



Director-General of the B.B.C. Sends A Message to N.Z. Listeners

Sir John Reith, whose message to "Radio Record" readers and New Zealand listeners appears on this page, is Director-General of the British Broadcasting Corporation, a position he has held since 1927. The son of Scots clergyman, Sir John was trained in Glasgow as an engineer. He had a distinguished war career and was appointed first general manager of the British Broadcasting Company, Limited, in 1922, attaining the position of managing director in the following year. In 1927 he was created a knight.

PUCK boasted that he could "put a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes," but to-day mere mortals can, by wireless, annihilate distance altogether. Voices of people in London can now be heard in Wellington, and men in Auckland can, if they wish, discuss business with their representatives in Birmingham. The resulting sense of proximity is a welcome development of modern times for the countries of the Empire which share so many common ties.

The New Zealand system of broadcasting and the British national system are developing along similar lines, and the progress made in New Zealand is therefore of particular interest to the British Broadcasting Corporation. It is generally accepted that a newspaper caters for the public taste, and the fact that the "New Zealand Radio Record" is devoting a special number to British broadcasting would seem to indicate that this interest is mutual. The B.B.C. also knows from correspondence it has received that on occasions when reception conditions are satisfactory, listeners in New Zealand appreciate the programmes transmitted from this country. The inauguration of the Empire Service at the end of 1932 was a deliberate experiment. Shortwave broadcasting was then, and still is, a new service, involving research and infinite patience. In some parts of the Empire a reliable service has been established; in others, particularly New Zealand, results, though gra-

dually improving, have been disappointing. But it is immensely worth while that the contact already established between certain parts of the Empire should be extended to the whole. The B.B.C. will not be defeated, and continual experiments will be carried on; but without co-operation from the listening end such experiments would be worthless. The response to requests for information and reports both from individual listeners and the broadcasting authorities has been magnificent, and the B.B.C.'s appeal to them is to continue their help. In the end, existing difficulties will be overcome, and a reliable service assured.

But broadcasting from Great Britain is only one aspect of the service; the Empire station should, in the future, become a centre for reception of incoming programmes from all over the Empire, and should act as a distributor of such programmes to other parts. This is not a midsummer night's dream, but a practical possibility. Programmes originating in the Dominions and colonies have already been radiated simultaneously in this country from the home transmitters and from the shortwave station at Daventry. The Empire service provides the opportunity of closer contact than can be achieved by any other means, but its design will be incomplete until it is working regularly on this reciprocal basis.

(Signed) J. C. W. REITH.