

## A Unique Broadcast

## "Dancing Across the Continent"

ON Wednesday, 1/1/30, I heard one of the most interesting broadcasts I have ever heard, writes Mr. A. D. Rodgers (Wellington). The programme was called "Dancing Across the Continent," and was broadcast by KDKA (WSXK) on 25.4 and 62 metres. The following are the notes I took:—5 p.m., WSXK was R8, with New Year celebrations. Dance music was received during the next 55 minutes. 5.55 p.m., WSXK announced, "This programme is coming to you through the courtesy of the National Broadcasting Co. and Associated Radio Stations. There will now be a brief pause for a station announcement. You have been listening to the Westinghouse Station KDKA at Pittsburgh. Our next programme comes to you from Chicago. You will now 'Dance Across the Continent.' 5.57 p.m., 'Hello, everybody, we are broadcasting to you from the Central Hotel, Chicago. There is exactly 3 minutes left of 1929.' One jazz number followed.

6 p.m., "We will now carol in 1930 with 'Auld Lang Syne.' Music from the ballroom of the Central Hotel followed. 6.55 p.m., "There will now be a brief pause for a station announcement. You have been listening to the Pioneer Broadcasting Station of The World, KDKA. We will now take you over to Denver, Colorado. Our programme continues." 6.59 p.m., "Hullo everybody, you are now to hear the New Year celebrations in Denver, Colorado. The New Year is now sweeping across the continent and is drawing near the Pacific Coast. In 15 seconds you will hear the Denver Cathedral chimes chime 12 p.m., mountain standard time."

7 p.m., chimes and street noises, etc., were heard, followed by dance music from the Denver Athletic Club. (Strength had this time reached R9 on 62 metres.) Dance music continued until 7.55 p.m., when WSXK went over to San Francisco. 8 p.m., Sirens, fire engines, etc., from Market Street practically drowned the announcer, who was making an attempt to describe the scene. 8.5 p.m., dance music followed, and the whole world had begun 1930. This programme was received also through W9XF, and was excellent until the latter part, when volume decreased.

9 p.m., Big Ben chimes 7 p.m. in Sydney. "This is the Amalgamated Wireless Station, 2ME, Sydney, Australia, transmitting a unique programme to the N.B.C. of America. We open our programme with a foxtrot, 'The Toy Maker's Dream.' This transmission was made on 31.25 metres, and was received perfectly at R9, audible 50ft. from the speaker. Concluded at 10 p.m.

KZRM, Manila, was R8. RA98, Siberia, on 33 and 70 metres, R8. 5SW with Big Ben was R7 at 12.30 a.m. 2BK, Bangkok, Siam, was R8 at 12.45 a.m. On 60 metres stranger talking at R8. I think this is F8GC, Paris. ZL2BE, ZL2AZ, ZL2BI testing. VK2HC working VK2LF at 1 p.m. I heard eight countries and concluded a successful day.

## Radio Development in 1930

## Smaller and More Powerful Receivers

AT this time the thoughts of listeners and would-be listeners are directed to the sets of 1930. Various are the prophecies and the following from the "Scientific American" presents a very comprehensive summary:—

While it would appear from a glance at the radio advertising that there had been a great many startling developments, it frequently becomes apparent after the season is well under way that there have been only one or two important innovations.

This season we are confronted with such terms as "screen-grid," "linear detection," "band-pass filter," and countless other terms and phrases which hold no meaning for the layman. After all, the final test of any radio receiver is what comes out of the loud-speaker. If the quality of reception does not come up to his expectations, the mere fact that the set uses screen-grid valves or has linear detection or any other feature will not induce him to buy.

In reviewing this season's radio sets, we find that the greatest strides have been made in the improved quality of tone and fidelity of reproduction. In fact, a point has been reached where it is a difficult matter to note any marked difference in the reproduction of sets ranging in the same price class. In this respect it would be interesting to witness a radio blindfold test, using a dozen or so of the leading radio sets of different manufacture similarly priced. It is safe to predict that the result of such a test would show that the majority of people who are incapable of splitting hairs on musical harmonies, and to whom overtones and undertones go unnoticed, would be unable to make an honest distinction between them.

While the great majority of manufacturers are featuring sets using screen-grid valves, not all of the improved tone quality can be attributed to the use of this new valve. A power valve which has recently come into use, and the progress that has been made in dynamic speaker design, have contributed largely to the better reproduction evident in this year's receivers.

Some credit must also be given to the broadcasting stations for their higher quality of transmission which has reached a state of perfection undreamed of a few years ago.

Although the present furore over the screen-grid valve would seem to indicate that its application has revolutionised radio overnight, we have two prominent manufacturers who are continuing to use the standard type of A.C. valve in their latest productions.

The one indisputable fact regarding this year's models is that the purchaser is given greater value for his money than at any time in the past. Any number of manufacturers are marketing sets in console cabinets with dynamic speaker and screen-grid valves, together with other improvements, priced around £50. When we get above this figure we find more elaborate cabinets, automatic tuning, remote control, and other features that increase the manufacturer's cost of production. This cost is finally passed along to those who are more exacting in their tastes and requirements. For example, the "tir-

ed business man" will have one of the new remote-control receivers which he may adjust without leaving his easy chair, or he may have the control box on a table beside his bed, enabling him to start, stop, or tune the set without getting up. For that matter, the control box may be installed in any room in the house and the radio set proper located in any other room desired.

There is no question that the average unit price on the complete set has been dropping rapidly during the past two years, and probably the outstanding price development in manufacturers' merchandising plans for the present year is the large number of sets retailing between £40 and £60. The majority of these sets are built in small consoles, many of them using the screen-grid valve and all equipped with dynamic speakers.

There are probably fifteen or more manufacturers fighting tooth and nail in this highly competitive price class. Obviously large volume is necessary to build profitably at this price, and it is equally true that not all of these manufacturers can by any means secure the volume of sales which is necessary. Consequently, several of these manufacturers will probably retire from the field this year or be obliged to seek mergers with their competitors. Evidence of this latter development is already at hand. Some mergers have already been accomplished, and radio trade papers are filled with rumours of many more.

Manufacturers are striving desperately to create the impression that the new models are a distinct advance over sets that have been heretofore available. It is true, nevertheless, that for the first time in radio history

## News Items

THE American Academy of Arts is reported to be drawing up rules for a competition for wireless announcers, and a medal will be given to the best exponent of the language. The chairman of the committee stated that the idea was not merely to improve the diction of the announcers, but to aid in raising the standard of spoken English throughout the United States. Members of the judging committee will decide on articulation, quality of tone, accent and general cultural effect.

DURING last year there was an increase of over 1,000,000 in the number of wireless licenses in Great Britain, bringing the total at the end of the year to over 2,898,000. It is estimated that each license means five or six listeners, so the Broadcasting Corporation has a potential audience of 15,000,000 people. There are also 16,000 free licenses issued to the blind. It is believed that Britain has the largest radio population in the world in proportion to houses. Wireless has led to the development of a new and considerable industry, and already the home market and British-made wireless equipment exported exceeds £1,000,000 a year.

It is difficult for the average listener to distinguish between the new sets and those that were available a year ago. This is the best evidence of the stabilisation that is making itself evident in the radio industry, and purchasers of well-designed sets manufactured in 1928 are to-day practically as well off as the owner of any of the latest models.

Whereas hundreds of thousands of electric sets were sold last year, it is generally believed that the big swing from battery sets to electric sets will take place in 1930, and that consequently more pounds per capita will be spent by the public for radio in the next six months than in any corresponding period in the history of the art.

You have not seen the latest in Radio Receivers until you have inspected the . . .

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