

Sales and Service

(Continued from Page 1.)

We not infrequently hear Stokowski (conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra), and his broadcasts are worth 2000 dollars (£400) a minute, so you can quite readily understand how the advertising cost of each receiver is taken up. Direct advertising is tolerated by certain sections of the community, but the middle and upper classes simply refuse to have it coming direct. In some of the smaller local stations it is greatly in evidence, but on the bigger chains direct advertising has almost disappeared.

WE were surprised to learn that many families have two and three sets. Of course it is more or less understood when they cost only £20 a-piece and that the time-payment system has a strong hold in the States. "It is not uncommon to go into some of these larger households," said Mr. Menon, "and hear the daughter listening to jazz, the son to a ball game, and the old people to some old-time songs."

Selectivity Problems.

IN the States there are some 500 broadcasting stations, and some of these are on tremendous power. One wonders that any programme can be heard with this terrible maze, but it appears that in all but a few ill-favoured locations a wide range and variety of stations can be tuned in. With this large number of stations many must operate on the same frequency at the same time, but these stations are scattered right round the Continent, so that only in a very few locations do two stations on the same wavelength clash to make an incomprehensible burble.

Each station, or group of stations, must be separated by 10 kilocycles, and this means that the modern set must be capable of a 10 kilocycle separation. It also means that the broadcasting station must be very sharply tuned. "It is remarkable," added our guest, "how sharply these stations send out their carriers. A 50 kilowatt station can be made to disappear with surprising rapidity and shock areas are very restricted. Imagine the chaos if you had two or three local stations that were not sharply tuned. Of course, all the big stations are crystal controlled."

Talking of selectivity and receivers raised the question of next year's set. The super-heterodyne, said Mr. Menon, had been introduced mainly on account of the selectivity problem. He was not prepared to say whether it was going to be a general characteristic of next year's model or not. "Just at present the manufacturers are sitting on the fence, and they do not know which

way to jump," he remarked. The midget sets are another problem that most manufacturers are considering. Their future also is somewhat in doubt.

The Loftin-White.

BEING interested in the Loftin-White, we asked if it was being absorbed into any of the new models. We were told that almost without exception it was not. There are certain drawbacks to the use of that amplifier. In the first place, the royalties are very high; secondly the wonderfully pure tone that it gave cannot fully be appreciated by people who clamoured for bass and heavier reproduction; and, thirdly, manufacturers consider that the life of the 45 or 50 valve will be much shorter than if used in the average set. The bias of the output valve is dependent upon the plate current of the screen-grid valve, and as this takes some time to warm up there is a period when the bias of the output valve is not present.

Talking of new season's models also raised the question of tone control. It was introduced many years ago in a different form to what it is now, and it has been reintroduced only because the public clamour to have a means whereby they can spoil their reproduction. Tone control only provides a method of cutting off the high frequency. A set with a good audio receiver will reproduce a range from 5000 or 6000 down to 50 or less. When a tone control is added a means for cutting off all frequencies above 3000 is also provided. However, by cutting off the

high frequencies one is also able to cut out a great deal of the electrical interference, which is generally just above 3000. It is for this reason that the set with the heavier bass reproduces less noise than does a set with an even response.

In the States the interference question is acute. There are so many electrical gadgets, and the country is so well reticulated with electricity, that the only solution which is available is to increase the power of the stations on one hand and by-pass the noise on the other. The former increases the difficulty of the selectivity problem and the latter provides a means for ruining the tone. "So you can quite readily imagine that radio in America is somewhat at a deadlock," remarked Mr. Menon. Arrangements have been made for three or four stations to come on the air with 100 kilowatts of power, and these should be heard in New Zealand quite well.

"Generally speaking, there will be very little alteration in the 1931 models. They will have only a few extra refinements, and probably the cabinets will be somewhat smaller, but I cannot foresee any big sweeping change," he added.

Highly-trained Staffs.

SPEAKING of the progress radio has made, Mr. Menon pointed out that there is really every facility for advancement. The big concerns maintain several laboratories with their staffs working almost in competition. When a model is produced the directors give it every consideration from the marketing point of view, and only the best are selected. This means that every refinement possible is added to a set. For this reason it seems as though radio will settle down to be a business of three or four huge concerns, who will monopolise the market. It seems as though the day of the small man, both in production and in distribution, is rapidly drawing to a close.

The Battery Set.

AS for the battery set, it is still selling, and many of the big radio manufacturers are still turning out efficient battery models. In fact a complete line, including battery sets, direct current main sets, a.c. sets, and a.c. combinations, are still being manu-

Our Mailbag

Old-time Music.

I WISH to compliment the R.B.C. on the new programmes, especially the old-time dance from Dunedin, which we thoroughly enjoyed. Would it be possible to have an old-time dance night every month? I feel sure it would be appreciated by many listeners.—Co. Mac. (Pukeuri).

A Transmitting Complaint.

I AM familiar only with the Dunedin and Invercargill B stations, but their broadcasting of records is immeasurably superior in quality to the YA stations. Is there any reason why this should be? When there is a B-class station broadcasting during the dinner music session it is almost ridiculous to turn from it to a YA station and note the contrast. From the YA stations there is no bass at all, from the B station balanced music which is a pleasure to listen to. Some months ago 2YA was fairly good for a while, but changed suddenly, and since then has been almost worse than 3YA and 4YA. As the payer of 30/- per year to the Broadcasting Company, and nothing to the B stations, might I suggest that the former try to obtain temporarily the services of one of the engineers or operators from a Dunedin B station with a view to improving matters? Can you tell me whether the Broadcasting Company follows any policy or system in the balance between bass and treble in its transmission, or is it left entirely to chance? For months until recently the 2YA Orchestra and orchestra were painful to listen to, but a few weeks ago completely changed and are now quite good. Brass bands, however, as broadcast by 2YA are still as bad as the orchestra was. From 4YA on the other hand bands are now very good. "Quality" (Hillgrove).

[The transmission from the YA stations is not left to chance. The output is measured, and the curve from bass to treble is straight. Providing a receiver is good the tone from the YA stations can be received in perfect balance.—Ed.]

factured. The out-back settler is in need of radio more than anyone else—and he needs modern radio. The d.c. screen-grid valve, although less complicated than the a.c. model, is not as satisfactory, and d.c. screen grid jobs are not as popular as are their a.c. successors. "There appears to be in New Zealand, as in America, a big market for d.c. battery sets, but the modern salesman must go out and sell them," remarked Mr. Menon in conclusion.

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