

Performing Rights.

I WAS greatly "put back" by "Switch's" par on "performing rights" last week. My sympathy is with the authors. Those poor authors! No wonder they are always poor, a condition which may be pathetic and interesting to their biographers after their demise, but hardly encouraging to original work, even at the present price of stamps. I am inclined to agree with Wagner, that the world owed him a decent living in return for his work. If the authors are to work solely for the advertisement and be grateful, then they pay very dearly for the ad. Where would the singers be without songs? And new and original songs, as well as the old, tried favourites. The publishing houses expect the authors to finance them in their publications. They take no risk, and frequently the royalties do not cover the original outlay, for a song's life is short, in these days of rush and craze for something new all the time; perhaps the demand will last only a few weeks. Therefore I consider that every avenue of income from a song should be shared by the author, and if the radio and mechanical record performers approached the matter with a spirit of co-operation with the authors, they would reap a harvest of material.

As things are now, an author receives less per mechanical record than any other concerned in the making of it. He is considered a mere minor factor. The U.S.A. standard royalty for author's rights is 2 cents a record, less a 10 per cent. agent's commission. Any retail merchant makes a far better profit from a record than the author who composed the song. My personal experience ends with mechanical recording, and the result is so depressing that I have no hope that radio would offer a better field. As one entirely ignorant of radio's scale of compensation for authors, I would just like to have a little information on the subject. For an illustration, if a New Zealand author-composer had good broadcasting material, what return would he receive from the New Zealand artists for the rights of broadcasting? Replies from genuine radio performers would be interesting and illuminating.—"Harmony."

[The paragraph referred to reads:—"Performing rights charges are now a serious menace to the well-being of broadcasting in New Zealand. The Russian authorities (whatever their sins may be) are carrying out their principles even in radio administration. It has been officially decided that musicians, authors, and artists will receive no additional compensation for broadcasting, nor royalties for the performance of their works. It is argued that if a microphone is placed on the stage, the musician makes no extra effort; and instead of expecting compensation, the composer should be grateful for the advertisement given his works."—Ed.]

Recorded Programmes.

AT the invitation of Mr. Ball from 2YA last evening I desire to express my opinion of the American recorded programme put over on that evening. The orchestral numbers at the beginning and the jazz items at the end were not at all bad, but I sincerely hope that the Broadcasting Co. is not going to give us further items which savour so much of the Yankee drawl heard so often in the "talkies." Our children hear enough unrefined

Our Mail Bag

While we welcome the expressed views of listeners on topics pertaining to radio, we ask that these communications be kept to minimum length, as heavy demands are made upon space. Mere reiteration of arguments cannot be accepted for publication, and we cannot take responsibility for views expressed. Address communications to the Editor, and sign all correspondence, though a non-de-plume might be used for publication.

language from the States now without having more from the New Zealand stations. The announcing heard from the records was fairly good considering it was American, but the in-



HARRY BRUSEY,
a fine tenor, singing from 2YA on
January 5.
—S. P. Andrew, photo.

correct grammar was very noticeable, especially in the boy and girl dance party number, which was, to my mind, so much trash.

I realise that some of the piece will not be placed before us again, and I hope that great thought will be exercised before giving vocal and spoken numbers as to the effect they will have upon our manner of speaking—we require good English and not an American drawl.

The play "Treasure Island" was one of the best I have heard over the air and I congratulate Mr. Montague and his company, and also the Broadcasting Co., upon their presentation.—L. J. Retallick (Wellington).

Balancing the Programme.

I NOTICE that your Mailbag columns have been conspicuously absent lately. I sincerely trust that yourselves and the Broadcasting Company will not conclude that the once-troubled waters of N.Z. broadcasting are now settled. Far from it, and I feel that I can hold back my little complaint no longer. The arrangement of the records in the afternoon programmes are chronically

bad. First we get a sustained programme of the more classical type of record, and then without warning we switch over to an hour or more of fox-trots and jazzes—from the ridiculous to the gorbimee (to spell that well-known term phonetically). Now, sir, we can all take medicine when there is a little of it, and if a lot has to be taken, then we prefer it in instalments. To some of us the classical music is the pill, to others it is the jazz. Why not do as some of the B stations—sandwich one in with the other? Who wants to dance at 4 p.m.? Not many, I guess; but that lighter music comes through well between heavier items. No concert was all vocal, then all instrumental, though there is no doubt a number go to hear one particular type of item. They do not want to go out when it is finished, nor come in half-way through to hear it—they would not be getting value. The same with broadcasting. Let us have the items in the afternoon mixed so that we can enjoy the whole programme, instead of being bored with continued classical items or jarring jazz. In the evenings the proposition is a different one. The dance session is of some use, and those who don't like it can switch off—they have had their concert—or they can go abroad and select a programme. I sincerely trust that the B stations will not have to go off the air, for if there is one part of the day I enjoy it is the mornings, when I can get a delightfully assorted programme from a nearby W. —Mixum (Otaki.)

Bringing Up Sonnie.

THE other night I listened to a programme of canned Yankee twang from 2YA. At the end of the programme the announcer asked listeners for their opinions. Without delay I gave him mine, but have since thought that it would be more intelligible if it were put down on paper. The worst of it is that the editor will probably modify it. (Agreed.—Ed.) The programme was crude; it oughtn't to be allowed. Here am I a mother of several youngsters, and have tried all I know how to bring them up the right way and to make them speak English. What do I get in return? "Oh, yes baby," in the best Yankee drawl, when I ask a question. I can't let that go, and there is a storm. And then they say radio makes the home harmonious and builds family unity. The talkies were bad enough; we could moderate that; but when you get it over the radio—ugh, I give it up in disgust. If we must have these wonderful canned American, or, as they are politely termed, "international" programmes,

then let us have cultured voices. I don't look forward to Wednesday's programme in the least.—English Mother (Masterton.)

"Hard Enough to Sharpen Knives On."

I THINK I realise that where the general public are concerned, to please everyone is impossible. At the same time it is only the expression of opinion that enables a broadcasting company at least, to feel the pulse of its listeners. I will add my little straw to the drift in the hope that it will help to build a haystack. I have listened to some excellent programmes from 2YA, and have also tuned-in to some other station when its items were not to my taste. After listening to the first half of the programme on Monday last, I cannot help expressing the opinion that it is the worst yet, and that's praising it. I wonder how many New Zealanders want to listen to an American accent hard enough to sharpen knives on? Can't that be left to the talkies?—H. B. Clapham (Palmerston North.)

"B" Stations.

WILL you make clear the position re the B class stations? Last night I was listening to that admirable station 2ZF, Palmerston North, and the chairman explained the position, but I



MISS MERCEDES GLEITZE, who early next month, when a favourable opportunity occurs, will attempt to swim Cook Strait. She will be accompanied by a launch carrying transmitting apparatus to broadcast progress reports.