



10 YEARS IN ENTERTAINMENT



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"The Old Order Changeth" In Radio

(Continued from page 11.)

among the dance bands and hot advertising copy, Germany provides some fine musical stuff, and some strong "national" publicity. Japan, as was shown in a recent article in the "Radio Record," has practically nothing to interest New Zealand listeners. Italy is the same, and France provides a peculiar mixture of what the Dominion likes and dislikes.

In other words, by careful stages and study in the evolution of the game, New Zealand broadcasting authorities have settled on a balance of programme matter which, for all the dissention, must be recognised by those who think twice about the matter to be a reasonable compromise which makes allowances for the divergence of tastes inevitable in any country which is not plugged up by perpetual propaganda.

All the troubles of the early days can now be looked upon with a smile—not so much of superiority, but one of plain comparison with present-day conditions. For instance, not many people know that when the studio in France Street was first opened in Auckland the concrete was by no means dry, and after the end of the concert session each night about half a dozen coke fires were kept burning inside the building until the next evening in a valiant effort to make the place habitable with safety. On one occasion the dampness of the walls caused all the studio lights to fuse, during the fifth item, and Miss Lillian Quinn, the pianist among the forty-odd artists assembled, kept the station on the air for the quarter-hour which elapsed before someone had gone out and brought back some candles to light the way to the rest of the show!

Then there was the fun of the first wrestling broadcast relay undertaken in New Zealand—the match between Ike Robin and Zybisko in the Auckland Town Hall. On this occasion one of the strong-willed staff of IYA who was in the hall mostly for technical reasons decided that he would take over the microphone side of the business. His description consisted mostly of: "He's got hold of Robin's leg—now Robin has a grip on Zybisko's neck, and Zybisko now has a hold on his opponent's arm. . . ." And even the hurried advent of the then station programme organiser was welcomed by the impromptu announcer with threats of "bodily harm."

The first relay of a religious service up north was undertaken when Gipsy Smith had his missions going well. In those days a church relay was accomplished by a member of the station staff whose job was to hold wires against terminal points for the "mike" and the result was that about four words out of every ten were registered through the transmissions.

Ten years ago people were glad enough to be able to receive their entertainment through the ether, and mistakes and unappealing items were treated more or less as a joke. Nowadays it is the station directors and announcers who have to be able to "take a joke" if they are to survive in their

Music For Millions— And Better Ahead

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aware of it or not, are reaching out for better things in radio. Ill-informed much of the criticism may be, but on the other hand, it cannot all be condemned as ignorant and pointless. With ever-improving standards in radio fare, the listeners' appreciative sense does not remain stationary. His cultural development proceeds, and the acceptance of the Broadcasting Board's new programme schedule with its liberal provision of the finest music of all time, is eloquent testimony to the advanced tastes of that section of the listening public which to-day takes its symphonies, sonatas, operas and other master works in its stride.

As if in anticipation of our radio requirements in these distant parts, the recording companies have set about providing for music lovers a comprehensive library of ideal records of all the greatest works of the last four centuries. In the words of Mr. Ernest Newman, "What is wanted is the replacement of many of the present records by others, made in each case by the one artist in the world who is best qualified for the performance of this or that work." It is a matter for congratulation to all concerned that this very thing is already in progress on a broad scale.

The best days lie ahead, and in a few more years listeners will find radio more indispensable than ever.

By a happy coincidence, broadcasting in New Zealand shares with the electrical recording process in England the attainment of its tenth birthday. From the outset they have marched together from strength to strength—lusty youngsters both, they have in store for the listening public of the future, joys and delights that might easily make the present generation envious of its successors.

positions, for the complaints on meagre grounds have grown out of all proportion to their importance. Humble enough in its beginnings, New Zealand broadcasting has become such a great thing that criticism is part of the game. But now their humility has been replaced by the knowledge that they are doing their best for the listeners, and if the criticism they receive is not constructive then it must of necessity be ignored.

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