

Editorial Notes

Wellington, Friday, July 8, 1932.

LISTENERS have experienced two special developments in the past week which augur well for the future of broadcasting. These have been the rebroadcast of short-wave transmissions from Australia of the important features of running descriptions of the All Black Test matches and the grand opera performance of "Lucia de Lammermoor"; on the other hand, a recorded speech on a literary subject by John Buchan. Each development is of special moment in its own field. Rebroadcasts of short-wave transmissions from distant points of the world are certain to be of growing importance in the future. Already the British Broadcasting Corporation has begun the farseeing plan of establishing a strong short-wave station for the special purpose of serving distant points of the Empire with news and features of interest. In the first instance, the B.B.C. is bearing the total cost. Ultimately those parts of the Empire overseas which directly benefit by that enterprise on the part of the Home Country may make some financial contribution. The important feature is that the development shall proceed and service be given listeners throughout the Empire. This direct contact with Britain will unquestionably be an outstanding feature in the relatively near future, and in its attainment will attract an ever-widening circle of listeners. Technical problems necessarily have to be overcome in clarifying transmission and eliminating as far as possible extraneous noises and static. Each year, however, sees the technical experts overcoming difficulties more and more and giving the listener better and better service.

THE time factor operates to the disadvantage of New Zealand in direct contact with short-wave broadcasts from England, in that our clock is the direct reverse of Britain's. That, however, can be overcome either by special transmissions for us and countries in similar plight, or by the recordings of the performance and their retransmission at times to suit. The important factor is that, once given the machinery for direct contact by short-wave between Britain and the outer parts of the Empire, a capacity for development is opened up which will bring new and richer treasures to listeners.

MORE initial pleasure in reception attached to the second feature mentioned, viz., the recorded utterances of John Buchan. This distinguished author took for his subject the "Life and Works of Sir Walter Scott," and in the 15 minutes of his discourse dealt most concisely, pungently and illuminatingly with the work and literary quality of that famous writer. No listener can have heard John Buchan's diction and voice without pleasurable emotions. Equally certainly, similar pleasure will attach to the further recorded speeches to be given by J. B. Priestley and Hugh Walpole on succeeding Wednesdays. These speeches are brought to us by the enterprise of a new organisation specialising in the issue of colonial programmes. A broad range of offerings, it is understood, is being developed by this organisation and, given adequate appreciation by listeners of the selections made, it is certain that this feature will expand, and in its expansion bring to

us a direct and pleasurable contact with life and thought in Britain. Distinguished authors and artists in Britain are responding appreciatively to the invitation to record for overseas audiences. They are accepting reduced fees in order that their friends abroad may enjoy through radio direct contact with the best in current life and thought. For that attitude on their part, we and listeners in general are grateful. It is another debt among the many which Britain confers upon

her kin overseas. We, as recipients of the generosity, are highly appreciative of the attitude dictating it, and of the modern development which makes it possible. We have heard nothing but appreciation of the recorded broadcast of the series initiated, and if the others are of the same quality, as we have every confidence they will be, then we trust that this success will lead to as rapid a development as possible of the policy of procuring from Britain the best recordings available.

In Phase and Out

By "Quadrant"

IF I am to believe a rumour that has come my way, Frank Crowther's bright little novelty orchestra will shortly be finishing up. I don't know whose fault it is, but I think 2YA will be losing one of its best features, and if it is not replaced there will be many regrets.

SUNDAY was a bleak, cold day in Wellington, and I'll wager that many of those who listened in to the southerly screaming through the campaign during the recital from 2YA during the afternoon were glad they were far from its icy blast. But, like most Wellingtonians, I was quite happy over a blazing fire.

LAST week was "Blue Danube" week in Wellington. But I still like that famous waltz.

JUDGING by the rebroadcast description of the test match on Saturday, the Australian announcer wanted his side to win. Nevertheless his enthusiasm was infectious and he quite successfully transported his audience to the grounds where the duel was fought.

"FOR whom is the carillon supposed to be?" someone asked me the other day. "If for the listener it is a dismal failure, and if for the people of Wellington practically no one hears it. It is a great shame to interrupt the Sunday afternoon concerts to inflict us with its jangling music." He left me wondering.

HOW things have changed! I was reading "My Northcliffe Diary," and came across this delightful reference to wireless. After the tremendous interest aroused by the Melba broadcast (June 17, 1920), Lord Northcliffe had a seven-valve receiver fitted up for his private use at the "Times" office. He was very proud of it and made a point of showing it to visitors. He had a special operator for the instrument, which was considered to be the very latest in wireless sets. "You need to have brains to understand wireless," Northcliffe used to say as he asked his operator to explain to his guests how it worked." Although wireless has advanced a great deal since that time, I think what Northcliffe said about wireless is still true.

CONGRATULATIONS, Mr. Hands, on your appointment to the generalship of the Broadcasting Board.

I HEARD some surreptitious advertising on shortwave on a recent evening. For a long time the broadcasts under which this was veiled were not permitted, but recently have been allowed again. Not being from a commercial station, the Government should be on the lookout for this kind of thing, as it is possible that someone has an axe to grind and is doing it under cover.

THE reference made by Miss Dora West when speaking from 3YA recently to the dynamic force and wit of Mr. Lloyd George, reminds me of an incident related by Sir James Parr in a speech from 2YA some weeks ago. Mr. Lloyd George was campaigning a certain well-to-do district, and in order to discredit his social standing the rumour was circulated that in his youth the great statesman used to hawk vegetables in a cart drawn by a donkey. He had concluded one vigorous meeting and was answering questions when someone from the crowd called out and made the accusation. There was a momentary pause before the speaker's cutting repartee was brought to play on the victim: "I thought I had lost sight of both many years ago," he said quietly, "but it seems the donkey has turned up again." The rumour was heard of no more.

"YOU were pretty dull last week," I was told the other day. "Why you have missed half the opportunities that came over the air." Maybe I did, but I cannot listen-in always, and if I were near my set for long I wouldn't be able to listen-in at all. But that criticism gave me an idea. Surely much that goes over the air will bear repetition in these columns, so why not drop me a note and let us have a mail-bag all of our own. I am certain it would be a bright one.

THE days of miracles have not yet gone, according to an American dx magazine, which publishes an account of how two private New Zealand stations, one with 30 and the other with 10 watts power, were received in New York. I think some stations do not take the trouble to check up their logs

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