

The New Zealand Radio Record

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N.Z. RADIO PUBLISHING CO., LTD.
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WELLINGTON, FRIDAY, MARCH 15, 1929.

DEALERS' LICENSES.

THE announcement that dealers' licenses for the sale of radio sets and apparatus have been revised, the classes reduced, and the rate of fee slightly increased, will be received with mixed feelings by the trade. There is one section which will be disappointed that the increase had not been of a very much more substantial nature. Others will protest against the increase.

The decision is a very important one and of a far-reaching nature. The occasion for the Post and Telegraph Department licensing radio dealers is based upon the conditions of the service and the nature of the control exercised by the Department. It is an open secret that, because of what was considered to be the attractive nature of radio from a profit-making point of view, the number of radio dealers seeking the trade attendant upon listeners was in excess of actual business requirements. Comparatively small capital was required for entry into the trade; and that reason, together with the absence of real technical qualification imposed upon those seeking a license as a condition of their operation, led to an undue preponderance of dealers to listeners. The commercial reaction from this position has been bad. The rate of business mortality has been high, and the large radio houses have unquestionably suffered heavily from bad debts incurred because of the flimsy nature of many of the small dealer businesses. From the listener's point of view, too, the reaction has not been good. The quality of service of many of the smaller organisations has not been what it should have been, and the same applies in a certain degree to the nature of the equipment sold and the trade done by them. Many small businesses, of course, are quite efficient and satisfactory, but unquestionably a proportion have failed in giving real business service.

FOR the reasons enumerated, a definite movement developed in the more stable sections of the trade in favour of the imposition of heavier license fees. Arguments in favour of that payment were that, by requiring a high financial standing, weaker elements would be eliminated with benefit to the commercial stability of the trade; further, that by raising the standard of the dealers remaining in the business, the service available to listeners would be improved. Naturally such a point of view encountered opposition. This opposition took its stand on the democratic basis that it should be open to any man interested to exploit his skill and capital and engage in the trade. Further, that in the interests of radio no barrier should be erected of the nature

of a close corporation; rather, every facility should be available to the public to secure its radio sets and parts as cheaply as possible and as conveniently as possible.

IN spite of the democratic basis of this reasoning it has not, we think, proved to be commercially sound. An excess of competition does not result in cheapness nor efficient service. Spreading the available volume of trade over too thin a surface leaves all participating in it hungry and unsatisfied and working on too fine a margin. That is not good business. Frankly, therefore, we think the real weight of argument in the special circumstances of the trade lies with those who contend that the betterment of radio calls for a stiffening of the requirements, financial and otherwise, on the part of those engaged in the trade. For this reason we think the increase in the radio license fee imposed by the Department is in the right direction. It has been made only after consultation with the trade itself, and, as indicated, is a compromise between two sections—those who want a much higher rate and those who argue for the right to trade without undue premium. The tendency of the increased license fee will be to make back-door trading unprofitable and drive out of the business the man of straw whose enthusiasm and keenness do not compensate for commercial weakness. In the upshot, concentration of the trade in fewer hands and the avoidance of bad debts, will tend to cheapen rather than increase the cost of radio to the listener. That, after all, is the clear-cut objective—that the listener should secure his requirements on a reasonable basis, and that the trade in its service to the listener should be able to conduct its business efficiently, capably, and at a reasonable but not undue profit for its enterprise.

Overheard

Incidents at 2YA

Ting-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling.

"Is that 2YA?"

"Yes, madam?"

"Do you keep a mallet down there?"

"Yes, madam, we do keep a mallet here."

"What do you use it for?"

"We use it for tapping on the head those artists who do not quite please all our listeners."

"Well, I wish you would tap on the head the person who has just sung that soprano solo. I cannot understand why you keep on spoiling the programme with those cheap sopranos. If you use that mallet quickly, and in addition drop the lady over the bannisters, I would be very grateful."

"Oh! I am very sorry, madam. That lady has quite a reputation as a soprano singer."

"Well, I don't think much of her."

"But really, I assure you she has quite a reputation. A number of people think she is amongst the world's best."

"Oh, indeed! Who is she?"

"Tettrazini, madam."

Another Evening.

Ting-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling.

"When will that wretched violinist finish murdering that piece?"

"Well, madam, I think he won't be very long now. But don't you like it?"

"No, I don't. I think it is a frightful performance. Why can't you get somebody who can really play?"

"Well, madam, he is really quite a good player. It is Heifetz, you know."

"Oh, and who's he? Is he a local gentleman?"

Dealers' Licenses

New Rates from April 1

AS from April 1, a new schedule of charges for dealers' licenses will be operative throughout the Dominion. The new rate represents an increase in the main and a co-ordination of classes.

For the future the license for the three classes of dealers will be as follows:—

Class I.—Dealers in the four centres and adjacent areas, £15 per annum.

Class II.—Dealers in other places, £7 10s. per annum.

Class III.—Portable licenses and dealers, without any fixed place of business, £2.

The main change above mentioned represents an increase of £5, from £10 to £15. Its effect will probably be in the direction of reducing the number of dealers in main centres and elsewhere. While this may represent hardship in some few cases, the general opinion of those most concerned with the good of radio will probably be that it is a move in the right direction. It is an open secret that the number of licensed dealers has been out of proportion to the number of listeners, leaving the turnover for each individual dealer on the small side. A reduction in the number of those competing for the business will naturally tend to increase the turnover of those remaining, with a beneficial effect upon their profits from radio. Listeners will benefit by every improvement that takes place in the status of dealers.

FOR SALE.

1 "B" KODEL ELIMINATOR, as new, been in use only one month. Voltage tappings: B—DET, B90, B150, B180. Price £8, cost £12/10/- new. Reason for selling owner having shifted out of power area. Apply "Radio," c/o Record Office.

Burgess Batteries
are used in all
big events.

**BURGESS
RADIO
BATTERIES**

More Burgess
Batteries are sold
in New Zealand
than any other.

Why?

Why?