

Auckland Notes

(By Listener.)

A FEW hours after last week's notes were written, the writer, along with thousands of others, had what he regards as his first real demonstration of the full effectiveness of drama over the air. The Auckland Little Theatre Society made an initial appearance before the 1YA microphone in the production of "Outward Bound," and it is safe to assert that no more effective two hours of spoken word has ever been heard in the whole of Australasia. The play itself, in the power of its spoken word to create the necessary atmosphere without any of those "effects" so featured in radio drama, suggested that it had been written primarily for broadcasting, though such was not the case. It was an ideal piece for a first appearance, and the Little Theatre Society has reached, and most thoroughly impressed, a far larger audience than it might ever hope to secure within the walls of the Concert Chamber. For an evening's entertainment the broadcasting of "Outward Bound" ranks with the best that has ever been put on the air in these parts.

BY the time these notes appear in print the radio year will have but few further days to live. Locally there is ample indication that the 1929 season is being approached with the utmost enthusiasm. In the radio trade itself there is unbounded confidence. It indicates that broadcasting is now on a firm basis, is a permanency, which will follow a definite line of growth and expansion. In this morning's "Herald" no less than three full pages are given to radio news and radio advertisements. This in itself is an evidence of the spirit which is abroad. Listeners, too, are urging upon friends the desirability of securing sets and obtaining licenses. Next week will see the post office rush commence. In this rush so many people disregard the fact that they may renew their licenses without going to the telegraph engineer's department at the G.P.O. Here the crowd is at times vexatious through the delays it causes. Any suburban postmaster will issue a license. Why not save time and visit him?

IT is no secret that during the past few weeks there have been many unlicensed sets operating. The owners of many of these could hardly be called "pirates" in the accepted radio sense of the term. They are simply over-eager folk who are fully determined to take out a license by April 1, but who cannot resist the desire to "get things going" a week or so beforehand, just to see what the new procedure is like. In the past ten days the writer has come across no less than three such individuals in a small area, and though he would be the first to ferret out pirates, has simply smiled at this "beating of the pistol," knowing that it is really all for the good of broadcasting. He has found these early

birds quite frank about what they have done, and equally emphatic on the point that they realise and will fulfil their obligations.

AUCKLAND is putting its house in order for the new year. The studio at 1YA and the transmitting plant are receiving a thorough overhaul, and the installation of new microphones will give further improvement in the quality of the transmission. Not that this has been poor, for 1YA prides itself that it will stand comparison with all other stations locally audible in this respect. Though there are occasional growls from people whose nature it is to be pessimists, the feeling general among listeners is that we have had a really good twelve months in the past, and that there is an even better one ahead. The steady progress which has been made by the Broadcasting Company, without fuss or flourish of trumpets, is recognised on all hands. There is growing a better realisation of the difficulties that have to be surmounted in making this progress, and the spirit of antagonism, once so pronounced here, is giving place to a sincere desire for co-operation that will be helpful towards the goal of brighter, better, and bigger radio. At this time it is fitting that a tribute should be paid to those keen voluntary organisations which have put in so much time and effort to help our local station. All listeners are grateful to them.

MR. LEN BARNES, the new director at 1YA, is settling down into his new post, renewing old friendships, and getting into close touch with all musical interests. His experience in the world of music will be a big asset to 1YA, and its effects should soon be noticeable. Aucklanders may congratulate themselves that Mr. Barnes has been sent north.

THE Auckland Comedy Players scored another striking success last Thursday when they presented a mock trial ("Larkin v. Fitzhugh.") The "trial" bristled with humorous points, and smart sallies, and even in the "court-room" itself (the studio at 1YA) it was difficult to restrain the spontaneous laughter of the performers, and the usher (Mr. O. B. Kwiott) had repeatedly to call for "Silence."

The humours of a law court, with its numerous witnesses and others, were exceedingly well brought out, and "Mr. Justice Dearing" was, as is often the case, extremely dense respecting common, every-day matters about which the average man is quite well informed. Altogether, a clever and diverting piece of work, and a distinct departure from the ordinary radio programme.

NEVER try and drill a hole in ebonite unless the exact position has been punched in, otherwise the drill is bound to wander.

WHEN flash-lamp bulbs are recommended for use as fuses in radio sets, the kind meant are the low consumption type of bulb.

Listener and Service. Trade Developments

From the Gen. Manager's Mailbag.

TO maintain contact with listeners in all parts of the Dominion, the Radio Broadcasting Company some time ago appointed official listeners in most districts. From these are received official reports and comments on matters of interest, and the following extracts are culled from recent letters received from various official listeners.

His Own Set?

WRITING with reference to press correspondence and specially commenting on a certain "radio editor" who formerly continually criticised 2YA transmissions, an official listener states that what the newspaper man considered to be bad transmitting from 2YA was really due to the faulty construction of his set. "He has not had so much to say of late and I don't think he is likely to in the future," remarks the official listener.

Overseas Programmes No Better.

AS winter comes on there seems to be an increase of fading and distortion from 2YA, but this I am convinced is a local matter. The power from all stations is very good and I can find no fault with any of them. Of course no programme will suit all listeners, and although I listen regularly to London, New York, Holland, etc., many of the items put over do not suit my tastes any better than the New Zealand items."

Doing Their Best.

IT has indeed been a great pleasure to me to have acted in the capacity of official listener during the period just ending and if you have not heard much from me in the way of criticism, it is because candidly I have found little to criticise, realising that the company are doing the utmost within their power to provide service which will give satisfaction to all tastes, commensurate with their resources, and the available talent."

LOOKING back over the past twelve months, one cannot but be impressed by the steady and real advance made by your company in bringing radio in New Zealand to its present high standard, and it gives me much pleasure to know, that at least, I have been given the opportunity of playing a small part in that advancement."

Children's Sessions.

THE children's session is now as important to listeners as the after-8 programme, and the parents of the children take an interest in supplying the wants of their own through the various Uncles and Aunts. Several people I have talked over this matter with are quite prepared to pay for the service, say 2s. 6d. for each message, such funds to be devoted to, say, such institutions as hospitals, homes, etc., to be used to install radio receiving sets.

To this suggestion the General Manager replied:

"Your remarks concerning the children's session have been read with interest, but we regret that we are unable to entertain your suggestion that payment be made for messages being broadcast. The regulations under which we operate do not permit of our receiving payment, nor do they allow the broadcast of point to point messages, except

The Airzone "Three"

(By "Observer.")

THE coming season is certain to see very many interesting developments regarding new apparatus. Nothing radically new is to be expected, though improvements, both in function and design, will be continually coming before the notice of the public, and it is the purpose of "Observer" in these columns, to briefly review these new models with a view of interesting radio listeners.

The Airzone "Three" has been submitted for test and report, and has proved equal to anything of its type yet tested. The design is indeed unique. The set, with the exception of the batteries and the speaker, is housed in a little metal case, the over-all dimensions not exceeding 12 x 8 x 6. This is finished in blue crystalline. There are three dials, tuning, reaction, and rheostat, and these are artistically arranged so as to give the whole outfit a very neat and balanced appearance.

There is nothing unusual about the circuit, but everything is arranged from the point of view of maximum efficiency—and it has been obtained. The arrangement of the valves are detector and two audio. These are of the Continental type, and the set can thus be worked from dry batteries, though an accumulator would be preferable if the set was to be used for long intervals. As sent out by the distributors, it is capable of handling great volume without distortion. A test was made from 2YA, and with 150 to 200 volts on the plate of the last valve and 30 on the detector valve, tremendous volume without distortion was realised, and it would have been possible to have conducted a dance to the music.

As for distance getting, the set is still on test, and a further report of this nature will be published at a future date.

in cases of urgency, such as matters of life or death, when no other method of communication is possible."

Atmospherics.

LISTENERS in this area appear to be all very well satisfied, and although the reception on occasions is not perfect, it is realised that the Radio Broadcasting Company are doing all that is possible, and that the interference is largely due to atmospheric or extraneous causes not under the control of the company. This common sense view makes my task very simple, and it is now months since I heard anything in the nature of a complaint."

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