

Radiolys, Rue Haussman, Paris

RADIO in France is two years behind the position it holds in your country," acknowledges the French merchant, "but that is because fewer French people can afford radio sets." Nevertheless there are stores in Paris which do an excellent radio business and which in general appearance and in enterprise rank well with the better class store in America. Among these is the shop which is known as "Radiolys" on the Rue Haussman. This store is in the center of the main shopping district adjacent to the Opera and it is outstanding in its neighborhood for attractive windows and for attentive salesmen. It sells radio even to people with moderate incomes and, as its proprietor acknowledges, does an "adequate" business.

In order to appreciate its methods it is necessary to consider the radio situation in France. Broadcasting is only fair, although greatly improved in recent months. Recent government regulations are bringing about higher class programs but they also limit the right of the station to use other than French equipment where the apparatus can be obtained locally, and it is feared, therefore, that

In France

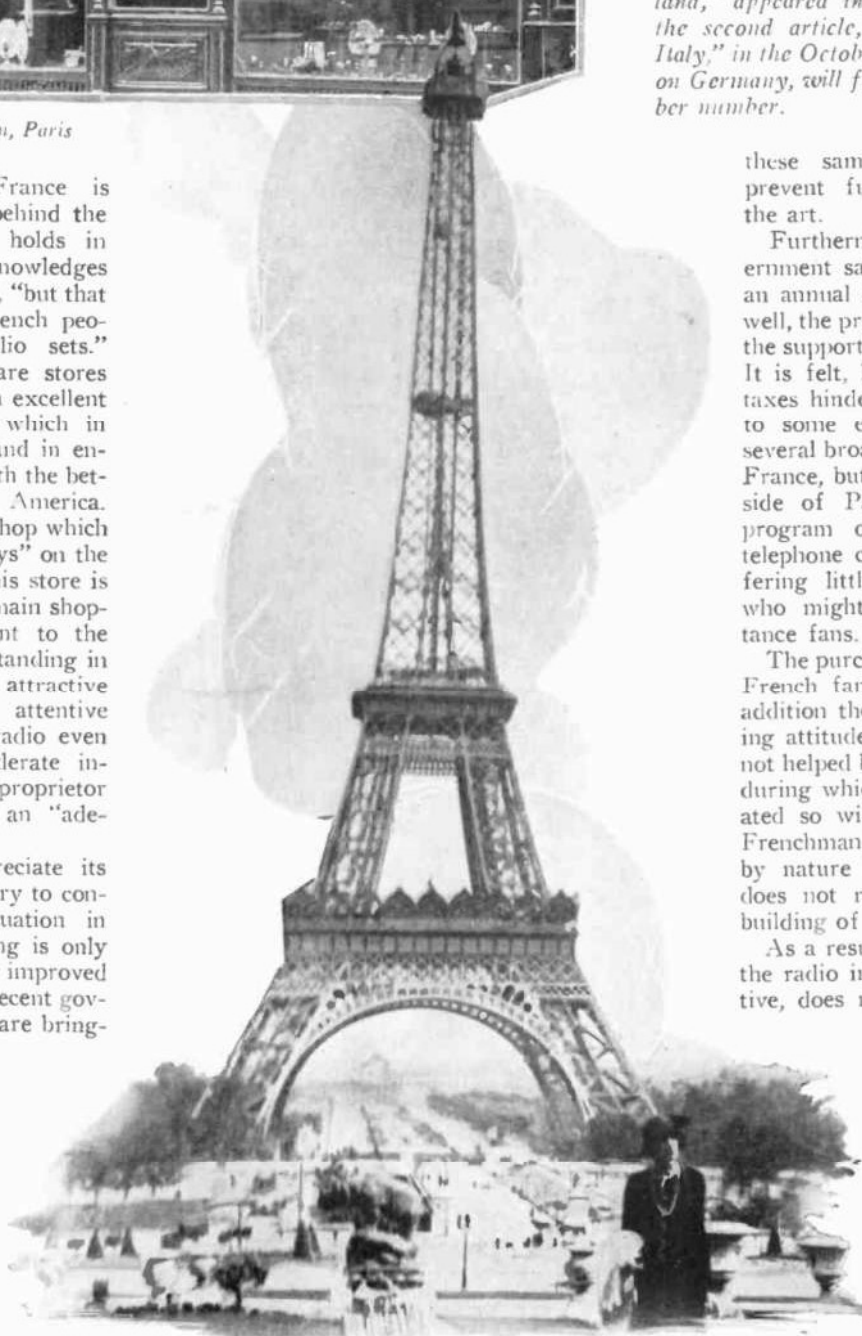
This article is the third of a series on retail methods in Europe that is being written by Clotilde Grunsky, "Radio Retailing's" Pacific Coast editor. The first article, "Retail Methods in England," appeared in the August issue; the second article, "Selling Radio in Italy," in the October issue and the last, on Germany, will follow in the December number.

these same regulations will prevent full development of the art.

Furthermore there is a government sales tax on sets and an annual operating charge as well, the proceeds going toward the supporting of broadcasting. It is felt, however, that these taxes hinder the sale of radio to some extent. There are several broadcasting stations in France, but most of those outside of Paris reproduce the program of this station by telephone connection, thus offering little variety to those who might normally be distance fans.

The purchasing power of the French family is low, and in addition the conservative buying attitude of the public was not helped by the recent period during which the franc fluctuated so wildly. The average Frenchman is not mechanical by nature either, so that he does not readily take to the building of sets.

As a result of these factors, the radio industry, though active, does not play an important part in the cross section of French economic life. There are several good radio stores in Paris, including one or two which have combined radio and photography, or other lines, and one or two de-



Dealers Face a *MONEY PROBLEM*

By C. GRUNSKY

partment stores which have started radio departments, but that is about all. Radio in the provinces is confined to the larger towns, which follow in the footsteps of Paris. This condition is not hard to understand when we realize that many of the rural districts of France have not yet come to electric light and, therefore, hardly dream of radio.

What can a shop like "Radiolys" do in the face of such conditions? Sell on time? The manager believes in allowing credit where experience shows that it is deserved, but a definite time payment is not yet a part of the French selling system and there are several reasons for it. In the first place the thrifty French custom of buying only what can be paid for does not readily accept the

Right: Cameras and radio make a balanced merchandising combination that is popular in France



of credit up to several months is not infrequent.

Does the shop send men into the field? Yes, it believes in active field work as a method of doing business. But here again, French conditions somewhat complicate the problem, for the "concierge" system, by which anyone entering a residence building must first pass the porter, is almost universal. It is said that this system was initiated by Napoleon as part of his spy system, but at the pres-

ent time it serves chiefly to annoy the householder who frequently finds himself locked out of his own dwelling—and to prevent house-to-house canvassing. Salesmen in the field, therefore, spend their time in following up store leads and in checking up on sets already in operation in order to develop further business with definite requests for calls from friends of the owner.

Demonstrations are made both in the shop and in the home, as they prove desirable, and the store is thoroughly wired so that the former is quite as practicable as the latter.

"Radiolys" believes in servicing and stands back of its equipment, furnishing free service as required up to a two-year period. This feature is not so common among French firms and it stands out by its very contrast. The friendly relations which have been built up with cus-

(Please turn to page 72)



Above: Another leading Paris store

Left: A listening-in station with headphones is one of the features of this store

opportunity for going into debt. In the second place, French laws do not make the scheme desirable for the merchant for the reason, it is stated, that the article becomes the property of the purchaser on delivery, and the merchant is not given adequate protection. On the other hand, the refusal of credit always creates an unpleasant impression—and "Radiolys" suggests openly the possibility of arranging terms, reserving the right to deal with each case as conditions may dictate. A frank extension

In France, Dealers Face a Money Problem

Continued from page 57

tomers through this practice eloquently testify to its value, in the opinion of the manager.

The sets sold are largely French products because of the heavy tax on imports and the lower range of French prices, but there is a possible opening for the self-contained set of American make. At the present time the 4-tube set selling around \$65 is most popular, although the tendency is toward higher-priced sets. There is a fair demand for parts, although the sale of sets greatly predominates.

One of the interesting things done by this shop which has proved a business-getter is the selling of sets at a price which includes government tax, installation and antenna. The manager believes that the fear of future unknown expense is a greater deterrent to sales than the immediate price which the customer is considering. The guaranty of free service and the price quoted complete are two safeguards which the customer greatly appreciates.

In a home demonstration the set is allowed to remain on trial overnight if circumstances seem to warrant, but it is always called for promptly on the second day if the sale is not completed.

The value of advertising is well recognized by Radiolys and the store advertises in radio magazines, as well as by direct mail. Windows are kept attractive and changed frequently. The interior of the shop itself is very attractively arranged, with no "jumble of parts and sets" to belittle the value of the merchandise sold.

There is, perhaps, nothing which the French radio merchant has to contribute by the way of sales methods to his American colleague, but his testimony that an active sales policy combined with a service guaranty against future expense will sell radio, even under adverse conditions, is possibly of value.

Small Town Methods in the Big City

Continued from page 53

ing the fact that the aim is to make the business and store as attractive as any downtown establishment and asking for suggestions. The card reads:

THANK YOU!

Your purchase is appreciated and so we "thank you."

We hope you will patronize us again.

We aim to make our store and our business as attractive as any downtown establishment. If you can suggest any improvements, please let us know.

It is signed, of course, with the name and address of the Westwood Company. Manufacturers' literature, incidentally, is also very highly prized and kept in neat pigeon holes in a rack especially made for that purpose in the store room.

Unmack feels that what he is selling is a service rather than any one article—that is, most of all, he is a counselor in the service of the customer and it is himself in that rôle that he is endeavoring to get over to his district.

"In practice this actually works out," Unmack says. "Except in a very few instances, the customer is no specialist in radio and his judgment is usually superficial.

The radio dealer, when you come down to it, sells, as a rule, just what he tried to sell."

This is particularly true when it comes to terms. One of the features offered by the store is twelve-month terms in payment if desired. It also offers a three-month payment, however, and because this is the arrangement which Unmack himself believes in, it is a fact that very few sets are sold on the twelve-month basis. The three month system is more satisfactory than a pure cash sale, in Unmack's opinion, because as a rule it establishes a friendly contact which is likely to continue on into other relationships, whereas the cash customer is apt never to be heard from again. The man who is able to pay one-fourth of the price of the set down, with the rest in three equal monthly payments, is a good credit risk and experience has shown that no trouble in collections is to be anticipated. Conversation at this point runs about as follows:

"What terms can you give me?"

"Just as you prefer. We allow twelve months if you feel you want to take that long, but to tell the truth, most people prefer our three-month cash payment. This allows you to divide the payment into four equal parts—" and so on.

The whole policy of Unmack in operating his store is to build himself a personal place in his community—to have his neighbors respect him and come to him as a friend for consultation in regard to their needs in the field in which he is an expert.

Adapting Battery Receivers for the New A. C. Tubes

Continued from page 65

and ground terminals of the set. It may be conveniently located on the panel in place of the rheostat, since it will serve as the volume control. This type of volume control is recommended because it does not affect tone quality and because it minimizes the possibility of overloading the tubes with ensuing distortion, also for its simplicity of installation.

The above changes have doubtless left the —B and +B terminals on the battery terminal board without connection. It is suggested that these two be reserved for the B-supply connection. Resistance unit terminals 2 and 6 should be connected to the negative B and positive B terminals of the battery terminal board respectively. The primary of the power transformer might be connected to two unused terminals on the terminal board to facilitate connection to the electric light line. It is suggested that other unusual terminals be removed to avoid confusion.

Various companies are now in production on the type of filament supply transformer as specified in this article, among which is the Samson Electric Co., Dongan Electric Co., Acme Apparatus Co., Silver-Marshall, Jefferson Electric, Thordarson Electric, American Transformer Co., Harold Powers, Inc., General Radio Co., Leslie F. Muter and the National Co.

Dealers who wish to change battery sets over to a.c. operation, using the new types of tubes, but who may not have the facilities to do the re-wiring job suggested in this article, will be interested in the methods being developed by the Connewey Electric Laboratories of Hoboken, N. J., and the Radio Receptor Co. of New York City, and described elsewhere in this issue.