

Auditions in Australia

Eclipse of the Sun

Effect on Radio

A FEW years ago "auditions" implied, to most of those who had personal experience of them, uncomfortable quarters of an hour in cold, empty rooms, where bored men thumped worn-out pianos, whilst hard-eyed managers looked scornfully on. Now an increasing number of people have quite a different experience. The actual procedure to be followed by those who want to have their talents tried out does not vary much, whether it is a musical, dramatic, or variety audition, or a speaking voice test. The applicant turns up at the appointed time, duly armed, as the case may be, with his or her roll of music, trombone or scrip, and is ushered into a studio where a red light over the door signifies to the initiate that the microphone is "alive," though a closed circuit only is being used. This means that sounds from the studio pass through the microphone and so to the control room, but instead of being broadcast they are merely passed back on the wires to a pair of headphones in the control room itself.

On these headphones a tactful member of the staff listens to the test, for the microphone has its own exigencies, and a voice or an instrument that might be beautiful in a hall only too often fails to pass the microphone test. A second hearing is sometimes allowed for nervousness can play havoc with ability, and even hardened performers are often unable to face the microphone without a quail. Talkers particularly can be enormously helped by a few words of expert advice on inflection and the pitch of the voice, and a special list of hints is sent to all of them who pass the test.

SOME, of course, in particular those with a taste for novelty, thoroughly enjoy the whole affair, in fact, in early days there was reason to believe that many people without the faintest hope of ever bursting into the broadcast programmes, came for auditions for the fun of the thing and nothing more. But the "auditor" who had spent weary hours listening to their efforts would at least reap his reward now and again when someone possessing real talent, even to himself or herself unknown, came into his net, or when he got a letter such as that of the gentleman who said: "I must also thank you for the kind way you received me, you must make many friends there."

When the licenses expire in July next, there will be stored in the archives of the company, reports dealing with 20,000 individual tests.

DURING the recent total eclipse of the sun arrangements were made by the Radio Research Board in Great Britain for a number of wireless observations to be made in order that "the effect of the eclipse on wireless could be studied. The experiments were made on long waves (12,000 to 14,000 metres), and on medium waves (300 to 500 metres).

The long wave observations were planned to include respectively signals which crossed the band of totality, those that travelled as nearly as possible along it, and those that were wholly outside of it. Apparatus was used for analysing long-wave propagation to show the relative effects of attenuation, the relation between the phases of the ground and down-coming waves, and any abnormal polarisation of the down-coming wave. The effect of the observations was to show the influence of the eclipse as that of a minor sunset, producing only the preliminary phenomena of a normal sunset, and suggesting that totality did not last long enough to enable the complete effects to occur. The effects were not confined to the totality band, but were noted in the transmission which was outside of it. This is in harmony with an observation made previously in respect to sunset transmission.

WITH regard to the medium waves, the observations showed a great increase in the intensity of the down-coming waves, which was interpreted as being due in part to the increased height of the atmospheric stratum from which the waves were reflected, and in part to the rapid deionisation of the lower layers of the atmosphere on the removal of the ionising agents due to solar rays. The period during which these efforts lasted varied from twenty to fifty minutes at different stations, while it took nearly two hours for the moon's shadow to pass across the sun, suggesting that wireless methods may not be able to detect these effects before quite an appreciable fraction of the sun's radiation had been cut off. For some reasons all the stations showed that on the morning after the eclipse night-time conditions seem to persist for a long time after sunrise.

Direction-finding observations seemed to show that during the eclipse the normal night properties of the reflecting atmospheric layer were temporarily restored, as was suggested independently by the observations on transmissions.—"Sydney Morning Herald."

THE D.X. CLUB

Views and News.

Stations for Identification.

CAN you advise me of the whereabouts of a station I have received on several occasions (Friday last at 9.50 p.m.)? Its wavelength is between 2YA and 2FC, approximately 428.8 metres. I have never heard the station "calling," but it appears to carry on two-way communication in a foreign language, and as it is at good loudspeaker strength it is apparently somewhere "near-at-hand."—"RHEOSTAT" (Auckland).

COULD any listener tell me which American station operates on approximately 231 metres, and a call that sounded like KG1 and another letter I could not catch at all, Idaho. Music quite fair strength. At times playing old favourites. Also heard to-night at medium strength K.S.L. Salt Lake City, Utah. KVOO was coming in strongly about a fortnight ago for several consecutive evenings.—L. A. KELLICK (Mangamahu).

The C. A. Larsen.

ON Saturday, 9th instant, at 5 p.m., when 2YA closed down, another station came in at great strength on the same readings as Wellington. The talk was all in a foreign tongue, but on three occasions we distinctly heard the call, Hulloo, Hulloo, C. A. Larsen! I would greatly appreciate any information you could give me on the matter.—C. C. KING (Geraldine).

[This would be the C. A. Larsen, a Norwegian mother whaling ship, which would be at the time a few days off the New Zealand coast, bound for the Panama Canal.]

Station WEXX.

CAN anyone tell me where WEXX, America, is situated. I am practically certain the above is the correct call sign, as I heard it twice on the 8th instant from 3 to 4 p.m. on a wavelength of 25.4 metres. They closed down at 4 p.m., and were about equal strength to W2XAF.—J.O.H.T. (Hakataramea).

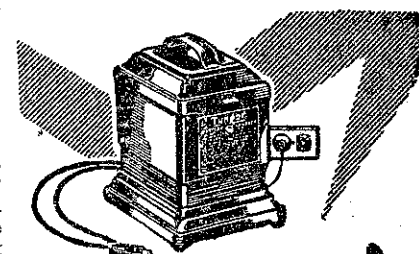
American Stations.

I THINK the station KCJJ, California, which "Kauspanka," Hastings, heard is KEJK, California. I heard this station several nights on 260 metres. Has any listener heard a station on about 545 metres? I have heard one there several times, but fail to get his call. From March 1 to 11 I have heard the following stations:—WJAG, 283 metres; KPLA, 526 metres; WDAE, 484 metres; KYW, 294 metres; KPQ, 248 metres; WMBD, 208 metres; WIOD, 242 metres; WOAI, 252 metres; KGER, 219 metres; KHQ, 508 metres; WCCO, 370 metres; WOW, 508 metres; KLX, 341 metres; KGIQ, 227 metres; KWWG, 238 metres; WWAE, 250 metres; WCLO, 250 metres; WAPI, 263 metres. And also 116 other American stations heard since September 1, 1928.—"ANTENNA" (Le Ron's Bay).

Verifications from America.

I HAVE just received three verifications from America. The first was KFOX; this station also sent me a page from "Radio Doings," on which particulars of KEJK were printed. KEJK transmits on 256.3 metres, with a power of 500 watts. I also received a letter from KTM, which is the new call-sign of KNRC on 384.4 metres with 500 watts. KTM broadcasts daily from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. P.S.T. It is situated in Ocean Park, Santa Monica, California.

The station WHER, which I reported, is WAPI. In the "Record" WAPI is said to be situated in Alaska, but (Continued on page 31.)



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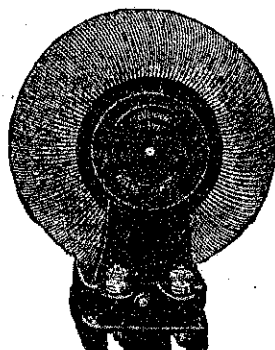
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