

Snapshots of Sound

PICTURES BY RADIO

(Continued from page 8).

cause of what he said in 1932." The feature then gave the recording of the President's Des Moines speech.

There was only one drawback to the scheme. The NBC, the great radio network of the United States, would not take the features because it had a rigid rule that no stations linked up with it must use recorded work.

The reason for this rule was not given by Mr. Dobbs, but it was not difficult to deduce it. The NBC would have millions of dollars sunk in land-lines and huge central studios. The value of this investment would be much depreciated if events could be recorded on the spot and mailed out to the stations, so that the actual relaying of events by the NBC would be almost worthless.

Ultimately a special sound crew of Pathe News men were engaged for recording these features. They sound-recorded dives in submarine: the orders, the slamming of hatches, the sound of the air going out, the men singing out the depths as the submarine went down.

They sound-recorded conversations between a government meteorological plane 15,000 feet up and the weather men on the ground; the sound story of forest fire-fighters; the arrest of a rum-running ship by coastguard cutters.

Sometimes the sound-recordings gave unusual effects. Once they recorded bombing squadron manoeuvres at Port Levenworth. One heard the plane coming down to drop the bomb and the actual explosion, which sounded like nothing so much as the crushing of a strawberry box.

The commandant at the field called them up afterwards to congratulate them. It was the only time, he said, that the sound of bombs exploding had been truly recorded just as it sounded.

Yet that recording was not a success. It was not a success because it didn't sound like bomb explosions to the people who heard it. They knew that bombs went off with a bang.

To-day, says Mr. Dobbs, there is a strong trend for radio to go to Hollywood. Three or four years ago hardly any programmes originated in Hollywood. Now the Bing Crosby and Bob Burns concern, the Kraft Music Hall, Chase and Sandborne Hour, the Shell Chateau and others have gone there. All the leading talent is in Hollywood to-day, because the radio people have gone into the movies. And the radio companies have had to bring their microphones there too.

IN France crystal-set owners do not pay as much for their licences as valve-set users. For crystal sets 15 francs per annum is demanded. There are 67,369 of these licences in use. Valve-set users make up by far the greater part of French listeners, there being 3,642,944 of these out of a total of 3,926,902. These pay 50 francs each. Receivers used for free public listening contribute the sum of 100 francs per licence, while if a charge is made for listening, 200 francs is payable.

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1/4/38

NOTICE TO RADIO ENTHUSIASTS

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ON SALE AT ALL BOOKSELLERS.

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