

DISGRUNTLED listeners are prone to blame the broadcasting stations for fading even at a relatively close range. The United States Government Bureau of Standards has just issued a new report on the causes of fading, after extensive research. The results show that even nearby stations fade through no fault of the stations themselves. The report states: "In the case of nearby stations much fading is caused by interference between ground and reflected rays." Fading is the most difficult problem which confronts radio scientists, and listeners should realise this before rushing in to condemn this or the other station.

IF it were not for fading we would have regular Empire broadcasting from the British short-wave station 5SW, Chelmsford, England, ere this. The British Broadcasting Corporation's technicians have pointed out time and again that the broadcasting end of the system is well-nigh perfect, but it is at the receiving end where the difficulty lies. Those of us who have listened to long-distance short-wave broadcasting are familiar with the jerky or "gusty" nature of reception. This is nothing else but rapid cycles of fading and recovery, and to a true lover of music it mars its merit. Those listeners who complain about fading should recognise that the position is beyond human aid at present.

THE "Wireless Weekly" (Sydney) recently essayed to "draw" Mr. H. P. Brown, head of the Commonwealth Government Post and Telegraph Radio Department, on the subject of the future developments of broadcasting in Australia. What Mr. Brown said did not amount to much. In fact, he declined to commit himself in response to many pertinent questions. However, he admitted that two relay stations have been ordered. Mr. Brown said: "We don't know how many we may want; but there will be more orders placed shortly." One relay station is definitely fixed for a location. It will be erected at Newcastle and should be operating in from six to nine months. This station will be almost as powerful as 2FC, Sydney.

"SWITCH" made an interesting discovery the other evening when checking up on the two Japanese stations, JOHK, Sendai (767 kilocycles), and another, presumably JODK (868 kilocycles). The former is on a frequency a little higher than that of 2QG, Brisbane, and the latter's frequency is higher than 2BL's. By tuning quickly from one Jap station to the other it was found that they were simultaneously broadcasting the same items. Both stations made the loudspeaker yield the same volume as 2FC, Sydney, just after 11 p.m. While there is certainly a monotonous similarity in the average Jap items, sometimes the songs possess quite a different style altogether and are not untuneful to the Western ear.

BY general assent the recent relay by 2YA, Wellington, of the concert by Queen Alexandra's Own Band, at Wanganui, was the most successful yet accomplished by 2YA. The Broadcasting Company's technicians made a first-rate job of the relay, and praise is also due to the P. and T. Department's staff. So clear and free from parasitic noises was the relay that one could almost imagine that the concert

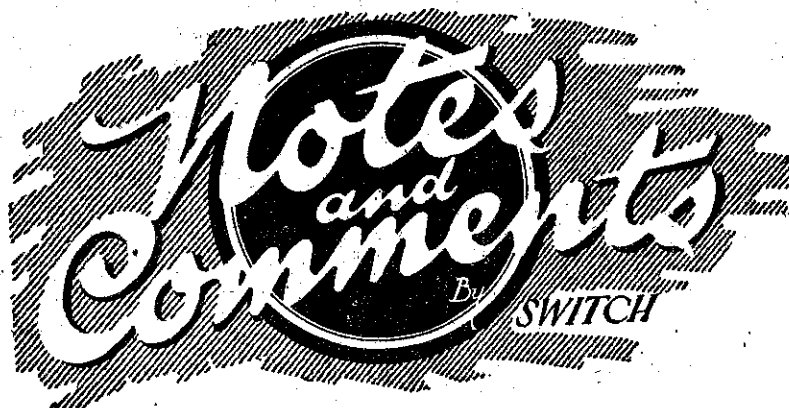
was at the 2YA studio. Mr. J. Ball, editor-announcer, was heard at his best, speaking from the Wanganui Opera House stage, his voice being loud and clear:

WELLINGTON listeners have lately heard a Californian station coming in for quite a while after 8 o'clock at night with distinct loudspeaker audibility on a wavelength approximating that of 2UE, Sydney (1020 kilocycles). When the Sydney station started up it blotted out the American. The writer heard the stranger's announcement clearly enough to establish the fact that it was one of the Californian "K" stations. Various statements have been made to "Switch" as to the identity of the visitor.

"SWITCH" recently received a letter from a listener who stated that he was quite satisfied that his home-made loudspeaker was superior in tone to the factory-made electro-dynamic loudspeakers. "Switch" was called into a friend's house recently to hear his loudspeaker, which he claimed was miles above any loudspeaker on the market. It was a painful ordeal for the writer, but as he was asked to give his candid opinion, he told his friend that the loudspeaker was the worst he had yet heard. It is a proven fact that many people are practically tone deaf.

THE new "pentode" type valve is proving a most useful acquisition to listeners. A Wellington doctor went to the Radio Exhibition and discovered that instead of adding a second audio transformer and valve to his present equipment to increase the volume of local reception, by inserting a "pentode" type valve in his one stage of audio the desired volume was obtainable.

THE writer has been requested to publish a recipe for reviving battery type valves which have become exhausted, "if such a miracle be possible." Providing the filament is not broken the thing is possible. Apart from the use of a patent re-activating device, the following method has proved successful. Place the valve in a socket and light the filament a little above its average operating voltage and leave it burning for about six hours. The "B" battery should be entirely disconnected from the set during this period. If the valve is not efficient after six hours burn it for another six hours. If it is still weak consign it to the dust-bin.



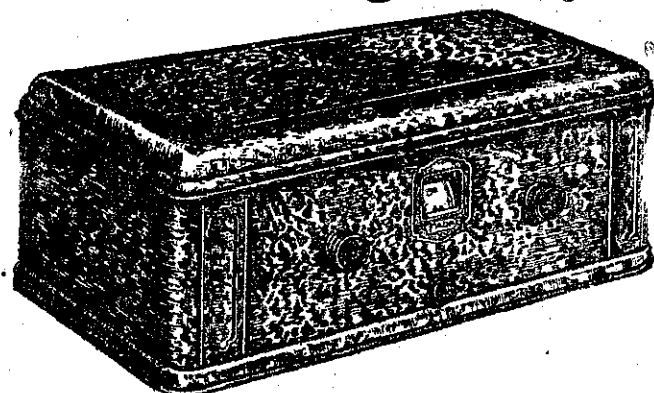
THE new Australian Broadcasting Company have made one egregious mistake at the outset. Instead of stating the time each item will be heard, in their published programmes, as is generally done in New Zealand, no schedule is given. It is pointed out in the Sydney wireless Press that the new system possesses the disadvantage that the listener is unable to learn beforehand when a certain item is likely to be heard and he runs the risk of missing it. It is contended that the average listener wants a detailed and accurate programme to look over.

MR. KEITH GRANT, whose fine baritone voice has been heard from 2YA, Wellington, on a number of occasions, has signed a six months' contract with the new Australian Broadcasting Company. His brother, Mr. Alexander Grant, received word from Mr. Keith Grant that he was to sing from 2FC and 2BL, Sydney, the other night. Mr. Alexander Grant came to the writer's home to listen to his brother 1200 miles away. Each of four songs sung by Mr. Keith Grant came in at full loudspeaker volume, and his brother was deeply impressed with the natural tone of the radio reproduction. The first song from 2BL had already commenced when the station was tuned in, but Mr. Grant instantly recognised his brother's voice.

IT has been estimated in a recent survey that at least one hundred million radio valves will be manufactured and sold in the United States during the radio season of 1929. This is double the number for 1928, and a thousand times as many as in 1922. Although these figures are staggering, when it is considered that the radio industry as a whole has had the most phenomenal growth of any of the nation's industries, it is only logical that the valve industry should show this tremendous increase.

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