

The New Zealand Radio Record

—AND—

Electric Home Journal

(Incorporating the "Canterbury Radio Journal.")

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RADIO PUBLISHING COMPANY OF NEW ZEALAND, LTD.,
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THE RADIO YEAR.

THE year just closed may be regarded as a very satisfactory one from the radio point of view. The number of licensed listeners at December 31, 1929, was 50,484. Figures for the same date of 1930 are not as yet available, but in view of the fact that at the end of November receiving licenses totalled 59,285, it is a perfectly safe prediction to make that the year's final total will considerably exceed the 60,000 mark. This shows a 20 per cent. increase in the number of licensed listeners through the twelve months, a position upon which congratulations may be extended, both to the trade for their active selling campaigns, and to the Radio Broadcasting Company for its maintenance of a relatively high standard of programme service.

THE expansion in the number of listeners may be credited, first of all, to the steady improvement in the quality of receiving sets and the simplification effected in them. The modern A.C. set is definitely now at the fool-proof stage, capable of giving the listener, ignorant of technicalities as good reception as the old-time instrument gave the enthusiast experienced in handling his set. That simplification has been an important sales factor, and combined with the enthusiasm of the trade has led to the expansion indicated. The economic situation, forcing buyers to secure the best value in the entertainment field, has also played a part; while credit must likewise be given to the programme directors and organisers of the four stations maintained by the Radio Broadcasting Company for the efforts made to give listeners the very best selection from available talent. During the year the Dunedin station was remodelled and brought into line, from the power point of view, with the stations at Christchurch and Auckland. This development was not followed by quite the full expansion expected from the southern centre, but nevertheless has been a factor in the total expansion of licenses.

ALTHOUGH advance has been made during the year, perfection has not been reached. It is not in the nature of any radio broadcasting service, we believe, to achieve absolute perfection, for so long as human nature is what it is there will always be those who

will criticise and desire more of what particularly appeals to themselves. Apart from the programme details there are, however, two or three factors upon which definite views have been expressed. The first lies in the demand of the trade for longer hours of transmission, particularly in regard to daylight hours. The genesis of this demand seems to lie in the desire to demonstrate sets. While quite sympathetic with this desire on the part of the traders, we cannot quite see that listeners in general would derive a benefit commensurate with the actual cost. It is at least problematic in our view whether the money involved would not be spent to better advantage in prolonging evening hours of transmission. Another point of moment is the desire for the abandonment of the silent night at each of the stations. To the country listeners, equipped with powerful sets, capable of reaching any station desired, it is perhaps not so material a point as it is to the city listeners who are equipped to receive only their local station. We confess that we would like to see the position reached of the company being able to abandon the silent night, and we sincerely trust that this will be the next advance made in service to listeners.

IN connection with programmes, the year has seen a rather remarkable decline in criticism of gramophone items. Time was when the barbed shafts of critics were directed toward the gramophone items. The position now is different. The technical advances made in recording, and the great range of high-class artists now available on the disc, have led to gramophone items being among the—if not actually first—most popular items on the programme. That popularity, and the desire of listeners to hear the world's best, have logically led on to the development of a scheme for the complete recordings of suitable overseas programmes. Effort has been made in this field by the Radio Broadcasting Company, and there are already in the Dominion samples of overseas recordings. Trial demonstrations have been given in some trade circles, and once satisfaction is achieved in transmission, listeners will be given this new treat.

ON the position now reached by the service, the outlook for the future is bright. The pioneering work of the Radio Broadcasting Company is at last bearing fruit, and the community is generally realising the necessity of every home being equipped with radio. With the financial strength which inevitably accompanies that position, the way is clear for progressive advancement in the future. It is probably a realisation of that position which has stirred the Postmaster-General to his declarations regarding further improvements of the radio broadcasting service. Whatever the future may hold, however—and into that position we do not wish to go at this moment—it should never be forgotten that definite credit is due the Radio Broadcasting Company for its pioneering work, in which it had to conquer many difficulties and demonstrate the possibilities of radio broadcasting.

Receiving Licenses Nearing 60,000

Grand Total Exceeds this Figure

A RETURN from the Post and Telegraph Department shows the number of all classes of licenses at November 30, 1930, as being 60,792. This represents the largest number of licenses that have yet been taken out in New Zealand and clearly shows that with the improvement of the radio set the decrease in listeners in the summer is less pronounced. The table shows the manner in which the licenses are allocated:—

District.	Receiving.	Dealers.	Trans- mitting and receiving.	Experimental and special.	Free.
Auckland	17,851	301	85	2	98
Canterbury ...	9,859	259	51	—	55
Otago	6,572	178	36	1	35
Wellington ...	24,762	489	101	4	53
	59,044	1,227	273	7	241

GRAND TOTAL: 60,792.

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