

Wanganui Band Contest

CERTAIN phases of the band contest at Wanganui have been the subject of correspondence between the competition authorities and the Broadcasting Company. The local secretary wrote to the Broadcasting Company: "The question of broadcasting the demonstration concert of the band contest was considered by my executive, and while appreciating the wonderful advertisement it would be to Wanganui, as far as distant listeners are concerned, members were apprehensive regarding the way it might affect local district returns. The contest is costing in the vicinity of £2000, and you will, I am sure, realise that in the interests of guarantors it would be unwise to take any risks that might possibly prejudice the gate receipts. That aspect was featured in the discussion, but considering that in the interests of your thousands of listeners in the Dominion you might be prepared to make a monetary offer for the privilege of putting the concert on the air, I was directed by my executive to ask

you if you would make an offer, and, if so, the nature of it.

To this the general manager replied: "We appreciate your view of the matter, but are unable to share the view that the broadcasting of the final concert will adversely affect the takings. We can assure your executive that notwithstanding any isolated case the members may have in mind, the broadcasting of a public function has no detrimental effect on the attendance, as we know from our own experience and that of other countries that the reverse is actually the case. We would be very pleased to make an offer to your executive for the right to broadcast your contest but for the fact that at the present time the company cannot make payment for relays. Particularly is this the position where in the event of a broadcast being arranged the company will have to meet the expense involved in sending announcing and engineering staff, as well as special apparatus, to Wanganui, and the renting of a land line between Wanganui and our transmitting station at Wellington."

We appreciate that a large number of our listeners are interested in your band contest, and in addition a great number of people who are supporters of the visiting bands will not be able to visit Wanganui, but will want to hear the performance, and for these reasons we are prepared to endeavour to arrange to broadcast from our Wellington station, your final concert, and pay such additional expenses as are involved in a special transmission of this character. Should you decide to accept the offer, we would be glad to receive your advice at the earliest possible moment, in order that we may rearrange our programmes and make arrangements for the land line and other technical requirements.

Auckland Listeners

Forming a Radio Society

THE initial meeting of listeners to consider the proposal to form a radio society in Auckland was held on February 13.

Mr. H. A. Steadman presided over a fair attendance. In outlining the proposed objects of the society, the chairman said the conveners had in mind a society that would foster and encourage the development of radio broadcasting and listening-in. It hoped to make representations to the Broadcasting Company in reference to programmes hours of service, etc., and generally to co-operate with the Broadcasting Company whenever desirable.

Mr. R. F. Burrell mentioned that a society could be of great value in assisting beginners to build their sets and an equipped workshop for this purpose could form part of the society's activities. Mr. J. Jones drew the attention of listeners to the fact that a live radio society could influence and encourage juveniles to take an interest in radio.

Mr. S. J. Hayden, director of 1YA, said that the Broadcasting Company was anxious to co-operate with listeners and he was pleased that a move had been made to form a society in the interests of radio broadcasting.

Mr. F. Hammond, in moving "that a Radio Club be formed in Auckland, subject to the approval of a later meeting," said that organisation on the part of listeners was very desirable and

"The Arguing Wife"

A True Story

ALL songs must have some story connected with their origin, but rarely is the story known. Here, however, is the true story of the birth of "The Arguing Wife," which was sung by Mr. Harrison Cook at the special D.I.C. concert given "over the air" on February 28.

Mr. Gwynne Davies (the composer of the song), and Mr. Harrison Cook were both principals in the Carl Rosa Opera Company and had been singing at a concert in South Wales. During the long train journey up to Scotland, where they were rejoining their opera company, they went along to the dining car for the second sitting of lunch and, as many of the passengers who had been in for the first sitting had conveniently left papers behind on the seats, they both started to read while waiting for the soup to be served.

Gwynne Davies suddenly passed the paper he was reading to the basso, with the remark: "How's that for a set of lyrics, Harry?"

Cook read the poem and passing the paper back, said, "They'd make a great song for —" (mentioning a popular ballad singer of the time).

"Damn —," said Davies, "I'll write a song for you."

necessary to put broadcasting on a better footing.

Mr. H. B. Arthur stressed the point that the Radio Society should make a big effort to increase the number of listeners-in, and mentioned the regrettable fact that listeners had only increased by 800 odd in the Auckland district during 1928. A working committee was elected to draw up rules and constitution to be submitted to a further meeting of listeners.

Nothing more was said about the song till some few weeks later when they had finished lunch in rooms under the shadow of the great Minster at York and Gwynne Davies went over to the piano, remarking, "How d'you like this?" and started playing a melody which he had set to the words found in the train.

You will notice that the melody to the third verse is different from that to the other verses, but it is not the original tune; for the basso, when asked his opinion, said he did not like the original to that verse to which remark the composer replied that he would change it. And he did. A week or two later Mr. Harrison Cook sang the song as it now stands at the Winter Gardens, Blackpool, at the Whit Sunday concert, May, 1921, and caused great merriment among the audience when he sang the peculiarly appropriate words, "She'd argy from Christmas till Whitsunday night."

The composer's original manuscript, which he gave to Mr. Cook, was the one Mr. Frank Thomas used at the piano when accompanying the basso the other evening.

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