

Radio Broadcasting Service Reviewed

Some Interesting Observations



At the conclusion of the Christchurch Radio Olympia, Mr. L. B. Scott, chairman of the Exhibition Committee, was interviewed by a "Sun" reporter. Mr. Scott had some very interesting observations to make concerning broadcasting.

"The radio show," said Mr. Scott, "has created more interest than it was thought it would. The public that went to see it has recognised that radio is established, and that even though its members may not have sets to-day, they will have them later. Changes in radio development have been taking place so gradually that they have almost been imperceptible. New Zealand now has not only the best artists obtainable for the stations—and those artists available are the best, although they have certain imperfections which the critics like to write to the papers

sessions have been a revelation to the public. Not only are the dialogues and stories, etc., attached to the juvenile mind, but also there is a wonderful wealth of artistry displayed that would grace any stage.

"As an educational force radio must exceed any other form of instruction, because there is the personal appeal in it that the performer is speaking directly to the listener.

"CANTERBURY

has lagged behind Auckland and Wellington in radio, and it is hard to understand the reason for this, particularly in view of the fact that at one time Christchurch was better catered for than the North Island.

"One would think as a natural inference that the man in the land, cut off from many of the pleasures of city life, would eagerly seize on radio. Often speakers have emphasised the monotonous life of farm workers who cannot attend the places of amusement the same as their town fellows. Yet we do not find them eager to make up the deficit by installing radio, and it is possible to get a set at a very moderate figure to fulfil their requirements.

"To the farmer himself there is a direct benefit in being in touch with markets as well as gaining the broadening effect from contact with affairs of the outside world.

"Innumerable instances can be quoted of the use of weather reports, especially at harvest and shearing times, and intelligent use of these accurate reports—and they are accurate—would not only save labour and money, but also a great deal of annoyance.

WITH regard to the sets themselves, so much has been written about oscillations, frequencies, and other funny expressions, that many people will have been misled into thinking that technical knowledge is necessary to operate a radio set. This is far from being the case, for the modern receiver is no more difficult to operate than many other articles of everyday domestic use. Certainly the 'innards'

are complicated, and require a capable man to repair them if trouble arises, but the modern set of to-day is reliable. In fact, we have to-day practically trouble-free listening-in.

"The workings of the totalisator are most probably highly complex, but one wishing to chase that elusive big dividend is not concerned with whether the totalisator is worked by electricity or by hand, but solely with the method of investing with hopes of a profit. There is a difference between the totalisator and radio in that you purchase a £1 or 10/- ticket, and later on have the doubtful pleasure of tearing it up (as a rule), whereas radio pays a dividend every time.

"Motor-cars have brought forcibly to the notice the question of upkeep in purchasing any article, and it is here that radio is unique. There is no form of amusement, irrespective of quantity and quality, which can be obtained at an outlay at all comparable.

"For each listener in the cost an hour works out at a very small fraction of a penny.

"It is a regrettable fact that only adverse criticisms of the broadcasting programmes come from the public notice, there being a singular lack of appreciation of the innumerable excellent broadcasting features. The public takes too many of these as merely a matter of course. The mid-day weather reports were undoubtedly of very great service to the

think of various services, has to grope blindly towards the light."

A "SUN" reporter asked Mr. Harris if he had any comment to make on Mr. Scott's observations, particularly in regard to his remark with reference to the number of radio licenses in Canterbury. Mr. Harris put the matter in a different light. He said that he had read with very great interest and appreciation the statement of Mr. Scott in "The Sun." Mr. Scott's prominent association with the radio world entitled his opinion to very serious consideration, and there could be no doubt that much that he had said would prove an inspiration to the people of the Canterbury district, more particularly to those who had not yet availed themselves of the broadcasting service. In stating, however, that Canterbury had lagged behind Auckland and Wellington in radio, Mr. Scott



MISS MAISIE CARTE-LLLOYD,
One of Auckland's foremost elocutionists

—S. P. Andrews, photo.

about—but also behind the Radio Broadcasting Company there is a very powerful organisation, not only of the company, but of a number of committees consisting of men and women interested in the particular subject.

"For instance, there is a committee to deal with the children's sessions consisting of representatives of the various associations concerned in child welfare.

"Similarly, the Radio Broadcasting Company has the advantage of a committee of representative musical interests, and the public can rest assured that if the musical authorities of the city consider the types of programmes suitable, it is not for some person with no knowledge of the public demand to set himself up as an authority.

"During the exhibition the children's

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MISS PHYLLIS HAZELL
A leading Auckland contralto.

—S. P. Andrew, photo.



MISS MADGE CLAGUE
An English contralto, and a very popular artist at IYA.

—S. P. Andrew, photo.

had no doubt misinterpreted what might be termed the bulk figures for each province, or rather postal district.

These figures did not give a true indication of the position. An examination of the service range of the radio stations in each of the main centres, as compared with the size of the license districts concerned, showed that the licenses allocated to any particular district could not be taken as the service value of its station and could not be accepted as an indication of its particular popularity. It was not practicable to estimate the service value of the respective stations, because of the unknown factors surrounding a broadcast transmission after it left the aerial system. One method of comparison, however, was to take the percentage of licenses to the population of the postal districts to which licenses were allocated. These figures had been taken out, and they showed that, contrary to the general opinion, the Canterbury district led Auckland, with Wellington holding first place, because, no doubt, of its having a more

farming community, and yet the farmers' organisations and the farmers themselves expressed no gratitude to Dr. E. Kidson, who put himself to personal inconvenience, and to the Broadcasting Company, for their efforts.

"If the listening-in public cannot look after its own interests and express appreciation of the efforts being made to give it service, it has only itself to blame if some of these benefits which meet with unanimous approval and are of service to certain sections of the community, are lost.

"The Broadcasting Company, being in ignorance of what the listeners