

Girdling the Earth by Radio

Wireless Telephone Service Opened between England and Australia

THE recent establishment of a regular wireless telephone service between England and Australia is an event of extraordinary interest and importance, for it is now evident that present methods of communication will undergo a revolutionary change when people are able to talk to one another from the remotest places on the earth as easily as if they were together. And this is what this most recent achievement implies. Of even greater significance to New Zealanders is the announcement just made by Sir Joseph Ward that negotiations are almost completed for the introduction of a similar radio telephone service between Wellington and Sydney. Thus, New Zealand will form one more link in the ever-growing international radio telephony communication chain that must eventually embrace every country of importance in the world.

cricketers, and briefly surveyed the Naval Conference, and exclaimed in happy vein: "What an age we are living in! What would our grandfathers have to say about it?" He closed with cordial greetings to Mr. Scullin and the Australian people.

Mr. Scullin's reply referred to his meeting with Mr. MacDonald twenty-four years ago, his task of straightening out the adverse trade balance, the Naval Conference, and the destination of the cricket "ashes," adding, facetiously, "There will be no embargo in this country on the importation of ashes." Then followed his greetings and "Au revoir," to which Mr. MacDonald replied quite plainly: "Au revoir, my dear Mr. Scullin."

The entire ceremony, which was startlingly faultless, was broadcast throughout England and Australia, and created a profound impression upon those who realised the immense importance of the newly-established service.

At the Other End.

RECEPTION in London was almost perfect, according to reports since received. There was not the remotest suggestion of atmospheric, though occasionally slight grading was apparent.

Great interest was manifested in Mr. MacDonald's disclosure that it was hoped that shortly Australia would be connected with the greater part of Europe and the whole of North America, via London.

Listeners were also greatly delighted at Mr. MacDonald's "By the by, this ashes business." Mr. Scullin's voice carried so perfectly that Mr. MacDonald said in closing: "You seem just to have been in the next room." Mr. Scullin retorted: "The same with you." Finally there was Mr. MacDonald's "Au revoir till September. All best things attend you. Ta-ta."

Photographs of the historic scene were then taken, after which Mr. MacDonald went to the journalists' room bubbling over with enthusiasm. He said:

"You know I had not heard Mr. Scullin since 1906, but I recognised his voice at the first word."

A further conversation between Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Hughes was then received with equal clarity.

Reception in New Zealand.

LISTENERS throughout New Zealand had very little difficulty in tuning in either the rebroadcast of the proceedings or to the actual short-wave transmission. The ease with which the conversation was maintained was amazing, even in these days of revolutionary happenings.

Mr. R. Leslie Jones, of Wellington, writes:—

"After many months of short-wave testing between VK 2ME (Sydney) and

the London short-wave stations, particularly GBX, the commercial wireless 'phone service was officially opened last Wednesday, April 30.

"Various officials had taken the opportunity of conversing between Australia and London during the days preceding the official opening, and much of interest was heard by short-wave listeners. Indeed, during the several months' testing, a feast of interesting information has been available to short-wave listeners. The most popular period of listening-in is just about the evening meal hour period onwards for a couple of hours. VK 2ME (Amalgamated Wireless, Australasia, Ltd.) manufacturers of the apparatus used at the Australian end, transmitted during the tests principally on 28.5 metres, this being the wave length used for the commercial service. Tests were also carried out on 15 metres; and the tests were in periods. Similarly, the commercial service will be conducted in periods, no doubt, for the time being.

"After Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Scullin had finished their talk, Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Hughes maintained a conversation for a few minutes. The strength of signal from VK 2ME was wonderful; in fact, seldom, if ever, has the volume and clarity been as good. Considering the fact that speech was from Canberra via Sydney, it was all the more marvellous. During the preliminary tests, just before 7 p.m., London was almost perfect; but it was necessary to alter the tuning a little when changing from 2ME to London; some atmospheric were noticeable on London's wave length."

The New Service.

AS was the case in the radio telephone service between England and America, detailed experimenting and endless testing were maintained over a period of twelve months or more before the service was announced. In the case of the recently-inaugurated service, however, the engineers of Amalgamated Wireless (Australasia), Ltd., were some time ago perfectly satisfied with the efficient system they had evolved. The commercial side of the question, however, presented numerous difficulties which took some time to overcome.

Conditions in the case of a cable service are constant, but with long-distance radio telephony considerable variation in the efficiency of transmission and reception is experienced, not only in the hours of the day and night, but in the seasons of the year also. Thus it can be easily seen that it is eminently desirable to collect the necessary transmission data before a regular service is brought into operation.

That the establishment of the service has filled a long-felt want is easily seen by the heaviness of the traffic already encountered by the service.

Two nights after its inauguration there were twenty-four calls at £6 each, put through during one night, while the maximum number of calls were already booked for the following night. The charge made for calls is at the rate of £2 per minute, with a minimum of three minutes.

It is reported that application for calls at the London end are equally satisfactory.

Radio v. Cable.

THE advantages of communication by radio rather than by cable, though at first not apparent, yet nevertheless are almost overwhelming. Only one important disadvantage exists, and that is the lack of secrecy in radio messages. However, it is believed that it will ultimately be possible to make such messages meaningless to everyone but the intended recipient—in fact, the radio service across the Atlantic has been made practically so.

No doubt the Sydney-London service will improve in time in this particular.

The desirability of using radio telephony in business matters is apparent. It might take half a day to settle an important business deal over the cable, which necessitates possibly several questions and answers to arrive at finality, whereas with radio telephony points are cleared up as the conversation proceeds, and finality may be reached in five minutes or less. The added advantage of personal contact (Concluded on page 9.)



Mr. E. T. Fisk,
Managing Director of
Amalgamated Wireless of
Australasia Ltd.,

whose foresight and energy, coupled with detailed mechanical knowledge, was responsible for one of the great wireless feats of the age. In opening the service Mr. Fisk has done much to completely break down the isolation of Australia and New Zealand from the Old World.



At 7 p.m. on April 30 there took place a ceremony which, though of only fifteen minutes' duration, will be recorded as one of the most important events in the history of international communication. The ceremony was that of the inauguration of the new radio telephone service between England and Australia, and though the two principals taking part were separated by almost half the globe, yet each chatted to the other with as perfect an understanding as if both were in the same room.

The Ceremony.

THE Australian side of the broadcast took place at Canberra, the Federal capital, and from thence was transmitted by land-line to the high-powered short-wave station 2ME, owned and operated by Amalgamated Wireless (Australasia), Ltd. The signals were ultimately broadcast by this station, to be picked up on the other side of the world by the English station at Rugby.

As the pre-arranged hour for the event approached repeated tests were made at both ends to ensure that there would be no hitch in the proceedings. Punctually at 7 p.m. (N.Z. time), Mr. Scullin, Prime Minister of Australia, speaking from Canberra, called Mr. MacDonald, England's Prime Minister. Promptly and clearly from the other side of the earth came the reply, "Yes, Mr. Scullin. How are you?" The entire broadcast was indeed uncanny.

Speaking with considerable feeling and sincerity, Mr. MacDonald delivered a short but intensely interesting address, mentioning many matters of mutual interests to both countries. He paid a tribute to the engineers responsible for making the spoken word possible between Great Britain and Australia, and said their achievement would be the means of knitting more closely together the two countries.

He discussed in the clearest tones Australia's financial difficulties and extended sympathy to Mr. Scullin in his efforts to right the ship of State, referred to the arrival of the Australian