Small Experimental Station Failure Caused Beginning Of Radio Programs

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Growing out of the effort of faculty members and students of the engineering college, who, in the fall of 1923 built and operated a 200 watt station, WCBC, radio broadcasting at the University last year had increased to the extent that 12 programs were sent through the air; they included 48 four-minute talks by administrative officials and faculty members, and various numbers by musical organizations and students of the School of Music.

The little station, the culmination of considerable effort on the part of the designers and operators, was considered unrepresentative of the University and the equipment only experimental; consequently a plea was made for an appropriation of $20,000 and an annual stipend of $3,000 with which might be constructed and maintained an adequate station. Upon the failure to obtain such a budget, radio activities were momentarily suspended.

However, the year previous to the experimental effort of 1923, responding to the demand for speakers coming from educational centers, the extension division of the University had co-operated with station WWJ by furnishing numerous speakers from the faculty, and these two practical demonstrations of the value of such programs to radio listeners throughout the state lead Edward H. Kraus, dean of the Summer session and dean of the College of Pharmacy, to investigate the possibilities of having a commercial station broadcast from the University.

The result was the broadcasting last year by the Jewett Radio corporation and the Detroit Free Press. In order that the programs might appeal to as large an audience as possible the educational features were balanced by musical numbers, frequently made possible through the co-operation of the School of Music. According to Waldo Abbot, of the rhetoric department, who has been program manager for the past two years, more than 2,000 lettes of commendation were received from the radio audience during last season's broadcasting.

The success of the previous years resulted in the initiation this fall of a second series of 14 Michigan Night programs, and at the conclusion of the broadcasting all of the talks kiven during the year will be incorporated into a booklet which will be forwarded to all those who request copies.

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