

AUCKLAND NOTES.

The Meanderings of Albert!

Mr. Russell Keeps Community Singers Happy — "Beating Up" the Second Mate — Movie Actors Need Only Good Looks and Ability to Obey the Director's Orders.

THE last community sing of the year was held in the Town Hall on Wednesday of last week and proved to be one of the most jovial and successful yet held. Albert Russell and his wife were the song leaders, and Albert made everybody happy at the start with his speech given in the most humorous vein, a la the "Meanderings of Monty." He was assisted by Mr. Reg Morgan, the Musicians' Union Orchestra, Frank Poore, Tom Maguire, Dan Flood and Mrs. Barrington Snow. This sing was in aid of the very worthy funds of the St. Vincent de Paul Society and resulted in over £100 being collected.

ACCORDING to the latest statistics showing that at the end of September the total number of licensed listeners stood at 108,868, Auckland tops the 30,000 mark, while Wellington has reached 43,400. However, Auckland still claims pride of place in number of dealers—a total of 381. The board might be justified in feeling proud at a 10,000 increase in licenses in three months. Judging by the popularity of radio this total should be increased by much more during the next six months.

"OLD WIREWHISKERS," an old master mariner with many years of experience both in sailers and steamers, who broadcasts from 1YA on Saturdays, was in good form on Saturday, October 28, when he related a thrilling story entitled "Twelve Days on a Blood Ship." In this tale "Old Wirewhiskers" gave a thrilling and a vivid account of life as he found it on board an American sailer—a "blood ship," when he was but a youth. The beatings he received from the brutal second mate, who would have killed him had not others intervened, and how the ordinary seaman ("Wirewhiskers" himself) got his revenge and beat up the aforesaid second mate, was well told by the narrator. Things

must have been very hard on sailing ships in the old days, judging by what took place on board. Such happenings would not be tolerated even in sailing ships at the present time. "Old Wirewhiskers" might be criticised because he does drop his "h's," but nevertheless his stories are true in detail and not by any means far fetched however much one might think so. His subject matter is always good and his talks from 1YA always excite much interest by the thousands who love a good sea story. Many listeners are still talking about his story of the blood ship.

IN his interesting series of lectures on "The Art of the Cinema," given during the W.E.A. sessions on Thursdays from 1YA, Mr. P. S. Ardern, M.A., discusses scientifically the cinema and everything connected with the moving-picture film. Last Thursday he was more than interesting in his talk on "The Art of the Cinema: Stories, Stars and Box Office." The film, as a work of art, he said, should develop from the cinematic idea; it should be directly pictorial or abstract, that is, moral or sociological. The idea might not necessarily be true, but sincerely and strongly held. The artistic creation is an act of faith. Here, said Mr. Ardern, both American and British films were weak. The ideas were often second hand. Stories were adapted from novels and plays. Often the standards were commonplace and outworn conventional morality. The weakness was partly due to the "star system." The peculiar conditions of movie making made acting, in a stage sense, partly impossible and partly undesirable.

"THE movie actor strictly needs only good looks and ability to obey the director's orders," said Mr. Ardern. "The director, not the actor, creates the part. There are too many stars 'made' by the director, and the publicity agent. Often a star can only play one part, therefore all his films are but variations on the same theme." Mr. Ardern considered that the weakness was partly due to the commercial production, with lavishness instead of art. Then there was the division of control—too many people with different interests. The author, the scenario writer, the director, technical experts, film editor, producer, each thinking of getting his money back. The responsibility of the public was also mentioned by the speaker. The picture industry wanted to give the public what it wanted, but did not know what the public desired. It gave it what it accepted. Box office returns were considered the most effective criticism.

MR. F. K. HUNT, S.M., sitting as coroner at the inquest touching the death of an Epsom widow who was found dead in her back-yard on October 12, holding a clothes-line which

was connected to a radio set and also the household electricity supply, had some comments to make in connection with radio and power supply. "I think that a request that all social welfare organisations which instruct classes of boys at different schools on the making of radio sets, model aeroplanes, and similar devices, should caution pupils never to interfere in any way with electric lighting systems," he said. The medical evidence was there was a burn on the inner side of the left upper arm and another on the left forearm. Death was due to an electric shock and fatty degeneration of the heart. Expert evidence was given that a direct connection had been made with cotton-covered wire from the lighting socket in a room to a small radio set and a connection between the clothes-line in the back-yard and a terminal on the radio set. The full voltage was obtainable between the clothes-line and earth when an adaptor had been removed and the ceiling snap-switch controlling the light socket was in the "on" position. In returning a verdict in accordance with the medical evidence, the coroner said he did not think there was need for him to add a rider, as sufficient publicity had been given by the power boards and authorities concerning the dangers attendant upon illegal interference with electrical equipment.

GOOD news was contained in last week's "Record" when it was stated that Mr. Hands, interviewed after his return from Australia, said more grand opera was to be broadcast in New Zealand than formerly. This is good news to the many music-lovers who consider that their tastes are not catered for enough. As stated before in this page, the bigger stations might well profit and follow the lead of some of the smaller stations which often present recordings of complete grand operas every now and again.

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