

Notes and Comments BY "SWITCH"

THE recent concert by the Wellington City Silver Band was a consummate success as heard from 2YA, Wellington. The items were well selected, and the placing of the microphone gave splendid balance to the band, which performed brilliantly.

PROBABLY a record broadcast feat was accomplished by the member of the visiting J. C. Williamson "Patsy" Company at 2YA, Wellington, last week. He sang no fewer than a dozen popular songs without five seconds intermission. "Switch" believes this is a record for New Zealand at all events.

"SWITCH" was lately asked to listen to a test of a home-made exponential horn built according to scientifically drawn up specifications published in an overseas magazine. While the volume was great the tone was indifferent. A close examination showed that the loudspeaker unit was of a cheap brand. Unless a first-class unit is employed the best results cannot be obtained even from a perfectly constructed exponential.

"L. J." (Hataitai) asks "Switch" to publish the following suggestion: "I think 2YA, Wellington, would delight a large number of listeners if the week's most popular song record were put on the air at a definite schedule time, say, just after the 9 o'clock weather forecast. This has been the prac-

tice at 3LO, Melbourne, for many months. No difficulty would be experienced in selecting the record, for this is already done by the gramophone people themselves."

THE gramophone records put on during the children's sessions of 2YA, Wellington, are well chosen, and one of these lately was the orchestral record in which various instruments simulated laughter. In a certain household this record was voted the best put on for several months. If the number of grown-ups who enjoy the kiddies' sessions could be mustered they would present quite an army.

A HIGHLY commendable idea lately introduced during the children's sessions of 2YA, Wellington, is the announcing of the ages of the juvenile performers. Besides adding interest to the items it occasions a certain amount of rivalry among the children listeners and encouraging talent to come forward. Some curiosity is expressed as to the reason why the full names of the young performers are not announced. "Little John" and "Little Betty" do not satisfy the curiosity of listeners.

THE broadcasting of the gramophone records of the opera "Rigoletto" was much enjoyed by many of "Switch's" acquaintances. They are looking forward to the early broadcasting of another opera.

A WELLINGTON College youth recently exchanged a puppy, with a pedigree, for a one-valve receiver. Let us hope he has not exchanged one type of howler for another.

OCCASIONALLY it occurs to novices that radio editors are sitting waiting for work. A Sydney correspondent recently sent the following cool request to the Sydney "Wireless Weekly":—"Kindly send me a few lay-outs for a number of selective crystal sets for receiving Broadcasters. I am living only half a mile from Farmer's transmitting station." Answer: "Righto. See below." And underneath was published seven bars of music!

HOWLING valves have been known by "Switch" to spoil the sales of sets, thus incurring a loss to the trade, a loss to the Post and Telegraph Department, a loss to the Broadcasting Company, and, in a measure, a loss to all listeners, for broadcasting is a community affair. The more listeners there are the greater the sum of money available for the programmes. Perhaps arrangements could be made for a five minutes' talk from 2YA, Wellington, by an expert who could explain in simple, untechnical language how listeners could ascertain when they are creating interference and the method of avoiding same.

THE howling valve nuisance which has been almost quiescent around Wellington for several weeks, broke out with great virulence during the recent spell of poor reception from

Australia. Two or three listeners close to the city have a knack of raising a howl which would almost awaken the dead. They never test to ascertain whether they are creating interference; if they tapped their aerial terminal with a moistened finger they would hear a loud click from their loudspeaker. This test would also be heard by other listeners, but their howls never indicate any attempt at the test suggested.

RECEPTION of the Australian stations by Wellington listeners during the recent prolonged southerly gale was extremely unsatisfactory. Fading was intense, and none of the Australians were exempt. Static was lively, and there was a general weakness of long-distance reception. A peculiarity of reception of 2BL, Sydney, was the decree in volume from the early evening sessions onward. Some evenings the "dinner music" was twice as loud as the subsequent evening concert music. This is the reverse of what one should expect.

A WELLINGTON listener commented to "Switch" upon the poor reception recently, and his difficulty in hearing either 1YA, Auckland, or 3YA, Christchurch, while even 2YA, Wellington, had dropped considerably in volume. As this was not in accord with "Switch's" experience he advised his friend to have his equipment tested. This advice was followed, and a coil in the loudspeaker was found to be burnt out. The experience of this listener may assist others.

A NOVICE queried "Switch" as to the advisability of purchasing a celluloid "A" battery, as he had seen one froth so badly as to cause the loss of a considerable quantity of the liquid. The explanation given to the inquirer was that some celluloid batteries develop this fault after a little while, owing to some unsuitable ingredient being embodied in the celluloid, but this does not apply to all makes. The better type of celluloid batteries can be relied upon not to froth. The celluloid being transparent enables one to view the plates and thus ascertain their condition.

"SWITCH" has a compliment to pay to Mr. Walpole for his impersonation of Milton Hayes, the original Monty of "The Meanderings of Monty," known the world over per medium of gramophone records. Listening to 2YA, Wellington, the other night the writer heard "Monty Addresses the Board of Directors," and thought he was being entertained by a record of Milton Hayes himself. It was only on consulting the printed programme that "Switch" discovered the item was mimicry by Mr. Walpole. Thorough merit was stamped on every syllable.

THE recent southerly gale at Wellington left a trail of fallen radio masts. Many of the masts around the city are of the broomstick order and are badly stayed. Any old thing seems to be good enough, according to some

listeners, and they realise their folly when the wind takes toll of their masts.

A WELLINGTON listener who operates a portable set was surprised the other day when he found he could receive 2YA, Wellington, louder ten miles away than when he had the set in his office in the city. He came to "Switch" for an explanation. This was not a difficult problem to solve. His office in a steel-framed building, and the metalwork acts as a most effective screen. A demonstration proved the truth of this. The set was taken to a window, and it performed splendidly, but when placed well inside the office reception dropped badly.

THE introduction of broadcast listening into colleges is steadily proceeding. The parents of an up-country girls' college in the Wellington radio district are about to instal an all-electric set for the girls. These A.C. sets possess a distinct advantage over the battery sets for such purposes, as they are so easy to manipulate, and the latest models are remarkably efficient.

A CRYSTAL set user has asked "Switch" why he recommends a loudspeaker with a large horn for reproduction from a crystal set in preference to a diminutive loudspeaker with a small horn. He thought that the less inertia to be overcome in the diaphragm of a small speaker would contribute to louder reproduction. The conservation of sound through the use of the larger horn, however, more than compensates for the greater amount of inertia of a larger diaphragm. A test with a small and a large loudspeaker of the horn type will immediately prove which gives the better results.

"SWITCH" regards our New Zealand announcers as generally superior, on the whole, to the Australian announcers, although there are individual cases across the Tasman which excel our men in some characteristic. There are several attributes which go to make a first-class announcer. A man with a good quality of voice may have indifferent intonation, he may pronounce badly, or he may announce disjointedly, as some of the Australians are prone to do. Some announcers enunciate badly, although gifted with a good voice. Some speak too slowly, and over meticulously, as in the case of a certain Queensland microphone man.

A WELLINGTON listener has drawn "Switch's" attention to the hesitating manner of some of the leading Australian announcers, who, he contends, are inferior to the New Zealand announcers. Taking careful note, "Switch" has discovered that the men across the Tasman hesitate a great deal when they are mentioning the items and the performers. They appear to have some difficulty in deciphering the written names in front of them. This is the impression created, but is not meant as an explanation of the peculiar pauses.

HAVE YOU READ IT?

Thousands of New Zealanders have read the little illustrated booklet, "Your Estate," and have been led thereby to a wise decision in respect to the making of a Will and the selection of a Trustee.

"Where there's a will there's a way"

to carry out your wishes; where there's NO will, there's NO way to carry out your personal desires as to the disposal of your Estate.

Do not let 1929 get any older without making a Will and selecting the safest Trustee. In the meantime, apply to-day for a copy of "Your Estate," obtainable from any office or agent of the Public Trustee, or free by post from the Public Trustee, Wellington.