

# Editorial Notes

Wellington, Friday, November 4, 1932.

RECENTLY someone pertinently asked if it was not a fact that we, being saturated in radio, are not getting too much of a good thing and are failing to appreciate radio for its true worth. In support of this argument it was contended that enjoyment derived from broadcasting does not by any means increase in proportion to the number of hours, rather the reverse. There is something in this contention, for most of us will recall the pleasure derived from the earlier broadcasts, when the quality transmitted and received was far inferior to that of to-day. The novelty no doubt entered into our enjoyment, but that does not explain all, and we venture the opinion that if the broadcasting hours were now reduced to, say, ten hours a week we should have fewer complaints and should be more appreciative. To-day our entertainment starts with breakfast music and finishes with dance tunes long after supper-time.

SO far as early morning sessions are concerned, the British Broadcasting Corporation has steadfastly refused to commence before 10.15 a.m. Although we are not acquainted with its reason for doing so, it is apparent that from the point of view of appreciation of music its decision is probably a wise one. Possibly it foresaw a shortage of music suitable for broadcasting, for if the present pace is maintained this will shortly become a real difficulty. The output is only a mere tithe of what is demanded by the listener.

WITHOUT doubt the revival in England of old songs and music was necessitated by the diffi-

culty in obtaining a sufficient quantity of modern matter. This can be understood when it is realised that in New Zealand more than a thousand different pieces are broadcast each day. Bearing in mind that there are over 30 stations and each station averages six hours a day, the estimate is really very conservative. Clearly, before long the demand will exceed the supply, and monotonous repetition will be the only solution. Already we see complaints on this score, but it seems to us inevitable, and that it will be accentuated as time goes on. As to the remedy, we will not venture an opinion, but will be content to leave it for our readers to think over. There is more in it than at first meets the eye.

THE licenses figures are again to hand and show that with three months to go before the end of the year there are almost 85,000 licenses. This phenomenal growth is hard to account for and rather offsets the depression talk we hear so much about. Similarly the import figures for parts have increased, which indicates that radio is on the upward grade at a fairly rapid pace. A general increase could be accounted for by two reasons, the improved fare now available and the price of radio receivers. But there is room for improvement in both. The service improvements can come only concurrently with the increased number of licenses. Of course, the broadcasters must take chances and provide certain features in advance of their revenue. The price of sets influences the license figures more than this, and the growth is to a large extent the reflection of the

price level. A few years ago the price of the receiver was high, and the quality it was capable of delivering was far from good. Improvements came and the price was reduced—result: a growth in the licenses.

EVEN now the prices of radio sets are far too high. In America sets cost about half the price charged in this country, and a radio set is to be found in every second home. The high import duties, particularly on assembled parts, keep up the price. But even the manufacturer or assembler is handicapped by the high tariff imposts. The differential tariff charged on parts and sets

accounts for the steady growth in the parts business, and incidentally the growth of the New Zealand industry. But too much protection defeats its own ends and stifles the trade. If a radio set capable of receiving all New Zealand stations and the principal Australians could be marketed for, say, £10 the licenses would jump to an amazing figure. It is doubtful whether the license fee has much influence on the number of listeners. After all, it is only a very small percentage of the initial outlay and a very small portion of even the most meagre income. Doubtless if it were reduced there would be a few more listeners but in no way commensurate with the reduction.

## In Phase and Out

By "Quadrant"

UNTIL I tuned in 3ZO on Saturday night I thought there were only two community song leaders in New Zealand. However, one lives and learns.

THE other week I saw a travel picture depicting the bubbling mud pools of Rotorua. The other night I was listening to 2YA and somehow I could not get those pools out of my mind. I think there must have been a ripple in the carrier.

"IN SYMPATHY," Lower Hutt, takes me to task for chaffing Bill Bishop regarding mothers-in-law and pertinently asks if it is the truth that hurts. He finishes up by quoting an old saying about daughter and mother. Yes, my friend, you are right. My wife stood over me with fire in her eyes and bade me write that par—but now she is spending her annual holiday at Day's Bay, and I can say what I think. Go ahead, Bill, we enjoy your stuff.

GREAT stuff these Aussies get over. Did anyone hear "The Mikado" from 3LO last Saturday? I couldn't for static.

FAITH healing by radio is the latest innovation from one New Zealand station. Only now it wants some enterprising station to start radio healing by wireless. After all, why not?

"REFORM" in last week's Mail Bag says that my notes sometimes annoy him, and in the same breath wants me to annoy 3YA by sending them laughing gas. "Reform" has forgotten his Sunday school session, "Do unto others," etc. I would hate tremendously to annoy 3YA after what he has said.

DID I hear 2ZW's preacher talking about singing praises to the pilgrims of the night? This is carrying the cruelty to animals propaganda too far.

ARN. CAMPBELL seems to know quite a lot about Montessori and Dalton methods of teaching. I don't altogether agree with letting the young brats bring themselves up—pardon, Arn, "develop." They want to take over the reins of control long before their judgment is mature.

DEAR QUADRANT, re your par. on interference. Reception of trolley buses here in Shirley is well nigh perfect. Couldn't we make the Christchurch Tramway Board take out a transmitting license?—DX28MC. Seemingly they are privileged.

ANNOUNCERS on form—Les Strachan from 2YA on Sunday night. His programme, "A Trip Round the South of England," brought back glorious memories to those who have left behind the chalk cliffs of old England and stimulated in those who are going "home" a pre-conceived love for her rural beauty. I am one of the latter, and when, in "Sussex by the Sea," I'll think of that admirable programme.

AN American inventor claims to have completed a scheme whereby entire families can be kept warm by radio. Probably hot air.

A THEORY has been advanced by a correspondent as to the reason for the great increase in the number of wireless licenses. He suggests that all the farmers and others who believe that radio was the cause of the last heavy rainfall have bought wireless sets in the hope of working the oracle during the summer.

SAYS a Christchurch paper: "A salesman not over a hundred miles from Christchurch had occasion to collect a receiver, recently sold, to correct a slight fault. He told the customer that the electricity travelling through the set made the dust rise, and it was only necessary to give it a cleaning." I wonder if the Radio Institute would make that gentleman an associate or member.

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