

# Editorial Notes.

Wellington, Friday, September 1, 1933.

WHAT does the country listener want? Here is a subject that has agitated the minds of broadcasting authorities, not only in New Zealand but in every country in the world, almost since wireless became an established fact. City folk are well off—if they don't like the way the news is presented they can switch the radio off and turn to their evening papers; if they don't like the evening programme they can play the gramophone or go to the talkies. But not so the country listener. If he doesn't like the programme he can switch the radio off—and go to bed! Which may sound all right in theory but is not so good when one considers that the radio is often his sole link with the outside world and that he is dependent on it for stock, market and weather reports. Also, he probably didn't buy a radio set and pay 30/- license fee to keep the machine silent.

In conversation with a North Island farmer the "Radio Record" gleaned several facts. The man on the land is interested above all else in the market news, the weather and seasonal conditions, because these concern his daily bread and butter. He likes them to be dependable and he likes them to be given in such a manner that they can be digested slowly. He is keen to hear news that directly concerns his industry and business; and he appreciates helpful talks on primary production by experts. The average man on the land rises early and his day is long and hard. By the time he has finished his evening meal it is usually somewhere between eight and nine—and that is the hour when he is free to sit back and listen to the doings of the outside world, and of his own farming world in particular.

The Graziers' Association of New South Wales has realised that it is impossible for the ordinary wireless station to give the time to the announcing of marketing news that the farmer would like, and it has, in consequence, approached the Postmaster-General for a license to erect a wireless station in the heart of the state for the broadcasting of news for farmers. The time may come when New Zealand will require to do likewise but at the present time the farmers are fairly well satisfied.

NEW inventions in the talking picture world (and especially the

new "wide range" reproduction which is finding its way into several of New Zealand's leading theatres) bring one to speculate on the first days of what is now the world's most powerful entertainment medi-

## Books to Read

### Literature in Demand at the Moment

THIS list, supplied each week 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.

#### FICTION

**Don Juan and the Wheelbarrow.** by L. A. G. Strong.

Sixteen short stories by the author of "The Brothers" and "The Garden," some in dialect and most with a county background.

**Julian Grant Loses His Way,** by G. Houghton.

A psychological novel of some depth.

**All Souls' Night,** by Hugh Walpole.

"Among the sixteen short stories are some that are sentimental, several ghost stories or tales of horror, and a few in which such well-remembered Walpole characters as Jeremy or one of the Herries clan reappears.

#### GENERAL

**The Inequality of Man,** by J. B. S. Haldane.

The effect of science upon human life. "Some of the essays are no more than good popular journalism, some are more substantial, but all are worth reading. There is a certain unity of purpose running through them, making the book philosophical in the wide sense."

**Talks with Mussolini,** by Emil Ludwig.

"An hour a day for eighteen days during the spring of 1932 Emil Ludwig talked with Mussolini. The conversations were conducted in Italian and recorded, immediately afterward, in German. Herr Ludwig submitted his list of topics beforehand, but asked whatever questions he chose. The purpose of these planned conversations, on historical, political and moral questions, was to reveal Mussolini's personality, rather than his opinions."

un. It was not in the 'twenties (as is popularly supposed) that talkies were first tinkered with, but 'way back in the gay 'nineties. Edison invented the phonograph in 1876 and the cinematograph 18 years later.

In the following year, 1895, at an establishment called a "Kinetoscope Parlor," he exhibited the "Kinetophone"—a system of synchronising a cinematograph with phonograph records. A United States patent was granted in 1897 for the synchronisation of motion pictures with records, while in 1901 the first Gaumont patent was granted for the same purpose.

No system, however, with features fully in common with the modern sound-film is found until 1906, when a British patent was granted. Eugene Augustin Lauste was undoubtedly the father of the sound-on-film process used exclusively to-day. His system was amazingly advanced for its time—the aural record was on the same film as the visual record, both in the negative and positive condition, as it is to-day in the Movietone system. Lauste used no valves and it was not until 1923 that Lee de Forest demonstrated a sound-film for which valves were employed in recording and reproduction. In 1926 Warner Brothers (U.S.A.) produced some short subjects using the now obsolete Vitaphone sound-on-disc and Theodore Case was also working for Fox on the now universal Movietone system. The turning point in the history of the sound-film as a commercial speculation came with "The Singing Fool"—a film which put the Warner Brothers' concern on its feet and heralded the definite arrival of the talkies.

HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF ITALY has conferred upon Mr. E. T. Fisk, chairman and managing director of Amalgamated Wireless, the insignia of Chevalier of the Order of the Crown of Italy. Mr. Fisk is at present in England.

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