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—AND—

Electric Home Journal

(Incorporating the "Canterbury Radio Journal.")

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RADIO IN THESE DAYS

THE condition of primary markets in these days undoubtedly affects the outlook of the community. Prices are down, and the surplus usually available for luxury and entertainment is diminished. How is that affecting radio? Curiously enough, both in Australia and in New Zealand radio is not showing depression as extensively as other interests in the entertainment field. In point of fact, sales are being maintained at a satisfactory rate, and expansion recorded in the volume of listeners. The explanation lies in the fact that people must have entertainment. With less money available for entertainment, the public is compelled to get the best value for its expenditure. Under those conditions radio enters into its own. It gives a definitely better return for every pound spent than any other expenditure on amusement. Once an efficient receiving set is installed in a home, an extraordinary variety of entertainment and instruction is open to the listener. That is being recognised under the stress of circumstances; so that the curious experience is recorded of an expansion in radio being apparent as a definite outcome of general depression.

IN Australia the listener is being afforded an increasing range of selection. The B Class Stations—with their title now changed to that of Licensed Radio Stations—are increasing slightly in number, particularly in provincial centres, so that fresh areas of provincial listeners are being afforded local reception. In the cities of Sydney and Melbourne the number of B Class Stations, operating in the extensive hours covered by them, mean in effect that the listener at practically any time between the hours of 7 a.m. and 11 p.m. can secure suitable music or other entertainment from some station or other. These licensed radio stations are relying for their revenue upon the proceeds of direct and indirect advertising. The direct advertising is usually of a somewhat blatant character, and in our opinion will ultimately kill itself. The lure of sponsored programmes is much more subtle, and in that field, provided adequate restraint is shown by those responsible, a definite appeal can be made to the taste of the discriminating listener. Whether the benefit to be gained by the advertiser is in line with the cost of the service given

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is another question, the answer to which can be determined only by individual experience.

WITH the total of licensed listeners now exceeding 60,000, the year now coming to a close can be credited with a definite advance. Criticism of the programmes given from the YA stations has not been silent. It is, however, to be recognised that the multitude of tastes to be satisfied imposes a herculean task upon programme organisation—a task so heavy as by its very nature to preclude the possibility of ever giving universal satisfaction. All that those responsible can hope to do is to attain a high average performance and give as high a degree of satisfaction as possible. Appreciation of the programmes calls as much for discrimination on the part of the listener as for enterprise on the part of the organiser. Properly appreciated and used with intelligence, the existing radio service from the stations gives a fair range of selection with much to meet all tastes. Advances will yet be made in the programme service. The next feature of definite interest toward which we are looking is the use of recorded overseas programmes. Private trials have already been given of early arrivals, and it is hoped that in the relatively near future all listeners will have the opportunity of hearing the first records in this field of enterprise, which is bound to be steadily developed as time goes on until radio listeners in the Dominion can have the privilege of hearing regularly the cream of overseas programmes. With that goal in sight expenditure upon radio, even in these days, proves itself more than ever adequately justified.

Just Too Soon

An Unfinished Oratorio

WHEN carrying out relays, broadcasting stations are often in doubt as to when a performance is actually concluded and when it is time to return to the studio. Such a case arose at the recent performance of Handel's "Messiah" by the Hutt Methodist Church Choir, when a broadcast on relay from the Hutt was carried out by 2YA. The choir had reached "The Hallelujah Chorus," and after its rendition there was a long silence. Those in charge at 2YA were under the impression that the choir's performance had concluded, and the station therefore closed down.

However, contrary to a common practice, the "Hallelujah" chorus was not the final of the oratorio, and listeners missed several choruses. To most listeners, of course, the oratorio would seem to have been complete, but lovers of this type of music regretted the curtailment.

One gentleman in Timaru, being under the impression that 2YA had de-

liberately applied the closure, sent in a strong protest. "Extended hours are given for jazz music, prize fights, etc., and this is no doubt satisfactory to a large number of listeners, but I think you would please make more if when good oratorio music is being broadcast the same privileges were extended to listeners as are to those above mentioned." The writer said he had a feeling of resentment at having missed part of a particularly fine performance.

In the course of an explanatory letter in reply to the correspondent, the general manager of the Broadcasting Company said that it is quite customary for the "Messiah" to be concluded with the "Hallelujah Chorus," and this practice is followed by many of the prominent societies in the Dominion. In point of fact the Royal Wellington Choral Union presented the "Messiah" on Saturday evening last and concluded their performance with this chorus.

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