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—AND—

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THE RADIO TELEPHONE AS AN EMPIRE LINK.

THE day is at hand when New Zealand will be able to engage in direct telephonic conversation with Britain. The service commercialising that function which has just been opened between Australia and Great Britain is a long step towards the extension of the same facilities to the Dominion. Immediately following upon the brilliant inauguration of the British-Australian service by the initial conversation between the Prime Minister of Great Britain, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, with Mr. J. R. Scullin, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth, the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Sir Joseph Ward, announced that arrangements were already in hand for the inception of radio telephonic service between the Commonwealth and the Dominion. "Most of the material," states Sir Joseph, "is already on hand, and the balance is expected within the next two months. It is hoped," he adds, "that this telephone service will be of great assistance to business men in New Zealand. It is hoped that at a later date those who wish can be switched through at Sydney to the new telephone service inaugurated there the other day."

THE dramatic nature of the service instituted between Australia and Great Britain focused public attention in both countries upon the event. The conversation between the heads of both States was broadcast both throughout Great Britain and throughout the Commonwealth, thus enabling the peoples of both countries to participate in the thrill of so outstanding an occasion. This consummation is the outcome of technical experiments which have been conducted by the two parties interested—Amalgamated Wireless of Australia, Limited, and the British postal authorities—for some years past. Technical efficiency sufficient to warrant the institution of the service was attained some twelve months or more ago, but time was required to complete the negotiations and finalise the arrangements for the administration of the service.

THE inception of the service between Australia and New Zealand will be of momentous import. It will directly facilitate and enlarge the trading interests and transactions of both countries. That develop-

ment, however, is the least important of its potentialities. Our trade association with the Mother Country is far closer than with Australia, and we will not receive the full benefit from this modern miracle until it is possible to speak through Australia direct to Great Britain. With the spanning of the immense distance between the Commonwealth and the Home Country, it becomes a commercial certainty that at need those at the heart of the Empire can communicate direct with any part of the globe.

THE vision of the past thus becomes a commonplace of the present.

What will the effects be? The miracles of science have followed so closely of late years that humanity accepts each further manifestation almost with a blase disregard of its importance. That, however, hardly applies to this latest development. The possibilities are so immense as to immediately excite the imagination. To be able to converse with interests 10,000 miles away; to receive an immediate response and suggestion or counter-thought to ideas issued; to meet another point of view on an issue of moment; these things cannot but stimulate closer contact, fuller mutual understanding, and a fuller sense of co-operation and unity. The radio telephone, interlinking different parts of the Empire, will go a long way toward killing that sense of distance now prevalent. It will promote the idea of unity. It will lead to a closer association of business interests, commercial and political, and a more intense development of trading activities. It will thus come as a definite stimulus to the economic unity of the Empire, toward which goal there is evidence from all parts of the British Commonwealth that public thought is trending. The thought everywhere is toward closer relationships and more intense mutual trading activities. That trend will be stimulated by the service made available by radio.

THIS development can perhaps rightly be described as the biggest thing that has ever happened to New Zealand. It puts us in touch with the world in a way never hitherto possible. Australia now has a communication service, not only to Great Britain, but also to Canada, and it is hoped that in a little while she will also have a direct telephonic service to the United States and Europe. By the link to be established between the Dominion and Australia, the advantage of communication with the outside world will be secured. Thus the radio age spreads, and radio places in the hands of humanity an instrument, the full effect of which upon the future development of the race cannot as yet be assessed.

Inter-Varsity Debates by Radio

Students Claim Many Advantages

THE prospects of conducting university debating contests by radio were discussed at the meeting of the council of the National Union of University Students in Auckland recently.

"If we succeed in arranging them, the debates will probably be the first ever organised on such lines," said Mr. W. J. Mountjoy. "We are hoping that the Broadcasting Company with the co-operation of the Post Office, will be able to install land-lines for relay between the main centres. In this way, if the contest is between an Auckland team and a Wellington team, neither need leave its college hall. Audiences in both centres will be able to hear the debates. The complete debate can be carried on with the usual rules, and brought to a conclusion in the one night. All four centres will be able to take part."

Continuing to outline the advantages of such a method, Mr. Mountjoy said

that travelling expenses for the various teams would be obviated and audiences would be made much greater. He mentioned that the Victoria debating team, which had travelled so successfully last year in the United States of America and Canada, had never spoken to such large audiences as in New Zealand. In Auckland 3000 had attended one debate.

The matter of arranging "wireless debates" during the coming year was left to the Debates Standing Committee.

The intention of the promoters is for the two North Island universities, in Auckland and in Wellington, to hold a debate, and then for the South Island universities to debate a question over the line from Christchurch to Dunedin, the winner of the North Island debate afterward to meet the winner of the South Island debate. This final debate would, of course, be broadcast by all four stations.

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