

Listeners' League

Laboratory Jottings

Book Review

Our Mailbag

Work Behind the Scenes

Gulbransen Minuet

Wireless Direction-Finding

Out of Place?

THE organising of Listeners' Leagues is always an onerous and generally a very thankless task. It requires work at all hours of the day and night. At a late hour the other evening a listener-in on a shortwave set heard a Wellington speaker carrying on a conversation with one in Dunedin.

The listener took notes of the conversation and to show the people interested in the formation of the league that the organisers are busy, we reprint the notes, for what they are worth. It was ascertained that the gentleman using the Wellington station (ZL2B1, Mr. C. G. Liddell) was Mr. R. Leslie Jones, and he was speaking to Mr. L. C. Bates (Station ZL4BE, Dunedin).

"Mr. R. Leslie Jones asked for Mr. Booth (secretary of the Listeners' League), but Mr. Bates replied that Mr. Booth was at home. He could give Mr. Jones's message by telephone to Mr. Booth.

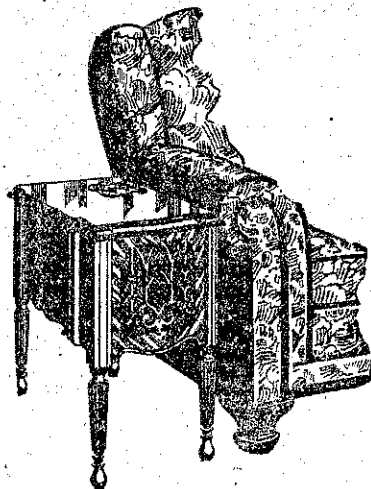
"Mr. Jones asked Mr. Bates to tell Mr. Booth that they had held their preliminary meeting in Wellington on the previous night and a resolution had been carried that the secretary be asked to come to Wellington to address a public meeting. A suitable hall, to seat 200, was available free, and the suggested dates of the meeting were either Monday, April 20, or Wednesday, April 22. It was no use holding the meeting sooner, as many people would be away for Easter.

"Mr. Jones requested Mr. Bates to phone Mr. Booth to tell him the foregoing, and to ask him whether he could be up at Wellington for the meeting on April 20 or 22. They must have Mr. Booth at the meeting. Also, they wanted a formal guarantee of £5 from Mr. Booth to cover the expenditure in advertising the public meeting. That money would be refunded to the committee out of the Wellington branch's subscriptions when it was formed. They would get a suitable public man as chairman for the public meeting. Without Mr. Booth there would be no 'kick' in the meeting. If he could not come to Wellington, Mr. Bates was to ask him to send up a lot of suitable stuff to be put across at the meeting. Mr. Booth could forward the formal guarantee of £5 for the advertising to Mr. Charlesworth, the Wellington secretary.

"Mr. L. C. Bates (4BE, Dunedin) replied that he had phoned to Mr. Booth, as requested, and the latter said that he could not give a decision about that £5 guarantee until he had seen his committee on the morrow. He would then communicate with Mr. Charlesworth. Mr. Booth was afraid that he could not come to Wellington on the dates suggested.

"Mr. Jones said that it was no use holding the meeting earlier. The meeting would be pretty snappy. There would be only one other speaker, besides Mr. Booth, who must speak for an hour. A musical programme would be provided from 7.30 p.m. till 8 p.m. He would advise Mr. Booth to telegraph to Mr. Charlesworth, and also to send, as soon as possible, receipt books for members' subscriptions. He

MESSRS. H. W. CLARKE AND CO. have supplied us with a Gulbransen Minuet, and during the last few weeks we have had ample opportunity to test out this little set. In the first place, the design is unorthodox and, it must be confessed, attractive. The set, designed so that it can be operated from the armchair, has great possibilities, for, with the long cable (which contains both aerial and earth leads), it can be moved about without difficulty. It takes much less space than the larger sets.



Though economising space, there has been no cramping or skimping of the internal mechanism, for the chassis is similar to the Gulbransen Lowboy set, i.e., two stage of screen grid, detector, audio and two 245's in push-pull. It is equipped with a standard Jensen speaker. One has only to feel the weight of the set to be assured that there has been no sacrifice to bring it down to the small space. Economy has been gained solely through the design of the cabinet.

The results came up to expectations fully, for, as was to be expected, the same fine performance put up by the Gulbransen standard models tested previously was attained. Sensitivity is all that is asked for in the modern set. When conditions were good, the Australian smaller stations could be listened to in comfort, while the Japs were consistently good. We had the opportunity of trying out this set in another locality, and we were successful in bringing in American stations. Under normal conditions there was a considerable reserve of volume on such stations as 2BL and 2FC, and we were able to listen to these more or less regularly. Considering the noise level in an ordinary city

hoped that Mr. Booth would be able to come up.

"There was nothing further said about the meeting or the league. Mr. Liddell (2B1) said that occasionally they put over some very fair records from 2YA. 'Anyhow,' he said, 'they are better than a lot of the second-rate artists they have. I wonder whether some of those artists are listening now. I don't care, but anyhow, it's too late for any of them to be listening.'"

OF recent years the syllabus for the commercial radio operator's examination has been appreciably extended. The theory and practice of wireless direction-finding is now of utmost importance.

One of the most comprehensive and lucid manuals we have seen on this subject is "Wireless Direction-Finding and Directional Reception," by R. Keen, B. Eng. (Hons.), Sheffield, A.M.I.E.E. A second and thoroughly up-to-date edition of this book has now appeared on the market, and for those who intend to make radio their career it is an excellent reference book.

The science of wireless direction-finding is traced through from its inception to the present day, and full descriptions of the commercial systems in use at present are included. In addition to dealing with the theory of all systems, including frame aerial direction-finders, the book describes in detail the preparation of directional maps and discusses causes and methods of correction of variations in bearings due to night errors.

The book may be obtained from the Te Aro Book Depot, Courtenay Place, Wellington, at a price of 26/6.

suburb, the set was as sensitive as desirable.

The tone was good, and as the Gulbransen Minuet is fitted with a volume control, the percentage of bass and treble can be varied at will. This accessory is nicely balanced, and tone can be brought over to bass without excessive woolliness. Although an expedient during bad interference, when it can be used to by-pass a great deal of the noise, we have little use for these modern "refinements," but they are demanded, and that is all there is to it as far as the manufacturers are concerned. There is a pronounced absence of a booming bass, even with the control in maximum position for this end of the scale.

The selectivity of the set leaves little to be desired, for we could listen to 2FC with only a little background from the local station. Farther from Wellington, however, there would be a considerable space between the two stations. This applies to 4QG on the other side.

The set is quite economical to run, as it consumes only 80 watts, approximately, and can be used in the Wellington district 12 hours for 1d.

SUCH uniformly excellent service is now being given listeners by the Radio Broadcasting Company, that one who has been critical in the past hesitates to cause fresh controversy. But I feel that I cannot allow to pass unnoticed what seemed to me to be a peculiar infelicity in the arrangement of the programme at Auckland on the night of Tuesday, March 31. The IYA Broadcasting Choir had given a splendid rendering of Gounod's beautiful "Messe Solenne," and at the conclusion, with but a moment's intermission, the announcer stated: "We will now broadcast a programme of dance records!" What a sacrilege! To play dance music of any kind after listening to one of the most sacred musical compositions ever written is surely not in accord with the tragic associations of Holy Week. Dance music, and plenty of it, is all right in its place, but surely it was out of place to broadcast it on the occasion in question. It would have been preferable either to have closed down, or else gone on with good gramophone music. I am sure all who have heard "Messe Solenne" sung at High Mass, and have been spiritually edified thereby, would not thank anyone who imposed dance music and jazz upon them afterward. I have a switch on my set, and after this gross offence against good taste, I promptly used it. —K.S. (Wellington).

Tips and Jottings

IF the many advantages of a short earth lead were generally realised there would be a decrease in the sale of wire!

OWING to evaporation the level of the liquid in an accumulator falls in time, but it should not be allowed to go lower than a quarter of an inch above the top of the plates, when loss should be made good by adding a little distilled water.

IF you are unable to get reaction when your condenser is all in, except toward the lower end of your tuning range, a small fixed condenser, usually .0001 or less, connected across the reaction condenser is an improvisation worth trying.

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