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RADIO

Round the World

IT is surprising the number of cars that are being equipped with radio in the States, and the high degree to which the sets are being developed. Of course, conditions are so much different over there. There are dozens of powerful stations within range in all the cities, and there are no license complications to set one thinking. It is said that before long radios will be built in as part of the standard equipment of the higher-priced cars.

JUST as the typical English car is different from the American, so is the English set different from the American, but with this difference, that the radio industry is where the car industry was four or five years ago. To-day in the latter trade the differences are not so marked and it is to be expected that the radios will tend to become alike, both nations giving and taking. The typical English set has only three or four valves and uses regeneration. The Americans have from five to seven, and have discarded regeneration years ago; the Americans favour the super-heterodyne, and although English constructional journals have a great deal to say about it, manufacturers do not seem to have incorporated the circuit in new models to any extent; the Americans favour extremely small midgets, while the English still have a great deal of unused space even in their most recent models.

THE Soviet Press comments on the great success of the introduction of wireless receivers in the trains between Moscow and Leningrad. Within the past few weeks loudspeakers have been installed, by which travellers are kept informed of the names of the stations en route, and the time which will be spent at each. News, musical performances, and propaganda are also transmitted. It is understood that other train services are to be similarly fitted in the near future. Every long-journey traveller on the New Zealand railways is asking when the Railway Board intends to install radio on the expresses.

FROM a recent survey conducted in the United States it has been found that radio sets are used on the average 4.04 hours daily. This information, together with that which shows at what particular hours receivers are most in use, is of utmost value to the advertising branches of the commercial broadcasting stations in America.

MANY hitherto undisclosed secrets of the American radio industry are expected to come to light in the replies to the new questionnaire addressed to broadcasting stations by the U.S. Federal Radio Commission in preparation

for the commission's forthcoming report to Congress on the feasibility of Government ownership of broadcasting and the abolition of radio advertising. The commission first selected a "typical broadcast week" to be covered in the questionnaire, and asked stations to designate the number of hours devoted to commercial and sustaining programmes during the day and night. The commission, cautioning broadcasters to be "very accurate," asked how many hours were devoted to sales talks or descriptions of commodities advertised, the terms of contest, and the like. It asked, too, how many hours were used to advertise the business of the station owner, or that of any principal officer or stockholder.

THE Paris tramways are causing such interference with radio reception that a prominent member of the Paris City Council has lodged a complaint. It appears that the interference emanates from the car trolleys, which collect current from overhead wires. Experts state that there would be much less cause for complaint if all cars were fitted with collector bows of a certain type.

A MAN whose throat was opened by radio waves after ordinary surgical methods had failed was reported recently to the Academy of Sciences, in Paris, by the veteran experimenter in this field, Professor J. A. d'Arsonval, as a case treated by Dr. Bordier. The victim had drunk a strong solution of caustic potash, or "potash lye." The result was a severe corrosion of the tissues of the throat and esophagus so that the latter tube, connecting the mouth with the stomach, closed up entirely. The surgeon in charge of the case then made an opening directly into the stomach and the patient was kept alive by liquid food supplied through this opening. In this condition, with the esophagus altogether closed so that swallowing was impossible, the patient came to Dr. Bordier. For a period of twenty minutes each day Dr. Bordier passed through the chest at the spot where the esophagus had grown together powerful currents of high-frequency electricity of the kind used in radio and which have been applied by Professor d'Arsonval to many medical uses. After four days a tiny passage opened through the obstruction caused by the caustic scar. In a few more days the esophagus opened altogether.

IN "Broadcasting," a prominent American radio journal, De Lee de Forest, the famous inventor, says: "The sad state of the industry to-day is more due to the miserable quality of radio programmes than to any other cause. The public simply isn't listening in—

not to a degree remotely approaching that of four years ago. More receiving sets—yes; but usually unused. We have learned that the switch-off is the best part of a radio set." Dr. de Forest forecasts that this year may bring "radical changes" to meet the many protests against American broadcasting's "Defiled Commercialism."

BUILT like a Zeppelin and capable of being propelled by a regular air screw, an automobile has been designed in Iowa to carry radio artists on a "booster" tour. The road Zeppelin is equipped with powerful loudspeakers and will broadcast directly from the studio within the car. It is mounted on a standard chassis, and, in ordinary operation, is driven by the usual auto power plant. The propeller is driven by an airplane engine, however, and will push the car at a speed of about twelve miles an hour when desired. A third engine is mounted inside to provide power for the generators of the broadcasting plant. The over-all length of the vehicle is 25 feet.

THE skipper of a Grimsby trawler fishing in the Arctic was recently able to make good use of the Canadian Government's wireless service of medical and surgical aid. Apparently one of his men was washed through a scupper door, with the result that he sustained a fractured jaw and had half his scalp torn away. So the skipper sent a wireless message to the operator at the nearest Marine station, the message was sent on to Ottawa, and within an hour a reply was received advising the skipper what treatment to apply.

THE most enlightened amateur in France is the epithet won by ex-President Doumergue, who delighted radio enthusiasts during his term of office by the interest he invariably displayed in wireless matters. Now, in retirement at his home at Tournefeuille, M. Doumergue operates an ambitious receiver, and he has now accepted the honorary presidency of the Toulouse-Pyrenees Radio Society, so the ex-President is still a president.

IT was recently announced from a famous English broadcasting station that a very well-known orator was to broadcast at exactly eight o'clock in a studio which also televised its artists. As the speaker was conducted to his microphone position a few minutes before the appointed time, the engineers, unknown to the waiting orator, opened up their flying spot. Watchers peering into their television receivers saw the gentleman sit down before the mike and arrange his papers, straighten his necktie, and prepare for his speech. The watching audience saw him as he appeared visibly nervous, waiting for the signal to begin his talk. At exactly one minute to eight they were astounded to see him reach around to his hip pocket, from which he extracted a flask, and proceeded to fortify himself for his coming ordeal with a sizable gulp of liquid. For the next few days the station manager was kept busy explaining that the receptacle contained merely cough medicine—a statement which quite possibly may have been true.