



—Photo by Courtesy Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

"THE World Fair is the best thing that Chicago has ever known. Six months ago it was the most stricken city in the United States. To-day it is the most prosperous city in the country—simply because of the money that is being spent all day and every day by the visitors to the Fair."

So said Mr. Charles E. Forrest, founder and managing director of the International Radio Company (importers of National Union Valves and Jensen Speakers), and one of the most successful men in the radio game in this part of the world, to a representative of the "Radio Record" this week. Mr. Forrest, who originally started in Wellington, but later sold out and established his business in Sydney, has just returned from America where he spent a considerable time visiting the principal cities.

"It is estimated that there are half a million visitors daily to Chicago for the Fair, and that each of them spends on an average 10 dollars a day. Total that out for yourself over six months and you'll guess why the Chicago people are looking on the Fair as a gift from Heaven. Every railroad company, too, is helping the scheme along by offering return fares from any part of America for a single fare plus sixpence, on condition that the traveller returns within 10 days.

"The Fair itself is wonderful. It is designed to show a century of American progress and various courts show the advance of science and transportation and so on. There are no goods on sale—except hot dogs and beer—but many manufacturers are reporting better business as a direct outcome of the Fair. The radio sets being displayed are very much the same as the sets that are being sold in New Zealand to-day.

"Television?" Mr. Forrest smiled. "There's not a radio firm of any standing in America to-day that is selling television kits or parts. One or two of the B class stations are playing round with it, and the attempts that I saw were pretty crude. It's bound to come, of course, but, surprisingly enough, it may not be in the hands of the radio people when it does. More money is being spent by the film industry than by the wireless, and the banking house of Pierpont Morgan is working in with several talkie magnates on the perfection of television.

America

"But Roosevelt is the man that America is looking to. Until he started beating things up with his National Recovery Administration nobody cared a damn. The country was so near to revolution that it didn't matter, but, in a few short months, all that has been changed. Hundreds of department stores throughout the country were not paying their assistants any wages—just commission on sales. Roosevelt stopped all that. 'Pay them commission if you like,' he said, 'but you've got to pay a living wage, too.'

"In the radio industry wages have increased 50 per cent. I know of one little town in Indiana that was paying the workers in a radio manufacturing factory 10 to 20 cents an hour. The makers were able to transport the sets into the big cities and more than compete with the large manufacturers who were paying their employees 25 to 30 cents an hour. But all that has been changed—wages have been brought to a basic level and, while the big concerns are faced with a 50 per cent. wage increase the little 'gyp' outfits like the one in Indiana find their wage bills increased 200 to 300 per cent.

"The N.R.A. is going to have its effect on New Zealand

shortly — American goods will go up in price, radios probably about 25 per cent. Until the act came into force there wasn't one radio company in America that was working at a profit. They were not losing 100,000 dollars a year but millions. Any firm in America selling below the cost of production to-day is liable to a heavy fine, and its principals to imprisonment. The Radio Manufacturers' Association, which is a concern absolutely representative of the whole of the trade, has produced figures to show that not more than five per cent. of the total American output is exported to the whole world.

From this it can be seen that Roosevelt's legislation is far-reaching, and that his policy of no sales below production costs will have a beneficial effect on the makers of 95 per cent. of the sets sold.

"Roosevelt is out, too, to clear America of its gangsters. He has organised the Federal police to stop the kidnapping menace which has grown enormously in the last few months. Since these police have been on the job many of the biggest kidnappers have been put safely behind the bars.

"Was there a story in the papers here about a big shooting in Kansas City? It appears that a well-known gangster was being brought in by train with five police officers in charge of him. The train arrived at Kansas at mid-day and the man was being taken to a waiting car when a machine gun from a nearby car opened fire, killing the five officers and the prisoner. The ordinary police weren't able to trace the criminals, but the Federal police caught them in ten days.

"There is no organisation for the relief of distress as

Gleanings from America

MR. CHARLES FORREST TALKS ON THIS AND THAT

It is estimated that 25,000,000 people will have paid to see the World Fair before it closes at Christmas.

The film "Cavalcade" is still drawing crowded houses in New York.

Six to ten pounds is the average cost per head for an evening at one of the more select of New York's night clubs.

Charles (Buddy) Rogers, formerly a well-known film star, is running a night club in Chicago. Mr. Forrest was charged 8/- for two bottles of ginger ale at this club.

Living in America is about twice as dear as in New Zealand.

One pound a day is an ordinary charge for a hotel bedroom and bath—and there are no meals thrown in.

Anybody with a good English voice can get a job at an American broadcasting station.

Travelling by aeroplane in America is as cheap as travelling by train—and about four times as fast. The train takes 20 hours for the New York-Chicago run, a plane 4½ hours.