

A SOUTH AFRICAN scientist has recently been conducting experiments in connection with the adaptation of radio as a rain-maker. He propounds the theory that transmitting stations set up powerful artificial gravitation areas which affect the surrounding atmosphere to such an extent that rain and rough weather result. He prophesies that in the course of time the etherical stress will result in atmospherical violence of such a nature that within two years the Beam system in its present form will have to be abandoned.

IT is reported that ships returning from the Arctic have brought reports of reception conditions in the most northerly parts of Canada, and it is pointed out that there are now very few trading posts there not possessing wireless sets. The post at Bernard Harbour, in the North-west Territories, holds the record for good reception conditions. Seven British broadcasting stations are received regularly at good loudspeaker strength. The Japanese station, JOAK, and Brisbane, Australia—at a distance of 9000 miles—have also been received clearly.

WATCHES may soon be set automatically by radio if the plans of an America timepiece manufacturer are successful. There is a race between this firm and a German concern to produce the first radio-regulated timepiece suitable for general use. If this is accomplished, the watch of the future will keep observatory time as long as it is running.

THE B.B.C. are taking prompt steps to track down an unknown "pirate" transmitting station which has been annoying listeners by broadcasting vulgar songs and jokes. As there are several thousands of amateur transmitters in England, the field has to be narrowed down, and thus a special van fitted with a direction-finding apparatus has been commissioned to trace the offender.

THE introduction of colour into television transmissions was recently carried out successfully in America. It is claimed that it is now possible to add colour without complication, and, while the size of the pictures are still limited to that of a postage stamp, it is stated that it would not be difficult, though more expensive, to reproduce coloured pictures on a larger screen.

THE Paris-Orleans Railway has temporarily abandoned the idea of establishing a regular service of broadcast reception on express trains. Experiments have been conducted since 1923, but it is now realised that atmospherics and other extraneous noises have still to be overcome before a reliable service is possible.

THE city of Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, recently held their first annual Rodeo to bring back bygone days when six-shooters, cowboys, and sayuses abounded. This exhibition was arranged by the local radio station, from which the sports announcer gave a running commentary on the bronk riding, calf roping, and steer riding, which made up the three days' programme.

PAUL ROBESON, the famous coloured artist, well known in New Zealand for his popular gramophone recordings of negro spirituals, is said to

be numbered among the few performers who have signed a four-figure contract with the British Broadcasting Company. Though circumstances have made him both actor and singer, he was originally a lawyer by profession, and once played for the All-American Rugby team for two seasons.

TWENTY-FIVE years after taking Scott to the Antarctic for the first time, his stout little barque, the "Discovery," is again there. But with what a different equipment! Wireless, a direction finder, and an aeroplane. The radio apparatus includes a 1½ kilowatt "quenched spark" transmitter and a special shortwave set.

THIRTY complete trains, ten carriages to a train, recently left Chicago with 15,000 employees of the Majestic Radio Company. The occasion was that of the company's annual picnic, and over 30,000 people in all travelled by train. 10,000 others also made the trip in 900 automobiles and charabancs. Athletic events, concerts, boxing matches, baseball games, and other events of interest were arranged for the entertainment of this huge multitude. The whole outing was carried through to a very successful conclusion, and was unanimously voted the most enjoyable ever held by the company.

THE recent death of Welsbach, the inventor of the gas mantle of that name, recalls Dr. Lee de Forest's statement that it was the effect of the discharge of his spark coil on an incandescent Welsbach mantle which caused him to begin the investigation which led to his utilising a "grid" in a valve. The first "grid" was not a "grid" at all, but a piece of tinfoil wrapped round the outside of the valve. In later models it migrated to the inside and assumed the gridiron form, which has led to its name. A strange coincidence was that De Forest's first experimental bulbs were made by a lampmaker named McCandless!

IN order to provide revenue for the broadcasting services, a decree has been made in Spain imposing license fees upon listeners. The fees are not heavy, but are probably commensurate with the value of the programmes. On a crystal set the Don will have to pay the equivalent of 2s. 8d. per annum. He may pay this sum in quarterly instalments. We wonder what will happen when the Don adds a valve amplifier to his crystal!

AN American company are perfecting a high-frequency apparatus for sterilising the eggs of the codlin moth and other insect pests. Aerials are strung above the infected areas, and the plant surfaces subject to egg deposits are charged for a few moments

each morning. The high-frequency current is also claimed to stimulate growth. The aerial system is energised by a 3 kilowatt rotary spark transmitter operating on a frequency of 101 kilocycles. When one considers the increase in radio activities towards the close of summer, one wonders if the above is not a satisfactory explanation of that well-known mystery concerning the unknown destination of the flies in winter time.

YET another test has been made to discover whether it is possible for a person to convey his thoughts to others at a distance, merely by concentrating his mind on some object or idea. This time the optimist was a former pupil of Houdini, the "hand-cuff king." He sat before the microphone and concentrated on a name, a number, and a diagram. The result is not yet known, but it can be guessed.

DURING the present year six lightships and nine lighthouses round the Irish coast have been equipped with radio receivers, and seven sets have been placed at similar points round Scotland and England. Statistics show that the average daily number of hours these sets are used is six for lightships and four for lighthouses. Letters received from the keepers express a deep appreciation for these installations, and sincere gratitude for the tremendous difference radio makes in their lonely lives.

IT is reported that a scientist has been receiving radio signals from the human body, as high-frequency electrical fields are alleged to result from muscular contraction. It is to be wondered whether if all the Boy Scouts at the recent Wellington Jamboree had contracted their biceps simultaneously the resultant "field" would have jammed 2YA.

AN important contract has been secured recently by the Marconi Wireless Company for the large extension of the Polish broadcasting organisation, which, following the British example, is to be remodelled to provide alternative programmes. The new equipment will comprise a 120-kilowatt aerial input broadcast transmitter, two high-power regional stations with 16 kilowatts aerial input, and three local relay stations. When the work is completed it is confidently anticipated that Poland will possess one of the most modern and efficient broadcasting services in the world.

THE number of "lookers-in" on television broadcasts in America has been estimated at twenty thousand. The manufacture of receivers for this purpose is increasing rapidly, and the daily schedule of visual image transmissions are becoming much more frequent. The art of television at its present stage of development may be compared with the progress attained by sound broadcasting in 1920. Probably, however, the technique of visual transmission will advance more rapidly than in the case of sound broadcasting, since many of the difficulties solved in the case of the latter, are applicable to the former.

Have you obtained your copy of the
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