

A GERMAN scientist claims that by subjecting seeds to ultra-short radio waves he can so accelerate the growth of plants so that only half the usual time is required for them to mature.

AN ingenious young lady in London is earning her living by providing music publishers with daily statistics of the broadcasts of songs, etc., so that their relative popularity may be estimated.

ONE of the largest circuits of cinema theatres in England has been negotiating for the installation in its theatres of the necessary apparatus for showing wireless news pictures.

A NEW system of radio decentralisation is to be installed at a school in Fort Wayne, U.S.A. It comprises a receiver, an automatic gramophone, a microphone, and individual loudspeakers for each class. The studio is to be close to the headmaster's room, and programmes will be broadcast to the whole school simultaneously.

AN elaborate "Radio House" is at present under construction in Berlin, and is expected to be ready for occupation early in January. This home of broadcasting is one of the largest buildings to be constructed in the capital in recent years. The facade has a frontage of 168 yards. Above the five stories a terraced garden will be available for meetings and public concerts.

AN American radio listener named Pierce has verification cards from 740 different stations all over the world. He attributes his success to his elaborate earth system. This consists

of 15 pipes embedded in the ground in a circle, 3ft. in diameter, with a leaky motor-car radiator in the centre to keep the ground damp.

ONE thousand radio receivers, adjudged obsolete, went up in flames at Philadelphia recently. It was felt that people owning old receivers could not appreciate radio to the fullest extent, and consequently sales were adversely affected. To counteract this, they were invited to bring their obsolete sets to the bonfire, and receive generous trade-in allowances on new receivers.

AFTER six years of experiment, broadcast reception on express trains of the Paris-Orleans railway has been abandoned. It is reported that the background of atmospheric disturbances and the high level of other extraneous noises completely spoilt reception. Radio engineers attribute the failure to lack of power from the broadcasting stations.

MORE than two thousand schools in England are now equipped with radio for listening-in to the special educational broadcasts arranged by the B.B.C.



AN attempt is being made in America to preserve records of eventful broadcasts, particularly those of historical interest. It is doubtful whether the scheme will succeed, for the broadcasting authorities in London recently destroyed two hundred similar records because they were considered useless for any possible rebroadcast.

THAT the aurora borealis induces a kind of temporary paralysis on the higher frequencies was affirmed at a recent meeting of the French Academy of Science. Reports were produced showing that on a particular night in September the "northern lights" gravely affected 30-metre communications on the Paris-New York service, necessitating a change-over to 17,000 metres.

#### Poetry by Wireless

Dr. John Masefield, the Poet Laureate, in a recent address offered the opinion that broadcasting could be a great asset in the dissemination of poetry. To him it seemed a joy to speak to people 5000 miles away, and to feel that people whom he could not see might be listening to poetry and hearing sentiments which might let them go to their beds with feelings of joyfulness and happiness.

He believed that if the broadcasting authorities would co-operate with poets, England would possess one of the most remarkable schools of poetry she had had for centuries.

A LITTLE difficulty has arisen between English and French radio circles owing to the disapproval expressed by certain members of the Church in England, against the frivolous nature of the programmes broadcast by Radio Paris on Sunday. France considers that this attitude is an unwarranted intrusion upon her own affairs, and certain commercial houses are complaining against loss of revenue on certain English products which they advertise.

A NEW wireless receiving set has been specially constructed for installation in the Science Museum at South Kensington, London. Elaborate precautions have been made for the safety of visitors, for the voltage of the final stage is 1000 volts—or nearly five times that of the normal power supply from the electric mains. Only the local twin-wave transmissions are received by this set, for the object of the receiver is to establish a standard of distortionless reception.

AN American has invented an allegedly infallible method of recognising false cheques and those that have been altered. Bankers will use a special paper and ink, or both at the same time. These will contain a very minute quantity of a special chemical product which will not alter the appearance of the cheque. Upon presentation the banker will subject cheques to a small ultra-violet ray plant, and the action of these rays upon the paper will enable the cashier to determine if the cheque is false or has been altered in any way.

THE wireless telephone link between India and Great Britain is practically ready, and plans are now being made for the opening of the line between Great Britain and South Africa in the near future. This will mean that a London subscriber will be able to speak by telephone direct to Cape Town and Calcutta, as well as to Sydney and Montreal. Australian, and in the near future New Zealand, telephone subscribers, will be able to communicate via the English shortwave station with subscribers in India, Canada, or South Africa.

A FRENCH magazine has this amusing piece of news:—"Listeners' Opinions and Visions of an Announcer.—"Oh! he is an ass. He gets on my nerves! He has a voice full of feeling. When I listen to him I want to box his ears! He must be a charming man. What an unutterable poseur! I picture him as being tall, dark and clean-shaven. I bet he is rather fat with a wart on his nose, and whiskers!" Human nature being what it is, it is safe to assume that some such remarks have been passed about announcers considerably nearer home.

AN interesting analysis was recently made by the British Broadcasting Corporation of the letters received by them during 1929 complaining of electrical interference with radio reception. Expressed as percentages, the figures are as follow:—Motors driving machine tools, 23.09; accumulator charging plant, 14.12; refrigerating plant, 10.01; generating plant, mains, etc., 9.5; overhead telephone and power lines, 6.29; cinemas, 6.1; flashing signs, 4.96; H.F. medical apparatus, 1.71; miscellaneous, 2.57; unidentified causes, 21.05.

THE Technical Institute of California is about to acquire a special ray valve which is more than 6in. high and over 13in. in diameter. The Institute of Radio Research has sought to employ X-ray of more than 250,000 volts for a long time. With 40,000 it was hoped to produce rays equal in strength to that of radium, but researches were held up for want of a sufficiently strong valve. The X-rays produced with the new valve pass through a piece of lead 2in. thick. If the valve gives the results hoped of it, a new era will be opened up in the medical world and a profound change will take place in the price of radium which at the present time is almost fabulous and the monopoly of one or two companies.

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