FROM AN AUSTRALIAN COMMERCIAL OPERATOR

Editor, RADIO NEWS:

In the September issue of your excellent journal, an article appeared entitled: "A Commercial Operator's Viewpoint," by Mr. F. Howe.

Mr. Howe seems to have a poor opinion of British radio, therefore the object of this letter is to defend it. The distance Mr. Howe states having received 2LO, using four tubes, is less than 2LO's range for a two-tube set. It may interest Mr. Howe to learn that London has been received in Sydney, Australia, and this city is about as far from London as it is possible to get on land.

Your correspondent says that British stations have very poor receivers and tells us the distance he works GKU (Devizes radio). British ships on the way to Australia via Cape Town, work this "inefficient" station south of the Equator, and a similar distance when on the Suez track. The latest British marine installation he criticizes—presumably the 1½-k.w. Marconi quenched spark set—is at least equal to the Standard 2-k.w. quenched spark set on American vessels, in appearance, workmanship and performance.

All the ships fitted with the Marconi Q.G. sets running to Australia, work long distances throughout the voyage.

As for the old Marconi rotary spark set—ridiculed by Americans and others—one of these sets hold a world's ship to shore distance record.

This set is fitted on a British ship trading from Sydney to San Francisco, and every voyage for years this ship has held communication with KPH (Bolinas), two-way traffic every night up to a distance of 5,200 nautical miles, and TR's, and direct QSL up to 5,964 miles.

TR's have been sent from the ship right across the distance from Sydney to San Francisco, but as only a single tube was used on the ship, KPH was not heard direct beyond the 5,964 miles. This means that 1,200 miles were added to the 5,964. Had the ship been fitted with the receivers using as many tubes as American ships often have, then, doubtless, the two-way communication would have held over the enormous distance of 7,000 nautical miles.

This is no "freak" working, but consistent long-distance communication taking place every voyage.

Of course, great credit is due to the coast station KPH, but the ship had to put it out before it could be received, and the same ship has worked long distances with Australian and New Zealand stations, and these are mostly one-tube receivers. Such is one of the many examples of efficient British radio telegraphy.

Two other items worthy of mention are two radio circuits operating in the Pacific. One is the Townsville (Queensland)-Rabaul (New Guinea) circuit. The distance between these two points is approximately 980 miles and C.W. tube sets with a power of 2-k.w. is used. The other—Awanni (N. Z.)-Apia (Samoa), a distance of 1,500 miles—is covered by a medium powered spark set. Both these circuits work a heavy traffic service in daylight under tropical conditions throughout the year.

Perhaps, when Mr. Howe has taken more than those three trips across the Atlantic, he will be good enough to give British radio the credit it deserves.

In conclusion, the writer wishes to say that some of the American coast stations are wonderful workers and, perhaps, the most popular are KPH, WCY and WIM.

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