

WIRELESS has yielded a few touching stories in its time, but none more so than that of the elderly debtor in the Leeds bankruptcy court recently, who declared that: "I cannot, in my old age, grasp the idea of radio." His trouble was that he had tried to make a living as a radio dealer.



RADIO and the talkies may literally have a golden voice as the result of a process developed to stretch gold leaf until it is only one-millionth of an inch thick. The new radio "larynx," created at Purdue University, is in the form of a gold-leaf membrane stretched taut like a drumhead over a steel ring larger in diameter than a silver dollar. Gold leaf as thin has been stretched before, but not so large. A new process of stretching made possible the large-size pick-up which, it is claimed, reproduces the low frequencies, or deep tones, almost without distortion. It can be used both for the pick-up of sound and for loud speaking. Neither fingers nor machines can pull so thin a membrane without tearing.

Instead the stretching is the result of the movements of atoms when metals expand in heat and contract in cold. The cold gold leaf is fastened to a sheet of cold aluminium, and since the aluminium expands more rapidly than gold in high temperatures, it stretches the gold leaf when the two are heated. The cold ring of steel is laid on the two metals and shellacked to the gold leaf. Then the steel is heated, and this further expands the gold. Finally, in cooling, the steel contracts less than the gold leaf, and hence there is a third period of stretching.

THE Australian new "B" class broadcasting station 3AW, which is located at His Majesty's Theatre, Melbourne, officially went on the air at 8 p.m. Monday, February 22, operating on a wave-length of 210 metres. The opening ceremony was conducted from the banquet hall of the Victoria Palace Hotel, Little Collins Street, by the Lord Mayor (Mr. Gengoult Smith), following which the programme was continued from the studio at His Majesty's Theatre. During the evening there was transmission from the Theatre Royal of the finale to Act II of "The Chocolate Soldier." Such interesting features as the broadcasting of Gilbert and Sullivan and other operas, which heretofore have been either wholly or partially precluded from radio programmes, will now be available to 3AW listeners, and these will form some of the weekly station features.

WITH a view to providing reception of the Moscow programmes throughout the whole of Russian territory the Soviet authorities have opened two 100-kilowatt transmitters at Noginsk. When it is desired to ensure that official communiques shall reach all corners of the State the transmissions are relayed by telephone cable for re-broadcast by thirteen other stations. By this means the capital programmes are available to all listeners, even those blessed with only small receivers.

MR. J. L. BAIRD, the British television pioneer, has recently been married to Miss Margaret Albu, well known as a B.B.C. pianist. It is not revealed whether Mr. Baird first met Miss Albu through the medium of television!

A RADIO test which may last a year began on January 1, when Captain J. E. Boyd and Captain Carl Justice leave Daytona Beach, Florida, in a 40ft. sailing boat on a 37,000-mile trip round the earth. Their boat is provided with two complete transmitting sets, and arrangements have been made with the American Radio Relay League whereby the little boat will be in constant touch with various amateurs throughout the voyage. It is understood that a definite schedule of transmitting times will be arranged.

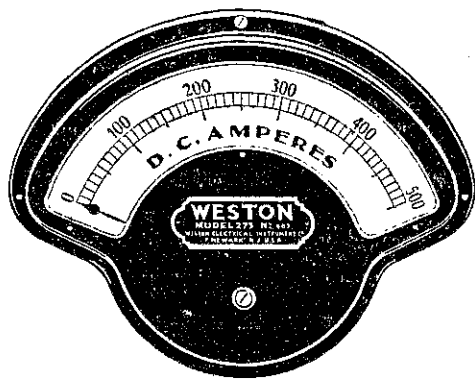
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Dinner Music: Publication of Items.

A NUMBER of further letters have been received by us seeking the restoration of publication in the "Radio Record" of items to be given in the Dinner Music sessions. This information has been withheld from the programmes for reasons into which it is not desirable to go in public, but from inquiries made we are hopeful that the position will be so far adjusted as to permit resumption of this information in the course of the next week or two.

FROM a radio point of view Holland might well be described as the Little Country with the Big Voice. For the Dutch stations, although few in number, are regularly and really well received in England and neighbouring countries. This, of course, is partly due to proximity. Hilversum and Huizen are only just over 230 miles from London, and to parts of Essex, Kent, Suffolk, and Norfolk the service they render is almost that of a second "local." Not only is the intervening distance short, but it is over sea all the way, with consequent gain in reliability and robustness of reception.

TO listeners who are accustomed to a filament consumption of about one-tenth of an ampere, a valve designed to take a heating current of no less than 500 amperes must come as a bit of a shock. Yet that is what the new giant valve transmitter for the Rugby station takes. The actual filament emission is 160 amperes and the power rating is 500 kilowatts. The valve is built entirely of metal and porcelain, and can be taken to pieces for overhaul and repair. The secret which has made its construction possible is the use of an oil distillate, in place of mercury, for maintaining the necessary high vacuum. The oil has an abnormally high surface tension at ordinary temperatures so that it can be used in the exhausting-pump without giving off any vapour to vitiate the vacuum inside the valve.

THE famous Baconian controversy is of less importance to radio amateurs than that which centres round "ham." This term, which receives praise and blame in about equal proportions, has perhaps its champion apologist in Mr. Kenneth B. Warner, the well-known American amateur, who is now contending that "ham," far from being derogatory in its meaning, is a title of which any amateur can be proud. "Ham" actually stands, he asserts, for "unprofessionalism" in the best sense.

FOLLOWING the opening of the new high-power broadcasting station at Prague, Czechoslovakia is rejoicing over the biggest monthly increase in receiving licenses recorded last year. The total rose from 343,869 in October to 355,492 in November. In January, 1925, the number was 1554; a year later it was 17,000, and in January, 1927, it had reached 175,981.

WHILE waiting for the perfection of television, the B.B.C. is not wasting its time. On January 4 listeners heard a novel type of programme in which they were helped to visualise a "Winter Landscape—a Snow Scene." Extracts from the works of ten well-known authors were given by three speakers and a singer, harpsichord, and other musical accompaniments were played.