

Sales mean Service

American Methods

for

New Zealand Market

COMING direct from one of the largest American radio manufacturing concerns, Mr. G. J. Menon had some interesting observations to make when we were talking with him a few days ago. In the States radio is conducted on colossal lines. Only recently we published figures that showed that almost one person in every two had a set, and this great development has taken place in the course of five or six years.

In the earlier days of radio, Mr. Menon told us, a very large number of small dealers sprang up. In some cases they knew a great deal about radio, in others very little. But when the American public took radio to heart it became not only a selling proposition but, to use their own expression, "the set must be kept sold."

This means that every big radio organisation must keep an efficient service organisation, so that the customer is satisfied not only the week he buys his set but so long as he owns one. Radio has become such an advanced science that only a relatively small number can concentrate on the technique necessary to keep a set in successful operation. It is recognised that no longer can the amateur or the self-trained, half-qualified service-man keep a set operating satisfactorily.

THE industry has realised, too that valve replacements and other minor adjustments must be made regularly, and the only way to do this is to have an organisation that is not only properly organised but has attached to it properly equipped and skilled men.

When a consumer buys a receiver, facilities are arranged whereby he can contact the factory directly he experiences trouble. They immediately communicate with their nearest out-pit channel and a service-man is quickly upon the scene. It was to organise the New Zealand branch of his business on these lines that Mr. Menon came to this country.

Distribution in America is on altogether different lines from what it is here. It may or it may not be known that electricity is supplied, not through public bodies, such as power boards, but through private and often competing companies. In order to invite consumers to use more electricity, large showrooms and retail businesses are opened. Everything from refrigerators and radios down to coffee perco-

lators are sold by these companies. They, too, maintain a staff who can readily be called upon to keep the device in working order. Furthermore, as far as radios are concerned, they maintain one very highly-paid technician whose duty it is to take new receivers, pull them to pieces, and bring out an extensive report. This report is then placed before the directors, who decide whether the line will be marketed. These big

companies can then be relied upon to sell only first-grade radios, and once they are sold, to keep them working. In this manner many of the problems that are troubling New Zealanders at the present time are overcome.

The cost of receivers is, of course, very much lower in America than it is here. The set for which we have to pay £40 can be bought in the States for just over £20. This can be accounted for by the fact that the import duty is about 50 per cent. "Still," added Mr. Menon, "the American public has to be 'sold.' It is as hard to sell one of these £20 sets as it is one of the more highly-priced combinations."

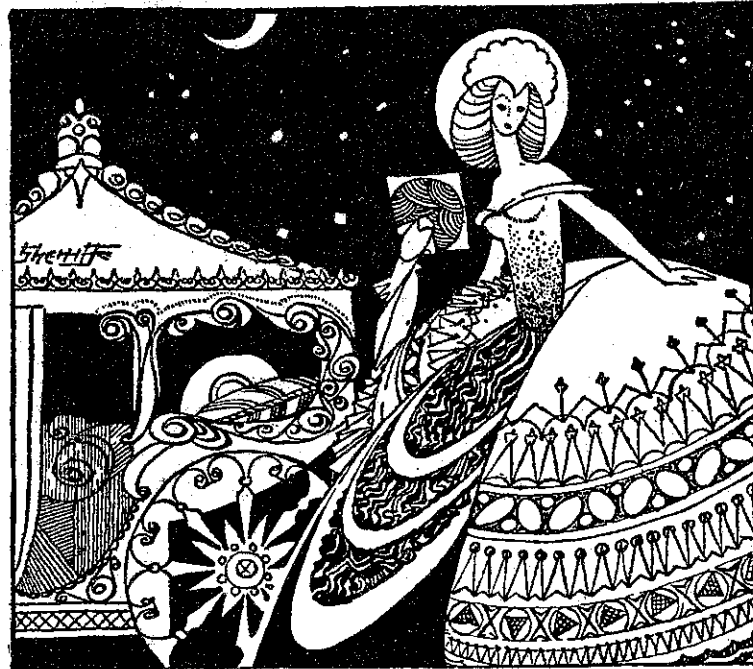
This remark raised a further query concerning American sales methods, and we learned that a short time ago a man would go into a store wanting a pair of socks and come out with a pair of shoes that he did not want. "The Yankees are beginning to realise that this is not good business. That man is a lost customer, and now the idea is to sell a man what he wants and keep him satisfied."

Tremendous sums are spent on advertising. On a rough estimate £2/10/- is required in this field alone to sell every radio set. "It comes to us over the air, through the newspapers, on hoardings, and everywhere you can think of," added Mr. Menon.

WHICH remark, of course, readers can imagine, raised the old question of advertising over the air. "What really do you think of advertising over the air?" we asked.

"I don't like it. It is nauseating. The bigger companies are beginning to realise this, and advertising now goes over very subtly and there is very little of it. We call these programmes 'sponsored' and they are very well received. Without some system such as this it would be quite impossible to maintain a high programme standard.

(Continued on page 2.)



"Cinderella Up-to-Date"

A pantomime arranged and adapted by

ERIC F. B. WATERS and "L.C.B."

Presented by

"THE PANTOMIMISTS"

Assisted by

Reg. Morgan and his Orchestra, and--

JOCK LOCKHART,

Scottish comedian.

From IYA

December 26