

Editorial Notes.

Wellington, Friday August 11, 1933.

ALTHOUGH listeners in New Zealand can scarcely be expected to grow wildly enthusiastic about the Empire broadcasts from Daven-try it is at least pleasant to learn that other parts of the Empire—parts that, in the matter of miles, are in closer touch with the Motherland—are receiving entertaining programmes with gratifying clarity. For the past few months thousands of letters and cablegrams have arrived at the B.B.C. headquarters in London, expressing satisfaction or the reverse with the programmes. The authorities have welcomed them for they are the only means of feeling the Empire's pulse on radio matters.

The programme-builders of the Empire service have no guide to the likes and dislikes of listeners except in the correspondence they receive. In England, as in other countries, where a licensing system is in force, the popularity of broadcasting can be judged to a considerable extent by the number of license-holders. In Empire broadcasting, however, it is obviously impossible even to estimate the number of listeners or their requirements, and the only guide to the success of the service, therefore, lies in the direct communication of the listener with the B.B.C.

While one person's preferences make far too slender a foundation on which to build a world-wide service, when looked at in relation to the preferences, tastes, powers of understanding and enjoyments of the other persons who make up the radio audience, they must inevitably be reflected in the future broadcasting policy. Listeners in India, Ceylon, Burma and Malaya—known as Zone 2—have been consistently generous in their praise of this short-wave broadcasting and their repeated requests for its extension have resulted in the hours of transmission for their zone being doubled. But the authorities in London complain that there must be thousands of listeners who have not yet written to the B.B.C. or obtained a copy of its questionnaire. Their co-operation is sought, and an appeal is issued to every part of the Empire to write the headquarters. It is hoped that criticism of the programmes and details concerning their reception will be forwarded by all those who have not yet written, so that their tastes can be assessed and the experience of their reception can be

used to the best advantage in this new medium of broadcasting. Eastern Canada and the West Indies have

Books to Read

Literature in Demand at The Moment

THIS list, supplied by the Wellington Public Library, indicates books that are in general demand at the moment, and may serve as a guide to those readers who are looking for new and interesting literature. It will appear regularly in future.

FICTION.

Sabatini, Rafael: *Stalking Horse*, a tale of the Jacobites in England and in France in the days of William and Mary.

Queen, Ellery: *American Gun Mystery*. "Ellery Queen has long seemed to me to be one of the best detective authors now writing." (J. B. Priestley).

Mason, A. E. W.: *The Sapphire*, a colourful and romantic story of mystery and adventure in Burma, picturesque and with humour.

Wells, H. G.: *The Bulpington of Blup*. "The title suggests nonsense. But the story is not nonsense. It is both a character study and a vehicle to present some of Mr. Wells's views. More concrete and better realised than many of Mr. Wells's later sociological tales, it is a readable narrative of much vitality, in a more psychological vein than 'Tono-Bungay,' though not without traces of the zestful satire which somehow still makes the book stand out from the mass of Mr. Wells's more 'serious' works."

Garnett, David: *Pocahontas*. A reconstruction of the life of the American Indian, beautifully written.

GENERAL.

McBride, P.: *Philosophy of Sport*. A survey of different forms of sport and games by one who "having participated in much of the former and many of the latter, has endeavoured to look at them from different angles."

Gilbert, W. S.: *The Lost Ballads*. A collection of ballads previously unpublished.

Maugham, W. S.: *For Services Rendered*. A study of the after effects of war. A play centring round the members of an English county family, all of whom have been affected.

O'Brien, Edward J.: *Son of the Morning*. A life of Nietzsche stressing the importance in his life of the influence of Cosima Wagner.

Sullivan, Edward Dean: *This Kidnapping Business*. A chronicle of famous kidnapping cases during the last fifty years, giving a complete resume of the Lindberg case.

appealed for earlier transmissions, and steps have been taken to please these listeners.

The general shade of opinion in New Zealand appears to be that the less said of the Empire programmes the better. Reception has been poor in most cases and, among those listeners who have received the programmes clearly, the opinion seems to be that our much-maligned local stations are not so very terrible after all. But the B.B.C., as was pointed out above, is anxious to provide for all reasonable tastes and shades of opinion. A new listener may easily switch on to an Empire transmission for the first time and find that a talk is being given on a subject in which he has no interest. (Exactly the same thing happens every day with listeners to our New Zealand stations, as the "Radio Record" knows from the correspondence it receives.) And so he condemns the Empire system—or sends a letter to the B.B.C. complaining of the whole service. This is where the corporation has to use its discretion in considering the mail it receives. The necessity arises to sort the grain from the chaff—the letters of those persons who are genuinely anxious to help the Empire services from those sent by people who have heard something that didn't interest them and are squealing loudly.

WE publish to-day an article by

Bertram Potts, a well-known returned soldier and writer, on the Wellington Carillon. For the past week or two there has been considerable controversy in the Press of the Capital City about the monument—should funds be raised to keep its notes floating across the city or should it be allowed to stand silent? Mr. Potts say it should stay silent—better by far that money be spent on keeping the bodies and souls of returned men together than that they should starve while a set of bells proclaims their deeds of war.

Fifteen years can change the face of a whole world. In 1918 flags were waved, crowds cheered, soldiers were feted, money was spent with cheerful abandon. To-day the world is plunged into an abyss—an abyss partly created by the load of debt brought about by giving these very men weapons with which to kill each other. To-day we are very sober and disillusioned—and the most disillusioned of all are the men who went away to waving flags, and came back—some of them—to more waving flags. But they know now that the path between that time and to-day has been a hard and friendless one and that flag-waving and brass bands cannot feed and clothe wives and children.