

UNION STEAM SHIP CO. OF NEW ZEALAND LTD.: CONTROL OF WIRELESS APPARATUS.

The twenty-nine vessels, of the Union Steam Ship Co.'s fleet, which for radio-telegraph purposes were previously under the control of the Amalgamated Wireless (Australasia), Ltd., were brought under the direct control of the company as from the 1st April, 1927. It has been agreed in respect of those of the company's vessels registered in Great Britain to adjust the radio accounts directly with the company, thus obviating the necessity of settling through the General Post Office, London.

BROADCASTING.

In conformity with the agreement between the Department and the Radio Broadcasting Co. of New Zealand, Ltd., a third modern broadcasting-station has been established. This station, which is at Wellington, was opened on the 16th July, 1927.

Tests show that the Wellington station has a daylight range over the whole of the Dominion to a greater degree than any other New Zealand station.

The Wellington station is conservatively rated at 5 kilowatts aerial power with an input to the tubes varying from 10,000 to 15,000 watts. The station is situated away from the business centre of the city, in a commanding position at the top of Mount Victoria, a hill of about 650 ft. The aerial-poles add to this height 154 ft. Private lines, with amplifiers, are used to conduct items from the well-appointed and modern studio in the heart of the business quarter of the city. There are also relay lines to a number of theatres, churches, and amusement-halls. A special feature of the transmitter is that faithful modulation up to 80 per cent. efficiency can be obtained. The new condenser type of microphones, with a natural frequency of 7,000 cycles per second, also are noted for their faithful reproduction. As voltages up to 10,000 volts are used, the usual protective devices are necessary. In this respect the equipment conforms to modern requirements.

In the agreement with the Radio Broadcasting Co. it was provided that, after the setting in operation of stations at Auckland and Christchurch, the company should establish similar stations in Wellington and Otago. The question of the erection of a station at Wellington with a capacity equal to 5,000 watts output, which would be ten times the output of the new stations at Auckland and Christchurch, was discussed between the company and the Government. In support of the proposal it was contended that, with the growth of broadcasting, people of the Dominion would, to an increasing extent, look to these services for daily news, instruction, and entertainment. It was contended also that a station such as that proposed for Wellington would be of great value for defence and national purposes, and would also be useful for broadcasting to the island dependencies. It would enable island residents to look for reception to a Dominion station, instead of to the Australian stations.

DUNEDIN BROADCASTING-STATION.

From the 10th October, 1927, the service given from the Dunedin station was extended to include Saturday evening, making a total of five nights weekly.

ARMISTICE DAY REMEMBRANCE CELEBRATION: RELAYING FROM NEW ZEALAND BROADCASTING-STATION.

The proceedings at the Albert Hall, London, and at Canterbury Cathedral, on Armistice anniversary day, the 11th November, 1927, were broadcast on a wave-length of 24 metres. The Radio Broadcasting Co. of New Zealand, Ltd., made special efforts to receive and to rebroadcast the programmes for the benefit of New Zealand listeners. The company reported that its Christchurch station successfully rebroadcast the Cathedral service and organ recital. The volume was excellent, and the clarity at the outset was fair, but improved later. This was a noteworthy achievement in the direction of long-distance short-wave reception and relaying on the part of the Broadcasting Company. The conditions were not favourable for the reception of the proceedings at the Albert Hall.

NUMBER OF AMATEUR RECEIVING-STATIONS.

It has been the experience that the opening of large broadcasting stations gives a remarkable fillip to the applications for radio receiving licenses. For example, when the Wellington station was opened, on the 16th July, 1927, holders of receiving licenses in the Wellington Radio District numbered 3,835. At the end of September, 1927, the number had increased to 9,579, and at the 31st December last there were no less than 14,454 holders of radio receiving licenses in the Wellington district. At the 31st March, 1928, the number had increased to 15,077.

On the 16th July, 1927, the total number of radio receiving licenses issued in the Dominion was 21,059. At the 30th September, 1927, this number had increased to 30,219. At the 31st December, 1927, it had reached 38,125, and at the 31st March last the total approached the 40,000 mark. There were also material increases in the numbers of radio-dealers.