

The New Zealand Radio Record

P.O. BOX. 1032, WELLINGTON.

Published Weekly. Price 3d. Subscription Post Free in advance, 10s. per annum; booked 12s. 6d.

Literary communications should be addressed: "The Editor"; business communications to "The Manager."

Advertisers are asked to note that alterations of advertisements should be in hand Friday of each week for insertion in the succeeding issue, printed Tuesday, bearing Friday's date. No responsibility is accepted for blocks remaining unclaimed three months after each insertion.

N.Z. RADIO PUBLISHING CO., LTD.,
P.O. Box 1032, WELLINGTON.

WELLINGTON, FRIDAY, JUNE 7, 1929.

BROADCASTING IN THE BRITISH ELECTIONS.

THE most interesting event in the radio world in the past week has been the part played in the British elections by broadcasting. Although for long the use of the microphone was banned to controversial and political subjects in Britain, such a pressure was exercised by public opinion that eventually the Government permitted the door to be opened for the inclusion of the treatment before the microphone of both controversial and political subjects. The British Broadcasting Corporation was charged, however, with the responsibility of seeing that controversial subjects were handled equitably and justly by acknowledged experts, and in the political field that equity was preserved as between the contending parties.

QUITE notable reactions on the part of the electors have been noted to the use of the microphone. Observers' comments have noted that the election has been one of the quietest on record from the point of view of popular demonstration. This is attributed directly to the fact that the microphone has carried into the homes of the people the considered statements of the leaders, that thereby there has not been the occasion for such intensive popular feeling at actual meetings as has existed in the past, and that as a consequence there has disappeared from the political arena many of those features of popular demonstration which have in the past been associated with political gatherings. There can be no question that the use of broadcasting will have a psychological reaction upon the community. It will call into being a new technique in the art of popular oratory. In the Parliaments of the world the tendency of the past century has been to advance reasoned explanations at the cost of flowery eloquence. Gone are the days when House of Commons thrilled to the impassioned oratory of an individual speaker. Now it is the considered statement of reason which commands attention and respect. The same tendency has been noted in our own Parliamentary circles. The microphone will now carry into the popular field this trend, and lead to a higher appreciation of plain straight-forward statements, backed by reason. This must be regarded as an advance. Decisions reached under the influence of mob psychology, inflamed by momentary eloquence, are not always sound. The mob in the past has proved very easily led. The actual contact between speaker and audience facilitates the transfer of mob psychology. Enlargement of the audience by the microphone and

the disassociation of physical contact between the speaker and his audience will thrust mere mob oratory into the background and increase the importance of reason and common sense. The election just fought, from this point of view, establishes a milestone in political history. It is the first in British history in which modern methods have been employed to educate and solicit the considered decision of the mass of electors. Necessarily the method has come to stay. It will be improved upon in future years, so that ultimately a steady advance will be made towards the ideal of a fully-informed electorate giving its balanced judgment. Only under those conditions will the voice of the people become the voice of God.

THE experience of the British election, following on the recent Presidential campaign in the United States, where also broadcasting played an important part, will not be lost upon New Zealand. As things stand, the microphone is barred to politicians and political messages at present. It is not likely that this ruling will stand permanently. The advantages offered by broadcasting for the diffusion of information concerning policies and plans are so great that it is inevitable that they shall be utilised, under guidance and judicious restraint, for the benefit of our widely-scattered electorates. It is likely, in our view, that the next election held in this country, whenever that may be, will see the employment of broadcasting as a means of securing the considered decisions of all electors.

Bishop Bennett

"Waterloo"

To Broadcast from 3YA 4YA Commemoration

The Right Rev. F. A. Bennett, the first Bishop of Aotearoa, will speak from 3YA on Wednesday evening, June 12. His lecture will be entitled: "Maori Subject, Embracing Language and Legends."

To mark the anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo, which falls on Tuesday, June 18, a special "Waterloo programme" is to be presented by 4YA on the following evening, Wednesday, June 19.

This commemoration will take the form of a play "Waterloo," by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. It will be presented with full effects and musical background.

The vocal numbers will all be specially selected for the occasion, and will comprise a number of the older songs reminiscent of Napoleon's day.

"Waterloo" will be the first full length one-act dramatic play presented from 4YA. A new combination of singers, a male quartet to be known as the Four Aces, will also make their first appearance.

First Race Broadcast in U.S.A.

IN announcing that it would broadcast on May 18 a running description of the Kentucky Derby, famous for years as the climax of the Churchill Downs race meeting, the Los Angeles station KF1 said:

"This will mark the first time in history that a horse race has been deemed of sufficient interest to claim the attention of the radio public."

America is quite a big country, but things do happen elsewhere in the world, even if they are not heard of in the States. Once upon a time racing broadcasts were a regular thing in New Zealand.

Timaru on the Air

Orchestral Concert on Tuesday

THE Timaru Orchestral Society is arranging an excellent programme, to which the leading talent of the town will contribute, for the evening of Tuesday, June 11. The Timaru society found necessary to alter the date previously arranged, and Tuesday was found to be the most suitable, so, though 3YA is usually off the air on that day of the week, the station will carry out the relay, which should provide a musical treat to all listeners.

Radio in the Hospital

Contributions Needed

MEMBERS at a recent meeting of the Wellington Hospital Board discussed the question of obtaining additional funds to complete the installation of radio at the hospital.

The chairman said there were still six wards which were so far not connected with the wireless installation.

The opinion of the medical profession was that patients were effected beneficially by wireless, and it was hoped that the public would subscribe sufficiently to allow the installation to be completed.

The chairman added that the board had £1000 in hand for the purpose, but was unable to spend its own money on wireless installation. An application had been made to the Macarthy Trust, and he hoped that public subscriptions also would be forthcoming.

A DOCTOR'S OPINION OF SYDAL.

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