

The New Zealand Radio Record

—AND—

Home Journal

(Incorporating the "Canterbury Radio Journal.")

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WELLINGTON, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1931.

BAN ON GRAMOPHONE RECORDS.

THE most important development in broadcasting last week was, of course, the demand served upon all broadcasting stations—both "YA" and "B" class stations—throughout the Dominion to cease forthwith the use of gramophone records under penalty of immediate legal action seeking an injunction of restraint and the recovery of damages. Negotiations were immediately put in hand between the stations concerned and the gramophone recording companies with a view to a harmonious solution of the difficulty. Pending the outcome of those negotiations, the broadcasting authorities in all cases within our knowledge are carrying on as hitherto.

THE first hint of this development came from Australia some week or so ago, when notice of the advice given the broadcasting authorities was conveyed by cable. A conference was called, which was to have been held in Sydney last week. Advice of the outcome of that conference will be awaited with keen interest in this country. Meantime, an informative summary from our special correspondent in Australia shows that a reasonable attitude is being taken by the gramophone record manufacturers, and that hopes are entertained of an amicable solution, protective of their rights, being arrived at.

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THE full implications of the situation are discussed, as far as is possible, in another column. In the first place, a certain amount of sympathy must be felt for the makers of gramophone records. They devote their enterprise and capital to the supply of records suitable to the public. They depend for their commercial success upon the sale of those records. In many cases it has been found that popular "hits," from which a reasonable revenue might be expected, have had their sales spoiled by being "flogged" over the air from the largely-increased number of broadcasting stations. This situation has been intensified by the notable expansion in the number of "B" class broadcasting stations throughout Australia and New Zealand in recent years. When the "A" class stations alone were in operation a certain amount of co-ordination and control was possible between the gramophone companies and the broadcasting authorities. That position has changed to-day, mainly because of the growth of subsidiary stations who use records as the piece de resistance of their programmes. Indiscriminate broadcasting has thus created a rod for its own back. As we understand the position, the gramophone companies are appreciative of the good that controlled and organised broadcasting can do; they wish to work in harmony with it; but to do this they seek to control that use of records, which is to the disadvantage of makers and distributors.

WHILE that attitude can be appreciated, listeners also must be careful of their own interests. That the Government of New Zealand is not prepared to allow the people of the Dominion to be subjected to undue penalty, or to be stampeded into precipitate action, was shown on a previous occasion by the enactment of special legislation to afford protection from patent claims pending reasonable negotiation. The situation, therefore, contains possibilities of Government action in protection of the rights of the people to cultural facilities and social amenities. At the same time, the gramophone record companies, it must be admitted, have a case for the protection of their enterprise and the capital invested in their business. The situation, as we see it, is one calling for full consideration and negotiation. Facilities for ultimate protective action by the broadcasting authorities here and elsewhere throughout the world are available. The public is entitled to its music at a price and broadcasting has proved itself so important that the public may rely upon the authorities intimately concerned, leaving no stone unturned to secure supplies for maintaining their service.

22,000 In Two Days Educational Broadcasts

A Raid on Pirates

RECENTLY the B.B.C. announced that it intended starting a definite drive to force registration of thousands of radio pirates, who it was believed were operating in London and throughout the United Kingdom. Special vans were to be equipped and fitted out with the very latest scientific means of detecting receivers. A period of warning was given, and it was announced that, after the expiry of that term of grace, anyone found operating a receiving set without a license would be prosecuted "regardless."

The mere announcement of this campaign precipitated a rush to register. But that rush was as nothing to the rush that started when the campaign was actually put into force. According to the "Sunday Times," in the first two days of the campaign 22,000 new wireless licenses were taken out in London alone. These were in addition to renewals of existing licenses. So great was the demand for licenses that many district post offices ran short of them, and the staff of Somerset House, which provides the

FOLLOWING are the educational broadcasts from 2YA for December:—

Dec. 8—Mr. N. T. Lambourne, M.A., Chief Inspector of Primary Schools. Music—Programme by pupils of Thorndon Associated Normal School.
Dec. 15—Mr. T. B. Strong, M.A., B.Sc., Director of Education. Music—Programme by Thorndon Associated Normal School.

printed forms, was kept hard at work fulfilling requirements.

What would be the result of a similar campaign in Wellington, Auckland, or any of the principal New Zealand towns?

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S-O-S

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