

# Notes and Comments

BY  
"SWITCH"

THOSE distant listeners who contend that reception of 2YA Wellington has decreased in volume as compared with that of last winter, will probably admit that reception of the Australian stations this winter is not to be compared with their reception last winter. Then, again, listeners who have not changed their valves since last winter would probably find if their valves were tested that they have deteriorated considerably. A thousand working hours is a fairly average life for the best make of valves.

THE forthcoming radio exhibition promises well. The Town Hall, with its extensive floor, is an ideal place for an exhibition, and there should be ample room for large attendances of the public. This will be the first separate radio exhibition held in New Zealand, previous displays having been conducted in connection with the Winter Show.

WELLINGTON listeners who tune in 3LO Melbourne and enjoy band music, will be interested to learn that the 32nd Battalion Band won the 3LO trophy shield as the winners of the third military band contest at Melbourne. Mr. Percy Code, whose beautiful cornet solos have occasionally been played in Wellington, acted as adjudicator.

A MUSICAL enthusiast who is a broadcast listener, expressed his entire approval of the remarks published by "Switch" in last week's notes regarding inappropriate music played on the banjo, mandolin, and other instruments. He said that there were other incongruities to be heard on the air occasionally, and not the least of these was the transposition of key of some of the finest musical compositions, including grand opera. He mentioned that there are numerous compositions which should be played only in the key in which they were originally written, otherwise they lose their character. A chapter could be written on this subject alone.

NEW ZEALAND listeners will be pleased with the cabled news that the Commonwealth Government has let tenders for the erection of two "A" class broadcast stations of considerably greater power than the existing Australian "A" class stations. The proposed locations of the new stations are not disclosed. If they are placed anywhere near the eastern coast of the Commonwealth, New Zealand listeners will derive much advantage from them. At present static and weak reception frequently plays havoc with the Australian stations when New Zealanders endeavour to tune them in.

CRITICS should be sure of their ground when embarking upon an attack on the pronunciation of studio announcers. A radio acquaintance stopped "Switch" the other day to tell him of the "bad slip" perpetrated by an announcer in pronouncing "Wurlitzer" as "Vurlitzer." He lost his enthusiasm over his imaginary discovery when informed that "Wurlitzer" was a Teutonic name, and in Teutonic languages the "W" was pronounced like our "V." The announcer had ample justification in using "Vurlitzer," although there is no great harm in adopting an Anglicised pronunciation of the name.

"If there is one instrument that sounds really excellent over the air it is the harp!" exclaimed a listener to "Switch" a couple of days ago. Unfortunately harpists are scarce in this community, and the harp is not easily transportable, but the said listener suggested that possibly a performer on this instrument may be induced to offer delight to a large number of listeners by giving some items from 2YA, Wellington. He thought as a substitute some records of harp soloists could be "dug up."

A GENTLEMAN who is interested in the preservation of the English language from the noxious intrusion of Yankee pronunciation and intonation, suggested recently that the Wellington Radio Society should pass a resolution condemning the "awfulness" of the American speech in the new "talking pictures." The subject, however, does not come within the scope of the Radio Society, and so nothing came of the suggestion.

"D.H.H." (St. Kilda) writes to "Switch":—"I notice that in last week's 'Record' you advise an Island Bay listener that interference from trams, wires, rails, etc., cannot be eliminated. I apologise, as a

merest amateur, with differing from an expert, but I am of opinion that the difficulty may, to a great extent, be overcome. The following is my experience: Our house is situate on damp ground, on a tramcar corner, with a transformer station a few hundred yards up the street. My earth is seven copper pipes each over six feet in the ground. Hence you can readily see that tram interference has been our bane, and when trams were within a quarter of a mile or more on frosty nights, reception of low-wave stations such as Christchurch, 2BL, etc., was practically impossible, and was always a nuisance on all stations even as high as 3AR, and when we occasionally heard Hobart. Feeling certain that the trouble was mainly the earth, I have erected a counterpoise exactly similar to my 4-wire aerial, about 15 feet from the ground. For New Zealand stations the trouble is at an end, though of course we have some noise. In order to still maintain my distant reception I have not cut out my earth, but a two-way switch gives me earth or counterpoise as required. Now, about volume. It has affected New Zealand stations very little, but Australia is very weak with the counterpoise, and still needs the earth wire. But as with us, we do not, as a rule, switch on to Auckland until after 10 o'clock, and as we have no Sunday trams, that is not much of a drawback."

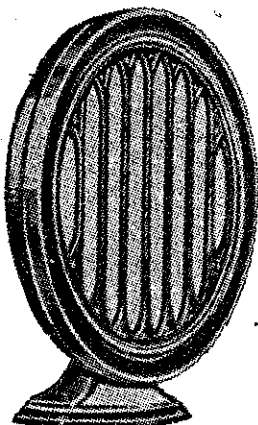
IT will be noted from the above letter that despite the use of a counterpoise by "D.H.H." (St. Kilda) he still has some noise when listening to outside New Zealand stations, though "the trouble is mechanically at an end." Then he admits that the volume of the New Zealand stations is affected, although "very little," but "Australia is very weak with the counterpoise." The Island Bay listener has gone to the trouble of trying out a counterpoise, but, while it reduced tram interference considerably, it spoilt reception of the outside New Zealand stations, and practically eliminated the Australians.

THE demonstration by Mr. Firth at the Wellington Radio Society's recent general meeting showed that the up-to-date combined all-electric radio set and gramophone is as easy to operate as the ordinary gramophone. For a long while the radio trade had to contend with the shyness of the public towards radio owing to the more or less skill required in tuning, and the trouble of connecting up batteries and attending to them. The three-coil regenerating set which was popular a few years ago required not a little skill, on the part of its operator, to tune it, and radio traders who were in the business then recall with a shudder the trouble they had in teaching purchasers to work those sets.

A WELLINGTON listener has asked "Switch" whether it is desirable to go to considerable trouble to erect a special aerial for use with a short-wave receiving set he proposes to construct, or whether his ordinary broadcast receiving aerial, which is a good height, would serve for short-wave reception. It is quite unnecessary to put up a special aerial, as the present aerial will act efficiently. By the way, the said listener should notify the chief radio inspector by letter that he is adding another set to his equipment. No extra license fee is charged.

A NEIGHBOUR asked "Switch" to hear his set, to which he had added a third audio transformer and audio valve to "boost" up reception from Australia. He was disconcerted owing to the profusion of parasitic sounds which defeated his object. The fact of the matter was that the addition of the third stage of transformer-coupled audio amplified the internal action of the preceding valves, so that the noise was almost unbearable. Acting on "Switch's" advice he discarded the third audio stage, substituted a power valve in the second stage, greatly increased the "B" and "C" battery potential on the second stage, and the result desired was successfully achieved.

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