

Editorial Notes

Wellington, Friday, December 23, 1932.

"WORLD RADIO," the official organ of Empire broadcasting, is just to hand with the programmes of the first broadcast of the Empire short-wave station. It is with some regret, and we must confess, disappointment, that we notice that following the chimes and ten-minute opening announcement, there is scheduled a fifty-minute pianoforte recital by Berkeley Mason. The numbers include three of Brahms, one of Bach, and one of Schumann. This is followed by a Blattnerphone recording, "The World and Ourselves," and fifteen minutes later by gramophone recordings of the B.B.C. Dance Orchestra. At 11.30 the first broadcast of the much famed Empire station will have been a thing of the past.

THE second day is much the same, for listeners are to be entertained for twenty minutes with the recorded works of Greig. Certainly the selection of records is a good one, including such artists as Richard Tauber, Rachmaninoff, and Kreisler. But the fact remains that the items are recordings of a type frequently broadcast in New Zealand. With the general reaction of New Zealand listeners to classic music, we are inclined to think it will take more than twenty minutes of Grieg to hold the attention of listeners. The recital is followed by a lecture, "The Doctor and the Public," again recorded, this time on the Blattnerphone. Apparently this talk lasts for fifteen minutes, and is followed by the "Wireless Singers," who for fifteen minutes will present a number of part-songs and madrigals, including several very old numbers. Another talk fol-

lows—the B.B.C. is noted for its talks—this time on new books. A news budget brings this session to a close. And so on during the week. The classical side has been strongly represented. Even on Christmas Eve it seems listeners are not to be allowed to escape it, for we note that there is to be a fifteen-minute pianoforte recital, including a generous proportion of Chopin.

Exile

Christmas: the heart of me
Deep with dull longing
For a home that I'll not know
again.

Christmas: the soul of me,
Laden with memory
Of a laughing-faced girl in a
glen.

Sad is the heart of me
Now it is Christmas,
And everyone else is so gay,
Sad that my misery,
Born of dull longing,
Should burn through the glad,
happy day.

Alas! though it's Christmas,
And time for rejoicing,
My heart deeply longs in its
pain

For a sun-dappled glen,
A laughing-faced girl,
And a home that I'll know
not again.

—Mary Kitching.

THERE is an old saying that one should not look a gift horse in the mouth, and because the programmes are being provided by the B.B.C. without cost to listeners, it is not quite fair to criticise. But the fact remains that if a job is to be done, it might as well be done well, and it seems that unless the standard of programmes is altered, the Empire station will not be sufficiently appreciated to justify the capital put into it by the Corporation. In the first place, the opening programme seems to fall very far short of expectations, in that recordings which are available in New Zealand are to be broadcast. The amusing part is that if the Broadcasting Board was to put on such a programme from one of its stations, there would be an outcry of protest. The B.B.C. is classic minded, for was it not Sir John Reith, Director General of the British Broadcasting Corporation who said: "It is the B.B.C.'s function to give listeners,

not what they like, but what they ought to like. Here is your programme, take it or leave it?" This policy may be all right in England, but there is always an alternative programme, generally of a lighter nature, and the foreigners are only a few hundred miles away. Thus few listeners have to switch off when the programme is not to their liking. The same holds true of the Empire station, but if listeners have to turn to their local stations as an alternative, it seems that the Empire station has failed. Of course, people will listen because it is England and Home, but we want to hear something we cannot hear here—Blattnerphone recordings of the actual B.B.C. programmes, of topical commentaries, and of the speakers whom we cannot hear otherwise. Listeners do not want half-hour recorded recitals when five minutes is enough.

WHEN it comes to the matter of recordings, the R.B.B. probably has at its command a greater selection than the B.B.C., for the simple reason that it has to broadcast a greater number of them, and consequently must have wider selection. Listeners want more than records from the Empire station. They want the artists of world repute whose engagements have made the B.B.C. famous. Failing these, for it must be remembered that the time is early morning and probably an inconvenient one for artists, the Blattnerphone recordings would be very welcome. To be a success, the Empire broadcasting station must cater for listeners in the Dominions, and this the B.B.C. should take into consideration when compiling programmes. Listeners to the Empire station are too far away to be influenced by "Here is your programme" methods.

In Phase and Out By "Quadrant"

MERRY CHRISTMAS, folks. Don't know about you, but I'm expecting more kicks than ha'pence next year.

TO Mr. Will Bishop: Dear Bill,—Thanks so much for the song dedicated to me. If my voice wasn't worse than any that ever inflicted pain on 2YA listeners I would make an attempt to learn it.—Yours with growing respect, Quadrant.

HOW many listeners to 2YA's church service on Sunday night thought they had heard a new boy soprano? So did I. Nothing doing. He was Gretta Stark.

THE Amos an' Andy act from 2YA on Saturday night did not go over as well as it might. The Yankee drawl and Lyall Bay do not mix too well. To make matters worse, a record of Flotsam and Jetsam went over the next act but one! Be yourselves, m'lads, be yourselves.

A PROVINCIAL paper says "enthusiasm in radio has now taken a firm hold, in the district, the reduced prices of wireless sets having brought this modern invention within the scope of a larger number of people." A still more modern invention is the no deposit easy payment system. It has had quite a lot to do with bringing radio within the scope of those who cannot afford it.

WHILE my back was turned the other day, someone tried to sell my wife a radio set. He wanted no deposit, half-a-crown a week for two years, would guarantee it to outstrip anything that was going, would keep it serviced free of charge, and replace defective valves for three months, and a lot of other things she has forgotten. Sheer nonsense, of course, but tactics like these do a lot of damage to the trade. By the way, if one of these people wants to instal radio for you,

ask if he has his license—if he hasn't, you may get into serious difficulties with the Supply Authorities.

NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS:

L. D. A—st—n: I'll enjoy broadcast programmes—I won't listen—I'll read them.

Dr. I. L. G. S—th—r—nd: I'll lead the community singing next year.

P. C. W—bb: I'll stand for Parliament as a party hack.

M—j—r—G—n. M—r—l—n: "I'll give up the stage.

C—lf—rd B—ll: I'll crack a joke.

Ll—yd R—ss: The world's a glorious place and all is well within.

Pr—f. Sh—ll—y: I'll attend the talks once a week.

L. E. Str—ch—u: I'll always use the editorial "We."

Ch—wn—u and J—ss—n: We'll be ourselves.

R. H. N—mmo: 2ZW won't mention our address.

The B—rd: We won't broadcast the carillon.

J—hn B—ll: I won't announce.

B—ll B—shop: I'll say nothing about henpecked husbands.

G—ord—n H—tter: I'll learn the American language.

J—on de M.: I'll suppress my name.

The Advis—ry C—u—c—l: For us, rationalisation.

A—nts—nd—ncl—s: We'll be examples!

The Ch—rch C—mm—tl—: We'll think of the listeners.

Ow—n Pr—teh—rd: No more will listeners hear, "Do you get the idea?"

G—rdon—Sh—rt: I'll syncope.

Dxr: I'll forget the Constitution.

R—d—R—c—rd Ed—t—r: Quadrant's cheque is to be doubled.

"Sp—rk": I'll empty the sulphuric acid from my inkwell.

Cl—v—Dr—mm—nd: I won't say Fongunni no more.



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