

# The New Zealand Radio Record

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## Electric Home Journal

(Incorporating the "Canterbury Radio Journal.")

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WELLINGTON, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1930.

### EDITORIAL NOTES.

RADIO listeners will be particularly interested in the news that a special committee, under the auspices of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, intends prosecuting inquiry into the question of static, with special reference as to its association with cyclonic disturbances in the Tasman Sea. The whole scope of static will be investigated as far as possible, and as the committee consists of the expert talent represented by Messrs. A. Gibb (chief engineer, Post and Telegraph Department), Professor Jack (Dunedin), Professor Burbidge (Auckland), Mr. Bingham (chief engineer, New Zealand Radio Broadcasting Company), and Dr. Barnett (physicist, Department of Scientific Research), listeners are entitled to expect that at least some interesting data will be secured, and possibly valuable conclusions arrived at. The committee met in Wellington recently, and investigated the lines of research to be undertaken. Special measurements of the strength of transmissions from Australia are to be conducted, in order to ascertain the conditions causing absorption of the strength of the waves, and whether meteorological factors enter into the matter. It is also intended that the New Zealand committee will co-operate in world-wide research into the properties of short-wave transmission from important overseas stations. This departure has merit, and will be appreciated by all interested in radio.

THE special value of radio in the alleviation of the monotony of life suffered in hospital by patients has commanded attention in Wellington recently. A special garden party fete was held on Saturday last, under the auspices of the Red Cross Society, with the object of raising a fund of £200 to equip with wireless the Ewart Hospital, whose inmates so far have not had the privilege of participating in wireless enjoyed by those in the other sections of the Wellington Hospital. The occasion was interesting because of the preliminary publicity voluntarily given to the cause of radio by

patients in Wellington Hospital who have enjoyed its charm. Several patients spontaneously wrote to the daily Press expressing the incalculable benefit derived by them from radio, and appealing to the public to support in worthy fashion the cause for which the appeal was made. The satisfactory outcome of that effort is gratifying.

### TALKING PICTURES.

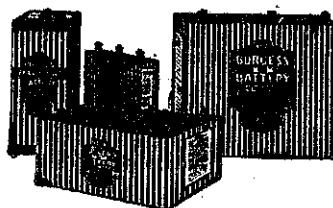
CONCERN is being expressed in all parts of the world at the economic effects upon the class of professional musicians, following upon the introduction of talking pictures in a comprehensive manner. In Australia the subject has attained enough prominence to warrant its discussion by the heads of the State, and the suggestion has even been advanced that effort will be made to protect the professional musicians by the imposition of a tax upon the talking film, either direct or in relation to the number of actors participating in the film. The question raised is certainly important. It is unquestionably true that every modern important mechanical advance has a temporary effect in the displacement of some labour unit. This was first shown in the cotton riots over 100 years ago. The workers of that day protested against the introduction of the power-driven loom, and showed their resentment by smashing the machinery. As time went on a more reasonable view developed, and it became clear that, while individuals might suffer temporary disability, the general class of work was benefited, both by the opportunity of securing higher wages through the manipulation of machinery, enjoying better labour conditions through less arduous work, and enjoying also the greater standard of culture and comfort through the labour margin of real wages being raised. Progress has been made through recognition of the fact that the invasion of machinery could not be resisted, and that in general humanity stood to benefit by the use of mechanics and power in every possible field. In the case of the talkies, this is merely a more poignant application of the same principle in an artistic field. The advent of the gramophone and the mechanical piano-player has not damaged the cause of music; rather they have benefited it. It is true that they have displaced the mediocre amateur and his painful efforts at the private party; but that is definitely a blessing, not a curse. The standard of music and the extent of its appreciation to-day are greater than ever in the past, and that is due in part to the mechanisation of music through the gramophone, the piano-player, and lastly of radio. Mechanisation, plus wide distribution, have benefited the race and the cause of culture.

WHILE those factors are recognised, it is urged against the "talkies" that their displacement factor is so vast as to amount to suppression; that the musicians affected have no opportunity for developing alternative activities. That claim is true only in proportion as perfection is attained by the talkies. Already there has been a slight revival from the overwhelming wave of abandonment of orchestras, and in some cases theatres prefer to maintain the individual touch given by the human performer. That tendency may prevail for a time, but in all probability it will be a losing battle, because of the inevitable increase in efficiency likely to accompany talking picture development. We do not see that much effect would follow human effort to resist the advent of the "talkie." To that extent the scope of activity for the professional musician may be limited. We do not agree, however, that the cause of music will be affected. Those with music in their souls will seek the opportunity for expression as hitherto, and the rewards for superior skill will be greater than ever. To the general populace the benefit will be given of both hearing and seeing the world's best when screened, and in so far as radio can co-operate with the talkies, the circle of influence will be made wider and wider.

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SAMPLE.

"Please send me a jar of Sydal. You sent me a sample by request a few weeks ago and my husband is so delighted with it for shaving that he will not be without it now. Please send a sample to my sister in Christchurch, as I am sure she would be as pleased with it as we are."

S-O-S

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