

Our Mail-Bag

Appreciated by the Old.

I HAVE been reading in the "Radio Record" about a pal in sickness. Well, every word he says is true. It is just a pleasure to hear Mr. Announcer's sweet voice. I am to-day (Tuesday) sitting in my dining room listening to those sweet records that have been playing all the week from 12 o'clock. It is simply lovely. I have five old pensioners with me. They do enjoy the music from my wireless, and I often have from 10 to 15 people in to hear my wireless going. Of course they are poor old pensioners; and then I have eight men in the house staying with me, lodgers. When they read some of the complaints they laugh and say "the poor milkman will have a rest now; something else to find fault with." I think we are treated better here than in Australia. I was born in Australia, Victoria. I know Smithy's mother and father in Sydney, and I know more about the Kelly Gang than I have read in our evening paper. I knew Ned's mother, and sister Kate. I saw the four of them a few hours before they were caught in Glenrowan. I am going to tell you that there is a few in Wellington a sight worse than the Kelly Gang. I am no friend of the Kelly Gang, but I know that much. I lived near those Kellys. Why did they start bushranging? They never put the foundation in print.—Q. (Wellington).

The Detector Valve.

TO the Editor: May attention has been drawn to a statement made by me, appearing in your "Topical News" column on Page 9 of last week's issue, end of first paragraph, which reads as follows:—"... and in October, 1922, by Professor Fleming's detector valve," is, unfortunately, a slight error on the part of the reporter, for I said that it was in 1904 that Professor J. A. Fleming, of London, invented the Fleming valve, which consisted of a carbon filament lamp with a sealed-in plate, and I explained that it was while Fleming was investigating a phenomenon discovered by Thomas A. Edison in 1890, known as the Edison Effect, he discovered that the unidirectional conductivity accompanying this effect could be utilised as a detector of radio frequency currents. I then went on to say that it was about 1912 or so that Lee de Forest introduced a third member into the valve between the filament and plate which he called the grid. My reference to October, 1922, was in connection with the first radio exhibition held in London (in which I had the privilege of taking part) a month or so before the British Broadcasting Company started their activities.—D. Neill Keith (Wellington).

An Appreciation.

LAST evening some eight lovers of good music gathered at my home and listened to the relay of "The Messiah," rendered by the Lower Hutt Methodist Choir and assisting artists. It was a wonderful performance, and my friends and I would like to congratulate everyone concerned on such a splendid rendering. We were very sorry when it concluded. I have heard "The Messiah" many times and consider this rendering far above any I have listened to. The choir was beautifully balanced, the soloists were outstanding, the orchestra performed well, and the whole performance reflects great credit on the conductor. Station 2YA is to be congratulated on the excellent programmes it provides its listeners with, and I consider this rendering of "The Messiah" on a par with the recent Maori Pageant, and look forward to many more such programmes. I would like to mention before closing that we listeners-in regard the announcer at 2YA as a real friend, so here's wishing the staff at 2YA greetings for 1930.—Grateful (Otago Central).

WE regret that in our issue dated December 13, the names under the photographs of Miss Marie Gaundin and Mrs. Elvira Meban (on page 3) were transposed.

Operations to Music

Patients Listen-in

PATIENTS may now listen-in to wireless broadcast while they are undergoing a surgical operation. This striking innovation in modern surgery, which was described at the recent Pan-Pacific Surgical Congress in Honolulu, was commented on by Sir W. Arbuthnot Lane, the distinguished surgeon.

In certain major operations spinal anaesthesia is given to the patient. A hypodermic needle on the spine renders the trunk of the body insensible. The patient is fully conscious, but quite free from pain during the operation.

He can, however, see what is happening, and hear the surgical sounds, and the usual method of saving him from the upsetting effects of this consciousness is to give him sufficient gas to send him to sleep, or, if that would be dangerous, to put a silk handkerchief over his eyes, and let the anaesthetist distract his attention by talking.

The new method is described as being "much preferable to the talking anaesthetist." Headphones are placed over the patient's ears, and he is able to listen-in until the operation is finished. He thus not only has his mind distracted completely and pleasantly from the operation, but in addition his ears are closed to the sounds of the operating theatre.

Overcoming Broad Tuning

"THERE is a satisfactory method of overcoming the broadness of tuning of the screen-grid valve," said a Wellington listener to "Switch" last week. "I have a set using three stages of screen-grid radio-frequency amplification, which is extraordinarily sensitive. I tried it on an outdoor aerial, but found that the set was very broad in tuning. Then I tested it on about ten feet of insulated wire as an aerial, and it was knife sharp in the tuning, besides bringing in the Australian stations. Cut down the length of your aerial, is my advice to owners of screen grid sets, if you reside within a few miles of a broadcast station."

Miss Marjorie Skill

Sydney Singer for 2YA

NEW ZEALANDERS who have listened-in to the Australian stations will know well the voice of Miss Marjorie Skill, soprano, broadcaster and concert-hall singer. She is an artiste with abundant brightness and a refreshingly sweet quality of voice. She was a pupil of Mr. Roland Foster, and studied at the Sydney Conservatorium. Miss Skill has toured much in Australia, being in great demand by musical societies. As a broadcasting artist she had the unique experience of being one of a party which gave a concert 1200 feet down in a coal mine.

Miss Skill is singing at 2YA on Sunday, December 29. To one of her songs, "Lo, Here the Gentle Lark," Signor Truda, considered to be the finest flautist in New Zealand or Australia, will play an obligato.

Wireless Wanderings

THE Swedish broadcasting service, controlled by the State Telephone and Telegraph Department, shows a record expansion. At the end of 1928 Sweden had 31 broadcasting stations, the most important of which is at Motala. The number of licensed listeners now registered exceeds 400,000, corresponding to 66 receiving sets per 1000 inhabitants. The Department has 19 radio telegraph stations, of which the powerful transmitters in Karlsborg, in Central Sweden, and Varberg, on the west coast, handle the foreign traffic, the Varberg station being specially built for communication with America.

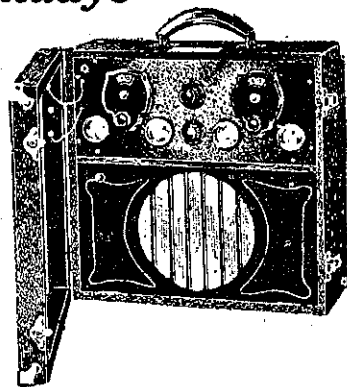
STEADY progress is being made in England with experiments in facsimile telegraphy which were commenced a short time ago in view of the interest that was being evinced, particularly by business men, in its future possibilities. There are already four or five facsimile telegraphy services in use between important cities in England, but perhaps the most highly developed system in use is that used in America. A picture can be taken, for example, to a post office in New York and sent to Chicago or any other town within a very short time.

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