

**CONTINENTAL** and English police officials recently held a conference at Scotland Yard to discuss plans for the creation of an international flying squad of police aeroplanes. The planes would be fully equipped with wireless installations, and thus in times of emergency the widespread police forces of Europe would be brought into closer touch with each other. Plans have also been discussed recently for the utilisation of the latest developments in television for the improvement of international police investigations.

**QUITE** a queer explanation for variations in frequency has been given by the Coney Island station, WCGU, New York. The station aerial is situated only 75 feet from the seashore, and it is stated that as the tide rises and falls, so the wave-length varies between 210 and 211.6 metres. The idea is ingenious, and the engineer responsible for it certainly deserves commendation, for it is not everyone who could have caught old Father Neptune interfering with the frequency of transmission!

**COMMANDER BYRD**, the Antarctic explorer, gathered his expedition together a few weeks ago to exchange messages with their friends in New York, twelve thousand miles away. The leader's message was clearly heard in New York, and the applause of those present at the function was instantly transmitted back to Antarctica. Commander Byrd thus had the unique experience of hearing his own speech cheered by people at practically the farthest limits of the earth!

**IS** it our imagination, or are people becoming less and less sensitive to sound? It is noticeable, for example, that several gramophone firms are recording at much greater strength than formerly. Again, many people nowadays when listening to a piece of soft music from a gramophone or a radio set, are unable to appreciate it in comfort unless the volume is increased. It appears as though we are gradually losing the finely-sensitive hearing once possessed by our jungle ancestors, for whom every tiny sound had a significance. It may be that the clamour of motor-bikes, electric drills, and all the varied cacophony of everyday life, has so deadened our faculty of hearing that quiet sounds are now beyond the focus of intelligent listening.

**IT** is surprising to note how radio has advanced in popularity in Germany during the past year or so. It is not very long ago that Germany was regarded as distinctly backward in the matter of radio broadcasting. However according to figures published just recently, the number of licensed listeners in Germany at present is roughly 2,800,000, an increase during the past twelve months of over 600,000. In view of the fact that the Germans are regarded as one of the most scientific nations of the world, this past backwardness is surprising. The cause may be found in the lack of an efficiently-organised broadcasting service.

**FOR** some time past in the Middlesex Hospital in London, professors have been experimenting to discover the effect of music on human blood pressures. A gramophone and a wide variety of records were used, about eighty people in good health submitting themselves for the tests. Even emotional and powerful music had no detri-

mental effect whatsoever, and in practically every trial, the experiment was beneficial. It is now thought that music may have a marked medical value, and if this is true, radio will have still another achievement to its credit.

**DENES VON MIHALY**, the Hungarian radiovision expert, was in London recently seeking permission to co-operate with the British Broadcasting Corporation with regard to his new radiovision outfits. It is understood that these are now being used in Germany, the small ones costing £2 10s. and the larger ones £5. He stated that he had negotiated with a well-known English company, whose directors were willing and anxious to manufacture and sell his sets. The sets are fool-proof, and he hopes in due course to be able to demonstrate them to English officials.

**RECENTLY** a conversation was carried on by means of telephony between officials in London and operators in an aeroplane flying over the State of New Jersey, 3000 miles away. This seemingly impossible feat was made practicable by the linking up of a large number of land and air stations. The conversation was maintained via London and Rugby, then transmitted on low frequency to Houlton, Maine, and from thence it was relayed to New Jersey. The wireless operators there established communication with the aeroplane, and the circuit was thus completed.

**MANY** Continental broadcasting stations are now installing Fultograph transmitters for the purpose of broadcasting still pictures. Prague, Brussels, Budapest, Madrid, and five others are all now "on the air," and most of the transmissions are easily receivable in England. Judging by the success of this picture transmission, it is now certain that this invention has great potentialities, and in a short time it will probably be adapted to serve many different purposes.

**IT** has been stated that in America, where broadcasting is in the hands of private enterprise, one particular concern spent a million pounds in one year on programmes. American listeners, in spite of such enormous expenditure of which the above is an example, are not required to pay any license fee whatsoever, whereas listeners in the majority of other countries provide revenue for the maintenance of a broadcasting service. It must be remembered, however, that enormous sums are expended by private companies in America on advertising per medium of radio. This outlay would obviously not be borne by the advertisers themselves, but would be derived by an increase of prices, an unfair system which taxes both listener and non-listener alike. Considering both

methods, the distinct advantage of a ban on advertising is apparent.

**ONE** of the latest "stunts" in England is the "phantom" orchestra. A band is on the stage playing a popular tune when suddenly one by one the players put down their instruments and leave the stage. The instruments, however, continue to play, and the effect is undoubtedly most uncanny. The explanation of this "stunt" is that the source of the music throughout the performance is a gramophone record to which is attached a pick-up device. The current from the pick-up is amplified in the usual way, and wires are connected from a loud-speaker to the stands on which the musical instruments are placed. These convey the sound vibrations which convert each instrument to a loud-speaker for the particular tones required.

**THE** chief announcer of a big station in the United States on opening his enormous mail one morning recently, found therein a letter which immediately focused his attention. It was from a lady-listener, and although addressed to him by name, its contents appeared to concern his fellow-announcer, whom it condemned in no uncertain terms. His voice was an affront to listeners, his manner atrocious, his pronunciation incorrect—altogether he was a most undesirable person. With undisguised glee, the senior announcer went to his colleague and threw the letter in front of him, saying, "Read that!" He did, with his face growing longer and longer. Suddenly he said quietly, "Have you read the postscript?" and handed it back. His colleague took the letter and read: "And as for you, you are much worse than the other guy in every way." Despite this incident, there is no doubt whatever that in America certain an-

nouncers have a wonderful and widespread popularity, and this is probably due to their complete lack of formality and their obvious friendliness in their announcing.

**IF** Dr. Julius Klein, U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce, is correct in his estimate, the wireless business has a glorious future. On the basis of five listeners to every set, Dr. Klein sees a potential world market for 200,000,000 radio receivers. A recent survey by the Department of Commerce showed that there are about twenty million sets already in use, two-thirds of this number being in the United States.

Lest the radio trade should grow despondent at the prospect of reaching saturation point, it should be noted that Dr. Klein has not allowed for wear and tear of existing sets.

**THE** new German liner, the Bremen, while crossing the Atlantic on her maiden voyage, effected simultaneous two-way communication with three American stations during the last two days of her trip. During the whole of the voyage, 50,000 words were used during communication, and wireless traffic was so heavy that the operating staff will have to be eventually increased to ten. Two further operators will be required when provision is made for picture transmission. One hour's telephony was transmitted each day, and this was rebroadcast by the Berlin wireless station to provide a novel entertainment for listeners.

**A** RUSSIAN radio engineer, named Gordejev, who has been experimenting for some time on short-wave transmissions, has discovered totally "blind spots" in the southern part of Russia, writes a correspondent. In a triangle bounded by Odessa, Batoum and Feodosia (Crimea) short-wave reception was found impossible, although signals on medium and long waves were easily obtainable. At Feodosia itself no difficulty was registered.

In order to investigate these peculiar conditions the Soviet authorities have equipped a small steamer, the "Grusia," with the necessary radio equipment, and tests are made throughout the day and night on both 20 and 40 metres with an energy of roughly 20 watts in the aerial. The "Grusia" recently left Batoum, and in short stages will follow the coast line of the Black Sea.

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