

B or A Stations.

WITH reference to the editorial in the current "Radio Record," I am very greatly surprised indeed to find your paper taking such a stand. I meet a fair number of listeners—mostly in the country—and all are agreed that the type of so-called entertainment that the A stations specialise in is more the wails of souls in torture in some horrible inferno than music. In fact, the local A station is known as "the morgue" for miles around here. These German and Austrian compositions are the products of an age that is dead, and they should not be allowed to intrude themselves on us through our radios as they do. For the most part they are extremely depressing and we dread those periods when our local B stations are off the air.

It seems very weak to me to accuse 22W of having such immense resources that the A station could not possibly compete with it when this same A station is reported to have access to 20,000 records and £25,000 per year in cash. Surely no B station could be better equipped than this.

Further, you state that, if the B stations do not cease to put on programmes that find favour with the public, they will be washed out, or words to that effect. Why, if that were done it would be tantamount to a crime. You are suggesting—apparently with some knowledge of the present position—that the new board would say: "That fellow's putting on a better and more popular programme than we are; let's wash him out—that will be easier than trying to put on a decent, enjoyable programme ourselves, and, once he has gone, the listeners will just have to take what we think is good for them, whether they like it or not." That sounds like a terrible autocracy to me. Things are bad enough with the A stations as it is—heavy, dull, monotonous stuff that is quite out of keeping with our time. Why can we not have a greater percentage of the music of our day and time? If buyers of new radios really knew of the tremendous amount of funereal recordings they would have to put up with, radio sales would fall very considerably, and if ever your idea of one big station eventuates, sales will promptly fall away to nothing. When the powers that be realise that we buy expensive radios because we want light entertainment, then, maybe, we will get a little more of it.—"Country Listener."

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 nom-de-plume may be used for publication.

[Our correspondent has read much into our article that is not there. The tenor of our remarks was that listeners' interests would be materially bettered if arrangements were made for programmes of contrasting and not competitive types to be given. At present there is no co-ordination and because of that listeners are not getting the best out of the fine programmes being given by both stations. We want to see radio improved and not reduced in effectiveness, and our article was written with that end in view.—Ed.]

Oliver Cromwell.

MY set gives very good reception, yet the play "Oliver Cromwell" came over in some of the characters very indistinctly. One lady read a letter, of which only every other line was audible. The actor playing Charles I was certainly quite clear. Otherwise, though, my set was excellent; the remaining characters, through poor diction, were very bad. This includes Victor Lloyd. He was a great disappointment, and from what I hear has now a decidedly small (almost negligible) following, in spite of letters appearing lately in the "Radio Record." I am a stranger to all concerned and have no axe to grind. The work of Mr. Drummond, announcer, was clear and delightful. It was the bright light in the show. I would suggest that Cromwell was unsuitable for playing, since Cromwell was such a butcher in Ireland and sold over 20,000 to slavery in the West Indies. Humorous plays would be generally

acceptable according to hundreds I speak to.—S. K. Smith (Masterton).

A Beginner's Lament.

WOULD you kindly try to persuade the Broadcasting Company to

A Listener's Lament

*I've spent my leisure listening in,
For many a year gone by—
I've had some fun and done a grin,
And sometimes dropped a sigh.*

*I've done a growl, and done a cuss,
And applauded quite a lot,
But never have I heard such fuss,
Nor such trifling tommy-rot*

*As the guy who gave Our Olive to know
That his last call was not right,
To oblivion let this blighter go,
We want our old good-night.*

*I spend my waking hours by day
Thinking tortures that will fit,
I've ground my teeth nigh right away,
"The Pit! For him, the Pit!"*

*But still I guess I'll hope away,
And I trust in this I'm right,
That Olive will sometimes slip and say,
"Good-night all! Goo-oo-ood night!"*

—"1916"

get the "stations" to broadcast their number and town they are in after every item. We are only new starters at picking up stations, and it is a setback when they don't announce the station. It would be a great pleasure if they could grant this favour to assist us out of this difficulty. Please do your best to help the learners of New Zealand.—"New Starter."

Classic and Popular Music.

MAY I once again presume upon your space to make a reply to "Hydrargyrum," who in the current issue of the "Record" passes some remarks upon a previous letter of mine. This gentleman accuses me of having learned to hate classical music. In this he is wrong, for I did not express such a view. What I said was that there was too much of it, especially "fifth movements and symphony orchestras," and that there was not enough humour and popular music.

Just in case that "Hydrargyrum" should be in doubt of my meaning by the term "popular" music, I will say that it does not consist of jazz, neither does it consist of pieces like "Danse Macabre," but does really cover musical pieces of a type enjoyed by about 90 per cent. of the listeners, such as "Donauwellerl Waltzes," "Rendezvous," "Waters of Minnetonka," "O Sole Mio," "La Serenata," "The Road to Mandalay," "Rose Mousse," "Whispering Flowers," "The Fly's Courtship," and novelty humorous pieces, even down to "Abdul-Abul-Bul Amir." Whatever type of humour is put over it must be of the very best to receive applause from the "Radio Audience," and the same applies to orchestral pieces. Our orchestras and orchestras very often play pieces more suited to display the technique of the individual performer than to provide a rhythmic melody which can be enjoyed. Russian and Oriental music just "flops!" and there it is.

Your correspondent also recommended me to go back to school if I could not enjoy "high-brow." Well, just what to say to this I cannot think. What good would it do, anyway? It is a goodly number of years since I went to school, but I am afraid, judging by the school children with whom I come in contact, that their musical education is very little better, if any, than mine.

Anyway, it is pleasing to note that at least we have one point in common: we are both "still hoping!" It is pleasing to see so many letters regretting the fate of our "Goo-oo-ood-night," and also Mr. Ball's "Oh! By the way—" and it is to be trusted that your readers will make such a din that even some small part of it will be able to penetrate the deep bonds of red tape that surround all Government affairs. If a handful of 100 listeners can stop the "Good-night," surely the rest can bring it back again! Here's hoping!—"1916."

Amalgamation of Radio Clubs.

THERE seems to be a desire for the various radio clubs to amalgamate, and it appears that we all know just what we want, but don't know exactly how to get it. I would like to suggest that, in order to save a great deal of time and to start the ball rolling, that each club secretary write in to some person who could embody all suggestions and views and immediately circularise all the clubs concerned. Amalgamation is co-operation, and unity is strength. There are many people who are capable of getting the thing in working order without much undue delay, and I am quite sure that the listeners of New Zealand would appreciate that each District and each member would have representation.—A. B. McDonagh (Wellington).

Points from Pahiataua.

AT a large informal meeting of radio fans the following minutes were adopted:—

- (1) The "Radio Record" publishes the same photos too often. It should look for more new photos, including those of "uncles" and "aunts."
- (2) Plays like "Oliver Cromwell" (who butchered many) are quite in bad taste, and are often like Cromwell, frequently turned off by thousands. The delivery of Cromwell—excepting the splendid announcing—was lamentably weak.
- (3) The Radio Board are looking for

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