

RADIO BROADCASTING.

With a view to establishing a first-class radio broadcasting service throughout the Dominion, provision was made in the Post and Telegraph Amendment Act, 1924, for the Minister of Telegraphs to enter into an agreement for any period not exceeding five years with any person or company who, in consideration of certain payments, agrees to undertake and maintain a broadcasting service to the satisfaction of the Minister. Under the scheme a broadcasting licensee is required to erect a 500-watt broadcasting station in each of the four radio districts—Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, and Wellington. A broadcasting station may be used only for matter of educative, informative, or entertaining character, and a service of a minimum duration of twelve hours **weekly** (excluding Sunday **transmission**) is required to be maintained by each station.

A broadcasting company is at present in the process of formation, and it is hoped that in a few months' time "listeners-in" will be enabled to enjoy programmes much in advance of anything that has hitherto been available. Until the new company materializes, arrangements have been made for the existing stations at the four centres to continue broadcasting on payment to each of these stations by the Department of a subsidy of £15 per week.

AMATEUR WIRELESS LICENSES.

In view of the operation of the broadcasting regulations from the 1st of April, 1925, it was necessary to terminate all licenses on the 31st March. From the 1st April, 1925, the annual fee for a radio receiving-station license is raised from 5s. to £1 10s. This is rendered necessary by the fact that payment has now to be made to the broadcasting companies for services rendered. Radio receiving licenses, which hitherto have been issued **only** from the General Post Office, Wellington, may **now** be obtained at any money-order office in the Dominion.

WIRELESS PRESS NEWS TO SHIPS AT SEA.

During the latter part of 1924 arrangements were made to forward daily to ships at sea a wireless message containing Press news. The service commenced on the 12th January, 1925. The message, which is prepared in the General Post Office, contains from one hundred to two hundred words of New Zealand news, and is broadcasted from Radio-Awanui on a wave-length of 2,000 metres. The service is free of all charges, and is available to all ships and coast stations within range. Information has been received that the **message** is accepted and posted up for public information on the majority of ships in the Pacific trading with New Zealand, and the **news** contained therein is much appreciated by passengers.

REDUCED CABLE RATES.

During the year a considerable reduction was made in the rate for cable messages exchanged with Canada and Europe. The ordinary rate to Great Britain and Ireland was reduced by 5d. per word. The rates to Belgium, France, Germany, Holland, and Switzerland were reduced by 6d. per word by both the Pacific and the Eastern routes, and to other places in Europe the reduction per word was 5d. via Pacific and 6d. via Eastern. The charge on full-rate messages to Canada was lowered by 3d. per word. In all cases a proportionate reduction was made on British Government and deferred messages. The concessions represent a reduction of between 16 and 18 per cent., and should have the effect of appreciably stimulating cable traffic. The rates for daily letter and week-end messages were not, however, altered in any way.

INLAND NIGHT LETTER-TELEGRAMS.

The inland night letter-telegram may be regarded as one of the most popular innovations ever introduced by my Department. It is evident that these telegrams are greatly favoured for social purposes, and that the business man also is using the system extensively. The number of night letter-telegrams forwarded last year was 215,473, which produced a revenue of £10,535; these figures represent an increase of 103 per cent. in the number of this class of telegram forwarded last year, and an increase in revenue of 99 per cent.