

Editorial Notes.

Wellington, Friday, August 4, 1933.

Of a hundred men—men from every walk of life—who were recently questioned in Wellington, only one confessed that he listened to the radio as an evening's entertainment. The rest said that the music was just a background for their conversation or their bridge party. It is quite obvious that any novelty that the radio may have possessed is quickly disappearing. A decade ago wireless was something that was a little mystifying—exciting, but not of much definite use; it progressed through the stage of commercial utility until to-day, both in the business and entertainment spheres, it is accepted as one of the distinguishing marks of our civilisation. And yet it may act like some drugs—taken in too large doses it may be definitely harmful.

Increased hours of broadcasting have meant to some people a continuous background of music for their daily activities. Whether it's washing the breakfast dishes to Chopin, lunching to Gershwin, or cooking the dinner to Cesar Franck, the radio is allowed to blare out its tunes from morn till night. Noise, noise, noise! And appreciation of music—an appreciation that was being fostered by radio in its earlier days—is gradually being killed. Where a flood of sound is allowed hour after hour in the home, how little notice is taken of all that is heard. There arrives a time when balance is lost and the listener, trying to hear what is being played through the livelong day, ceases to hear at all.

This "all-round-the-clock" radio is going to have a mighty unsettling effect on the country's nerves and appreciation before very long. It would be interesting to discover just what percentage of radios are kept in continuous action from seven in the morning till midnight in New Zealand. The number must be large—walk along any suburban street in any town in the Dominion at any hour of the day or night, and it's a safe bet that you'll find at least half a dozen radios pouring out their music to an unheeding housewife.

Admittedly, there is a temptation to turn on the radio and let it provide a background to the day's toil. The machine is there, the music is floating about in the atmosphere waiting to be picked up—why not turn the dial and flood the house with sweet sounds? But that is not the point. The point is that, if the hours were strictly limited—say eight in the evening till 11—the household would turn the radio on and LISTEN TO IT! The world is being ransacked for talent to provide entertainment for a public which admits that the radio is only second fiddle to its evening talks or bridge.

What is going to be the effect on civilisation? Will it not be like an attempt to swallow a vast quantity of food in which the distributed nourishing qualities are small and scattered

in minor portions of the whole quantity? The effect of this on the digestive organs can be visualised; to foresee the effect upon the mind of unlimited assaults upon the air is more difficult.

This is not an attack on our broadcasting service, but it is an attack on

MODEL PROGRAMMES

Musical Comedy Section Is Next To Close

KEEN interest is being shown throughout the Dominion in the series of model programme competitions inaugurated by the "Radio Record." The entries for the first two competitions came from every part of New Zealand, and are a tangible expression of opinion from listeners as to what they consider the ideal type of programme for broadcasting. Entries for the third competition of the series close on Saturday next, August 5; competitors are required to submit what, in their opinion, would be a model musical comedy programme, to occupy two hours in performance. There is no necessity to provide for two hours of musical entertainment, as a title for "suggested radio" some subject relating to musical comedy, or the theatre in general, may be introduced, such talk to occupy 20 minutes of the duration of the programme.

The remaining types of programme in the series, with the closing dates of entries, are as follows:—A miscellaneous classical programme (Aug. 19); an operatic classical programme (Sept. 2); an orchestral and instrumental classical programme (Sept. 16); a recital programme by individual artists, not exceeding four in number (Sept. 30); a "theme" programme, i.e., a story, or recital, with appropriate musical numbers interspersed (Oct. 14); a one-hour dance programme (old or modern). (Oct. 28); a one-hour children's session (Nov. 11).

A prize of One Guinea is awarded to the competitor submitting the programme which, in the opinion of the judges, is considered the most suitable for broadcasting.

those people who are slowly but surely killing their appreciation of music by continually flooding their homes and their minds with a medley of music, news and views. The New Zealand Broadcasting Board is willing to admit that restricted hours would cause the country's appreciation of radio as an entertainment to

grow, but it must give the public what it demands—music, ad infinitum.

THE new orchestra at 3YA, Christchurch, under the leadership of Mr. Harold Beck, is a step in the right direction. The southern air has been deluged lately with light music and jazz—now the works of the famous masters will be given to listeners, who may rest assured that they are being given them just as the composer intended them to be presented—by experienced and intelligent players.

Christchurch musicians realise the immense power for good that rests with radio. Mr. Alfred Bunz, one of the city's best-known musicians, said recently that, of the young people that he was conducting in the Orchestral Society, the majority of them had an insight into music that would take them weeks of rehearsal to understand in former days. What the pianola had done to make people better appreciate music, the radio is doing to-day. Even the lightest music is a joy to listen to when it is played by artists.

Mr. Harold Beck also considers that broadcasting has given a flip to modern musical tastes. The English School of Composition had never been in such a flourishing state since the days of Elizabeth—and this fact was partly traceable to radio. The youth of the community was showing a musical interest that was unknown 30 years ago. Special concerts were being given in London for children, and these were being remarkably well attended. The concerts were usually symphonic with oral explanations. Perhaps New Zealand might gather an idea from these concerts—the experiment would be worth trying.

THE B.B.C. has accepted the recommendation of the Central Council for School Broadcasting that two special courses be given in Welsh for the benefit of Welsh schools. Hence it is expected that from September next experimental courses on the Welsh Language and Literature, Welsh History, etc., will be given from the West Regional and North Regional transmitters. It is to be hoped that this will give satisfaction to our Welsh compatriot, even though it is not the same as a Welsh national station.

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