

Taking an Unfair Advantage

Canterbury Rugby Union Management Committee decide that all or no matches shall be Broadcast

THE old bone of contention, the broadcast of sports events, has been dug up again. This time it is the Canterbury Rugby Union who cannot see eye to eye with the Broadcasting Company, with respect to the broadcasting of the matches played under its auspices. Upon the company's application for the right to broadcast this season's matches, the Management Committee stated that they were ready to grant permission if no exceptions were made. The attitude of the union clearly indicates that they wish to lessen the risk of the gate takings being affected and to effectively block Rugby broadcasting.

IN introducing the subject at the meeting, the president (Mr. A. E. McPhail) stated that last season permission was granted, but the Union held the right to say when the matches were to be kept off the air. Then Dr. W. S. Seed suggested that: "It would be a good idea to grant permission provided the company would broadcast our matches every Saturday throughout the season."

The president: If we retain the right to say when the company should go on or off the air for our football matches, we could see that all matches were broadcast.

Dr. Seed: The company is going to broadcast our matches when that suits it. When the British team is playing the company will broadcast the British matches.

Mr. S. F. Wilson: That's the point. We should have the right to say that the company must broadcast our matches.

Dr. Seed: The company wants to fill up Saturdays when it is not broadcasting matches played by the British team.

Mr. Wilson: We should grant permission only on condition that the company broadcasts our matches every Saturday.

Mr. L. V. Jensen: There is no doubt whatever that when a Test match is being played in Dunedin or Wellington, the company will not want to broadcast a match here. People with valve sets could, of course, pick up the Test matches direct.

It was pointed out that insistence on the company's broadcasting all the union's matches would prevent the company from rebroadcasting matches played elsewhere.

Dr. Seed moved that the company be given permission to broadcast, provided that it broadcast all matches played under the union's jurisdiction, at Lancaster Park, throughout the season.

This motion was carried.

The Company's Point of View.

INTERVIEWED by a representative of the Christchurch "Press," Mr. A. R. Harris, general manager of the Radio Broadcasting Company, stated that the terms of the committee would, in effect, mean that the Broadcasting Company would not be able to take full advantage of the recent decision of the New Zealand Rugby Union to allow the broadcasting of the British Rugby team matches.

"It was the company's intention, on the occasion of the four test matches," said Mr. Harris, "to make application to the Post and Telegraph Department for a land line from Auckland to Dunedin for the purpose of linking up the four stations at Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin, so that the descriptions of the matches would be broadcast from all the stations simultaneously as it was felt that these matches were of Dominion-wide interest to all football enthusiasts."

"In regard to the provincial matches, it was intended that these should be restricted to the station serving that district. For instance, when a British match was being played at Christchurch, it was proposed that this be broadcast by 3YA, and when a match was being played at Timaru, the company had a duty to perform in respect to its listeners in South Canterbury interested in that particular event, and this match would also be broadcast by 3YA.

"It was also intended to carry out the same idea at the other stations in regard to their respective provincial matches, our only object in this proposal being to serve the district as widely as possible with the limited hours at our disposal, as it was impossible to broadcast more than one match at the one time from the same station.

Ranfurly Shield Games.

"**T**HEN there is the question of the Ranfurly Shield matches to be played this year at In-

vercargill. All followers of the Rugby game in Christchurch are sure to be interested in the description of any Ranfurly Shield matches played at Invercargill—in particular when Canterbury is the challenging team—and in offering to broadcast this match from the Christchurch station by means of a land line from Invercargill.

"Subject, of course to its availability, we would do so entirely in the interests of the local community and not for any mercenary motive on the part of the company, as it means considerable expense to do this.

"On Saturday afternoon, May 3 next, commencing at three o'clock, there is the Sarron-Donovan fight at Dunedin, and as permission has been granted by the Otago Boxing Association for this fight to be broadcast, endeavours are being made to link up all stations so that the bout will be simultaneously broadcast from all the company's stations. Owing to the Dominion-wide interest that will be shown in this fight, the company could not very well compromise itself in respect to local matches so that it could not broadcast the Sarron-Donovan fight on the Saturday afternoon or avail itself of events of such nation-wide interest.

A Matter of Preference.

"**I**T is not a question of picking and choosing as one member of the local Rugby Union stated, but entirely a matter of public preference, and the company would be failing in its duty to the community were it to compromise itself and jeopardise its sports service at this stage and without regard to other national events that may be offering on special occasions and of far greater public interest than some football matches of little interest.

"When the Canterbury team played the Wairarapa team at Masterton last year, we were severely criticised by the Wellington Rugby Union for broadcasting this game in preference to broadcasting a description of the local Wellington match. The Wellington Union used the same argument that the Canterbury Rugby Union now puts forth. However, the match at Masterton was of far greater interest to New Zealand Rugby followers—and in particular the Canterbury public—than any Wellington match. Had the Broadcasting Company not taken the wider view and broadcast the Wairarapa-Canterbury match from 2YA and rebroadcasting by 3YA, then a far greater number of Rugby followers would have had reason to complain than was the case when the company did not broadcast the local Wellington match.

Catering for All.

"**I**T is not the desire of the Broadcasting Company to lessen the public interest in any societies or associations organised (Concluded on page 2.)



BOOKS of the Month A Literary Review

Mr. E. E. Wiltshire has been engaged for monthly book talks at 3YA, the first being given on Monday, May 12. Mr. Wiltshire is not unknown to 3YA listeners. He is a gardening enthusiast and has given talks on bulbs, on which he is an authority. He is also well known as a bibliophile, being a great lover of books. He is vice-president of the Linwood Public Library which can boast of circulating more books than does the Auckland Public Library. It is a very live and flourishing concern which has grown tremendously since it was founded in 1909. There were then 40 subscribers, now there are 1700. The circulation last year totalled 105,000 books.