

Present-day Broadcasting in America

Dissatisfaction with Programmes

VAGUE murmurings of dissatisfaction with present-day American broadcast programmes are becoming definitely crystallized as the result of comprehensive surveys which are being made throughout the country, states the New York "Radio." One of the most significant of these surveys is that recently made by the Commonwealth Club of California, since it represents an independent and unbiased attempt to learn the preferences of a typical cross section of a community of listeners. The conclusions are based upon four thousand sets of answers to a group of twenty questions.

Two-thirds of the replies showed that listeners think that there is something wrong with the programmes. More than half of them stated that they are constantly annoyed by radio advertising, although 86 per cent. admit that they are grateful to the advertisers and nearly half are led to buy through this medium.

Music is greatly preferred to the spoken voice, only one-third of the audience wanting more talks, although more than two-thirds of the listeners want more educational talks and half of them want more radio drama. Saxophone music is wanted by only 106 out of 4000, of which 85 per cent. prefer semi-classical orchestral music. Men's voices received a four-to-one vote as compared to women's. One of the most surprising features in the poll is that only 19 per cent. do not enjoy gramophone music.

Searching for distance still amuses 37 per cent. and 69 per cent. think that distance reception has improved during the past two years. Local reception has also improved in the opinion of 94 per cent. Many critics agree that there are too many stations and that they are too close together. The preference is 71 to 29 for chain programmes as compared to local. The great majority think that there should be no censorship of programmes.

Proposed remedies run all the way from "killing announcers" to broadcasting legislative sessions. There seems to be especial interest in re-broadcast foreign programmes and in university extension courses in cultural subjects. The favourite remedy for financing programmes without advertising is by endowment of stations or by all sorts of special taxes.

Yet, while this audience criticises what is being done, it is able to offer no practical suggestions for worthwhile features that have not already been tried. It seems easier to criticize than to improve. And the fact that only five per cent. say that they are "tired of radio" indicates that the present programmes are fulfilling a real need for home entertainment.

THE 1928 results of the broadcasting enterprise in Germany show up well in comparison with those of Spain and others. Receipts, £1,600,000. Expenses, £1,440,000. Dividend 7½ per cent. and £55,000 carried forward. The cost of programmes amounted to £610,000, and of power, £240,000.

Mechanical Music

The Influence of Broadcasting

THE very vexed question of whether broadcasting constitutes a menace to the professional musician has been a subject of discussion ever since broadcasting was introduced, and the fight between societies of musicians and broadcasting is still an undecided battle in many countries. In America, where broadcasting had a considerable start over our own country, it had seemed that some sort of understanding between the musician and the broadcaster had been reached; but the arrival of the "talkies" and the great advances which have been made towards perfecting the gramophone record appear to have been watched with the greatest anxiety by professional musicians in the United States. Recently large advertising spaces in American newspapers were taken by the American Federation of Musicians, with the object of trying to arrest the encroachment of mechanical music where it is feared the new art will oust the professional musician.

Some of the arguments put forward by the American Federation of Musicians do not seem to ring true, as, for instance, a statement that "The cultural menace of this movement, to supplant real music with the flat, savourless monotony of mechanical music, becomes apparent upon a moment's thought." Is it not the generally accepted view that broadcasting resulted in a vast extension of the musical public and an enlarging of the appetite of the world for music of all kinds?

The extension of the use of what is described as mechanical music must result in less employment amongst individual performing musicians, but may not this prove to be only a temporary objection and not one which is likely to have any lasting effect to the detriment of music generally, nor to the disadvantage of the community, for surely the increased taste for music must stimulate the demand for creative musicians in every grade of the art.

Radio News

A PRELIMINARY survey is now being made by B.B.C. engineers for a high-powered Regional station somewhere near Glasgow or Edinburgh. Directly the site is chosen, the construction of the station will be commenced. The existing stations at Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Dundee will be retained as local transmitters with studios.

FROM Detroit comes the report that a pocket wireless set has been tested and found practicable for regular use by the local police. The set contains two valves, measures six inches by four inches, and is narrow enough to fit into a vest pocket. The aerial consists of a network of 175ft. of fine wire sewn into the back of the vest. Tests are stated to have given clearly audible signals at a distance of seven miles from the Detroit police transmitter, KOP.

THE D.X. CLUB

Views and News.

Identification Wanted

HAS any listener heard a station broadcasting on 675 k.c.? I received this station on January 12 at excellent volume. I am now listening to an orchestra from KNX, playing "My Fate is in Your Hands." I receive this station on very good volume—in fact, it can sometimes be heard all over the house. I have a list of eleven New Zealand stations, ten Australian, four Japanese, and five American, making a total of 30 stations, excluding the unknown one.—I. Hansen (Manaiā.)

LAST evening (January 18) I picked up an American station between 280 and 285 metres (1060 k.c.). He was playing a lot of gramophone music and closed down about 9.20 p.m. (New Zealand time). Though his reception was at good speaker strength I could not quite catch his call, which seemed to me like KGMC.—F. Freitas (Hokitika).

Stations Identified

I NOTICED in your issue of January 17 several inquiries (under D.X. Club section) for the identification of stations. The first one for "Suspected" (a New Zealand station). I should say this is a station near Kawau Island, Auckland, talking to another station near the city. I have heard similar conversations on varying frequencies for several years now. The call sign sounds very much like 3LO, but I have my doubts if that is the correct call sign. Also, re inquiry on station 1FC or 1ZC: Unless this is 2FC, Sydney, I think that this was the harmonics of station 1BC, a powerful short-wave station at Avondale, near Auckland. This station works at very erratic hours, and generally tests with a good selection of gramophone records.—T. Pascoe (Epsom.)

IN reply to J.T.S. (Napier), I wish to state that I received the American station KGM, Los Angeles, on the loudspeaker on 21/1/30 at about

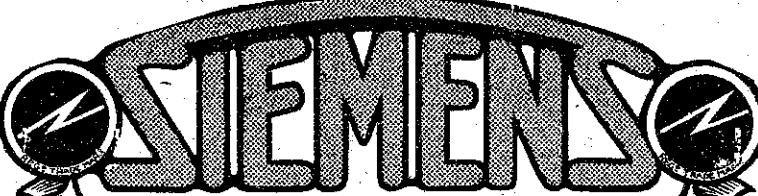
9 p.m. approximately 385 metres (780 k.c.). This apparently new station was broadcasting a Brunswick programme and came through at fair strength.—B. J. Bayliss (Waipukurau).

DX Topics

ANTICIPATING inquiries concerning a station on the air on Monday at midday, January 20, I am sending a few particulars to your D.X. corner. The station is situated at Wairoa, and has not been allotted any call or frequency as yet. He especially asks for reports which will find him under "P. Perry, c/o County Garage, Wairoa." Since I started radio I have logged some 250 odd stations in about two dozen different countries, and I am still adding to the list. I wonder if any amateur can enlighten me as to the identity of two sixth district American "hams" on 'phone on 80 metres? Date of reception, January 17. In conclusion, I would very much like to correspond with anyone interested in radio in general, and "ham" radio in particular.—P. Circuit (Wyfold, Omaha Road, Hastings).

RECEPTION of American stations during the New Year has been quite satisfactory. I have logged WTAM, 1070 k.c. (280 metres), Cleveland, Ohio; WTIC, 1060 k.c. (283 metres), Hartford, Connecticut; WOC, 1000 k.c. (300 metres), Davenport, Iowa; and KYW, 1020 k.c. (294 metres), Chicago, Illinois. I have also heard eight other Americans (including KMMJ, Nebraska, and KFVD), and the usual Californian stations.—C. V. Blucher (Waipohop).

ON a five-valve factory built Brown-Drake I picked up station WTIC, Hartford, Connecticut, working on about 280 metres. This station, the loudest American I have ever received, came in at excellent volume. I have logged eleven American stations, and one in Los Angeles without a call. The announcer at the latter stated repeatedly that they were broadcasting from Hotel, Los Angeles.—J.W. (Hikurangi).



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