

The New Zealand Radio Record

(Incorporating the "Canterbury Radio Journal.")

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WELLINGTON, FRIDAY, 6, 1929.

IRRESPONSIBLE CRITICISM

WE think every licensed listener may legitimately feel resentment at the irresponsible attack upon the broadcasting service recently made by the musical critic of the "Sun," a paper published in Christchurch. Resentment of this attack may be based upon its unfairness, the inadequacy of the critic's capacity and experience, and the injury to broadcasting likely to be inflicted by such a discouragement of business. On his own showing—as is revealed in a summary of the case given in our front page article—this critic is not, and never has been, a consistent listener to broadcast music, and was not equipped with even so humble a radio set as a crystal receiver. For the purpose of his attack, he borrowed from a music firm in Christchurch, which had recently added a radio department to its activities, a five-valve set, and devoted himself for five whole nights to listening to the programmes dispensed by 3YA. On this lengthy and comprehensive experience he took it on himself to criticise the whole broadcasting service, more particularly its musical side. Obviously, with this limited experience the critic's capacity for the task he undertook is questionable. His bias in relation to his personal tastes will be sufficiently revealed to listeners by citation of his main recommendations. First he wants more classical music, in order to "educate the public" in its appreciation of such music, as to which, we are pompously assured, "there is no music less dull than that of the classics." In the second place, this critic wants more high-class gramophone records. In the third place, he wants better artists—although the majority of those whom he named as being desirable to employ have been employed and the others have not been available. Fourthly, and finally, this critic makes the sapient suggestion "that the absolute control of the musical programmes must be put into the hands of a capable body of musicians."

THE suggestions of this immature critic will be sufficiently familiar to experienced listeners to be discounted at their birth. We are not concerned to expose further the unoriginality and futility of the suggestions made. All those listeners who have had experience over recent years and who are paying for the service they are receiving will recognise the advancement that has been made in improving the service. The point we are mainly concerned with is to protest against the unfair attack by a newspaper upon the radio broadcasting business to the injury of such business. We do not resent in the slightest any

fair criticism that can be, or is, levelled against the Radio Broadcasting Company. It is not above criticism. It is quite open to attack in fields where it can be shown it is failing to meet the public want. It has not attained perfection by any means, but we believe it is honestly striving to give a good service, and we think it quite inexcusable for any newspaper to assign a member of its regular or associated staff to vent an attack upon the service by a person with so inadequate a capacity for the task as is displayed by "Pied Piper." A newspaper may quite rightly regard itself as a guardian of the public interest where the public is in peril, but before any attack of this nature is levelled by a reputable paper care should be taken to see that the charges made are justified, that sufficient inquiry and research has been made into the case to warrant attack, and that no suggestion of self-interest or competitive interest is involved, and more particularly care should be taken that the law is observed. Listeners may be surprised to learn that we have every reason for believing that "Pied Piper" played the part of a radio pirate when listening to 3YA. If the facts as given are correct, he borrowed a set from a radio dealer whose license does not cover the use on loan, although it permits demonstration with a view to sale. On the facts, "Pied Piper" would seem to have committed the same offence for which an unlicensed listener in Wellington was recently fined £10. Will the radio inspector please investigate, and if the facts are correct take the necessary action? Listeners, we think, would enjoy seeing this case pushed to finality and witnessing such an experienced critic being fined for piracy.

Maori Pageant

Congratulatory Letters

LAST week we published a series of comments received from Australian listeners praising in very high terms the Wanganui Maori Party's broadcast of the Pageant of the Maori Race. So impressed were listeners on the other side of the Tasman that further congratulatory letters have been received in shoals by the latest mail, and it is evident that the broadcast created great interest in Australia, as well as incidentally providing New Zealand with an excellent advertisement.

It is interesting to note that as an indication of the impression which this broadcast made on Commander Byrd and his party, special mention of the programme was made in a message from Little America to Sir Maui Pomare.

Waitomo Caves Concert

An Unusual Feature

ARRANGEMENTS for the concert which is to be relayed from the Waitomo Caves on September 20 and broadcast by 1XA are well in hand, and in addition to the novelty of the relay a splendid programme to be given by leading Auckland artists is promised for the occasion. The possible effect which the acoustic properties of the caves may have on the performance is causing a good deal of discussion among listeners, and there is no doubt that the relay is being anticipated with more than usual interest.

Fruit Preserving

Lecturette by Mr. Ken Willis

OF special interest to the ladies will be a lecturette to be broadcast from 4YA on Monday by Mr. Ken Willis. Mr. Willis will deal with the subject of fruit-preserving, and will doubtless be assured of a large audience when he appears before the microphone at 7.40 p.m.

The Radio Ball

Interesting Event

A HAPPY evening occurred at the Majestic Lounge on Tuesday night—the Radio Ball, when a number of 2YA associates sponsored a successful event. On entering one was met by a sign displaying an appropriate variation of a well-known phrase, "Goo-o-o evening, everybody." The usually pleasant atmosphere of the room was enhanced by very large, artistic, and well-placed sunflowers. There is no to the full. The dance music was supplied by Claude Hoare and his band. Dancing, however, was not the only entertainment offered, there being several enjoyable cabaret items between dances. These included a vocal item by Miss Myra Sawyer, a demonstration of magic by Mr. Ling, and an acrobatic Eastern dance by Trevor and Dawn. Mr. Pat White gave a step-dance. Exhibitions of the latest ballroom dances, given by Miss Phyllis Bates and Mr. Pat White, Miss M. O'Connor and Mr. Ted Priestly, Mr. Joseph Colledge, and Miss McHaffey, added interest. A pleasant surprise awaited the ladies on entering, a posy being presented to each. The efforts of Mr. Edward Silver, who had organised the Radio Ball, were well rewarded.

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