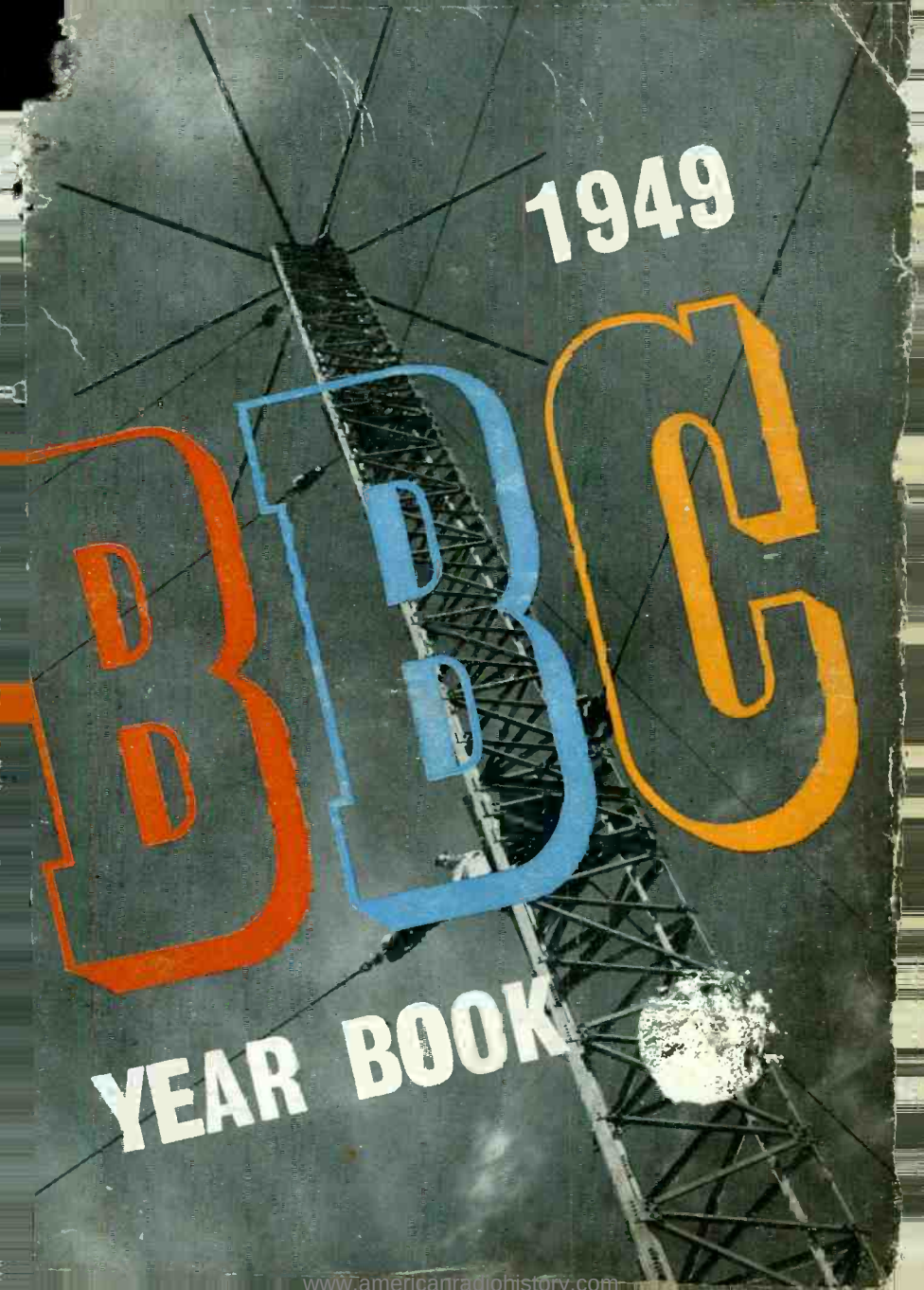

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YEAR BOOK
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CONTENTS

WHY I LISTEN TO THE BBC

RADIO ENGLISH

by Sir Ernest Gowers

In a little book that I called *Plain Words* I drew freely on the BBC for illustrations of things which, in my submission, would have been better said otherwise or not said at all. In a commendably Christian spirit the BBC thereupon invited me to contribute an article on Radio English to the *BBC Year Book*, and expressed the hope that I should be as controversial as I felt I wanted to be. I do not want to be controversial. I am one of those who think that the BBC carries out a task of consummate difficulty with amazing success. Still, what I have written I have written, and I cannot shirk the challenge.

My quotations (ten in all) included one example of the use of a threadbare cliché for the purpose of what Fowler calls 'elegant variation', several of the use of ponderous expressions where simple ones would have served—some of the use of words in senses not yet authoritatively established in this country, and one tautology. All venial errors, it may be said, and not many of them either, when one remembers the BBC's vast output of words. That is true, if the Corporation were to be judged by the same standards as ordinary folk. But they cannot be. Their power for good or ill is too great. If in what comes over the air a certain word is given a certain meaning, listeners will give it the same, and the dictionaries will eventually have to fall into line. If certain grammatical usages are habitually employed, they will pass into popular speech, and grammarians will have to adapt their rules accordingly. If stilted phrases are regularly preferred to simple ones, we shall all forget how to express ourselves in a straightforward way. Ivor Brown, commenting on a stilted phrase used by a cowman in a broadcast from a Wiltshire farm, says:

> 'We need not suppose that the cowman wished to be imposing, and to seem a fine, book-learned speaker at the "mike". He might have used the phrase any day at his own fireside, because words of this kind come pouring over the air and are inserting themselves into the common talk "unbeknownst". The Ancient Greeks had a nice phrase about the man who "escaped his own notice becoming drunk". So nowadays we escape our own notice becoming verbose.'

May it not prove that we have escaped our own notice—which is our favourite way of making important innovations in this country —creating in the BBC something like that Academy for 'correcting,

improving and ascertaining the English tongue' which Swift and other lovers of the language after him have hankered for?

We all know that the BBC are alive to the importance of accent and pronunciation, and have taken much trouble over them. They have decided that their announcers must speak with the accent that the few use everywhere, and not with one of those that the many use somewhere; they could hardly have done otherwise, even though this may lead in the end to converting our rich variety of dialect into a dull uniformity of standard speech. They have also been at evident pains to make sure that difficult words and proper names are spoken trippingly on the tongue with unimpeachable correctness. I often marvel at the skill with which it is done. Since even announcers are human, there must be occasional lapses; but though the small and dwindling band of listeners with a classical education may now and then get a surprise at such novelties as hearing Agamemnon's eldest daughter called Iphigeenyer, we can always count on hearing words of the Romance languages pronounced with a native, if not more than native, accuracy.

Are the BBC equally careful in their greater duty to protect the language itself from corruption, especially from the present epidemic of vague and sonorous abstractions that save the trouble of thought and of meretricious new-comers that try to supplant homely words? The first of these is wholly bad. The second is mostly bad, but there is always the chance that some of these newcomers may have nuances that will lead eventually to their adoption as enrichments of the language. No one, not even the BBC, can safely undertake the delicate task of deciding which should be accepted and which rejected. That will be decided by a force superior to any corporation, the force of public opinion, which seems to decide as wisely in the long run as in the short run it shows itself volatile and undiscriminating. The only safe rule for the BBC is to hold the ring, and employ only usages that have established themselves.

I do not know much about the inner workings of the BBC, but it does not need much imagination to realize that this duty cannot be easy. So much of what comes over the air is from sources independent of the Corporation. I do not know whether they polish the English of the distinguished people who give talks for them. I think they must do so, for it is generally so good; but revision must be a delicate affair; distinguished people are often touchy. Again, so much must be in appropriate vernacular. If Wilfred Pickles were to talk like Dr. Johnson he would no doubt still be most entertaining, but he would not be the Wilfred Pickles we want. The talk of the present generation must be allowed the catchwords of today if it is to be lifelike—its actuallys in every sentence, its

couldn't care lesses, couldn't agree mores, and wouldn't knows. (Whether 'I wouldn't know' is an improvement on the old-fashioned 'I don't know', I don't—or wouldn't—know; but I think that its present universal vogue must owe something to Stewart MacPherson's fondness for taking refuge in it when hard pressed by the 20-questions team). The members of the Brains Trust themselves are not always faultless; no one can be who talks extempore. Those astonishing people with even nimbler brains who hold us spellbound with descriptions of sport as it takes place can have no time for the niceties of English usage. But there is always the News, and here is the real opportunity. Everyone listens to the News, and its material comes mostly from sources specially susceptible to temptation—from the Press that finds the lure of the picturesque neologism so hard to resist and from Officialdom that likes to wrap awkward truths in the cotton-wool of verbiage so as to lessen the pain—and the reaction to pain—that is produced by the sharp edge of precision. There is plenty of scope here for translation into plain words.

This, I am sure, is done, though some ears may sometimes still be jarred. There are, for instance, those who dislike hearing 'claim' in the sense of 'assert' used daily as it is at present; it is a usage recognized by the O.E.D. only with the qualifying words 'In the U.S.A. loosely', and there are many who think that it would be better for us if it stayed the other side of the Atlantic. As to officialese, I suppose that Authority must be allowed to break bad news—it is unfortunately mostly bad nowadays—with narcotic verbosity if Authority so insists. But I feel sure that the BBC do put up a fight. Two recent episodes are possibly significant.

An eager crowd waiting in the sunshine of a June day to see Trooping the Colour cannot be told that the ceremony has been postponed on account of bad weather. They would think Authority just silly, and that would never do. But if the reason is given as 'adverse meteorological conditions' there is a chance that they may think that a superior wisdom is acting for the best. If soldiers are used to do the work of dockers on strike, the truth must not be stated bluntly, because using troops to break a strike is a naturally disagreeable thing. So it will be better, even though, as on this occasion, only the Army is used, to call them 'service personnel'. I was glad to note that in both these instances the BBC did not follow the official lead, but gave the facts plainly. That may have been an accident, but I like to think of it as an encouraging sign; for in the discharge of this great responsibility that has been thrust upon the BBC nothing is so small as to be negligible.

PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTING

by Francis Williams

Broadcasting in Britain is we say—correctly, but sometimes with a touch of self-righteousness when talking to American and other visitors—conducted as a public service. By this we mean that it is not governed by the making of private profit or run in the interests of advertisers, but solely in the public interest and without having to pay regard to purely commercial standards.

Now there are clearly certain things which a broadcasting system operated as a public service is prohibited by the nature of its constitution from doing. On the whole we are all fairly clear in our minds as to what those things are and, I think, fairly much in agreement also that the BBC conforms in this respect to the standard set.

But the administration of a public service system of broadcasting carries with it more positive responsibilities also, and it is with one particular and highly relevant responsibility that I am here concerned. This is the responsibility of a public service to undertake public service broadcasting. What is meant by this? It is necessary to define the term because in a sense—and a not unimportant sense—all broadcasting that meets a public need or satisfies a listening hunger is a public service.

To provide entertainment in great variety is a public service; certainly to make available a reliable and impartial service of domestic and international news is. To bring to listeners good music and great drama and contact with minds deeply imbued with knowledge and understanding of the cultural heritage of our nation and the world is not less so. And all these things it seems to me the BBC does: nearly always adequately and on some occasions superbly and with an average level of achievement not surpassed, except in some fields of light entertainment, by any broadcasting service in the world and seldom reached by most.

But by public service broadcasting in the strict sense I mean something narrower than this. I mean that responsibility which the BBC shares with newspapers to inform its listeners on issues of great public importance, and particularly on issues which are the subject of deep and genuine controversy, in order that these listeners—who are also members of a democracy—may be in a position to assess the facts so far as they are able and attempt to reach reasonable judgments on them.

Now because the BBC is a public service and a monopoly, its responsibility in this matter, although it is akin to that of a newspaper, differs from it in one important respect. At the same time the size of the listening public imposes upon it both opportunities and limitations such as affect no single paper.

The difference in responsibility arises from the fact that it has always been the accepted function of great newspapers not only to inform but to advise readers on public questions—the instrument of advice or persuasion being the leading article. The function of a newspaper is to state an issue plainly, to provide its readers with all the relevant evidence concerning it, to assess honestly the weight of views on one side and the other, and having done so to form its own judgment and to seek to persuade its readers with all the art and lucidity it can command that this judgment is sound.

The responsibility of the BBC is confined to the first half of this function of a newspaper—it is indeed specifically and properly prohibited under its charter from having views of its own or from broadcasting anything in the nature of a leading article.

But the BBC is subject not only to a restriction of function such as does not affect the newspaper; the nature of its service also imposes upon it at one and the same time opportunities and limitations which do not arise for any single newspaper. All newspapers appeal to a particular audience whose tastes, interests, expert knowledge of affairs, and ability to comprehend difficult and often complex issues can be judged with reasonable certainty. It may in the case of one of the popular newspapers be an audience running, when family readership is taken into account, into perhaps ten million readers. In the case of a serious newspaper it may be one of half a million or even less. But it is in each case a fairly defined audience the common denominator of whose interests and comprehension is on the whole known.

The editorial staff, if it is experienced and competent, can judge with a fair degree of accuracy the degree of sophistication that an article on an issue of public importance must possess to appeal to and be understood by the majority of their readers. They are in no danger of offering to readers of the *Daily Express* an article better suited to the more informed public of *The Times*, or of affronting the readers of the *Manchester Guardian* with one which would serve excellently in the *Daily Mail*.

How much more complex is the problem that faces the BBC when it comes to deal with public issues. Its potential audience is not half a million or even ten million, but almost the whole of the forty million or so people above the age of fourteen—and since it is a public service monopoly it must have some regard for all of them, for they are all members of the public. The common denominator which it must have in mind is one based on an assessment of almost the entire adult community—although in practice it cannot of course hope, for it would be humanly impossible, to treat any issue in such a way as to be equally interesting to and equally comprehensible by all.

The extent of the listening public and the fact that the BBC as a public service monopoly has the sole broadcasting access to it provides a dazzling opportunity to undertake the responsibility of informing the public on great issues. But with the opportunity goes the limitation imposed by all systems of mass communication—the limitation of non-selectivity. Even the most popular newspaper may well be satisfied if an article it publishes will hold the attention of a million readers. But a million listeners to a BBC talk means that radio sets have been switched off wholesale over the country. A serious analysis of current affairs published in a serious weekly review will have had a most notable and worth while success if it is read by 50,000 readers. But a mere 50,000 listeners to a radio programme in a good listening hour means a colossal flop.

This problem of non-selectivity has to some extent, of course, been met by the three alternative national programmes and the regional programmes; but even on the Third Programme the size of the audience whose interest must be held by a serious talk if it is to be successful is colossal by any non-broadcasting standard.

One further difficulty, moreover, arises out of the nature of the listening audience. This is the problem of the half-attentive listener. The vast majority of radio listening, certainly to the Light and Home Programmes although probably not to the Third, is family or group listening. In a vast number of cases the radio is turned on as a companionable accompaniment to other activities of a more or less distracting character. Now this may fit in admirably with a background of light music, with a group programme such as 'Have a Go' or a 'Quiz' in which the listening group can feel that it is participating with another group, or with a popular variety show or play; but it does not provide anything like so satisfactory a framework for a serious talk which requires a fair amount of concentration on the part of the listener.

And finally there is the problem which faces all those who would communicate ideas or information to the public. This is the problem not only of holding attention but of attracting it in the first place. Here the newspaper has two inherent advantages over the BBC, and one which, while not inherent, tends to exist because broadcasting is a monopoly public service. The first two arise from the fact that a newspaper is making a specific appeal to a particular audience and from the attention it can secure from typographical display.

The third advantage arises from a freedom which is, in part at any rate, denied to the BBC, or which it has denied itself out of a sense of responsibility to its monopoly position, and the freedom to build up stars who can attract an audience on their own account on

whatever subject, within at any rate a certain range, they are writing or speaking.

By trial and error newspapers have discovered that with rare exceptions the expert in a particular subject is not necessarily or indeed usually the person most likely to possess those gifts of lucid and pleasing exposition which will attract and hold the public interest. They have found that skill in communication—what we call style and presentation—are of paramount importance, and that readers can be persuaded to read what would otherwise appear to them a dull or difficult subject if it is handled by a professional writer whose previous writings on other subjects they know, and whose personality and style they find attractive. The American radio companies have made great use of this same fact in building up star commentators.

The BBC to a very large extent denies itself this means of attracting listeners in the field of public service broadcasting, although it has employed it, of course, very successfully in the realm of entertainment and in that field has established many commentators with a large personal following. But in public service broadcasting it has been shy—perhaps too shy although one sees the hazards—of doing so because of the fear on the one hand that a regular professional commentator on public affairs may come to be regarded as expressing the views of the BBC itself and thus as an infringement of its obligation not to hold or express a view of its own or that alternatively he may by the accident of being a good broadcaster be built up into a political and public figure to an extent that would justify criticism.

I have set out the limits within which, as it seems to me, the BBC has to function in its public service broadcasting because it is only against such a background that one can either properly assess what is already being done or consider what might be done. Of course not all the disadvantages are on the BBC's side. It has the immense advantage that comes from being an instrument of the spoken word which very many people find much easier and more attractive than the written word, and the advantage also that it can present the actual living clash of ideas in debate and bring, when need be, greater actuality to the spoken word by a dramatic illustration.

Yet the limitations remain. They are important. They provide the framework within which public service broadcasting must operate, and the BBC is not justly to be criticized, as it sometimes is, for failing to do things which such a framework does not allow.

But has it carried out its responsibilities within the realm of public service broadcasting as efficiently and imaginatively as this framework allows? I think that a year or two ago the answer would have been 'no'. Now I think it 'yes' though with some qualifications.

I would say that on the Third Programme this responsibility has been accepted with courage, imagination, and a most welcome respect for the listener's intelligence—although I suspect, without being sure, that more attention needs to be paid to the technique of presenting serious issues even to a serious-minded and attentive audience, and that the audience for such talks and discussions even on the Third Programme may not be rising as it should and may even be declining. This is not an argument for lowering the quality and content of such programmes, but for more careful coaching of speakers and also for considering perhaps whether many of them would not hold attention better if their talks were somewhat shorter.

On the Home Programme 'Questions of the Hour' and 'Friday Forum' have, I think, maintained on the whole an excellent standard. The old fear of controversy has almost gone. It is sometimes indeed in danger of being replaced by a naïve passion for controversy for controversy's sake. 'Friday Forum' in particular seems to me on occasion to have suffered from the belief that it was necessary to have sharply opposed political speakers on every issue. As a result listeners were often provided with an amusing display of conflicting prejudices rather than a serious attempt to examine important principles.

What is surely necessary in all such discussion programmes is that those taking part should have both knowledge and a degree of open mindedness: the discussion should be an inquiry beginning from different points of view and not a platform on which spokesmen, chosen almost entirely for their balancing political affiliations are required to demonstrate the inflexibility of their loyalty to a party point of view and their fervid inaccessibility to argument. The statement of party viewpoints can be left to the official Party Political Broadcasts, which have been an excellent innovation.

Progress Report also seems to me to have been a praiseworthy if not altogether successful attempt to present the manifestly enormously important public issue of the need for production in an understandable way.

But I do not feel that the BBC has yet begun to tackle, or perhaps even seriously to think about, the major problem of incorporating some public service broadcasting in the Light Programme, and of finding techniques by which information on public issues can be presented at once intelligently and attractively to the vast audience this programme commands and in the conditions of family listening in which it very largely operates.

I do not pretend the problem is easy. But it seems to me that in the field of public service broadcasting, the responsibility of the BBC does not end with making available a certain number of pro-

Edward Ward (right) *and Stanley Coombs* (left) *after twenty-nine days in the Bishop Rock Lighthouse*

Ludwig Koch recording the voices of baby seals in the cave below the cliff
(*see page* 20)

grammes to which those who are interested in public issues can turn of deliberate choice. It has a responsibility also to find means whereby the general interest can be attracted and held. For public issues today increasingly concern everyone and can in many cases only be solved by a very wide understanding of their significance.

Clearly talks or even radio discussions do not provide an entirely adequate technique for this purpose, although, if the difficulties in the way of building up a team of attractive professional broadcasters capable of attracting listeners in their own right could be overcome—as I believe they might be—that would help. But more is needed and a combined operation by the talks and entertainments staffs is required even to begin to solve it.

Yet in the general field of public service broadcasting much has been accomplished and the BBC deserves praise for what has been done. It cannot hope to escape criticism from time to time on the grounds of partiality and bias—but I think there has in truth been very little of either. Let it never be afraid of controversy which is the life blood of public service broadcasting. Although it must have no corporate opinion of its own, it has both the right and the obligation to let every other substantial opinion be known. The more courageous it is the more truly will it serve the public interest.

JOURNEYS WITH A MICROPHONE

by Edward Ward

I suppose I crammed more into the years 1940 and 1941 than into any other period of my life. It began in Finland in the ice and snow of the bitterest winter known for years. A brief halt in England and the German invasion of the Low Countries came and I was off to Brussels. Then through the fall of France, scurrying ahead of the advancing German troops and out, just in time, from Bordeaux. A few months later I went out with a convoy to Gibraltar and then was ordered to Egypt. To do this I had to go right round the Cape and fly up from Durban, and I reached Cairo early in 1941. I was with Wavell's first push through to Benghazi and beyond; in Greece and Crete; I travelled in Palestine and Syria and spent a month in Abyssinia. And then on 23 November, 1941, I got 'put in the bag', when Rommel's tanks mopped up practically the entire 5th South African Brigade.

I have always been a restless sort of person, and the enforced inactivity of those three and half years largely spent in two prisoner-of-war camps—one in Italy and the other in Germany—didn't fit in with my idea of life at all. I swore that when I got out I should

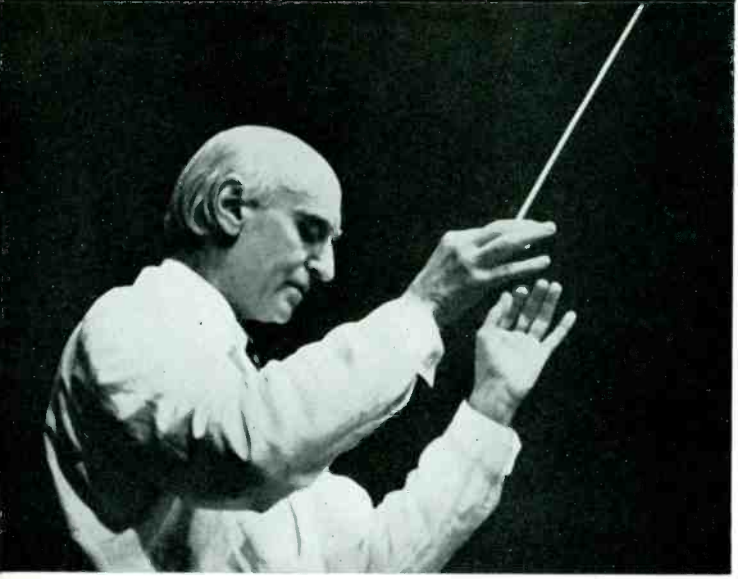
never spend more time than I could possibly help in one place. So far, at any rate, this seems to have worked out pretty satisfactorily. Within a few days of my rescue by the 1st U.S. Army I was back in Germany again with my rescuers. I was with them for the fall of Leipzig and at the link-up with the Red Army on the Elbe. On VE-day I was at German Headquarters in Flensburg.

With the European War ended I planned to see the finish of things in the Far East. But the atomic bomb beat me to it, and I reached Ceylon just after the Japanese surrender. There was plenty going on in China, however, and I went up to Hong Kong for the Japanese surrender ceremony there. Then Carl Carlyon, the BBC engineer, and I took a recording set up to Chungking to do a story of the first post-war 'Double Tenth'—10 October is China's Independence day. While we were in Chungking we seized the chance to make the first trip down the Yangtse by river-boat from Chungking to Shanghai that had been made since the war. We took a wire recorder and a 'midget' with us, and we recorded the swirl of the rapids in the famous Yangtse gorges and the chant of the coolies as they dragged the heavy, cumbersome junks upstream. We had a wonderful trip, and we had a great reception in all the little river-ports on the way, for we were the first 'foreigners' that had been seen there for years.

From Shanghai, which had become a completely American city in an oriental setting, I travelled north to the beautiful old capital, Peking, which had not changed in the least—except in the matter of prices—since the days I had known it ten years before. I travelled farther north, across the Great Wall of China into Manchuria to report the war between the Chinese Nationalists and Communists. I lived for some days in a Chinese train which was the nationalist general Tu Li-ming's headquarters. (I shall always remember Tu Li-ming's office on that train, looking like a seaside boarding-house parlour, with potted ferns, a Victorian table-cloth with a fringe of bobbles on the table, and antimacassars on the chairs; and Tu Li-ming himself, munching toffee as he told us about the military situation.) And then there was a flying visit to a Communist headquarters in Inner Mongolia. We gave the Communist general a lift back to Peking in our plane, and there was the embarrassing moment when we landed on the way in Nationalist territory and a Nationalist general came to meet the plane. It turned out well because they had been at school together years before, and they threw their arms round each other's necks!

The trip with a microphone which I certainly disliked most, but which caused by far the greatest stir of any of my journeys was when I went to the Bishop Rock Lighthouse at Christmas, 1946. Stanley

Martyn C. Webster rehearsing (*see page* 23)



Victor de Sabata

BBC MUSICAL VISITORS

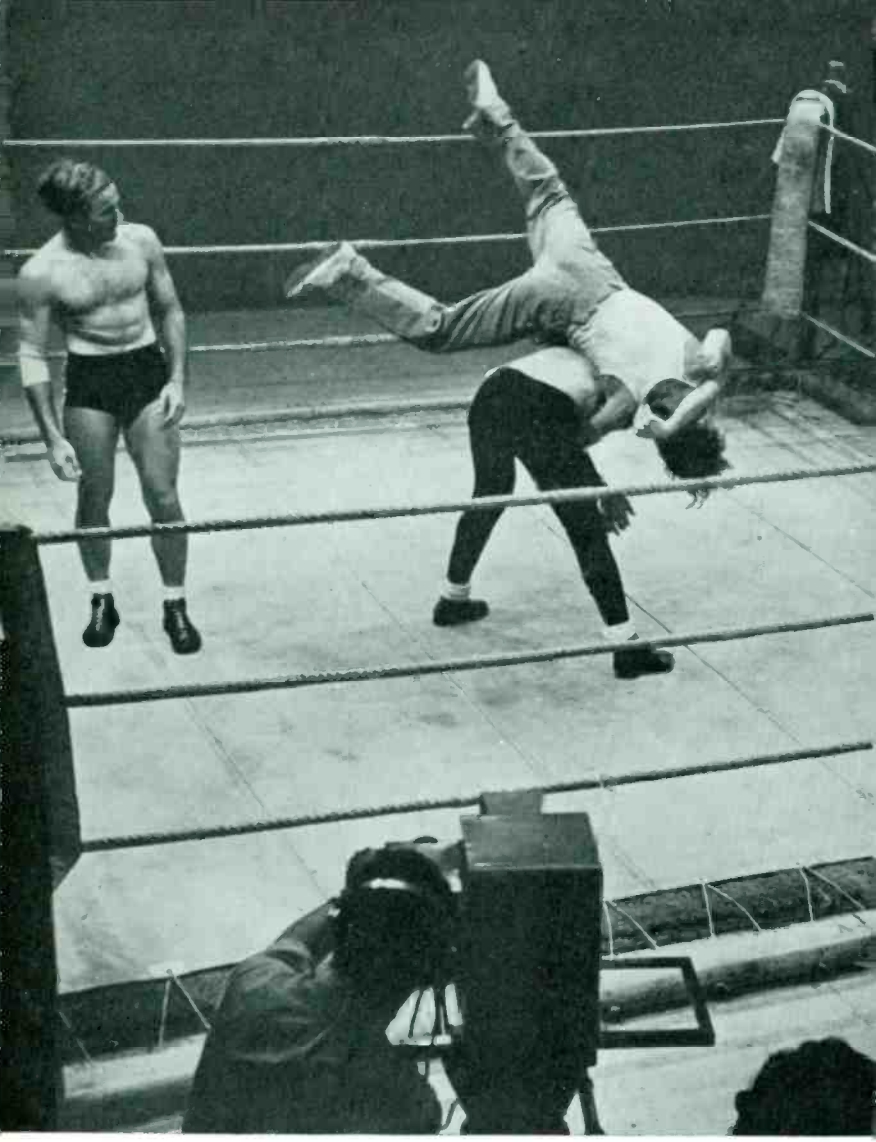
Richard Strauss (right) *with Sir Adrian Boult*

Ronald Colman

IN TOWN TONIGHT

Ann Hills, fourteen-year-old May Queen, with William Knight, chimney sweep, of Hastings

See page 26



Being a television announcer has its strenuous moments. Here McDonald Hobley, who on page 28 writes about his job, is shown flying through the air during a televised wrestling lesson

Cooms, the BBC engineer, and I expected to be on the rock for at the outside five days. That, we thought, would be quite bad enough. But we found ourselves involved in a series of south-westerly gales and had to stay there for twenty-nine days. Lighthouse-keeping is certainly not a profession I would care to take up. But ever since, wherever I have been people have said: 'Oh yes, of course, you're the chap that got stuck on the lighthouse!' I'm getting used to it now. It's become a kind of label.

However, Laurence Gilliam made up for that trip by sending me on one of the best I have ever had a few months later. With Fred Cooper I drove in a BBC recording-van to Seville to get material for 'Easter Journey' in the spring of 1947. We had a wonderful time recording the famous Holy Week processions. And we made some fine discs of the Andalusian gipsies singing 'saetas' in the course of them. What was even more fun was playing the records back to the singers, who thought the whole thing was pure magic. Then, after tremendous negotiations, we made the first recordings ever made in English of a bull-fight on Easter Sunday in Seville. The running commentary which I made was to cause quite a stir when it was later broadcast.

Later the same year I was one of the team sent to India for the hand-over of power. Jimmy Caulfield and I made our headquarters first of all in the Pakistan capital, Karachi. Then we made our way south to Bombay, where we made some very colourful recordings in the bustling, teeming old part of the city. From Bombay we went to the State of Hyderabad where, among other things, I ate diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and pearls in a strange hospital which specialized in these remedies. In between mouthfuls I recorded my impressions.

Christmas, 1947, was a great improvement on the year before. My contribution to the Christmas broadcast, 'Men of Goodwill', came from Warsaw, the most ruined capital of Europe. With Harvey Sarney I recorded Christmas carols in the bomb- and shell-shattered churches of the Polish capital, and then we drove south to the High Tatra mountains to the winter-sport resort of Zakopane to make more records for a 'New Year Journey'.

Getting news and programme material for the BBC certainly took me over a good deal of the world. But early in 1948 I had a job which took me all over England. Getting material for 'Progress Report' meant going to steel mills in Northamptonshire; textile factories in Yorkshire; finding out about the tourist traffic to this country meant meeting the *Queen Elizabeth* at Southampton and spending a few days in Stratford-on-Avon. And I took time off during this period to go for a month to France with Marjorie Banks to do a 'Focus on France'. We cut across the country from Rouen

in the north-west to Marseilles in the south, taking in the vineyards of Burgundy and the silk factories of Lyons on the way.

My latest journey took me to France, Switzerland, Italy, Austria, and Germany (to mention only some of the countries) making discs and interviewing people for a programme on the 'Children of Europe'.

Yes, one way and another, I think I have made up for those long years of inactivity in P.O.W. camps in Italy and Germany. I hope I shall go on doing so.

WHAT *IS* PROGRAMME-PLANNING?

by Godfrey Adams

The attractions of alliteration are rarely resisted. 'Paralysing Planners', 'Planners Perplexed', 'Planners Plainly Planless' are a few examples I have noted in the Popular Press. These knocks are handed out impartially to those who plan in any sphere of activity, and the programme-planner comes in for his full share. His sins are of omission and commission, while some of the more vehement outbursts attribute to him prodigies of sustained ineptitude. Much of this criticism is based on a false impression of the function of programme-planning, and an equally false belief that the programme-planner wields despotic power and is a past master of sly diplomacy.

The BBC has used the label programme-planner, internally at least, for many years, but it would be wrong to imagine that the planner has at any time had absolute control over the 'make-up' of the programmes. Today the general lines of policy are laid down for him, and his work is subject to the scrutiny and approval of the Controller of the Service. The job, however, of planning the weekly schedule can satisfactorily only be done by a single individual.

Programme-planning is essentially a process of selection and arrangement, which continues both at long range and at short range. Thus in late June and July the main plan took shape for the October–December quarter, while during the last week in June the detailed programme schedule of the Home Service was issued for the week beginning Sunday, 22 August, that is, eight weeks in advance of its going on the air. Both these processes involve discussion between the planner and the Heads of the production departments (Variety, Drama, Features, Talks, etc.), at which there is a constant two-way traffic. The production departments submit programmes and ideas for programmes to the planner,

and the planner asks the production departments for certain specific types of programme which may be needed to implement a line of policy, or to supply some element he may feel essential to his programme scheme. Frequent interchange of information between the Regional Home Services and the 'basic' Home Service planner enables the latter to include in his schedule and therefore give a wider hearing certain Regional programmes, which promise to be of general interest. The Light Programme and Third Programme weekly schedules are planned after the Home Service and are required to provide a contrasting pattern to it.

In an average week there are some three hundred programme-items in the Home Service. Although many of these are 'fixed points', such as News Bulletins, Today in Parliament, many of the talks and the more considerable contributions of the Variety, Drama, Music, and Feature Departments, the design has to be planned afresh each week. The Programme-planner will have by his side schedules of the Monday Plays and Saturday Night Theatre, which have already been agreed, and details of the Sunday and Wednesday Symphony Concerts which may have been fixed up seven or eight months previously. He will have a note of any anniversaries which fall within the week. For an important anniversary plans will already have been made; the lesser ones he may consider in relation to all the material on offer for that week. Thus gradually the schedule of the week's programmes is built, but a number of 'extra' programmes will still be required. In selecting these he will have regard first to the overall look of the schedule as it stands. Is the Drama output perhaps less generous than it might be? If so he will attempt to place somewhere in the week another play which contrasts in character with the Monday and Saturday night contributions. Similarly, if for some reason there is less music or Variety than usual, he will try to redress the balance. As soon as the schedule is finished, copies are despatched to the Regions (the Home Service is the basis on which they plan), to all other Programme Services, to the Production Departments, to the section responsible for allocating studios, and to many other people, who in one way or another have a part to play in getting that week's programmes on the air. During the period between the completion of the schedule and its radiation, there may yet be alterations. Copyright considerations may at short notice necessitate a change in choice of a play, a conductor may decide to alter his programme for some valid and acceptable reason, nevertheless necessitating lengthening it by ten minutes, or an important outside broadcast may be offered, for which space must be found. Such changes are all the concern of the planner, and the Production Department must consult him before any such change is made.

In much of his work and particularly in assessing the success of an individual programme, the planner is assisted, but not controlled, by the findings of the Listener Research Department, which helps him principally in two ways. 'The Listening Barometer' tells him what percentage of the adult population of this country heard each individual programme. Secondly, at a weekly meeting with Head of Listener Research he selects in advance certain programmes about which he wishes a questionnaire sent to the special Listener Research Panel. In this way he gains knowledge of what listeners thought about a particular programme, how many enjoyed it very much, quite enjoyed it, disliked it. In addition, in the case of a play, for instance, there will be illuminating comments on the acting and production when a certain view is widely shared by the panel members.

I hope I have answered, partially at least, 'What *is* Programme-Planning?' The planner does not shape policy: he carries it out. He is not the enemy of the Production Departments: he alone can make sure that their programmes find their right place in the integrated pattern of the week. But more important still is his responsibility to make that pattern informative, entertaining, and attractive for the listening audience.

ADVENTURES IN SOUND RECORDING

by Ludwig Koch

I believe it was in 1889 that my father surprised us boys with a toy machine and half a dozen wax cylinders wrapped in cotton wool, my first recording machine. I was a nuisance to everybody as they all believed I was going to pull their leg, so I approached our caged bird which was a Shama, an Indian throstle-like bird. Shama did not object, and I have preserved his would-be voice as a memory of by-gone days. The rest of my early recordings, among which were many famous voices, including that of the great Helmholtz, were left in Germany and must have perished.

When one of the pioneers of the gramophone industry, a family friend, presented me with an acoustic recorder with a long green horn I could be more ambitious. After recording on the wax I would shave off a thin layer and so could make numerous recordings without too great a strain on my parent's money. Before 1914 I even recorded a blackbird in the open, using a thin steel disc sprayed with enamel, and the 'Hill-and-dale' cut, but I remember these were poor recordings. My ambition to record birds and animals in their natural surroundings was only really possible to

achieve when the microphone was put to the service of sound recording and when after 1926 I used mobile (Neumann) gear. An enthusiastic old lady, then President of the Society for the Protection of Birds, gave me a huge car for my recording equipment, and this good lady felt she had found her reward when she heard my outdoor recordings, I think the first ever to be made successfully.

I left the Continent and came to this country early in 1936.

The BBC approached me within a week wishing to broadcast my records, but I suggested waiting until I had recordings of British birds. Julian Huxley, who knew my Continental work, encouraged me to start recording in the spring of 1936 and to carry on publishing my already well-known sound-books, that is, books with records as an inseparable part, which I did with my co-author, E. M. Nicholson.

My first experiences in outdoor recording here were startling. Never before had I the weather of the four seasons within a day or even within hours; wind, hail, rain, and the rustling of leaves would drown the song of my feathered victims. I tried to get my results in the early morning hours when the wind frequently dropped for two or three hours. Mostly, however, the bird I wanted preferred to be silent at the critical time, warily watching from a tree 500 yards from the very branch where I had observed him for weeks past. Birds are encouraged to sing by noise, as they try to make their song heard by the female in spite of it. How often have I found my bird coming through beautifully in the loudspeaker, but have been unable to record because of a passing aeroplane or some other noise. By the time war broke out, however, I had already a large collection of the call notes and songs of our most popular birds.

During the war years it was happily possible for me to continue, using a portable recording outfit developed for training purposes, which proved most suitable for my special work. With this gear I have had many interesting adventures which I hope are not yet finished, but there is only room here to recount two or three of them.

For many years I had wanted to get a record of the 'Butterbump', the popular name given by the country folk in Norfolk and Suffolk to the boom of the Bittern.

I realized the tremendous difficulties when Major Anthony Buxton, the well-known author and expert on Norfolk wild life, showed me round the wonderful Horsey Mere.

One fine night our floating recording studio was in search of a hiding-place in the swampy reed beds where I had often heard the Bittern. On this night it did not boom a single time within recording range. After dawn, the wind rose to a gale and BBC recording engineer, Eric Hough, and I thought the boat no longer safe for my precious recording gear. We moved to a more sheltered spot, but

for two nights heavy wind and the rustling of the reeds made any attempt impossible. Then came a night when the wind dropped and the Bittern boomed within recording range. 'Cut', I said quickly (meaning 'Start recording'), but in the same fraction of a second a bomber squadron began circling overhead. It was tantalizing in the extreme to hear the Bittern without being able to record.

Next came a 'technical hitch' as the damp of the swamp, which was our recording headquarters, caused a short-circuit, but in the end the Bittern's boom was added to my collection, which has now become the property of the BBC.

The West Wales Field Society helped me to obtain the voice of the Grey Atlantic Seal at Skomer Island off Pembrokeshire. We had to bring my microphone 220 ft. down the sheer rock-face of the North Haven cliff where the baby seals were living. I knew the babies would be put so high in the cave that even the high tide could not reach them. This, I thought, is the right place for my microphone. Neither new-born grey seals nor my microphone are fond of water. During the following days a 100 m.p.h. gale swept over the island smashing to smithereens the yacht which brought us over from the shore and carrying away my solidly built recording hut; it is miraculous that nothing happened to my engineer and to myself. Meanwhile my microphone was safe in the cave. When the storm quietened down, I recorded what had never been attempted before: the family life of the Atlantic Seal, the voices of the bull and the cow and the 'human' cries of the baby seals. After almost a week I got my microphone back unharmed.

Recording history was also made on the breeding grounds of the Greenshank on the Scottish Moors. The Greenshank specialist, D. Nethersole-Thompson, was very helpful in locating the nest of this elusive bird. In spite of the rough weather of early 1946 and the well-intentioned objections of Mr. Nethersole-Thompson, who was horrified that I should want to bring my microphone so close to the bird, which is inclined to desert when disturbed even a day or two before the hatching, I managed, by creeping up at night, to place my microphone very near and succeeded in recording the bursting of the egg-shells and the first conversation between mother and child.

Many of these recordings have been or will be broadcast and my sound-recording work is far from finished. Apart from the long and patient work in studio and recording rooms which goes to the preparation of the broadcasts even after the records have been brought in from the field, new expeditions are within my programme and I hope soon to have added more rare birds to the BBC's collection.

My reward is the increasing interest in bird life and bird song in all parts of the British Isles. Many letters of thanks prove to me the pleasure which all classes of listeners have found in these programmes, and I find a welcome wherever I go in this country of nature lovers.

PITY THE POOR PRODUCER!

by Martyn C. Webster

'Do radio actors really need to rehearse before they broadcast?' 'Don't they merely read a script?' 'Does a radio producer actually have to do any *work*?'

These questions, each and all of them calculated to make any BBC producer's gorge rise, are asked by innocent listeners not once but many, many times. I have reached the conclusion, therefore, that the average listener's idea of radio production is something like this:

Let us assume the show is scheduled to go on the air at 7.0 p.m.

6.45–6.55 p.m.	Cast arrive in twos and threes. General chat about the weather, food queues, etc.
6.55 p.m.	Producer distributes scripts, rather as though they were hymn sheets at a prayer meeting.
7.0 p.m.	Cast sit down before the mike and 'read' their parts.
7.30 p.m.	The show over, cheques are distributed and everyone adjourns to the nearest bar.

Let me disillusion you. It isn't a bit like that really. Suppose now that *you* are the producer.

In the first place you are told to produce a certain play on a certain date. You are also told not to spend more than a certain amount of money. (Remember that.) You must then ensure that the play is available for broadcasting on that date. Strangely enough certain managements do object to having their property broadcast. This may explain why your own favourite West End play has not yet had a radio 'airing'. It isn't always the BBC's fault.

Copyright has been settled. Permission to broadcast the play has been obtained. Splendid. All that remains is to decide the cast. This is easy. When you first read the play you knew instinctively that the three main characters could only be played to perfection by Miss Blank, Mr. Dash, and Mr. Dot. With a satisfied smile you write in their names on the cast sheet, pass it over to Drama Bookings, and concentrate on something else. Next morning you receive

a phone message to say that Miss Blank is on tour, Mr. Dash is already booked for another show on that date, while Mr. Dot's fee is far too high to be covered by your meagre budget, so would you mind selecting someone else? This may happen three or four times, and in some radio plays there may be fifteen to twenty characters. You will therefore begin to appreciate that casting your play just isn't the easiest thing in the world after all.

Incidentally, some of the listeners' most cherished illusions would be swept away if they could *see* the cast of a radio play. A pretty face and a nice pair of legs don't mean a thing on the air. Voice control, pitch, and quality are the essentials. Thus one well-known radio actress (no names mentioned) who sounds a fresh, girlish eighteen on the mike, is in fact in her forties, while the virile, stirring tones of that dashing hero can—and often do—emanate from the throat of an agile young gentleman of seventy-six. We don't care how they *look*—how do they *sound*?—that's what counts.

However—your cast is settled. Things are moving. You now have to choose your studio, taking into consideration the fact that you require, say, a separate narrator's studio, an echo chamber, extra grams, special acoustic properties, etc., etc. You decide on your favourite studio and book it with Studio Bookings, who—always scrupulously fair—regretfully inform you that it has already been booked by someone else on that day. They can, however, offer you a studio (much too small) in Tottenham Court Road, or a studio (much too large) in Piccadilly, or a studio (Heaven forbid) in Maida Vale. What? You thought all the studios were conveniently situated in Broadcasting House? Oh no. Not at all. Nothing of the kind. In fact the only main difference between a BBC cast on trek from studio to studio and a film of 'The Covered Waggon' is that in the former there are no redskins around.

Cast and studio have been decided. Now you must check that everyone has been notified of rehearsal times and places, and that everyone concerned has received a copy of the script—usually a week before the first rehearsal. (This is done to give everyone concerned the opportunity of losing their script well in advance.)

'Everyone concerned', by the way, includes those vitally important backroom boys the Programme Engineer and the Junior Programme Engineers. The former is in charge of the dramatic control panel, which controls the output of mikes and grams, and which 'mixes' them into a harmonious whole. The Junior Programme Engineers are responsible for gram effects (waves, seagulls, storms, street noises, incidental music, etc.) and for 'spot' effects (effects done on the spot, such as doors opening and closing, tea-cups rattling, etc.).

A detailed conference must be held between these Programme

Engineers and the producer well before the rehearsal to decide how many mikes are required, what effects are needed, and how they are to be achieved. These effects are all rehearsed separately, and any music required is carefully chosen and a written permit obtained from copyright for the use of each gramophone disc: woe betide any producer who forgets that all-important point.

The first rehearsal is under way. The cast sits round a table and you, as producer, explain to them *your* conception of the play as a whole and of their individual parts in it. This conception usually differs in every particular from that held by the members of the cast and by the author. However, you are firm. What you say goes, even though this may mean you eat alone at lunch-time and that you are cut dead by cast and author for weeks afterwards.

The script is read through, carefully timed, and found to be much too long. You must then go into a quiet room armed with a large blue pencil and a revolver, the former to cut the script and the latter to protect you from the outraged author who protects his precious lines much as a tigress will protect her cubs. Personally I would rather face the tigress any day.

Next morning all is ready and the *real* work begins. The cast stand at the mike, while the producer is in his own listening box from which he talks to the cast on a 'talk-back' system. This has the advantage of enabling the producer to listen to the *complete* production including voices, effects, music echo, etc., from the loudspeaker at his side. It also keeps him out of the clutches of the cast.

Then every line, every scene, every effect is rehearsed and rehearsed *and* rehearsed, until you are satisfied with each intonation, each sound perspective—everything. Incidentally, spare a thought for the actor. Try it yourself. Speak in a voice which trembles with abject terror, keep your position in front of the mike, turn over a page of your script without rustling it, and remember that lines four, seven, and nine of your speech have been cut—all at one and the same time. No, being a radio actor isn't all honey.

Eventually, when the cast and everyone else is fed up with the play, fed up with the studio, and very fed up with you—the red light goes on and you're on the air—to give a performance which, you hope, will be unparalleled in its sparkling spontaneity.

Then you go home and have four large gins or a nervous breakdown according to your temperament.

In between productions you relax. That is to say, you deal with correspondence, interview artistes wanting work, authors wanting plays produced, fond mothers who *know* that little Willie can act if only he has a chance, Miss So-and-so who has written a play which her friends tell her is 'ever so much better than that awful thing last night'. All these people must be given a fair hearing and all the

plays a fair reading. Auditions must be held, the Press Officers kept informed of all productions, publicity details arranged, Overseas Department seen about relaying one of your productions, departmental meetings on future policy to be attended.

And so it goes on—and on.

Yes, my friends, radio actors *do* have to rehearse before they broadcast.

Yes—a radio producer *does* have to work. Honestly, he does.

So *you* won't ask those questions any more, will you. Because I've convinced you now, haven't I? Or have I?

IN TOWN TONIGHT

by Peter Duncan

When people ask me, 'What is the secret of "In Town Tonight"?'—a radio show that has held the interest of the public for no less than fifteen years—the answer I give, in one word, is 'surprise'! Though I compile and produce the programme, it's often as late as Friday night before I know definitely who will be appearing. To retain its popularity the show must be topical, and it's not always easy, for example, to extract a film star—who has only just landed in this country—from a welter of press and public receptions to appear in front of the microphone.

But the programme has come to mean as much to the 'big names' as to the public. It's one occasion on which they can show their real selves to their fans, and appear as human, likeable folk, who easily mix with '. . . the ranker, the tramp of the roads . . .'

Essentially the programme is the same as when it began all those years ago. But a difference was bound to creep in after the war. Until 1939, most of us had lived settled, rather humdrum lives. Listeners were glad to hear of treks through the jungle, or daring parachute descents. But now, when the milkman or postman can relate more thrilling experiences, and nearly all of us have stood in mortal danger, such tales, to a certain extent, have lost their thrill. I have had to search for the individual achievement, the rare adventure, and the unusual job. I've found—amongst others—a film stunt girl, a man who crossed Niagara Falls by climbing the girders under the bridge, and a bed-ridden invalid who came to the studio in her wheel chair to tell how she had won her B.A. by studying in hospital.

It's not an easy matter to tell a story in front of a microphone. Personally, I think the voice is as important as the story. By it you judge personality, temperament, and form an impression of the

speaker. So, sometimes, interesting stories have had to be turned down because I felt that the way of telling them, and the voice, did not do justice to the personality of the speaker. One of my best broadcasters was a ninety-year-old commercial traveller who has since become so attached to the programme that he often visits the studio, and has promised to broadcast again on his hundredth birthday, when, he says, he'll still be 'on the road'!

I try to draw a careful balance between 'the man in the street' and the stars. But I do feel that 'In Town Tonight' without one or two big names is like an unrewarding 'Lucky Dip'. You hope there will be 'something special'—and feel disappointed if it doesn't materialize. So we have brought many stars to the microphone for their only broadcast in this country, such as Carmen Miranda, Mae West, Ronald Colman, Fredric March, Lana Turner, Edgar Bergen, Lauritz Melchior, and Carmen Amaya, the famous Spanish dancer and singer, who could not speak English, learnt her answers by heart, and went ahead to nudges and nods. The only problem was to get her answers in the right order! Among other celebrities who have taken part are Sir Noel Curtis-Bennett, author Rupert Croft-Cooke, Sir Harold Gillies, the plastic surgeon, and, of course, we have had many distinguished visitors from overseas. There is still plenty of room for the 'ordinary' people—so long as their story holds a special interest, or has a particular slant. 'Talky-talky' is ruthlessly cut. The programme is never recorded—we must have personal appearances in town every Saturday night. Because of this, Ann Hills, the young May Queen of Hastings, was flown from the Saturday afternoon crowning ceremony to the studio, with her attendant sweep. They arrived half an hour before transmission!

I attach great importance to the incidental music, because it acts as a 'buffer' between personalities, and also helps to create the right atmosphere for the following story.

Each week I sort through about a hundred suggestions from people who would like to appear in the programme. 'Possibles' are interviewed by George Fuller, or Robert Buckland, who skilfully sort out the stories for the air. In the studio, John Ellison's success as interviewer lies largely in the sympathetic confidence he can convey to star or steward—and sometimes the stars are more nervous!

My most helpful critic has always been C. F. Meehan, now Assistant Head of Variety, who succeeded A. W. Hanson as producer of this programme in 1938, and continued until May, 1947.

An outside broadcast has nearly always been featured in the programme, and, in these days of long hours and hard work, I felt it would be topical to introduce a 'spot' lighting on those who still worked on Saturday night, when so many are 'off duty'. Brian

Johnston has been 'On the Job' with many of London's famous characters—the bus conductor, the taxi-man, the chef. . . .

We have our own 'In Town Tonight' tea-party every Saturday afternoon, at which staff and visitors meet. We talk together, nerves are eased, and the happy, comradely atmosphere which we hope comes over your loudspeaker is created.

After tea, we return to the studio. There is just a final run-through before we meet you again, as we hope to do through the months ahead, each Saturday 'In Town Tonight'.

A TELEVISION ANNOUNCER'S DAY

by D. McDonald Hobley

In a railway carriage, not long ago, a pleasant-looking lady in her middle forties asked, very politely, whether I was the television announcer whom she saw from time to time on her set at home? When I said yes, I expected to be asked questions about every phase of television, including the technical. To my relief, all she asked for was a description of an announcer's day at Ally Pally. This, at least, was familiar ground, and I was glad to oblige. And this is what I told her.

My time of arrival at the studios depends on how much I am contributing to the different items in the programme, and the time it is due to begin. Whatever time I turn up, my first visit is to the office of the Production Manager, under whom I work. On duty each day with the announcer is a very helpful individual called the 'Presentation Assistant', and having reported to the Production Manager I immediately seek him out and together we go through the various announcements for the afternoon transmission. A word altered here, a phrase changed there, makes all the difference when you reflect that most announcements have to be committed to memory. Nothing pleases me more than an announcement headed 'Sound only', a self-explanatory term obviating this irksome necessity.

Having satisfied myself that the announcements are something that I can get my tongue round I go in search of the producer responsible for the item in which, perhaps, there are at least seven people with impossible names. A friendly word of advice from him ensures that neither the actors nor their agents take offence. Pronunciations of place-names can be checked with those very helpful individuals in the 'Pronounciation Department'. Armed with my script, or 'running order', as we call it, I now make my way to Dressing Room No. 7, once labelled 'Only Announcers'—but now

amended to read 'Announcers'! Here for the next three-quarters-of-an-hour I endeavour to wear a very thin strip of green carpet to shreds by pacing up and down it, in my effort to memorize the opening announcement. Then downstairs to our canteen. Sometimes, and usually in the middle of lunch, the loudspeaker system booms out a request for me to report at once to the 'Presentation Assistant', who politely informs me that, due to circumstances beyond his immediate control, the opening announcement has had to be rewritten. This doesn't happen often—but it has—and can!

After lunch, there is the important performance of applying one's make-up. Since announcers appear in front of the cameras more often than most people, they are permitted to do it themselves. I am told that in the early days of television—and by early days I refer to the 1930's—make-up consisted of various shades of blue and yellow, but today all that has changed, and our normal make-up resembles that used by most actors and film artists. With a reasonably good grasp of the first announcement, and a distinctly sunburnt appearance, I now make my way to the studio for what I shall always regard as the most unpleasant part of the day's work—namely, a lighting session. Perhaps I had better explain more fully. The announcer is always the first person to appear on the screen, and it is essential that the picture should be as nearly perfect as possible. For twenty minutes before each transmission I stand in my allotted position while the lighting engineers bear down on me with every type of arc lamp that they can find. Finally, with perspiration seeping from my brow, but knowing that it has all been done with the best intentions, I step out of the blaze of light and await my cue to stand in once more and launch the programme on its way.

Now it's two minutes to three, and with a last glance at my script I step in front of the camera again. Although I have been doing this same thing for more than two years now, that 'first night' feeling never leaves me. I've yet to meet the person who can truthfully say that the camera bears no terrors for him.

Directing the artists on the floor is the 'Studio Manager', and on a signal from him, which I can see out of the corner of my eye, I know I am 'on the air'. With the words: 'This is the BBC Television Service' I begin my introduction to the first item, but it is soon over, and, breathing a sigh of relief, I step out of the lights once more. The number of announcements will, of course, depend on the type of programme. For example, if it is a play, you may have only an opening and closing announcement, but a series of small items may mean having to memorize a further six or seven. However many there may be, I never memorize more than one at a time, managing somehow to learn each new announcement during the preceding item.

For the evening transmission preparations begin soon after tea, but sometimes I may be asked to attend the auditions of would-be lady announcers, in which case my normal role is reversed and I become the 'interviewee'. I might be roped in for a rehearsal of some future programme, or, again, I may use this time to go through the scripts for 'Kaleidoscope'—the magazine programme which I compère every other Friday. Compèring, interviewing, commentating, and even conducting 'quiz' programmes all come under the heading of announcers' duties. In a word, this means that until the Television Service has its own large staff of resident commentators, the announcers stand a reasonably good chance of getting ring-side seats at most of the great national events, sporting and otherwise. No one can say that the life is a dull one! Once I found myself in front of a television camera with a twelve-foot python wrapped round my neck (I had been interviewing a keeper from the Zoo) and another time I had to enter the ring with a professional wrestler and spend a considerable time flying through the air with the greatest of ease.

After my evening meal, at about eight o'clock, the lighting process begins all over again. At eight-thirty I introduce the evening programme and at any time between ten and ten-thirty I tell viewers about next day's plans and bid them all a very good night. Soon afterwards, with my make-up removed, my dinner jacket hanging in the wardrobe, you'll find me in the BBC bus on the first stage of my journey home.

As I completed my story, the train pulled in at Baker Street. I stood up, opened the carriage door, and waited for my friend, the lady viewer, to step out on the platform, but she didn't move. She was fast asleep!

ROYAL PROGRESS

by Robert Dunnett

The scenes are so varied: Side by side the crofter from the remote Western Isles (who has come to the capital of the Highlands in an aeroplane) and the shock-headed farm foreman from the richer and more sophisticated Lothians (who has come by train) stand in the crowds at the Highland Show. They watch the Royal Procession moving along the narrow avenues between the be-flagged pavilions. From a little BBC studio made of wood and canvas the news goes out to the world. The contrasted accents of many parts of Scotland, which give such a varied character to the sounds of the crowds, impart their own vitality to the broad-

cast talks. Not only Scots but farmers from overseas—Australian, American, Swedish, South American, Russian—make their contribution. Scottish agriculture is international in its significance.

Here, at the first Highland Show for nine years, as in so many other different parts of Scotland, the royal progress illuminates aspects of the national life like the sweeping beam of a searchlight. For those of us who work in the BBC in Scotland it is a special broadcasting occasion. It recalls at every point the diversity of character and interest which we try day by day to reflect in the Scottish Home Service.

The scene changes: The beam has moved over the heather and rocks of the Grampians and lights on the green profusion of lowland trees. On a Parade Ground in the valley of the Earn Their Majesties inspect Units drawn from famous Scots Regiments and we recall many great stories of the war which have been reconstructed in Feature programmes in recent years.

But we are looking to the future now. In the Kingdom of Fife the scars of new roads in the making, the skeletons of buildings, the barest outline of new streets, take the mind and eye inside away from the land to the blue prints and the drawing board. Here are the new towns, centres for the new industries of Scotland. Flags are flying in the rows of miners' cottages and in the fishing villages. Here, too, the royal progress picks out one aspect after another of our national life, which has been prominent in microphone discussions, talks, and feature programmes during the post-war years. Planning, the new coalfields, the ancient fishing industry and more than a suggestion of a new world in the making.

Across the Forth from Fife, the capital of Edinburgh and centre of the greatest International Festival in Europe today welcomes the Royal Party. From Holyrood House the King and Queen will go out to various engagements as they do every year. Inside the BBC in Scotland plans are laid to cover their every move. With them the microphone will visit some of the heavy industries on the Clyde, the ship-building yards, and the centres of social services, the hospitals and the nursery schools. The royal visit to the Home Fleet anchored in the Clyde will long be remembered in Scotland where so many of these fighting ships were built. Our commentators follow the royal party by land, sea, and air, and the microphone finds itself in unexpected places—on the bridge of an M.L., in the heat and glow of a foundry, or poised on a city balcony above the cheering crowds.

In reporting the royal progress we thus perform (but at rather greater speed!) the duties of visiting the most populous as well as the loneliest parts of Scotland, as we do throughout the year, to collect material for our programmes. Every year, too, there is

much new to report. There are still traditional songs and stories to take from the lips of old men and women in the far western isles; there are concerts to give for workers on hydro-electric and other new development schemes; there is the point of view of the Highlander to contrast with that of the Lowlander on all the many contemporary problems affecting their way of life.

The scene changes again and to the lighter side of life: Great crowds ebb and flow over the seaside golf course of Muirfield, awaiting the King's arrival to watch a phase of the Open Golf Championship. BBC sports commentators and engineers are on the spot to report the event to the world. The same team will describe the tremendous rivalries of First Division football, the triumphs of Scottish swimmers, the clash of shinty teams beyond the Highland line, and the skill and grace of yachts in the international fortnight on the Clyde. And many other sporting events of the seasons.

Back in Edinburgh, as the time comes for Their Majesties to leave, the crowds flock into the forecourt of the Palace of Holyroodhouse. It is night and from the commentator's point we look across the heads of the crowd to the royal figures standing on the balcony listening to the singing and sometimes joining in. Although in Scottish Broadcasting we have discovered many little-known Scottish songs in past years, it is the old favourites, which reign supreme now, with the personal message of 'Will ye no' come back again'. And, of course, there is piping and dancing here, too, as there is everywhere on all special occasions and sometimes on no special occasion at all.

We must look at one last scene from a distance because the Scots are proud that the Royal Family can spend their holiday in privacy amongst them. So only recalling the many natural beauties and the sturdy inhabitants of the Scottish countryside, which our programmes seek to present month by month, we think of Royal Deeside, the family home at Balmoral, and the little village church of Crathie, where Their Majesties worship with the villagers.

These are all Scottish scenes and yet behind them there are others. For just as our Scottish programmes not only deal with the national life, but reflect its international context, so the presence of the Royal Family in the Northern Kingdom makes us more conscious of our link with the Empire and the world. For myself, I cannot hear the bells ringing on a Sunday morning in Edinburgh as the Royal Party proceeds up the grey Royal mile to worship in St. Giles, without also hearing the clamour of the bells of Malta ringing in the sunshine and seeing the King in white naval uniform standing on the bridge of the cruiser *Aurora* as he enters the Grand

The Royal Family in Scotland: looking down from the balcony of the Palace of Holyroodhouse on the broadcast Sunset Ceremony

Broadcasting and the Countryman. 'Peter Scott feeds wild geese'

Sam Jones, BBC producer, in North Wales, with the College Trio, whose voices are heard in 'Noson Lawen'

Alan Clarke looks out on some of the sporting events of the North of England described on page 38

'Town Forum' : See Denis Morris's article on page 35

'Up against It', the Northern Ireland Quiz Programme of which Henry McMullan writes on page 43

Harbour of Valetta during the war. Or, again, when I think of them on holiday stalking, or walking on the Cairngorms, I see not only the mountains (which bear the name of Scotland's most famous jewel) but also the arid veldt around Kimberley and the precious stones which that name recalls. Listeners on another royal occasion hearing Princess Elizabeth accepting the Freedom of the City of Edinburgh, may also have recalled her voice coming to them in her speech of dedication from half-way across the world on her twenty-first birthday in Cape Town. Everyone will have their own impressions of this kind. To those engaged in broadcasting it is stimulating to think that this medium can help not only to report the many national activities which Their Majesties' presence illuminates, but to emphasize their significance within a unity of nations extending across the world.

BROADCASTING AND THE COUNTRYMAN

by A. W. Coysh

The roving microphone is no respecter of persons. In the West Country in 1948 it led observers to scale rocky cliffs, to wade waist-deep in the sea, to climb to the narrow gallery of a lighthouse, and to tramp through ploughed fields in drenching rain. And in a rural region this is a good thing, for broadcasting material from the countryside is seldom to be had for the asking. It has to be sought out. This is particularly true of farming; however interested a farmer may be in the findings of the scientist, his main concern is to know how new ideas and new methods are working out in practice. So, more and more, the microphone is being taken to the farm or market garden to get the views of the man on the spot.

Early in 1948, for example, there was a great deal of discussion about the quality and the packing of Cornish broccoli, and it was decided to record a programme on the holding of a prominent grower in West Cornwall. We set out on a cold dark February evening, and as we drove across Bodmin Moor the wind rose almost to gale force and rain streamed down the windscreen so that it was all we could do to keep to the narrow ribbon of road picked out faintly by the headlights. Then, as we ran down towards Hayle, came the search for an unknown farm; happily we had been well directed.

Next morning we went out to the sodden fields, where a number of men were cutting and trimming the broccoli heads and loading them in tall wicker baskets on to a waiting cart. The grower ex-

plained to us how and when the crop was planted, what fertilizers he had used, and how the plants had been set out to ensure easy working. The conversation was recorded and then, soaked to the knees after walking through the wet crop, we made for the packing station, a large shed stacked high with empty crates, where men and girls were already busy, grading the white curds into sizes—large, medium, and small—and packing them securely into crates for the long journey to London or some northern city. We saw, too, an experimental pack designed so that the buyer might see at a glance the quality of the produce, a pack which could be opened up and placed at once in the shop window for the housewife to see. Descriptions of the various processes were recorded, together with the views and experiences of a number of the workers, including those of a Land Army girl who had previously worked for over seven years in a Liverpool tobacco factory, and of a young man who had just returned to the farm after six years in the Royal Air Force. They were both mainly concerned with problems of food and of housing. Then, after a final word with the grower about the general economy of his farm, back to the studio with a bunch of discs to build a programme. Many of the broadcasts in the series 'For Western Farmers' have been prepared in this way and apart from visits to study, for example, the use of electricity on a Devon farm, or the working of a Growers' Co-operative in Hampshire, the major agricultural shows, the Bath and West, the Three Counties, and the Royal Counties, have all been covered in much the same way. When it has proved impossible to send the recording car an observer has frequently walked over a farm and returned with the farmer to the studio to talk over what he has seen.

But, apart from the specialized interest of the farmer and market-grower, the countryman has much to contribute to the more general programmes about rural life—programmes heard by townsman and countryman alike. The West has already made some notable contributions in this field—'The Naturalist', 'Bird Song of the Month' and 'Country Questions', for example. This year a new series for the Light Programme called 'Out of Doors' has been added to the list, giving listeners some idea of what they can see and hear in the countryside each month, every programme illustrated by sound pictures of wild creatures recorded by Ludwig Koch. Another experimental series for West of England listeners is 'Point of View'. Brian Vesey-FitzGerald has proved himself to be a first-rate and very popular broadcaster about the countryside and has come to the microphone on many occasions, without a script, to talk about his experiences in the West Country. In 'Point of View', however, he takes the microphone with him and broadcasts 'live', again without script, from some vantage point where he can see a

stretch of coast or wide views of moorland, hill, or valley. From Portland Bill Lighthouse he has described the scene looking westward across Lyme Bay along the Chesil Beach to the cliffs of Lyme Regis, and eastward across Weymouth Bay to St. Alban's Head. And he has talked about the people enjoying a Bank Holiday on the short springy turf above the rock ledges and about the disused quarries around Portland Bill—'the womb of London'.

Brian Vesey-FitzGerald has broadcast from many other places in this series. In Sark, using a radio link with Guernsey, he stood near the slender causeway known as the Coupée, that 'sheer thread of narrowing precipice' linking Great Sark with Little Sark. At Avonmouth, he described the wide stretches of the Severn as seen from the flat roof of a high sugar warehouse and told of the part played by the little River Avon in the story of the great Port of Bristol.

Back in the office at Broadcasting House, Bristol, where these broadcasts are planned, hangs a map of the West Country. On it, every place visited by the roving microphone is marked by a coloured pin and the journeys made by the microphone weave a fine-meshed pattern, rather like a spider's web, stretching from the Forest of Dean to the Dorset coast, from Hayling Island to Land's End, with strands reaching out to Lundy and the Channel Islands. Every few months the map is wiped clean and then, as broadcasting goes on, a pattern slowly emerges again—a slightly different pattern, perhaps, but one in which no gaps can be allowed. That map is a guarantee that no part of the region is neglected—it continually reminds us that the West of England Home Service serves both the towns *and* the countryside.

TOWN FORUM

by Denis Morris

The aim of this Midland series was to produce a programme with public participation, which would maintain the 'Brains Trust' level of responsibility and add to it the virtue of entirely spontaneous questions. The BBC would have no control over the questions or the way in which they were put.

When the broadcasts started in November, 1946, we had no idea what would prove the best technique. We had many fears, of questions that might be difficult, dangerous, or disastrous. They have, in fact, been consistently interesting, responsible, even searching. Their only fault has been that, on some occasions, they lacked lightness.

The Forum has always consisted of four speakers and a Chairman.

The hall has been chosen in every case to accommodate about 500 people.

In the first broadcast we learned a number of things—and we are still learning. We learned that it is unwise to have a politician in the Forum. For instance, Miss Jennie Lee, who was in No. 1 of the series, had literally about two questions out of three addressed to her, and although she answered them with all the adroitness and skill of an experienced and able politician, it was obviously neither fair on her as an individual nor on her unrepresented political opponents, and so since then we have not chosen national politicians to speak in Town Forum. Another early mistake was to invite Lord Mayors or Mayors who attracted abstruse questions on Local Government which were seldom of general interest.

Perhaps, though, the greatest lesson that we learned in the first few broadcasts was the high proportion of people who wanted to put questions and the difficulty of deciding who should have a chance. The drill is that the members of Town Forum have their own microphones on the platform and the public have the microphone brought to them when the Chairman calls upon them. The result of the enthusiasm at Leicester, Nuneaton, and Wolverhampton—the first three places visited—was that throughout the proceedings from thirty to fifty people remained on their feet trying to catch the Chairman's eye, though on an average only twelve to fifteen questions were put. Since then, potential questioners have been asked to stand up before the broadcast; we give them numbered cards and ask them not to stand up again until their turn is next but one. This explains why the microphone is always there when the Chairman calls upon 'that lady in the fourth row on the right with the yellow hat'.

Another difficulty is that with wandering microphones our Engineers—who have a very ticklish job on these occasions—refuse the embarrassment of having to cope with a public-address system in the hall. If there were one there it might well produce echo, howlback, and all sorts of other queer noises—incidentally the first time we tried the wandering microphone we broadcast the heart-beats of the woman who held the 'live' microphone to her heart whilst the members of the Forum were answering her question. To overcome this we now 'mix' the microphones in the sight of the audience—and vice versa—so that the engineer in local control can keep out all the microphones which are not actually being used by speakers.

Our speakers are paid, of course, but when one remembers that by the time they get home again they have sometimes been three days away, that throughout the grim winter of 1946–7 they turned up cheerfully and conscientiously, that they so readily and agreeably risk making the kind of wrong answer which might well prove em-

barrassing to them in their professional career, they seem to earn it. Our chief trouble in laying hold of the illustrious is at the very beginning. How full their diaries are! On an average we ask twenty-two people before we find four who are free on a night two months hence.

As in the Brains Trust, much depends on the tact, kindliness, and humour, and above all on the quickness of the Chairman. In Town Forum we have been particularly fortunate with our Chairman; we have in the main called on the services of three men, Bernard Storey, R. P. Winfrey, and Colonel Arthur Mellows. All three, who in different ways combine these virtues, are members of the legal profession.

There has always been a woman member of the Town Forum team, and as often as not it has seemed to me that she has anticipated her fee, added a considerable sum to it, and invested it in headgear. Before leaving décor I must mention the hottest June day of that hot 1947 summer. Picture a scene in the rather drab private room of a war-shabbied hotel in Northampton. In it were sitting four tired, extremely hot and slightly dispirited men—General Sir John Brown, W. A. Stewart, R. P. Winfrey, and Norman Barrett, all of whom had quickly shed some clothes soon after arriving. It was that time when the broadcasting brain is at its lowest—about seventy-five minutes before taking the air in a programme in which there is every opportunity of making a complete and utter ass of oneself. Into this melancholy assembly walked an elegant, cool, and exquisitely turned out lady who had, literally, flung a gauntlet at the weather by choosing to wear long black gloves. Not only did the lady—Miss Jill Craigie—remain as cool as a cucumber throughout the whole proceedings, but she also proceeded to smoke nine cigarettes during the forty-five minutes of the broadcast, which is so far a record for the series.

Our most eventful Town Forum was the one which nearly did not happen. The distinguished team, Major-General Ian Hay Beith, Bernard Storey, 'an anonymous physician', and Major Anthony Buxton were waiting, somewhat anxiously, in a Lowestoft hotel for the 'lady of the party', on this occasion, Miss Monica Dickens, the novelist, who was late. At last she came, but by the time she was suitably prepared for her ordeal there were only twenty minutes left to get to the Sparrow's Nest, a mile-and-a-half away, where the broadcast was to take place. Unfortunately our physician had a little local knowledge, but not quite enough. Instead of going through the centre of the town, a way which was about a quarter of a mile longer but straightforward, he took us through the back streets of Lowestoft's Dockland. With what I thought were eight minutes to go, we pulled up at a little old house.

I rushed to the door, banged on it, and asked impatiently to be directed to the Sparrow's Nest. Happily, it was only a hundred yards up the street. We got out of our cars with that feeling of relief that comes after crisis only to be told by an almost frenzied member of our Regional staff that we had only a minute and a half. We just had time to get to our seats on the platform (I sit and tremble just behind the Forum) when the red light started flicking. This meant that the announcer had started announcing us in Birmingham and we were as good as 'on the air'. How slick that Lowestoft audience must have thought us—these BBC people and their split-second timing. Actually, my watch was five minutes slow!

This programme has now gone to eighteen towns, large and small. Many notable people have taken part in it and it has regularly received one of the highest appreciation indices returned by the BBC's Listener Research system. More than 200 ordinary folk have been enabled to seek enlightenment or put forward a point of view for discussion by people well qualified to reply. That this facility has never been abused by listeners shows, I think, they appreciate that freedom of discussion is, in the Midlands, no mere figure of speech.

THE SPORTING NORTH

by Kenneth Wolstenholme

From the early days of broadcasting, the North Region has had to play the rôle of Pathfinder in its sports broadcasts, because of the wide variety and unique extent of sporting activity within the Region's boundaries.

The North Region pioneered the broadcasting of speedway league matches as a regular feature; it was the North which first recommended that commentaries should be broadcast on the smaller boxing promotions; it originated the system of using two voices for cricket commentaries; for a long time the North has gone out to youth clubs and working men's clubs with 'Sportsman's Club'. This experimental work is not surprising in view of the amount of sport which has to be covered. Half the first-class association football clubs are in the Region, Rugby League is solely a Northern game, and Rugby Union clubs are to be numbered in their thousands. Eighty per cent of the country's League cricket is played in the North, while its County strength may perhaps justifiably be described as formidable.

And there are the other sports—cycling (Reg Harris and Alan Bannister, our two leading cyclists, live in the North Region), T.T. racing, athletics, racing (St. Leger, Grand National, Manchester

November Handicap, and the Chester Cup are just four of the North's big races), and an overpowering list of sports played nowhere but in the North.

All these have to be covered in the Regional sports programmes. Alan Clarke, staff sports producer, is a southerner. He came North eighteen months ago and almost beat a retreat to London the first day when he saw the activities he had to cover. To help him the North Region uses a number of outside contributors. Five men, for instance, are used in 'Sports Special' for Rugby League alone.

The Region is sometimes accused of not giving adequate coverage to the sport in its area, yet, in this year alone, almost forty different sports have been included in our programmes, and Ivor Glyn Jones has covered nineteen different sports for the region since he started broadcasting.

'Sportsman's Club', the mid-week magazine programme in the North of England Home Service, has featured every form of sport played in the North, and it has compressed it into fifteen minutes each week. Yet scores of suggestions, both from the listening public and from contributors, litter Alan Clarke's desk every day—lacrosse, Cumberland and Westmorland wrestling, fell-racing, and many more.

Every Saturday brings another problem with 'Sports Special'. The whole field of Northern sport must be covered in twenty-five minutes. The list is so extensive that the difficulty is not what to put in, but what to leave out. For instance, on 13 March, 'Sports Special' had to cover two F.A. Cup semi-finals, the Lincolnshire Handicap, the four third-round Rugby League Cup ties, the Rugby Union County Championship (Lancashire won it), the English Cross Country Championships at Sheffield, and the Head of the River race at Chester. It also included short reports of six other events.

A busy day; yet listeners still wrote in to ask why we did not devote more time to this, or why we ignored that! If they could only have surveyed the scene in the office—telephones ringing incessantly, telephonists rushing down reports, the editor and his subeditors rapidly sifting the material and getting headaches deciding what to reject. And even when the programme is on the air, last-minute changes are made to some of the reports, sometimes a few seconds before they are read.

In addition to producing its own programmes, the North Region is often called upon to provide contributions to other wavelengths. On the day I mentioned, for instance, North Region engineers and Outside Broadcast assistants were required for the Lincolnshire Handicap commentary and at Sheffield for the Manchester United *v.* Derby County F.A. Cup semi-final. Alan Clarke was the commentator at Sheffield and I was sent to Villa Park, Birmingham, to

do the commentary on the Blackpool *v.* Tottenham Hotspur semi-final. Yet another team of engineers, with a commentator, had to cover a Rugby League cup match.

So it goes on, day in, day out, week in, week out, Sometimes, the North Region sports team is working amid the roars of 75,000 cheering fans at a huge stadium. At other times it is fighting against time to provide an up-to-the-minute sports news programme or a magazine programme which reflects the sporting life of the Region.

And if this were not enough, the team spends a lot of time 'liaising' with the hundred-and-one sporting executives, meeting the ordinary sports fan to find out his views, providing the Northern News Editor with items of sports news, and so on. It is a job which calls for tact, patience, and an inside knowledge of the wide variety of sports played in the North. It is a job which can only be successfully accomplished by a well-drilled, well-disciplined unit. That is exactly what the North Region has tried to build. Under the captaincy of Philip Robinson, head of the North Region Outside Broadcasting Department, commentators, reporters, and engineers work as one team.

MERRY EVENING IN WALES

by Myfanwy Howell

The 'Noson Lawen', produced by Sam Jones and broadcast once a month from the Penrhyn Hall, Bangor, is without doubt one of the most typically Welsh programmes broadcast from Wales during 1948. It is also one of the most popular—it reached one of the highest appreciation figures ever recorded by the Listener Research Bureau. More than that, it has become an institution. Local Council meetings have been known to hurry through their proceedings so that the members can reach home in time to listen to the 'Noson Lawen'; village societies plan their meetings so that they do not clash with a 'Noson Lawen' broadcast and mothers write despairingly to Sam Jones to beg of him to arrange to broadcast the 'Noson Lawen' earlier in the evening so that the children can listen without having to stay up late.

How has all this come about? The 'Noson Lawen' is not a new form of entertainment in Wales. It is, in fact, one of the oldest. Before the coming of radio, films, and buses, country folk of necessity provided their own entertainment, and many a 'Noson Lawen' has been held in a farmhouse kitchen to celebrate a wedding, the end of the harvest, Christmas, and other feasts. The literal translation of 'Noson Lawen' is 'A Merry Evening', but this does not in any way

convey the meaning of a 'Noson Lawen', the spontaneous gaiety of which cannot be translated into English or any other language. The essentials of such an evening are that it should be unrehearsed and that everyone present should take part. In the old days each one present would in turn tell a story, true or imaginary, recite, or sing, or dance to the accompaniment of the harp or the fiddle or both. Time, of course, was of no account. A farmhouse 'Noson Lawen' could and did go on till the early hours of the morning. Spontaneous, unrehearsed, the number and choice of items left to the artists, and the time unlimited! Anything more unlike a radio programme cannot be imagined. And yet, for years Sam Jones knew that here were the makings of a first-class essentially Welsh light radio programme. But how was it to be done? How could an uncontrolled and seemingly uncontrollable entertainment like the 'Noson Lawen', as we knew it, be reduced and translated into radio terms? Several times he tried out various programmes of the 'Noson Lawen' type. Some of them were quite good, but not good enough for the producer. He was looking for a winner. He found it by accident.

Members of the BBC Programme staff attend public functions whenever they can, but there are inevitably rehearsals and broadcasts to be looked after. One evening Sam Jones did manage to attend a social and concert held at a Bangor café in aid of the Local Welcome Home Fund. He had been asked to preside, and, according to him, in a weak moment he agreed to do so. It may have been a weak moment for him, but what a fortunate one for Welsh radio. A group of Bangor University College students had promised to provide the entertainment, which meant nothing new to Sam Jones. Not so many years ago he, too, was a student at Bangor, holding similar concerts in the local cafés, and he was quite prepared to hear the same old songs with topical variations. But, as he himself said afterwards, the very first item, a trio, brought him to his feet. He could hardly sit down for the rest of the evening as one item followed another—solos, duets, trios, a ventriloquist, an outstanding mimic, a mock peroration on Welsh radio given with the traditional Welsh 'hwyl' and including a skit on Sam Jones himself. Here at last was the programme for which he had been looking.

He came to the office the next morning in a fever of excitement, a fever that must have been infectious—as all Sam Jones's fevers are, because in no time the whole staff had caught it. During the afternoon the 'College boys' came in delighted at the thought of going on the air. And there and then the 'Noson Lawen' was born.

Who will ever forget the preparations for that first broadcast? Certainly not the Bangor staff! It was impossible for anyone to get on with his or her own work that day; Sam Jones and his college

boys were here there and everywhere. In any case we were all in it —it was a 'Bangor Event'. Apprehension?—yes, but not for long. There was no mistaking the reaction of the delighted audience of 250 which filled the Penrhyn Hall that night as they listened to the Trio singing 'Mari Fach', and Henry Aethwy Jones mimicking well-known Welshmen, including some of his own Professors and even producing a Welsh speech in favour of Welsh Home Rule by Mr. Churchill. Here indeed was a winner, and if more confirmation were needed, it came by post during the next few days in the form of an avalanche of letters, cards, and telephone calls from all over Wales and parts of England and Scotland. Never has there been such a response to a Welsh programme.

The 'Noson Lawen' series has already run through three seasons, during which it has naturally grown and developed a long way from that original student show. It is, however, the producer's policy to let the public believe, as they do, that it is almost entirely run by the students themselves. For students rush in where Professors fear to tread and that without causing offence. Certainly no one but students could have 'got away' with some of the satirical songs that have been included in the programme. No one is safe from their 'de-bunking', from the Government down to the local Eisteddfod Committee. They have even taught us to laugh at ourselves. The students are, of course, still with us. They write most of their own items, words, and music. The discovery in this respect was Meredydd Evans, one of the original trio, now a lecturer at Coleg Harlech, with his astonishing talent for writing words and music for the trios and his ability to sing bass or tenor as required. He has even been referred to as the 'Bangor Bing', and instead of imitating Music Hall and film crooners we hear children on the streets humming his 'Triawd y Buarth' and 'Hen Feic Penny Farthing fy Nhaid'.

Around the students the rest of the programme has been built. The producer quickly realized that good as they were, the students alone could not maintain a series of programmes. More than that their songs and skits were too academic to suit the majority of listeners. He decided to bring in the sort of item that would have been heard at a farmhouse 'Noson Lawen'. Hence the harp and the penillion singers; Robert Roberts, Tai'r Felin (aged 77) and his friend, John Thomas (aged 81), with their hitherto unpublished folk-songs, now, thanks to the 'Noson Lawen', safely recorded; a farmer yodeller from Carmarthenshire with his guitar; the Eryri Men's Chorus accompanied by Ffrancon Thomas and Maimie Noel Jones, who, with the first-class soloists, sing new arrangements of popular Welsh songs of the last century; and perhaps the greatest discovery of all, Richard Huws, who recites monologues in the

unique dialect of Caernarvon. The result is the radio 'Noson Lawen' as we now know it, a harmonious blend of old and new.

The 'Noson Lawen' was a part of the pattern of Welsh life in the olden days; thanks to radio, and to Sam Jones, it is undoubtedly a part of Welsh life today. And what of the future? The programme will go on, that is certain. It may reappear under another name and maybe in another form. But to us, who were a part of the first programme, it will always be 'Sam's Noson Lawen'.

'UP AGAINST IT'

by Henry McMullan

'What is the standard width of a double bed?'

'It varies.'

'It should not. It is laid down by a trade regulation.'

'I don't believe it!'

Oddly enough, it is, and in one town in Northern Ireland at least the majority of the inhabitants can now give the correct answer without a moment's thought. They got it when the Northern Ireland Quiz Programme, 'Up against It', visited the town hall last year in the second year of its apparently endless tour of the Six Counties of Northern Ireland.

'Up against It' is the kind of Quiz which is something of a rarity in broadcasting nowadays, a programme in which the questions really have to be answered. The programme was born at the time when the Northern Ireland Home Service had just started after the war, and the BBC in Northern Ireland was anxious to start the microphone on its journeys round the countryside. The problem was to find a programme which would fulfil a number of conditions. It must be extremely mobile; it must have audience participation; it must, if possible, be competitive, and it must be able to fit into any country hall in a chosen town or village. Incidentally, of course, it must also be an entertainment programme.

The Quiz, 'Up against It', fulfils all the conditions, particularly the final one, since in the two years of its existence it has become the most popular programme on the Northern Ireland Home Service. The recipe is a very simple one. The BBC provides a team of four competitors who travel to the selected town once a fortnight. In the town hall this team faces a team of four selected from the town itself, and the audience consists of the inhabitants of the town who have come to cheer their own side to victory. The BBC provides a Question Master and the questions. The main purpose of the questions is to produce interesting information, and they range from

literature through history and art down to the more mundane points of the rationing system. Oddly enough the teams generally seem to have more trouble with the rationing system than with any of the other general knowledge tests which they endure.

Since the programme went on the air in October, 1946, it has travelled to every part of Northern Ireland, and when it went off the air in the spring of 1948 it still trailed behind it, like a cloud of glory, a list of indignant or slightly hurt towns which it had not visited. Hence its reappearance for yet another winter.

The BBC team in the Quiz has travelled since the programme started to every part of the Six Counties. It has appeared in the nick of time on the platform through a snowstorm. It has performed in a town where the electric-light system had failed and where only superhuman efforts at the power station kept a special supply going to illuminate the platform. Actually, since each member of the team is a hardened broadcaster in one way or another, most of the serious work of the Quiz is done in the half-hour before it goes on the air, during which time the BBC representatives attempt to persuade the opposing team that the whole thing is not as frightening as it sounds.

Of course a programme such as this is bound to collect many stories as it travels through the months. The problem, for instance, of prompting has provided some of the best that the Question Master tells. His particular delight was the evening on which he asked one of the town team which branch of the British Army contained only Officers, and an ex-Airborne Padre in the front row of the audience almost tore his clerical collar off in an attempt to encourage his own side to secure the vitally needed point.

The secret of 'Up against It' and its popularity is probably the fact that it gives the listener an opportunity of feeling at one time or another in each programme superior to the faltering contestant who, faced with a microphone, an audience, and a complete consequential mental blank, has been asked a question completely outside his scope of knowledge or ingenuity! As one listener wrote, 'I think the questions are too hard except for the literary ones, and I am always able to answer them long before the people you ask them do.'

During the two seasons that the programme has been on the air the BBC team has changed considerably. In the original design of the programme it included a number of members of the staff whose names were familiar to the Northern Ireland listener, but whose work had been entirely confined to the studio. Nowadays the BBC team is subject to constant alteration, and new voices appear in it frequently as the best-known radio actors and some of the other broadcasting personalities in Northern Ireland accept the invitation to form part of the defending side. Only one member of the

team, D. G. Waring, the Ulster novelist, has remained constant since the Quiz began its tour. She now confesses that she ought to be one of the best informed people in the North of Ireland—if only she could remember all the answers she has heard.

Listening to 'Up against It' is by no means confined to Northern Ireland. It has its correspondents in other parts of the country and quite substantial listening groups in a number of places which can receive the transmissions. At the moment plans are in contemplation for the programme to tour more widely outside the Six Counties, and there seems little doubt that the recipe is assured of success wherever it may go, once the audience can be convinced that the whole thing is not 'a put-up job'. This of course is bound to be a criticism. It can perhaps be answered on paper, as it has been answered on the air before some of the programmes were broadcast, by an explanation of the extraordinary secrecy which surrounds the preparation of the questions by the programme-producer, a story, in fact, of sealed envelopes, week-end work at home, and of the two pairs of eyes which alone see them before the listening audience and the competitors hear them for the first time.

Northern Ireland listeners now have accepted the programme as being what it is—a completely genuine and honest Quiz run on the simplest lines. An anachronism in these days of elaboration and lavish distribution of prizes? Perhaps, but an anachronism which ties a large proportion of Northern Ireland listeners regularly to their sets once a fortnight, and looks like keeping them there for another winter.

WHY I LISTEN TO THE BBC

During the War, listening to the BBC became a world-wide habit. The Year Book three years later has invited four listeners in widely separated parts of the world to say why they are still listening to its transmissions.

by Michel Fort, who is a French Civil Servant living in Paris.

I now listen to the BBC from sheer habit. The basic reason for this habit is, I think, that since the war I have got used to trying to compare current opinions in foreign countries. If I read only the papers of my own country, if I listened only to my own country's broadcasts, I should soon feel stifled. Even Paris sometimes strikes me as slightly provincial.

From time to time, I feel the need to fling open the windows overlooking the world, and London seems to me the best of such windows. So I listen mainly to news bulletins, either the Home Service ones, or the French Service ones, which I appreciate mainly because they are objective and because they maintain a careful balance between news items of varying importance. I listen, not out of what used to be called 'le snobisme de Big Ben', but because I know by experience that at the end of a ten-minute news bulletin, nothing really important in the life of Europe will have escaped me.

Press reviews interest me very much, too, but only if I have more time to listen and can concentrate. It seems to me that if I had not lived in London, I would find it difficult to gauge the nuances of these Press reviews, and to appreciate them fully. I do not listen to the programmes on the theatre, books, and films, which are broadcast much too soon for us: we shall only see those plays or films or read those books in six months' time, or perhaps a year from now. Sometimes, too, I hear concerts on the Home Service, but concerts are not the prerogative of the British radio.

In fact, I repeat that I like the BBC because on the international, and more especially on the European plane it is an admirable complement to the radio of my own country. To these more or less abstract considerations I would add another, more practical one. From time to time, I feel like improving my knowledge of English. I do not listen to English by Radio, because I like to think I am past that stage. But I find it both useful and entertaining to listen occasionally to 'Twenty Questions' or to try and understand one joke out of two in ITMA.

That is my personal point of view. I do not think it is representative of a cross-section of listeners, for I know many people who listen to the European Service of the BBC mainly for its short stories, its serials, its variety of programmes, and its inimitable sports programme.

by Mr. Trond Hegna of Stavanger, who is Editor of the Labour paper Første Mai

In the hard years of the war, listening to the BBC became a sort of a Norwegian native custom which may go on for years, long after it has lost its original significance. The conditions for tuning in to the English stations are—especially here in the western part of the country—extremely good.

Being a newspaper man I listen with great interest to the British news bulletins. London is at present as before the war the most important clearing house of world news, and I find that after having listened to Radio Newsreel at seven and then to the nine o'clock news, I can resume my work with well-founded opinions about what has happened and is going to happen in the world.

The Norwegian section of the BBC brings news and comments from the same sources and, in addition to this, items of special interest to the Norwegian public. Obviously these programmes are especially valuable to Norwegian listeners not knowing the English language.

I gain much pleasure and profit from hearing the talks on current affairs and the political-party speeches. The individual character in expressions, voice, and behaviour is transmitted by radio in a degree that printed matter cannot at all compete with.

This part of the BBC programme I listen to regularly, that is, almost every day. But very often I catch out of the programme some point or other which keeps me listening. I think that I can often catch something of the British public feeling at various stages of after-war development even in ITMA and 'Much-Binding-in-the Marsh', although there is a lot of it which I cannot follow. At any rate, it is amusing.

I remember with great respect the most imposing transmission of John Hersey's atom-bomb report, 'Hiroshima', some time ago. I also want to mention the series of Icelandic sagas. These monuments in European literature are deplorably little known, and I know no better way of transmitting them to the great public than broadcasting, properly arranged. I very much appreciate such transmissions as these, both for their value in themselves and as stimulating patterns for the arrangement of radio programmes.

Concluding, I want to add an advantage which I as a non-Britisher gain from listening to the BBC. My experience says that the best way of learning a foreign language is listening to it in living speech. Even 'Twenty Questions', which for British listeners hardly represents more than an amusing social game, has for me in this way its solid and earnest importance.

by Percy Jouett of Christchurch, New Zealand, who is a retired accountant

Having had to retire from my work through failing eyesight I found wireless a great boon. Not able to read I turned to Braille, which I learnt in six weeks, and also talking books. This still meant that I had to encroach upon the time of busy people for the news, views, and interesting articles provided by newspapers and magazines. However, I turned more and more to my short-wave wireless set and thus became acquainted with the BBC. I there found a wide selection of world news, comments from world-famous journalists, newsreels with on-the-spot remarks by the people actually mixed up in great happenings. This filled the gap, providing me with my spoken newspaper, and I got it without feeling I was troubling people. In addition there were the talks and special feature programmes which filled the place of special articles in newspapers and magazines. All this kept me in touch with actual happenings, with what was being said, with the ideas being expressed, and with the clash of opinions. In particular I was able to follow the efforts of our enemies to set our friends against us and sow dissension in our midst, and to hear what was being done to counteract the mischief. As a contrast to the above, there was music of all kinds, humour both boisterous and subtle. Like David Low's cartoons, for instance, ITMA often hits hard at abuses and mocks more gently at the foibles of the day. To me, however, music and humour are pleasant breaks. They keep one in touch with the lighter side of life.

Often a talk proves much more interesting than the title indicates. The talks are stimulating; they make me think. I dislike pomposity in talks; few of us like to be talked down to; but I find few instances of that. I dislike the talker who says 'I will not worry you with figures' thus evading a ticklish point, just as much as I dislike the man who tries to mislead by quoting wrong figures.

I like 'In Britain Today' (Georgie Henschel and Colin Wills), William Holt's 'Industrial England' (especially his story of the Sheffield steel ingot). I also like the street microphone interviews, and, to my surprise, a good deal of the poetry. I particularly like short stories. I have been listening to the BBC for eleven years—I cannot enumerate all I have enjoyed.

Listening is fitted into my daily round of 'doing' my room, making my bed, mopping and dusting, and shaking two mats. I read Braille books, and listen to a talking book. I take a walk. And I listen to the BBC. Incidentally my wife reads to me anything of interest she thinks I might like. I also type correspondence with my family of four children, all married, living in the North Island—my wife and I are in the South Island.

by Calixto A. Armas Barea, a student, of Buenos Aires

I am a modest student of International Law, lately down from an Argentine university, and I am also a profound lover of peace. I have always striven not to limit my knowledge to theories propounded in books, and am consequently interested in learning what is happening in the rest of the world and the traditions, customs, economy, etc., of other people.

I first listened in to the BBC for the sake of its news reports in Spanish and was immediately impressed by their brevity and clarity, and especially by their objectivity and lack of any unpleasant attempts at propaganda. I consider them to be ideal.

As I wished to hear, not only of world events but also of the comments arising from them, I began to examine other BBC programmes. Thus I came across the one called Radio Gazette which is now my favourite, as I consider it the indispensable complement to the news reports, and greatly appreciate the way in which events are selected, and the excellent staff of correspondents employed.

Another item I am fond of is the Press review, giving as it does, in few words, a complete idea of the chief events dealt within the British Press.

The Talks by Salvador de Madariaga, Tuyá Vidal, and Juan de Castilla, I also find very interesting, not only in their subject matter, but in the indisputable ability of those writers.

Other programmes in which I am, by the nature of my studies, especially interested are the Topical Commentaries, the British Political Scene, and the International Commentary. All are first-rate and remarkable for the high standard of their writers, and are selected without consideration of politics, a fact which speaks well for the civic culture of the English people.

Other aspects of life (economic, social, cultural, historic, etc.) are dealt with by the BBC and are important in encouraging mutual understanding among peoples. As I am often busy in the evening, I do not listen in regularly, but, whenever I have done so, I have observed how well the programmes fulfil their purpose, especially the musical ones which are of a high artistic standard.

Do not think that I am an uncritical admirer of the BBC, or that I always agree with everything in the programmes which I have praised, but an impartial analysis of the Spanish programme shows, in my opinion, a distinctly favourable balance. Furthermore, I think that the Overseas Service of the BBC contributes most effectively to the spiritual drawing together of peoples, and thus has become an organ of the international community, helping to achieve something far wider than the individual interests of Great Britain, and directly affecting the well-being of humanity.

PROGRESS OF A PROGRAMME

From the Studio to the Transmitting Aerial

by Peter West

It is a commonplace to say that broadcasting has become so much a part of our daily lives that we take it for granted. We switch on the wireless to listen to the programme of our choice, rarely if ever pausing to think of the intricate equipment and technical skill that are indispensable in the production of even the simplest programme. Yet, if the number of people who are eager to go behind the scenes of the BBC is any criterion, this attitude is testimony to the unobtrusiveness of the techniques used in broadcasting rather than to a lack of interest on the part of listeners. Here then is a backstage view of the progress of a programme on its journey to the transmitting aerial.

The first stage of this journey is the studio, where sound waves are generated by the speaker, singer, orchestra, or whatever it may be. Several types of studio are needed to cope with the many kinds of programme that are broadcast, but all of them have their walls and ceilings specially treated, so that the original sounds shall not be distorted. A studio may have one or more microphones, whose rôle is to translate the sound waves into electric waves, in the form of a minute and continually varying electric current. A small studio, such as is used for news reading or for talks, will probably have only one microphone, and at the other extreme a large studio, in which plays or feature programmes are produced, may have as many as eight. The Programme Engineer responsible for the broadcast, decides during rehearsal how the microphones shall be used and where they shall be placed.

From the studio the programme goes to the studio.control room, where the Programme Engineer, working with the Producer, controls all the microphone outputs and blends them to form a complete programme item. The control room adjoins the studio, with a soundproof window between them and contains a control desk, gramophone reproducing equipment, and a loudspeaker. The current from a microphone is very minute—how minute can be gauged from the fact that it would take a million million microphones to produce enough current to light a hundred-watt lamp at full brilliance. These tiny currents are first magnified by amplifiers and then taken to the control desk, on which there is a fader for each microphone, similar to the volume control on a wireless receiver. With these faders the Programme Engineer can fade up or down the output from each microphone and blend the outputs from several microphones in whatever proportions he wishes. By moving the faders and listening to the results on the loudspeaker he gets the blend of sound that he wants.

Many programmes, especially plays and features, require musical and other sound effects as well as the voices of the artists. Some sound effects are produced with special contraptions before a microphone in the studio, and others are obtained from gramophone records, which are played on the gramophone turntables in the studio control room. The output from the gramophone-reproducing equipment, representing the sounds recorded on the disc, is amplified and then taken to the control desk, where its contribution to the programme item is controlled by a fader, similar to those used for controlling the microphone outputs.

The Producer and his assistants in the control room can see the artists in the studio through the window and hear them over the loudspeaker. During rehearsal, and occasionally during the broadcast, the Producer needs to speak to the artists—to tell them how he wants a particular phrase rendered, for example. To do this, he talks quite normally, as if they were with him in the control room, and his voice is picked up by a microphone in the control desk and reproduced by a loudspeaker in the studio.

The currents from each microphone and from the gramophone equipment go through the faders and are then combined into a single current, representing the complete blended programme output from the studio. This composite output is taken to the main fader on the control desk, where its strength, representing the loudness of the sounds which will be transmitted, is controlled. After further amplification it leaves the studio control room by line for its next destination—the continuity suite.

The individual programme items which constitute a day's broadcasting for one programme service, such as the Light Programme, come from several different places—from different studios and from theatres, sports grounds, and so on. In the continuity suite a complete programme service is strung together from these individual programme items. The suite consists of a continuity studio, where the Announcer and the Presentation Assistant on duty supervise the running of the programme, and an adjoining room, separated from the studio by a soundproof window, which contains the technical operator's equipment. The technical operator has in front of him four faders, like the ones on the studio control desk, to each of which he can connect one programme item. These items may come from studios in the same building or in other studio centres, from temporary outside broadcast points, from overseas by the GPO radio-telephone, or from the machines that reproduce recordings. The technical operator can communicate by signal and telephone with each of the four places he has selected. When one programme item finishes, he turns down the fader to which it is connected, turns up the fader corresponding to the next programme item, and signals

to the programme engineer to start. In this way, one programme item follows another throughout the day.

The continuity studio is used for making announcements between or during programme items, and for playing gramophone records to fill a gap in the programme, when one item finishes before the next is due to begin. It contains a microphone and two gramophone turntables, a fader for each, and a main fader. With this equipment the announcer can readily and quickly fade out a programme item, fade up his own microphone, and make an announcement.

The output from the continuity suite is a complete programme service ready for radiation by the transmitters. This output is taken to the central control room, which is the terminus for all the special telephone lines that carry the incoming and outgoing programmes. The engineers in the central control room connect the output from the continuity suite to the lines that go to the transmitting stations which are to radiate the programme.

On arrival at the transmitting stations the programme is near the end of its journey. Here a carrier wave of the correct frequency is generated by an oscillator of great accuracy and stability and then amplified in the transmitter up to the power for which the station is licensed. The programme wave, sent by line from the studio centre, is also amplified in the transmitter and is then made to modulate, or regulate the strength of, the carrier wave. By this modulation process the shape of the programme wave is impressed on the carrier wave. Finally, the modulated carrier wave is conveyed over a transmission line to the aerial, whence it is propagated through space as an electro-magnetic wave bearing the imprint of the sound waves generated in the studio.

THE BEST SEAT IN THE HALL

The Problems of Broadcasting Orchestral Concerts

by Rex Haworth

In the past few years, there have been many improvements in the design of technical apparatus employed in broadcasting. However, the existence of efficient broadcasting apparatus, capable of handling a wide band of musical frequencies, is not by itself a sufficient guarantee that the owner of a high-quality receiver will always hear a true-to-life reproduction of a programme. A vital factor to be taken into account is the studio, which must be regarded as an integral part of the broadcasting chain.

In the studio, the engineer encounters many fascinating and baffling problems, some of which may never be solved to the satisfaction of everyone.

One of the most difficult problems encountered when balancing an orchestral concert for broadcasting is to create for the listener the illusion that he is hearing the performance from one of the better seats in a concert hall, and to give him a sense of realism. That sense of realism is experienced to the greatest degree when the orchestra seems to be playing on a platform at a point some distance behind the loudspeaker. The loudspeaker then seemingly ceases to be the actual source of sound, and simulates an open window or door through which the music can be heard. Careful placing of the microphone can produce this desirable effect.

On the other hand, it is only too easy to arrive at a microphone position where this imaginary distance between loudspeaker and platform is non-existent, and then the brain, through the ear, is asked to accept the idea that a dimensionally large source of sound, represented by some hundred musicians, can be replaced by a comparatively diminutive hole in a box. The brain involuntarily rejects this as being an unnatural experience, and all sense of realism is destroyed.

It might be thought that all the broadcasting engineer has to do, in order to obtain the desired perspective, is to find the position in the concert hall or studio where the orchestra sounds most pleasing to the ear, and there place the microphone.

Unfortunately, the problem cannot be solved quite so easily, because broadcasting is carried out on a single channel—that is to say, although we listen to a radio receiver with two ears, the broadcasting chain beginning with the microphone and ending with the loudspeaker is the equivalent of a single ear. The difference is obviously considerable. The effects resulting from the absence of the binaural sense can easily be tested by stopping up one ear while in a church, theatre, or concert hall. It will be found that distant sounds appear to be more distant, incidental noises (coughing, rustling, etc.) are more pronounced, and the building may seem more spacious. Also, the ability to concentrate on the sound it is desired to hear, and discriminate against unwanted sounds will have been lost. It is necessary, therefore, for the engineer to endeavour to assist the single ear of the broadcasting chain by arranging his microphones in such a way that the sound heard via the loudspeaker will bear as much resemblance as possible to the sound that would be heard by the listener, with his two ears, if he were actually present in the concert hall or studio. Under favourable conditions a fair degree of simulation can be obtained. An exact match is, of course, quite impossible.

At the present stage of the art, finding acceptable microphone positions involves a great deal of trial and error. It is rarely possible to forecast with any accuracy the quality of sound to be expected

from a given position, since this is governed largely by the acoustics of the building. It is quite unknown for two halls or studios to have identical acoustic characteristics. However, once a satisfactory arrangement of microphones has been found in a particular building, it is seldom necessary to make any change from concert to concert, provided the size of the orchestra remains approximately the same.

Since most people are accustomed to hearing an orchestra play in a fairly large hall with appreciable reverberation, a broadcast of an orchestra with reverberation missing from the sound picture would appear unnatural. Therefore, to convey to the listener a realistic impression of an orchestra playing in a large hall, we must ensure that the microphone picks up, not only direct sound from the various instruments, but also reflected sound and reverberation all blended in the proportions that the listener's experience has taught him to expect.

If the microphone is placed too near the orchestra, it will pick up a preponderance of direct sound. In addition there will be difficulty in obtaining a satisfactory balance between the various sections of the orchestra; violins will sound hard and gritty, the dynamic range will be restricted, and the listener will feel that the entire orchestra is crowded together in the box containing the loudspeaker.

A more distant microphone will help to remove most of these defects; just how distant depends on the size and acoustic characteristics of the hall—it may be anything between 20 and 90 ft. away. The farther the microphone is removed from the source of sound, the greater the proportion of indirect to direct sound it picks up and, up to a point, the livelier and more natural the reproduction will become.

However, complications often arise because musical sounds of different pitch are not all treated alike by the various absorbing and reflecting surfaces in a hall. In certain conditions the reverberation time may be longer for the low-pitched tones than for high-pitched tones, the resulting effect being low-toned, mellow, and lacking in brilliance. In this case the balance of the orchestra would be unsatisfactory with a distant microphone. The violins and wood-wind would sound feeble in comparison with the lower-toned instruments. Unless it were possible either to reinforce the high frequencies considerably by arranging reflecting surfaces near the orchestra, or to absorb some of the excess bass, a much less distant microphone might have to be resorted to in order to restore the balance.

For a soloist an additional microphone is usually necessary. This can be arranged to take either the orchestral accompaniment in

addition to the soloist, or the soloist alone, the correct level of accompaniment being maintained by use of the orchestral microphone. The latter method is preferred, as it gives a measure of control over the relative levels of soloist and orchestra. A chorus, organ, or additional soloists may sometimes necessitate individual microphones, but as far as possible more than two are never used at the same time. The most natural reproduction is obtained when the number of microphones is kept to a minimum.

The placing of the microphones and the combination of their outputs in the control cubicle during rehearsal and the performance are the responsibility of the Programme Engineer who is constantly able to check his results with the aid of a full musical score and a loudspeaker. He is responsible, also, for discreetly operating the main volume control when necessary, to ensure that the full dynamic range of a symphony orchestra is kept within bounds suitable for reproduction in a room of average size.

Ways of improving the acoustics of studios and balance technique are continually being investigated, and the goal will be reached when the fidelity of reproduction obtained by the listener is limited only by the capabilities of his own apparatus.

BROADCASTING THE OLYMPIC GAMES

by L. Hotine

The XIV Olympiad, the second Olympiad to be held in Britain (the first was in 1908), presented a planning and operational problem which had never before been encountered in the history of any broadcasting organization in the world. The BBC through the years has dealt with broadcasts of increasing magnitude and, prior to the Olympic Games, the Royal Wedding in November, 1947, created the heaviest load on its resources. It was known, when the decision was taken to hold the XIV Olympiad in Britain, that broadcasting reporting and eye-witness accounts of the Games would surpass in complexity and magnitude even the broadcasts of the Royal Wedding, because, although the latter had international interest, the Olympic Games in detail would have to be reported in practically every country in the world in each country's own language and in most cases by commentators who were covering their own athletes participating in the Games.

The Engineering Division were faced with two major difficulties in planning: first, accommodation for a broadcasting centre, and secondly, accurate knowledge of the amount of facilities all nations would require. As the first problem could not be solved without

resolution of the second, it was necessary to make certain assumptions and to err on the side of greater demands so that preliminary planning could begin.

The first requirement was a building near the Wembley Stadium, and it was at one time thought that a special building would have to be erected. Apart from the expense of construction, it was known that severe difficulties would be encountered in obtaining building materials and building labour. It was, therefore, a considerable easement when Sir Arthur Elvin, the Managing Director of Wembley Stadium, Ltd., generously offered to lend to the BBC the old building which was the Palace of Arts in the British Empire Exhibition of 1924. This building had been used in the intervening years for a number of purposes and the internal arrangements were of little use, as they stood, for broadcasting purposes. The building did provide four walls, however, and a roof and ample area in which to partition off spaces for studios, recording and reproducing rooms, etc. Preliminary planning of the area was then possible, and meanwhile replies to a questionnaire which had been sent to the broadcasting organizations of the participating countries were beginning to come in.

Analysis of the requirements showed that it would be necessary to provide for thirty-two channels; that is, equipment to permit thirty-two separate broadcasts to take place at any one time. This equipment, amplifiers, mixers, line terminations, etc., would be installed in the central control room in the Palace of Arts, to be known as the Broadcasting Centre. Space and other considerations determined the number of microphone positions which would feed the central control room for distribution to the BBC's Home and Overseas Services and to the participating countries of the world. At Wembley Stadium fifteen commentary boxes were planned, together with seventeen open positions. The Empire Pool would have sixteen commentary positions. Because of the distance between the central control room, the Stadium, and the Empire Pool, it was necessary to plan for sub-control rooms in each of these buildings in order to raise the programme volume from each microphone. No switching would be done at these points.

Eight studios would be required in the Wembley Broadcasting Centre, together with twenty recording channels and eight reproducing rooms. The need for these facilities, in addition to the commentary points, was created because many of the eye-witness accounts of events would be either broadcast live or recorded for later transmission because of time differences in different parts of the world.

Planning of the Broadcasting Centre was now completed, and constructional work began in January, 1948. All equipment had

OLYMPIC GAMES, 1948

The central control room in the Broadcasting Centre, Wembley

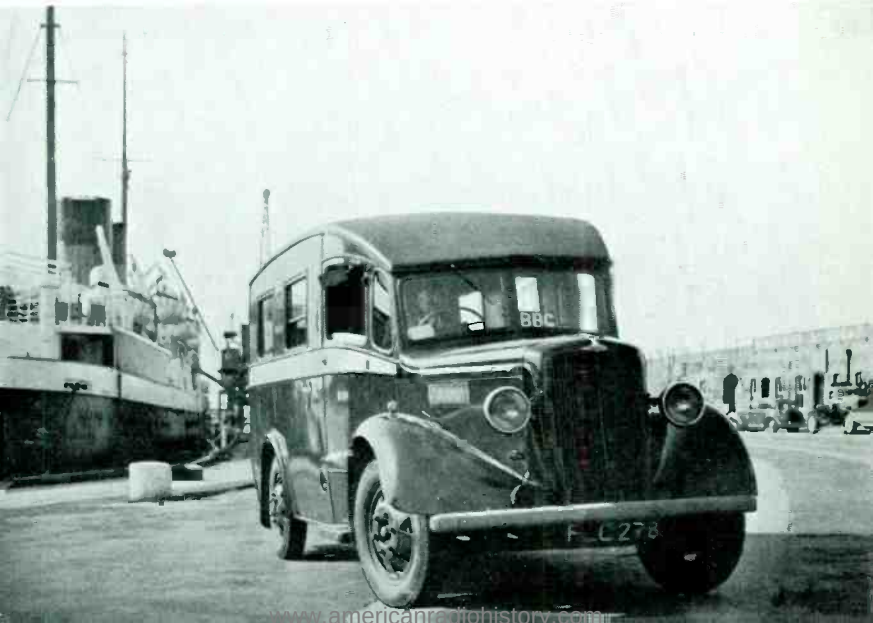
A programme in transmission. The studio is seen through the window of the control cubicle

See the article on page 50

Marjorie Banks in Paris

THE BBC GOES ABROAD TO RECORD

Leaving the dock at St. Helier's, Jersey



Richard Williams (centre) *in Palestine*

THE BBC GOES ABROAD TO RECORD

Wynford Vaughan Thomas (left) *at the Khyber Pass*

been installed by the end of June, and exhaustive tests were carried out in the few weeks which remained before the Games were opened by H.M. the King.

Other technical accommodation provided in the Broadcasting Centre consisted of television control and production rooms, and television cameras were installed in the Stadium and Empire Pool. A co-axial cable for television had been installed by the GPO during the early part of the year between Wembley and Broadcasting House. This cable is terminated in the Stadium and remains as a permanent installation for future television broadcasts.

Non-technical accommodation consisted of correspondents' room, editing rooms and record library, restaurant, information room, and, of great importance, the bookings room. The bookings room, controlled jointly by engineers and a section of the normal Studio-Management Unit, dealt with all applications for studios, recording rooms, commentary positions, outgoing circuits, and all reservations for lines or radio channels abroad controlled by the GPO.

Apart from the events at Wembley, there were many other venues: Henley, Torquay, Bisley, Aldershot, etc. All these venues were treated as normal outside broadcasts, although, because of the number of simultaneous commentaries from each place, much more equipment and many more circuits back to the Broadcasting Centre were necessary than for an outside broadcast for BBC transmission only. Twelve mobile recording cars and one vehicle containing eight magnetic recorders were available for the events at venues other than Wembley. At Broadcasting House a special control point was built, to handle all the commentaries sent by line from Wembley and the other venues and to pass them on to the Post Office trunk exchange and radio terminal for transmission by line and radio to the foreign countries.

The photograph opposite page 56 shows the control positions which were installed round three sides of the Central Control room. The positions were arranged in banks of three bays, the middle bay being a reserve for those on each side. Each bay was equipped with an amplifier and a four-channel mixer, but the outer bays were able to use two of the mixer channels of the centre bay. Thus each control position had in effect a six-channel mixer which provided six alternative input sources. In the event of failure, three bays became two, each with four-channel selection. This arrangement was designed to economize in equipment, but still provide sufficient reserves. Each control position was provided with ten tie-lines to the main source-selection bay, so that a maximum of ten sources of programme were under the hand of the operator. In the middle of the room were the bays accommodating

the source-selection terminations, outgoing and incoming line terminations, line-testing equipment, and the switching arrangements for all the cue and signal-light circuits to all the microphone positions.

Of special interest were the television arrangements, which were more complicated than for any other television outside broadcast previously attempted. Only one week before the start of the Games the BBC had taken delivery of a new television O.B. unit designed and manufactured by Electrical and Musical Industries, Ltd., and the cameras associated with this unit were installed at the Empire Pool. The cameras used a new design of pick-up tube which had only been used experimentally in prototype form on two previous broadcasts, one of which was the Royal Wedding. Much development work, however, had been done in the intervening period and the pictures obtained of the swimming and other water events exceeded the hopes of the designers and the BBC engineers. The control equipment for these cameras was located in a vehicle parked outside the building and connected by co-axial cable to the vision control room in the Broadcasting Centre.

The older television cameras were used in the Stadium, as they require much more light for satisfactory operation. Their control equipment vehicle was located in the Stadium tunnel and was also connected to the vision control room by co-axial cable routed via the Empire Pool control point. The vision control room was equipped with a vision mixer which could be faded from point to point at the direction of the producer who sat in a small production room adjacent to the control room. The producer had three monitors in front of him, which showed the actual picture as broadcast and previews of pictures from the Stadium and Empire Pool.

That the XIV Olympiad, 1948, represented the most ambitious undertaking in broadcasting history there can be no doubt; 200 engineers were engaged; there were twenty-five venues, 130 commentary positions, and 500 amplifiers and 150 microphones were installed. The project took twelve months to plan, building and installation work took six months and three months were required to dismantle and return to normal.

RADIO PERSONALITIES OF 1948

Photographs appear between pages 72 and 73 of the men and women chosen to fill the gallery for the past year

ALGERNON BLACKWOOD

When Algernon Blackwood broadcasts a story he always sounds as though he were just making a comment on something somebody else has just said. This isn't just a trick of a skilful story-teller, it also illustrates the courtesy which is in his voice because it is his very style. Before he even starts to speak he is already in a group of friendly talkers, listening to their conversation and allowing his mind to play luminously with the subject of the conversation, and so his talk grows naturally out of the conversation, contributing some tale about real people, some narrative of real facts which makes a comment on what's gone before. They're often very strange facts, of course. They're real, all right, almost commonplace; but they take place in a world which has been enlarged beyond ordinary knowledge because the story-teller has been very inquisitive about the mystery which surrounds us. The facts may be hard to swallow; and as he tells the tale you can almost hear him look round at his listeners and nod to them and realize perhaps that he's forgotten some little detail that will confirm the oddity; there's a little sound of hesitation in his voice and he adds just what you were wanting to know—it's an afterthought, a confirmation, and it's always factual. So, rapidly, smoothly, and easily he builds up his story and you listen entranced to the deep, experienced, masculine, and considerate voice.

And so far as a story-teller can, he never leaves the listener in the air. The character described may indeed have disappeared completely, never to be seen again, but we invariably want to know what happened afterwards—to the witnesses, the ordinary people; and we always find out. He is one of the most courteous of story-tellers, master of the climax and of the anti-climax, too.

Those with television sets have learned what sound alone did not make so clear, that he is an old man. (Last winter, at the age of seventy-eight, he ski-ed in Switzerland and has booked his rooms again.) The hard lights in the studio show no mercy to the magnificent lines in his face. He sits very still. Sometimes he will put up a finger to his eyelid as if to brush away the glare. Yet there is no telling; it may have been to point a clue. We shall know later. The cameraman shooting a Blackwood tale has a simple task—advance and retreat in slow time—but on the screen as the face enlarges or contracts are many things, among them wisdom, guile, hypnotic power.

RICHARD MURDOCH AND KENNETH HORNE

The most deceptive, and to many the most engaging of radio partnerships, is that of Richard Murdoch and Kenneth Horne. One says deceptive because while these agreeable characters give in their programmes the impression that the whole thing is a colossal lark, closer examination shows their success to be the result of a highly professional technique.

To hear them talk (what good talkers they are!) one would think that script-writing is a casual, mildly diverting hobby, an affair of a dozen gags scribbled on old circulars and envelope-backs. It is true that once or twice a week the smooth and genial Horne and the quizzical and mercurial Murdoch betake themselves to a quiet corner in a Pall Mall club and in due course next week's 'Much Binding' takes the air.

But one cannot build a slick and sparkling show (and if we may use the word, an *intelligent* show) of this kind without a good deal of concentrated effort. In the opinion of a huge and devoted public, 'Much Binding' with its famous concluding couplets—of stop-press topicality—is the best programme-series of the day.

The partnership is the more remarkable since Kenneth Horne is not a professional comedian. He is a completely successful business man—the Sales Manager of a world-famous British firm: and so far he has resisted every temptation to exchange his office for the theatre dressing-room. 'I don't think the stage would suit my temperament,' he says.

He and Murdoch are the same age (just on the shady side of forty) and they were at Cambridge together. Both served in the R.A.F. (Horne finished up with one more ring on his sleeve than Squadron-Leader Murdoch) and between them they concocted the airmen's contribution to the wartime 'Merry-go-Round' programmes. They offered it by a stroke of genius under the title 'Much-Binding-in-the-Marsh,' with Horne, who had made his broadcasting debut in 'Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer,' as Quiz Master.

Ever since, with the customary breaks, the light-hearted nonsense of 'Much Binding' has brought laughter from the air. If Horne, the tennis 'blue' and man of affairs, remains outside the 'profession,' Murdoch has enough background and practical experience for both. He first of all tripped it as a musical comedy chorus boy, was promoted to juvenile lead, and has been round the country with revue and in Variety.

There is in the work of these two comedians a carefree, friendly quality which is a direct reflection of their normal association in private life. Meet them together, and the wise-cracks fly like sparks —their dialogue is British banter at its best. Fortunately for us and

for them they are not inseparable. 'Dickie' Murdoch, solo, can get an audience on his side quicker than most. Kenneth Horne is a polished compère with a priceless gift for impromptu.

Individually, each is a stylish performer: together they can romp their way to the top of the poll.

LOUIS MacNEICE

Louis MacNeice is one who walks by himself. Born in Belfast, the son of a bishop, he has travelled far in his forty-one years from the Malone Road and the rocks of Connemara. He has passed, abstracted and studious, through Marlborough and Oxford, which he revisits often to talk and play 'vingt-et-un' with sympathetic dons. A 'First', both in 'Mods' and in 'Greats', was followed by a verse translation of the *Agamemnon* of *Aeschylus*, and by several years lecturing in classics at Birmingham University and Bedford College. During the thirties he began to publish the poems which made him, together with W. H. Auden, Cecil Day Lewis, and Stephen Spender, an acknowledged leader of the younger moderns. It is now clear that these writers, with an all too certain prophetic sense, were proclaiming the spiritual decay that lead through Munich to war. The first year of the war found MacNeice lecturing in the United States at Cornell University. He returned to London in the autumn of 1940, and offered himself to the BBC as a writer in support of the national cause. The feature programmes he wrote and produced during the war were brilliantly effective for their immediate purpose, which was to clarify the moral issues of the conflict; at the same time they enabled MacNeice to develop new writing and production techniques in radio. At the coming of peace he was ready to apply these techniques to subjects of his own choosing, and continued to explore broadcasting as a medium of publication without ceasing to write and publish poetry and criticism. It was an important decision, and on its results depend to a very large extent the direction and quality of original imaginative writing for radio in this country. Few writers of MacNeice's quality have applied themselves whole-heartedly to the radio medium. Timidity, the call of the box-office, ignorance, and a shrinking from the scrutiny of a mass audience are all factors that inhibit the rising writer in this field. Original work for broadcasting such as MacNeice's 'The Dark Tower' has proved that a small circulation and a closed critical circle are not essentials to creative success of the first order in our day.

His future direction is unpredictable. In his stillness, as he

watches and listens at Lord's or Twickenham, in a Delhi bazaar or a Dublin pub, there is a sense of movement suspended, of energy conserved for the decisive spring. Some are perturbed in his presence, call him aloof. Actors love the sinewy quality of his writing for speech, the sharp contemporary tang of his scholar-poet's idiom. The professional *literati* respect him, and watch with some foreboding as one of the major poets of our time walks easily and gracefully through the labyrinth of broadcasting, revolutionizing its technique, and making exciting contact with an audience of millions.

MacNeice works either at home or in a small office, apparently immune from the traffic of telephone and typewriter. His Irish secretary holds off from him the trivia of bureaucracy and the importunate. But little that happens in his world escapes his notice. His greatest gift is a mind of a highly sensitive quality, that registers subtle inflections of meaning and gesture. He has the true craftsman's respect for the deadline, complicated by an Irish sense of the importance of leisure. He loves London, his job, and his fellows with the discrimination of a true humanist. What such a gift as his, in which integrity and grace are blended, can mean to his generation, the years will reveal. Broadcasting is happy in the service of such a man and such a writer.

RALPH WIGHTMAN

'Country Magazine' was begun by A. G. Street. When he fell ill he said, 'The chap you want to succeed me is Ralph Wightman.' 'Why?' 'Well, he knows the countryside, he's an agricultural scientist, and he likes people—and whether you know it or not, he writes like an angel.'

The BBC is unfamiliar with the writings of angels, and what we really wanted was a compère. Inadequate and un-English as the word is, Wightman was booked, rather blindly.

As compère, Ralph Wightman meets eight or nine countrymen gathered from all over England. They approach the mike as normal people approach one of those fiendish machines on the large fairgrounds which try to separate you from your stomach. They know they will not be hurt, but they are drawn by the thrill of extreme fright. Wightman would ruin a fairground proprietor in a few days, for, although he is more scared of the machine than anyone else—indeed, every time he faces the microphone he trembles like a reed in a stiff breeze—he gives confidence to all the other speakers, most of whom have never seen a microphone before. Very few people have this gift. A roaring 'it's-easy-old-man' kind

of manner is of no use. One speaker was perfectly confident until a compère threw out a jolly, reassuring laugh. From then onwards he was a shattered man.

Part of the secret lies in Wightman's unaffected, intelligent, and sincere interest in the people he meets, and part in his wide knowledge of country matters which enables him to talk to a countryman on level terms whatever the man's occupation. He is a large man, genial within reason, fond of old pipes, which he stuffs with cooking tobacco, and a fair-to-middling drinker. He is phenomenally quick on a cue and in giving a cue, so that when Wightman's hand is guiding a programme there are none of those awkward pauses lightly filled in with vague rustlings and whispers rendered either by two voices in a duet followed by another pause, or by an explosive pick-up in the middle of a sentence. If a man is going to lose his place in the script, then Wightman senses it two lines ahead, and when he 'feeds' the line it is almost impossible for a listener to detect the join. Other compères who are equally good at this piece of technique allow just sufficient pause to let the listener know that the clever compère has saved the show again. You may have detected a sharp note in Tommy Handley's voice when one of his highly professional gang has not been at hand to respond to his impeccable timing. Wightman cannot permit himself that sharp note, nor a quick crack. He gathers in the culprit with the utmost amiability, eases him to his correct place, and cues him in. Time: about three seconds.

A compère must show an interest in his cast from 'how-d'ye-do' to 'goodbye', and this can be a terrible strain when, say, two excellent broadcasters are of the non-stop road-drill type of conversationalists, each demanding an exclusive ear, and with no intention of listening to any other voice. Another and more subtle aspect of this attentive interest: the compère must not be altogether unobtrusive, but must so attune his reaction and replies to the speaker's piece or dialogue as to give the speaker superiority, to make him and the listener feel that he has said something important well. A poor compère will stick out as very much the better broadcaster.

Ralph Wightman is more than a compère. He has an integrity which is no part of a compère's equipment, an integrity which will not allow his real love, 'the land of England', to be played down. He believes that the English have not yet grown to their full strength. Today there is so much doubt and diffidence, mostly on the part of journalists and politicians remote from the source of all strength, the Land, that Wightman is a wholesome corrective to the whimperers. We propose to go on broadcasting this point of view in 'Country Magazine'.

S. J. de LOTBINIÈRE

After every important broadcast, most BBC commentators go through a time-honoured ritual. They pick up the telephone and put through an anxious call. Until a calm, unhurried voice at the other end replies with 'Not bad', no commentator, however eminent, would dream of regarding his broadcast as a success.

Usually the same calm voice continues '. . . But I'm a little bit puzzled why, for instance, you didn't mention the score at regular intervals during the game. And why you didn't give the exact position of your commentary box at the beginning of the broadcast. . . .'! So the analysis proceeds, with every weak point carefully noted. And the wise commentator equally carefully notes the criticism. For the critic knows what he's talking about. He ought to. He is the man who, more than anyone else, invented the present technique of running commentary as practised by the BBC.

Seymour Joly de Lotbinière is Head of Outside Broadcasts Department. Inevitably, his name is affectionately shortened to Lobby. But this is the only thing about him that you can shorten. He is 6 ft. 8 in. tall, the second tallest member of the BBC. An Etonian and a Cambridge man, he was trained to the Law. When he took over Outside Broadcasting in 1936 he immediately applied an acutely analytical mind to the problem of Running Commentary. He swept away the pleasant waffling at the mike that used to pass for commentating. Gone were the days of 'I can't quite see from here', square four and music-hall back-chat. The Lotbinière method demanded clear-cut description, vivid phrasing, and the human touch. Naturally, when you are as tall as Lobby and are gifted with a persuasive charm you get your way. Obedience to Lobby produced commentators of the calibre of Thomas Woodruffe, Raymond Glendenning, Stewart MacPherson, Wynford Vaughan Thomas, Michael Standing, and John Snagge. Every one of them has worked under Lobby, and they would be the first to admit how much of their success they owe to him. They will remember those conferences in Lobby's office after a big broadcast, with 'The Boss', coat off, walking up and down and carefully but kindly pointing out their mistakes. Every point is emphasized by a characteristic gesture, when Lobby smacks his right fist against the open palm of his left hand. Even Stewart MacPherson wasn't proof against such persuasive eloquence. 'O.K. Boss', he sighed on a famous occasion, 'I agree before you beat yourself to death!'

But Lobby doesn't need to proceed to such extreme measures to get his own way. He is gladly obeyed because he is a man with first-hand knowledge and great experience of the tricky and recondite art of commentary. He it was who spoke impromptu for over

an hour when there was a delay in the wedding of Princess Juliana. He also holds the record for the shortest commentary ever broadcast. It consisted almost entirely of a hurried gasp, uttered in an aeroplane flying over the Boat Race Course . . . 'Back to the launch!' If Lobby had been able to continue, he would have added with characteristic candour 'Help! I'm airsick!'

For he has one overwhelming passion. Absolute honesty in broadcasting. Transparently honest himself, he is determined that BBC commentary shall be one hundred per cent trustworthy. 'Tell the listeners the truth and you are half-way to getting good commentary.' For ten years, Lobby has dinned that message into the ears of BBC commentators. The result is that BBC commentating is respected wherever the BBC is heard. Outside Broadcasts may be a small department, but it is united by an unshakable loyalty to the man who has guided its destiny so long.

Lobby is invincibly modest and shrinks from publicity. But the commentators who get the limelight know what they owe to his training and his overwhelming enthusiasm. I will not add 'to his praise'. That is one thing that Lobby never hands out indiscriminately. In his view, there is always room for improvement. But every commentator would prefer to hear Lobby say '. . . not bad, but. . . .' to hearing a thousand indiscriminate listeners shout 'You were terrific, Old Boy!'

LINDLEY FRASER

When our men marched into Germany, they were puzzled to discover that every German knew the names of two famous 'Englaender'—Winston Churchill and Lindley Fraser, and were constantly asking when they could meet the latter.

This anecdote illustrates not only the virtuosity of Lindley Fraser as the chief commentator of the German Language Service throughout the war, but the astonishing influence of the BBC behind the enemy lines. For five years, when the news was over, the man behind the mike in Bush House talked informally to millions of unseen listeners. For them the BBC was Britain, and Lindley Fraser was the man in the BBC. To the anonymous and objective bulletin he added the touch of human personality which the secret listener craved. And because it was an enemy listening—suspicious always of propaganda and evasion—he had to maintain a standard not merely of accuracy but of personal integrity, which made his talks, and indeed the whole German Language Service, the least propagandist in tone of any wartime radio.

For this job his training as an economist and as a University teacher admirably suited him. Simplification without condescension, seriousness without humourlessness, candour without indiscretion, preaching without preachifying—these were some of his qualities as a broadcaster. He learned them as a leading member of a brilliant team during the war. He is now using them with undiminished skill as Director of the BBC's peacetime German Language Service. Occasionally, but too rarely, he is given the chance of proving to Home listeners that he has not forgotten English, or rather, Scottish.

Off the air, Lindley Fraser is a connoisseur not only of fine music but of fine beer and of the fine conversation which goes with it. His wartime beard has gone, but his girth and his gusto are still those of a modern Henry VIII!

BELLE CHRYSTALL

There is perhaps one word more than any other which sums up this artist's work: 'Vitality.' Of all the qualities desirable in a radio actress it is the one which counts most highly in performance. Belle Chrystall has it in abundance, and it is difficult to remember any part which she has played in a long radio career which has suffered from the lack of it.

No doubt it is inherent in her theatrical 'make up,' but only hard and concentrated work can communicate that vitality to the listener.

Belle Chrystall is one of that relatively small band of players who have found in radio the best medium for their talents, and who can therefore be placed in a very distinct, and distinctive, class of broadcasters—broadcasters not only possessing interesting 'dramatic' personalities, but also the technical perfection of their craft.

Like all good artists, Belle Chrystall is unremitting in her preparatory study of a role. She is critical and unsparing of herself, bringing to her performance a sense of artistic integrity which reflects not only on the actress, but the whole play. But lest this picture of high seriousness should seem overdrawn, it should be said also that she has an equal capacity for laughing at herself.

It would need many pages to list the parts she has played, but, within the limits of her voice and personality, her range is wide and extremely versatile. Serious dramatic roles requiring controlled intensity, hysterical, flamboyant parts, are hers as well as the straightforward less emotional characters; and as a light comedienne,

especially in a 'character' vein, she can bring a gay-spirited quality to her performance that is extremely attractive to hear.

It is sometimes said of an actress that she 'never gives a bad performance'; a well-meant but negative tribute suggesting a monotonous level of competence. This is not the tribute for Belle Chrystall. She is too vital an artist. She deserves something more positive. Let us say rather, that her 'bad performance' has yet to come, and that when it does it will be 'brilliantly bad'. In the meantime, given scope in the right part, there are few of her contemporaries upon the air who can compete with her and not suffer by comparison.

SALVADOR DE MADARIAGA

In Britain Salvador de Madariaga, the European philosopher and politician, would have been a great intellectual force in any age. But only radio could have made him a *popular* figure, a stimulating and favourite member of the Brains Trust team, to whom any of the great figures of Western thought and letters are familiar friends upon whom he can throw fresh light. To the home listener a slight foreign accent is an added attraction, for Señor de Madariaga knows how to express himself forcibly, clearly, and briefly. To the BBC producer, who is able to get to know him rather better, he is a man of small stature, vivacious, with quick and penetrating eyes and a ready smile; not imposing, but unmistakably distinguished, and with a profile that might have been borrowed from a Roman coin; a man of stimulating conversation and overflowing with ideas. Contact with Madariaga is one of the more rewarding aspects of a BBC producer's work. For if the subject is letters, Salvador de Madariaga can cite examples from the literature of half a dozen European countries and bring to the conversation the expertize of the acknowledged literary critic. If the subject be psychology, a close study of European Nationalities and a comparison of national characteristics throws new light on a hundred apparently inexplicable confusions. And if the subject be politics, the whole experience of an ex-Spanish Cabinet Minister, an ex-Ambassador, and a former official of the League of Nations in Geneva, makes possible acute observation and mature judgment.

But it is not only the BBC's home listeners and the BBC's producers to whom Salvador de Madariaga has become a familiar personality, for he commands many tongues. In Latin America weekly political commentaries throughout the war, and many contributions since, have made Madariaga's name a house-

hold word. It is not only as a result of recorded reproductions of Brains Trust programmes that he is familiar to English-speaking Overseas listeners. He may one day broadcast a talk on the political situation in Spain, and the next debate before the microphone with Mr. Gallagher whether or not the Russian conception of Communism can be compatible with modern Western democracy; nor is Señor de Madariaga unknown as a broadcaster to Spain and France.

Scholar, historian, literary critic, politician, diplomatist, man of letters, and broadcaster; that is the sum of Salvador de Madariaga's achievements. But there is another which perhaps explains why as a broadcaster he must be numbered among the masters of the microphone. He is above all the conversationalist. Very few of those who come to the microphone for the first time can afford to do without the help of the producer; Madariaga is one of the few. His natural delivery is that of the brilliant conversationalist, at once intimate, friendly, clear, and sympathetic. Perhaps one reason for the sympathy he evokes in his listeners is that Salvador de Madariaga is essentially the liberal European; he is fiercely opposed to totalitarianism in any guise: and he is a true internationalist. It is the combination of these characteristics that has made Madariaga the really successful broadcaster; and it is no mean feat for a Spaniard to become one of the best speakers on Britain's radio.

J. BRONOWSKI

An extremely quiet manner which may sound at first almost a little diffident, a little hesitating, and then the listener discovers that behind it there is a persistence, indeed a passion, for a point of view.

His first introduction to Broadcasting House took place a few days before the atom-bomb experiment at Bikini in June, 1946. It was a member of the Civil Service who rang up and mentioned his name at a time when everyone was desperately attempting to produce the best possible account of this experiment and to recall the disaster which had overtaken Hiroshima. So almost casually in the middle of the whirl of engineers' conversations, correspondents' dispatches, and comments by commentators, a small and very quiet man drifted into an office in Broadcasting House. A producer apologized for a complete lack of scientific knowledge and Dr. Bronowski replied precisely, 'But this is not a scientific script'. The script was indeed the first draft of a broadcast which

many listeners found one of the most moving and imaginative descriptions of Hiroshima.

It is very much to the point that Dr. Bronowski is a scientist, but it is even more to the advantage of the listener that he is a poet and a humanist. For him science is a matter of everyday life and as much a matter of it as eating or breathing, and yet it also means to him the unexplored ground, enterprise, adventure. It is as large as a fantasy, but much more real. It was this which animated his series, 'The Common Sense of Science.'

He has broadcast on the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century and made it clear that the three of the more important figures in that period were William Blake, Jefferson, the American president, and Sir Humphrey Davy, the scientist—an oddly assorted trio, which illustrates his preoccupations. He broadcasts in the Brains Trust and in the Victorian series, and is so much interested in the medium of sound that he will spend hours discussing the technique of the air.

JAMES McKECHNIE

Whatever fairy godmothers attended James McKechnie's christening, three in particular lavished their gifts in just the right proportions to make him a radio star.

First there is his Celtic flair for portraying emotion—charging his speech so that even the phlegmatic Sassenach feels with him. This implies an insight into the human mind and heart, probably largely instinctive for McKechnie is only in the thirties; but however it comes, it gives him his unerring character-drawing in parts as diverse as Abraham Lincoln, Oswald in *Ghosts*, and George in *Mice and Men*. He is that rare actor who brings more to the part than the author knew was there.

Then there is his accurate ear for the colour and rhythm of words. A producer rarely wants to modify one of McKechnie's inflexions, but should he do so, 'Jimmie' picks up the note at once, without fumbling with the usual shandy-gaff of actor's and producer's ideas that satisfies no one. It is interesting that he should have a natural gift for languages: he speaks fluent Spanish, tolerable French, and has more than a smattering of Russian. With this ear for fine shades of sound, and his ability to reproduce them, he might almost claim to be the Professor Higgins of Scotland, for he can play in at least ten different Scottish dialects.

Lastly, there is a still rarer gift—an instinct for what the microphone will or will not do. Many actors, who gauge automatically

e voice needed to fill any theatre, are at a loss before the unresponve microphone. McKechnie seems on the best of terms with it, nd seems to use it almost as a musician uses his instrument.

McKechnie is a complete refutation of the old actors' advice to learn the trade painfully with a long provincial apprenticeship. After only two or three years in Repertory in Edinburgh and Glasgow, he joined the BBC and found a medium that exactly suited his talents. His flexible voice is ideal for conveying those delicate contrasts of emotion and thought that the microphone catches so well—subtleties that seldom cross the footlights, and that are lost in the huge expanses of the cinema screen.

It is sad that he should have said somewhere that, as an art, radio does not come up to the theatre or cinema—for his screen performances in *Colonel Blimp*, say, or *San Demetrio*, or his stage work in *The Eagle has Two Heads*, doesn't seem to show his qualities nearly so well. Perhaps radio technique comes so easily to him that he wants fresh peaks to scale. But if ambition or advantage should tempt him away, it would be an irreparable loss to the millions of listeners who look for the name James McKechnie in the *Radio Times* as the promise of a perfect piece of radio acting.

WILLIAM HOLT

If you want to know what it feels like to fall asleep at a microphone during a 'live' broadcast ask 'Willie' Holt; ask him what happened in the early hours of one morning in 1940 when he was broadcasting to America after two sleepless nights and days spent reporting the blitzing of Coventry.

Even before the green light flashed in the studio, Willie's head was nodding and only quick action on the part of his producer who thrust the glaring table lamp under his eyes carried him through the first part of his talk about the bombing he'd seen the previous night. Then with a couple of minutes still to go it happened—his head went down on the table and it took seven seconds of vigorous shaking by the producer to wake him up; and seven seconds silence in a broadcast can seem like eternity.

By instinct, or just by luck, Holt picked up his cue in the script where he'd left off and finished the broadcast. And the sequel? Many letters of congratulation from people in the States who had assumed that he had broken down in the middle of his talk overcome with emotion at the memory of what he'd seen the previous night. Although it wasn't emotion, it might well have been, for this stocky Yorkshireman, with the fierce red beard, is not one of your

cool reserved Englishmen. He talks fast, at times when he's moved or excited so fast that he stammers; and it is this enormous enthusiasm which he brings to life that gets across to his listeners and that has helped to make him one of the most popular speakers in the Overseas Services.

His life has an Elizabethan flavour about it. Starting at the age of twelve as a boy in a mill he has been weaver, lumberjack, film extra, war correspondent in Spain, has worked his way twice around the world, and has five books to his credit, the first of which he had printed himself and then hawked the copies round the countryside carrying them in his haversack. He taught himself four languages while weaving, writing his exercises in the dust that collected on the framework of his loom, and he has broadcast in each of these languages, strong Yorkshire accent and all!

He is best known to listeners overseas, and in particular to listeners in America, for his reports on the British Industrial Scene during and since the war. Recently he's been touring the length and breadth of Britain inquiring, as honestly and as bluntly as only a Yorkshireman can, into the production prospects of various British industries. Industry here likes him because it recognizes that he knows its working background and story, and his listeners like him because there's an honest and practical quality about his broadcasts that compels belief in what he says. A spade is a spade to Willie and no one has yet made him call it a shovel.

RUGGERO ORLANDO of the BBC's Italian Service

If you ask Ruggero Orlando what made him leave Fascist Italy before the war, he will probably reply, 'I was a fish trying to swim in paper-hanger's paste'. He tried to swim in the medium in which he grew up; he tried to be an Italian journalist. His break with Fascism was on ethical and humanitarian rather than political grounds. He tells the story of when he was sent to the North of Italy to write about the women workers in the rice-fields, whose conditions Fascism was said to have bettered. He was revolted by the unrelieved misery of the rice-field workers and the barefaced cynicism of the official propaganda line. He then made a risky living mostly by selling 'stories', which no Italian newspaper would publish, to foreign correspondents. His exuberant vitality being denied a proper outlet, Orlando spent most of his time reading and acquiring the—extraordinarily wide rather than deep—knowledge, which he now displays in his brilliant radio talks to Italy and his pyrotechnic conversation.

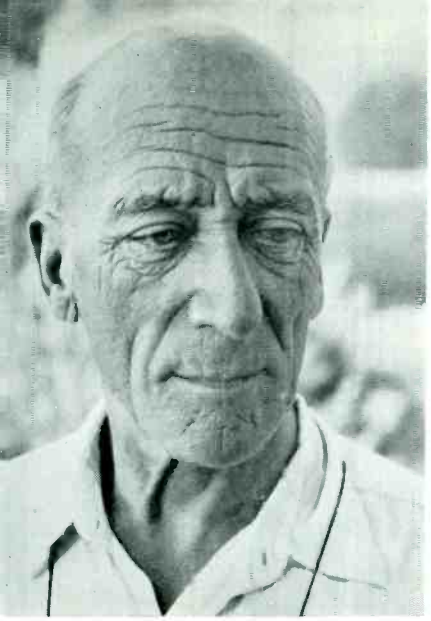
In the end, his crypto-collaboration with foreign newspapers was found out, but he managed to leave the country and free-lanced his way, under assumed names, first to Baghdad, then to London, where he remained. He remained, he says, because of British tolerance, and because 'England is the most difficult country in the world to understand'. He studies the English in clubs and pubs, town and country—poets, trade unionists, politicians. When the war broke out, Orlando saw it as war for the many, for the underdogs, for tolerance, for decency and 'living in peace' against the few, the despots, immorality, statolatry. He joined the Political Warfare Department, and went to Italy as the battle moved forward into the 'soft underbelly'. He returned to England on VE-day, and then began his remarkable success as a BBC broadcaster.

That he is the best-informed Italian commentator in Britain is not sufficient to account for his having become a household name throughout the Peninsula. He believes that the way Britain has chosen of ensuring social justice with political freedom can provide a lead for Italy and Europe, and whether it is a comment on a debate in the House, or a report from a Party congress, or a UNO conference, some of his belief in a better world for the 'little man' everywhere seems to get across to his listeners. At the microphone, he speaks for the million rather than for the fastidious few, eternally sceptical, and studiously adopts a popular Roman drawl. Rome, in fact, is where he spent most of his youth, but he was born in Verona and his family is of Sicilian origin—he is a distant relative of V. E. Orlando, the Italian elder statesman. The achievement in which Orlando himself takes most pride is his translations of English Poetry, classical and contemporary.

You could not help recognizing Orlando if you saw him advancing along the corridor like a penguin—or a 'bateau ivre', as a French colleague put it—or heard him holding forth on the likeness between John Donne and Petrarch, or quoting from his inexhaustible supply of anecdotes. His talks he writes all too near the time when he is due on the air in half an hour of concentrated effort at the typewriter; still, he has probably thought them out and tried them out throughout daylong conversation with his legion of friends, old and new.

GERALDO

In a radio series during the war, band-leader Geraldo was dubbed 'The Immaculate Maestro'. It is an apt description both of his appearance and of his musical integrity. Every broadcast of his, whether it is a programme of popular tunes played by his twenty-



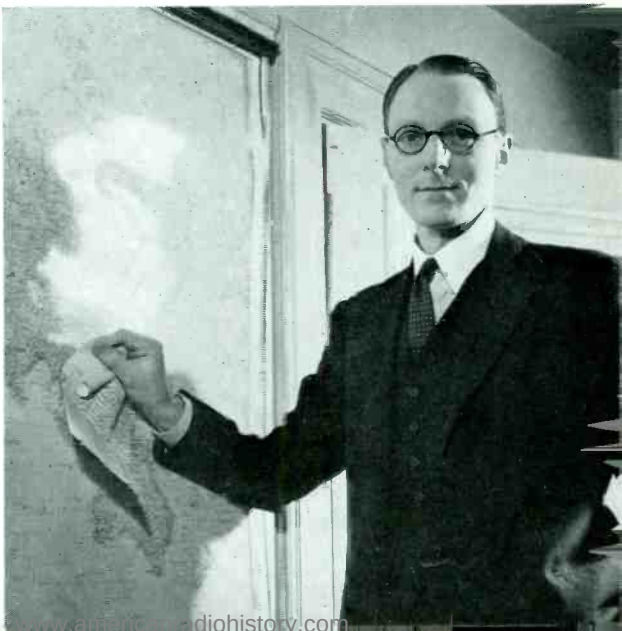
Algernon Blackwood

Kenneth Horne (right) *and Richard Murdoch* (left)

Louis McNeice (left)

Ralph Wightman

Lindley Fraser

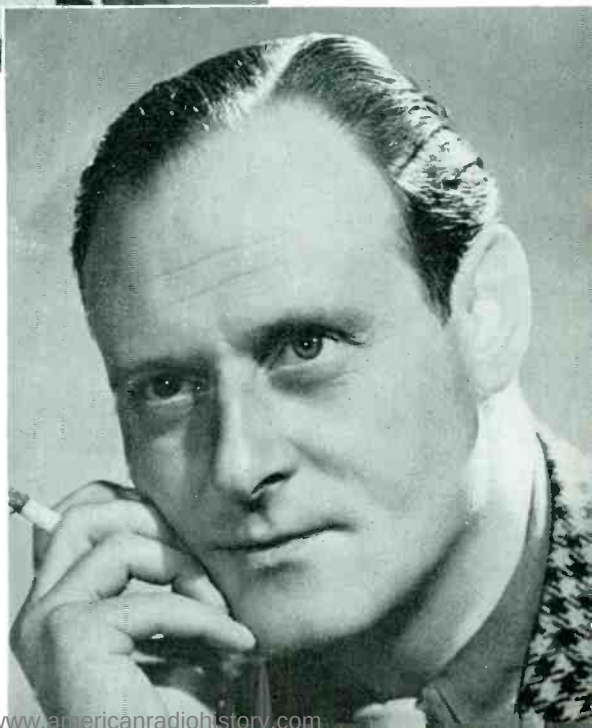


S. Joly de Lotbinière

Belle Chrystall

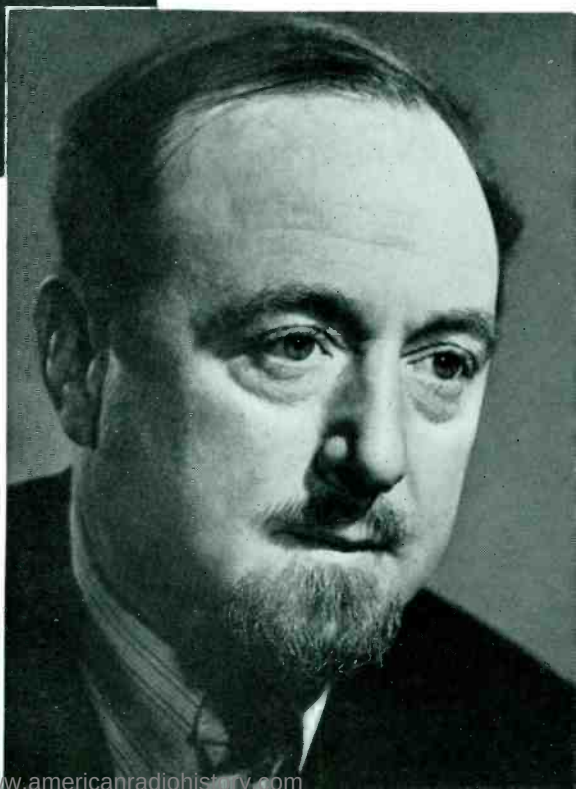
J. Bronowski

Salvador de Madariaga



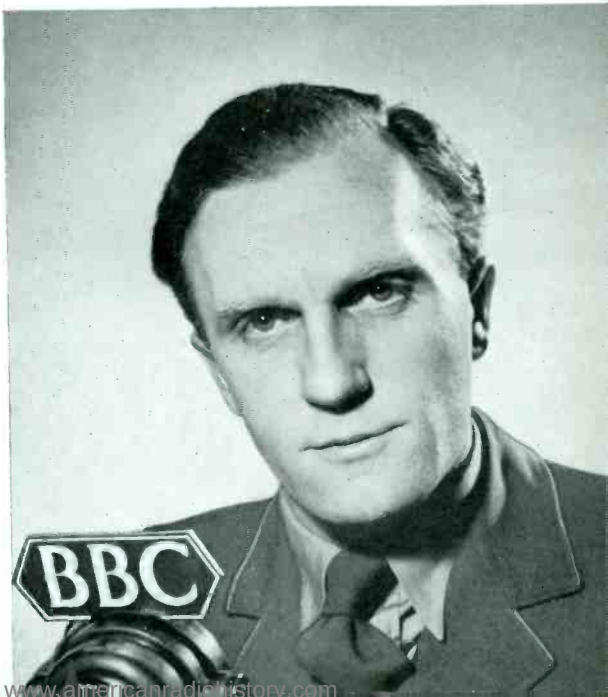
James McKechnie

Ruggero Orlando



William Holt

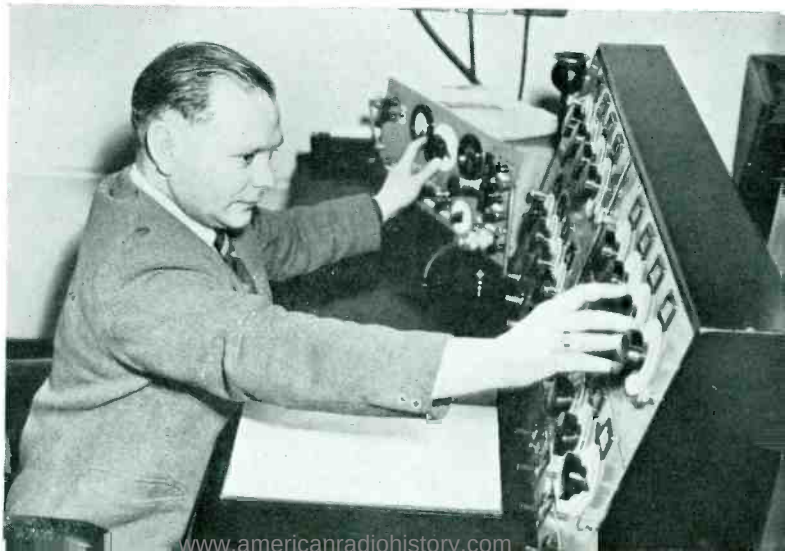
Geraldo



John Nixon

Ann Driver

'*Laddie*'



piece Dance Orchestra, or ballads and light music rendered by his Concert Orchestra of seventy musicians, has the same smooth consistency. How is it that this swarthy 'Beau Brummel of the Baton' has been able to maintain such a high musical standard throughout the twenty-four years he has been broadcasting?

The answer lies partly in the use he has made of his experience as it has lengthened, partly in an ambitious striving that whatever he does shall be the best of its kind, partly in a personal thoroughness, and lastly, to put it simply, in good musical taste.

Born in London in 1904, Gerald Bright (to give him his real name) studied the piano with a professor of the Royal Academy of Music and started his professional career as relief pianist at a cinema in London's Old Kent Road. But he always had a firm and fixed determination to reach the top. In 1924, he became leader of his own light orchestra at the Majestic Hotel, St. Anne's-on-Sea and stayed for five years. During that time, he broadcast three times a week, so starting to learn how to appeal to the band-leader's most difficult 'customer'—the ordinary listener.

A journey to the American continent converted him to South American music, and, back in England in 1930, he assembled a group of unknown musicians who were patiently welded into a Gaucho Tango Band. This led to one of the most coveted jobs in the West End, the Savoy Hotel, whose management had him change his name to Geraldo, as more in keeping with the exotic type of music in which he then specialized.

But a Tango Band appeared soon to him limited in its scope, and he enlarged his musical interests by forming his first Dance Orchestra and his Concert Orchestra in 1936.

Since those days, everything he has touched has succeeded. But luck has not done it; thorough musical preparation and a flair for knowing what listeners like to hear are the secrets.

Interesting and pleasing methods of presentation, use of the best available instrumentalists, and a special gift for discovering vocalists and vocal entertainers are also characteristic of Geraldo. It is a formula which sounds easy to copy. But 'Gerry', as BBC producers know, is capable of great pains, insists on them, in fact he selects every tune in every broadcast and edits every arrangement. He rehearses with tremendous energy. He gives the same detailed attention to a popular dance tune as to an involved orchestration of a light-music classic. And when he is broadcasting, what matters to him is what comes out of the loudspeaker, which should be, but still isn't, a platitude.

These are some of the things which happen before Geraldo once more brings down his long baton and greets us with the familiar strains of 'Hello Again'.

ANN DRIVER

Every Tuesday morning at one minute to eleven, about 150,000 boys and girls in infant schools all over Great Britain are sitting on the floor looking at a loudspeaker. When, at half a minute past the hour, a voice they know almost as well as their teacher's says 'Good morning', they greet the voice as an old friend, which indeed it is; 'Good morning, Miss Driver', they all say in slow unison. For the next twenty minutes they will be moving to music, busy being a galloping horse or a tug-boat, or curled up on the floor like a cat, and quite lost to the outside world.

'Hammer a nail. Your fist can be the hammer. You can hit your nail into the floor to put down a carpet, or you can hammer high up as if you were putting a nail into a wall to hang a picture, or you can hammer two pieces of wood together on a bench. Choose quickly how you will hammer. And here's the hammering music. Are you ready?'

Then follows one of Miss Driver's simple attractive improvisations to which children respond so readily. She believes that young children can best appreciate music if they are *doing* as well as listening, but while they move they are subconsciously acquiring a love of music and a knowledge of some of its fundamentals.

Ann Driver first went on the air in 1934, and since then she must have given nearly a thousand broadcasts. In the studio she sits at the piano facing a microphone which is slung above the keyboard; on one side of her there is perhaps a celeste or a xylophone (sometimes both) and on the other a variety of objects she can snatch up at a moment's notice to illustrate some point on rhythm or a particular movement; drums, bells, bits of wood, coconut shells, all are pressed into service, and her gracious persuasive voice does the rest. For Ann Driver is that rare phenomenon, a natural broadcaster with personality in her voice. She herself does many of the movements at the piano. 'Stretch your arm up, high above your head' ; and Ann stretches hers up and so times the movement correctly. But her timing is primarily the result of experience. Many of her lessons are tried out in advance on London school children.

From her student days Ann Driver has been a convinced believer in the use of movement as an aid to the understanding of music. Trained on Dalcroze principles, she developed her own methods of teaching young children both in the School of Music and Movement which she used to run and more particularly in her exhaustive experimental work with London schoolchildren. These methods are now accepted in infant schools all over the country, and her influence on musical education for young children has been profound.

JOHN NIXON

'Our correspondent in the Middle East reports. . . .' That phrase is very familiar to listeners to news bulletins and Radio Newsreel. Of all the uneasy parts of the post-war world, the Middle East has emphasized as much as any other troubled area the importance of fair and unbiased reporting. The clash in Palestine interests people in a number of countries. John Nixon, the BBC correspondent in the Middle East, has earned tributes for his clear impartial reports.

John Nixon was born in Wiltshire thirty-eight years ago. Before he joined the BBC as naval correspondent with the Mediterranean fleet towards the end of the African campaign, he had spent nine years on the staff of Reuters, the last two of them also in the Mediterranean. Soon afterwards, the emphasis of the war changed, and he flew off to India to join Wingate for the campaign around Kohima; then back again to the Mediterranean, to cover the Italian campaign and the civil war in Greece.

Not long after the war ended, Nixon returned to London for a spell at headquarters before taking up his permanent post in the Middle East. He has his headquarters in Cairo, and his wife and small son live there; but though Cairo is his home, he usually spends more than half of each year in other Middle Eastern capitals. The area he covers is larger and more diverse than that of any other BBC correspondent. Russia lies on his northern frontiers; and he has spent some months in Persia, reporting such affairs as that of the province of Azerbaijan. He has covered elections in those of his several countries where elections are held. He has travelled west to Tripoli, and south to Eritrea, with the commission gathering information for a decision on the former Italian colonies. And he has been farther south still, to the beehive villages of the upper Nile, for material to illustrate his reporting of the negotiations between Britain and Egypt over the Sudan. But until the BBC sent out a special correspondent to take over, under his direction, it was Palestine which occupied the greatest part of Nixon's time.

Perhaps the story he will remember best was the blowing up of the officers' club in Jerusalem. It happened at a time of the day when most people in Jerusalem used to take a short nap, or, if they were more energetic, managed to fit in a round of golf. But Nixon had been across the Transjordan frontier to lunch in Amman with King Abdullah; he returned to Jerusalem ten minutes before the club blew up, and his report reached London, and through London the outside world, long before those of his colleagues.

Every journalist remembers his scoops, even if they are achieved, as most of them are, more by luck than good management. But

very few listeners recognize a scoop when they hear one; and to them, just as to the news desk of any responsible news organization, day-to-day reporting which is level headed, unflurried, simple, and trustworthy, is of far greater value. It is because John Nixon can provide the BBC with this type of service that he continues to be its correspondent in one of the most troublesome parts of this world.

CHARLES LADBROOK (Laddie)

Young as it is, British radio has its traditions and its unsung heroes, ways of doing things that are ingrained and unquestioned, people whose expert skill is taken for granted. Like Chesterton's postman, they are part of the known unseen landscape of everyday. Indeed, most of radio's postmen are unknown names and voices to the listeners they serve so well. Engineers most of all, and particularly the programme engineers, whose deft hands balance the orchestras, mix the voices and music and effects that make up the smooth rhythm of the sound plays and features, adjust the subtle emphasis of 'echo' and 'close-up' and 'distort'. When Charles Ladbrook joined the BBC as a boy twenty-one years ago, effects were a make-shift business, a hit or miss affair, done by hand, a crazy cacophony of thunder-sheets and roller-skates masquerading as trains, crushed match-boxes simulating the sinking *Titanic*, cylinders of compressed pressed air wailing fitfully and sorrowfully in hopeful parody of the ship's siren.

Now all is changed; all is ordered, recorded, and catalogued. Programme engineers are specialists, and 'Laddie' is Senior Programme Engineer (Features), responsible for a skilled staff of young men and women, patiently trained by him over the years to give service to feature producers. Only producers can tell the full story of that service. In the control cubicle, in the last rushed moments before the programme goes on the air, the work of all concerned with it, author, producer, composer, actor, is in the hands of 'Laddie' and his kind. And the hands are sure and safe, guided by cool heads and the instinctive timing born of long practice. Light cues flicker on and off, records fade in and out, crises of the moment are surmounted with the ease of a first-class pilot. And at the end of the shot, be it world-wide Round-up on Christmas Day or a First Hearing matinee, 'Laddie' will 'sign off' without fuss, take his well-merited pint, or go home to play Father Christmas to his family.

'Laddie', as his job demands, is a king of improvisation. A Londoner of Londoners, no blitz, no regulation may deny his programme engineers the one essential gadget needed for a special

effect. It is his pride that if it exists, it will be got. How and where, one does not ask. He may turn up anywhere, at the Derby, at the Aldershot Tattoo, on desolate moor or crowded beach, lonely lighthouse or down-river pub. Inevitably, he will be locked in secret converse with the one there who knows. A new triumph in sound will sooner or later result, a collector's piece of 'waves on shingle' or a new 'gear change in traffic', to be lovingly approved and catalogued for production at the right time.

He is a master of strange gifts. His bark is feared at Crufts, his neigh honoured at Tattersall's. Sir Laurence Olivier, who knows the best when he hears it, enlisted 'Laddie's' aid for the supreme sound moment in the film of Henry V—the charge of the French cavalry at Agincourt and the answering 'twang' of the English archers. It is whispered that the twang effect had all the soundtrack experts baffled, until Laddie found the answer by stretching a piece of elastic against the needle of the pick-up. But the true battle honours of 'Laddie' and his programme engineers are emblazoned in the secret lists of what might have been; the programmes carried through without a hitch, the sudden technical crises caught and dealt with in time. Yes, British radio has its unsung heroes, and 'Laddie' and his are among them by right of loyal service; imperturbable, ingenious, gay masters of the art of the impossible.

REPORT OF THE YEAR'S BROADCASTING

At Home

THE HOME SERVICE

The year under review was notable for a number of royal events, beginning with the wedding of Princess Elizabeth, one of the most remarkable broadcasts in the BBC's history, the visit of the King and Queen and Princess Margaret to the BBC, the Silver Wedding broadcasts of 26 April, and the unveiling by the King of the Roosevelt Memorial in the same month. 'World Theatre' threw its cloak over Euripides, Marlowe, Bjornson, Massinger, and Strindberg among others. 'Saturday Night Theatre' included current London productions. Progress Report, a searchlight on British recovery, made news as it went its weekly way. The Brains Trust returned; summer and winter 'Proms' and other festivals were heard; studio opera was ambitious and wide-ranging; a series of feature programmes on India aroused great interest. Familiar variety shows continued to attract mass audiences. So the Home Service kept old and made new friends, and sustained its public service role.

THE LIGHT PROGRAMME

Broadcasts to midnight again; the introduction to home listeners of Radio Newsreel—the most outstanding development in the domestic broadcasts of news since War Report; the establishment of 'Woman's Hour' as one of the most valuable of all the BBC's service broadcasts; the outstanding success of 'The Plain Man's Guide to Music'; the opening of a summer studio in Blackpool to tap the remarkable amount of talent which migrated for the season to that part of the coast, the 'Curtain Up' series of mid-week plays; these were some of the highlights of the Light Programme year. New and popular kinds of light entertainment were brought to the microphone. But while variety programmes showed a decrease in number compared with 1945, the vast audience for 'the Light' still increased.

THE THIRD PROGRAMME

Experience of the first year, ended 29 September, 1947, led to no fundamental change in policy. Music programmes aim at enlarging the boundaries of musical experience and at providing the best available performances. Attention has been concentrated at different times upon the work of Cherubini, Schutz, and Monteverdi. The massive 'History of European Music in Sound' began its three years' course in January and is bringing to light many hitherto unheard works of great beauty. The classics have, of course, been fully drawn upon. One of the advantages of the Third Programme's freedom from regular weekly commitments is that time can be made available for full-length operatic performances. Studio productions included *Otello* (Verdi) and *La Vida Breve* (Falla). In the field of Drama, notable productions were *The Cenci*, the revival of *The Rescue*, *The Devil's General*, and an adaptation of *The Small Back Room*.

New ventures in adaptation included Chaucer's *Troilus and Cressida*; three of Plato's Dialogues and extracts from *The Republic* and *The Laws*; Wordsworth's *Prelude* in six readings; and Milton's *Paradise Lost* almost at full length. The year was especially distinguished by the inclusion of the most ambitious enterprise hitherto attempted by talks broadcasting—the series entitled 'The Ideas and Beliefs of the Victorians'.

NEWS DIVISION

The event that affected everyone in News Division between November, 1947, and June, 1948, was the creation of a general newsroom on 12 June. Reorganization of the Division, which had been anticipated for two years, was thus achieved. The new organization has been warmly praised by those outside professional experts who have seen it in operation. Until the newsrooms could be merged, national news bulletins heard in Britain were prepared in a newsroom in Broadcasting House while bulletins for Overseas audiences were produced in a newsroom at 200 Oxford Street. At Oxford Street, also, editions of 'Radio Newsreel' for the Light Programme and for Overseas audiences were produced. Naturally enough, reorganization has resulted in a far greater degree of close

co-operation within the Division besides a more profitable expenditure of time and energy. News Division is responsible for some sixty broadcasts in twenty-four hours, including repeats and the weather forecasts, but excluding editions of 'Radio Newsreel' and news talks. There are only six times during the twenty-four hours at which general news bulletins coincide in the domestic and overseas services.

During the year Mr. T. R. P. Hole was appointed Editor, succeeding Mr. A. P. Ryan, who resigned to join the editorial staff of *The Times* in October, 1947. For the first time, 'Radio Newsreel', which had been well known to listeners abroad for a number of years, was heard in Britain when, in November, 1947, it was introduced to Light Programme listeners as a daily half-hour feature. A special correspondent was sent to Palestine to cover the withdrawal of British troops when the Mandate ended, and he remained to report developments in the area.

RELIGIOUS BROADCASTS

The most sustained and widely heard series of religious broadcasts in 1948 were 'The People's Service' in the Light Programme. The broadcasters over the first seven months were Frederic Greeves, Wilfrid Garlick, Kenneth Mathews, J. T. Gillespie, Leslie Weatherhead, Tony Otter, and F. J. Sheed. 'Sunday Half-hour' and 'Think on these Things' continued to draw large audiences.

In the Home Service there were several shorter series of religious services, including one on 'Work and Worship', in which Christians engaged in different kinds of industry testified regarding the relation of what they did in church to what they did at work; another on 'The Bible in the Modern World' introduced by Bishop Berggrav of Oslo, and a third in which South African, New Zealand, Chinese, Japanese, Indian, and American Bishops attending the Lambeth Conference took part. The opening and closing services of this Conference were also broadcast, and talks and other programmes reflected the work of the first Assembly of the 'World Council of Churches' at Amsterdam. In the daily series called 'Lift up your Hearts' a new form of 'bible readings with commentary' has been introduced alongside the traditional bible readings, devotional readings, and short talks. Among a number of series of talks on Tuesday evenings, one on 'Living Forces in the Churches Today' may be specially mentioned, and the weekly Christian Commentary is now an established programme.

In the Third Programme Christian theologians and philosophers

Godfrey Talbot,
BBC Chief Reporter

THE BRAINS TRUST

(left to right), Lord Samuel, Kingsley Martin, Bertrand Russell, and Gilbert Harding, Question Master

THE THIRD PROGRAMME

Translator Geoffrey Dunn watches opera coach Leo Wurmser and conductor Stanford Robinson put the finishing touches to Handel's Xerxes

Robert Speaight as Thomas Becket in T. S. Eliot's Murder in the Cathedral

BBC TELEVISION

Stanley Maxted and MacDonald Parke in a scene from Elmer Rice's The Adding Machine

A demonstration by the League of Health and Beauty

BBC TELEVISION

Mr. Streeter in the Television garden

have contributed to various discussions; the series on 'English Cathedral Music' was concluded, and services were broadcast from St. Paul's, Westminster Cathedral, and Durham.

MUSIC

Broadcast music, in the period under review, has ranged over a vast repertoire. Another successful season of a fortnight's Winter Promenade Concerts set the mood for 1948, a mood which the continuation of the 1947–8 Symphony Season extended and intensified. The fifty-fourth season of the Henry Wood (summer) Promenade Concerts has made new records in the astonishing history of this musical phenomenon. Two orchestras, the BBC Symphony and the London Symphony, shared the work, under three conductors: Basil Cameron, Sir Malcolm Sargent, and, as Associate-Conductor, Stanford Robinson. At his own request, to enable him to take a long-postponed holiday, Sir Adrian Boult did not participate in this series. In addition to the customary classical and modern repertoire, there were fifteen novelties in the schedule, of which five were foreign.

In the Third Programme, especially, there have been many interesting programmes, new, or unfamiliar, in which the music of many periods and countries has been presented, often under the aegis of artists with special knowledge and experience of particular programmes. In the fields of symphony, opera, and chamber music much has been added to the accumulating store of the listeners' acquaintanceship, and, as is indicated elsewhere, famous conductors and soloists have been extensively enlisted in the service of new works and also for the authentic presentation of the less known.

Contemporary music has been well served, and one of the most important occasions of the year was the first world performance, broadcast from the Albert Hall, of Vaughan Williams's Symphony No. 6 in E minor, repeated three days later when the BBC Symphony Orchestra visited Newport, Monmouthshire.

Several performances have now established this work as one of the creative peaks of our time, a notable tribute to the vitality of the G.O.M. of British music, who was seventy-six in October.

In September the BBC Symphony Orchestra, under Sir Adrian Boult, visited the Edinburgh International Festival to give two concerts, at the second of which the Vaughan Williams Symphony was again played.

A new Head of Music, Steuart Wilson, succeeding the late Dr. Victor Hely-Hutchinson, took charge of the BBC's Music Department in April, and in the June Honours List was knighted for his

services as Director of Music to the Arts Council, a position he vacated to join the Corporation.

DRAMA

Perhaps the most interesting dramatic productions of the 1947–8 season were a number of plays chosen to represent the contemporary theatre on the Continent: such pieces as Thierry Maulnier's *The Field of Kings*, translated by Jonathan Griffin; the *Medea* of Anouilh, translated by Lothian Small, and *The Devil's General*, by Carl Zuckmayer, adapted by Robert Gore Browne. The two last plays were embellished by notable performances by Mary Morris and John Clements respectively and provided material for the most part new to listeners and apparently of unusual interest to them.

In February, 1948, Maria Becker, the well-known actress from the Schauspielhaus Company of Zurich, accepted an invitation from the BBC to visit England and appeared with great success both in the *Electra* of Euripides and in Hermann Kesser's well-known dramatic monologue *Nurse Henrietta*.

The World Theatre series, in addition to the *Electra*, included Strindberg's *Easter*; Ibsen's *The Master Builder*, with Frederick Valk in the name part; Tchekov's *The Cherry Orchard* and Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* with Francis L. Sullivan.

In Saturday Night Theatre plays, perhaps the greatest success was achieved by Miss Joan Temple's *No Room at the Inn*; while of novel adaptations, the outstanding example was undoubtedly Peter Watts's production of *The Small Back Room*, by Nigel Balchin. Of plays written specially for broadcasting, *A Single Taper*, by R. C. Scriven, and *The Stone in the Midst*, by Patric Dickinson with music by Alan Rawsthorne, deserve honourable mention, though the revival of Edward Sackville West's *The Rescue* proved that to date there has been no serious challenge to this piece in the field of radio drama proper.

Last, but by no means least, as a postscript to the series of Granville Barker plays produced earlier in 1947, the Third Programme presented the same author's *The Secret Life*, a play only once performed in the theatre, which turned out to reveal itself not only as a work of great literary distinction and quality, but also as one particularly suited to the broadcasting medium.

FEATURES

Commemoration, analysis, and illustration of relevant historic and contemporary events was the main business of feature writers and

producers during the year. 'Progress Report' high-lighted the economic crises to a weekly audience of eleven millions. At Christmas 'Men of Goodwill' circled Europe and the Commonwealth to tell a story of faith and positive achievement in a bewildered world. 'Easter in Europe' retold the Easter story with a verse commentary by W. R. Rodgers and illustrated it with the music of twenty choirs drawn from ten countries, ranging from the Wiltshire village of East Knoyle to the cathedral of St. Stephen's in Budapest. The transfer of power in India was marked by a sequence of six programmes, written mainly by Louis MacNeice and Francis Dillon, and hailed by one critic as 'a new landmark in radio reporting and interpretation'.

D. G. Bridson visited Australia and New Zealand to prepare documentaries of those Dominions in preparation for the Royal Tour next year. Leonard Cottrell took recording gear to East Africa to cover the story of the Ground Nut Scheme in Tanganyika and the RAF Aerial Survey in Kenya. The Royal Wedding Silver Jubilee was commemorated by 'The People's Greeting', and the BBC's own Silver Jubilee marked by a sequence of special features.

Among the successful series were: 'The Undefeated', true stories of courage; 'Meet the People', close-ups of typical workers; and 'Focus', which ranged from France to Income Tax.

In the Third Programme, Rayner Heppenstall's 'Imaginary Conversations' attracted contributions from such distinguished contemporary writers as Sean O'Faolain, C. V. Wedgwood, Herbert Read, and Rose Macaulay. Nevill Coghill and Stephen Potter followed their success with *The Canterbury Tales* with a serial adaptation of Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde.*

The most imaginative documentary of the year was an adaptation of 'January 29th' by a German writer, Hans Schnabel, which gave a haunting and terrible picture of a winter's day in the defeated Reich.

VARIETY

No major change in the general character of Variety output or in the policy of the department is to be reported. Many series of established popularity were retained. Among them, in the comedy field, were 'ITMA', 'Much-Binding-in-the-Marsh', 'Twenty Questions', 'Stand Easy', 'Merry-go-Round', 'Variety Bandbox', 'Music Hall', and 'Ignorance is Bliss', and in the musical field, 'Band Parade', 'BBC Dancing Club', 'Jazz Club', and 'Palace of Varieties'. The immense personal popularity of Wilfred Pickles achieved a pre-eminent position for his weekly programme 'Have a Go'. 'Workers Playtime' passed its seventh anniversary in May, 1948.

Important series developed during the year were 'Gert and Daisy's Working Party', a long-range follow-up to the Gracie Fields programme last summer, 'Up the Pole' (Jewel and Warriss), 'It's a Great Life' (Bonar Colleano), 'Take it from here' (Jimmy Edwards, Dick Bentley, Joy Nichols) 'Private Bar' (Stanley Holloway), and 'Showtime'—in effect a junior 'Music Hall' parading up-and-coming variety talent.

Among dramatic productions, 'Crime, Gentlemen, please', a comedy serial featuring Basil Radford and Naunton Wayne, and 'P.C. 49', were the most successful. 'Gilbert and Sullivan', a biographical series illustrated with music from the Savoy Operas, proved to be one of the best appreciated programmes of this type ever broadcast. Isolated programmes of note were the two Gala Variety shows staged to celebrate the Silver Wedding of the King and Queen, and the Silver Jubilee of the BBC.

In May, following upon the absence through illness of C. F. Meehan, Assistant Head of Variety, an administrative reorganization took place involving the appointment of R. Waldman to the post of Assistant Head of Variety (Productions) and J. Davidson, an Australian with a wide experience in the musical field, became Assistant Head of Variety (Music).

TALKS

In a post-war world of question rather than of answer it is not surprising that four of the five major innovations in talks programmes have been discussions. In the Home Service, 'Friday Forum' has been a weekly unscripted discussion of current affairs at home and abroad, the Critics on Sundays have debated the film and the theatre, books, radio, and the arts, and in 'Belief and Unbelief' religious controversy has for the first time found a regular space on the air. In the Third Programme, 'Second Opinion', under the chairmanship of Frank Birch, has provided an opportunity for listeners to discuss critically other talks in the programme.

The fifth major innovation has been the long series of talks and readings, 'The Ideas and Beliefs of the Victorians', to which the greatest living authorities on the Victorian age have contributed. Other programmes of note have been the set of readings from Wordsworth's *Prelude*, the discussions on the Labour Party and the Middle Class and the Conservative Party and the Working Class, Bertrand Russell and Father Copleston debating the existence of God, the Sunday night series on Famous Men, and the new literary talks in the Light Programme 'New Books and Old Books'.

Meanwhile such regular series as 'World Affairs','Questions of the Hour', 'The Week in Westminster', 'Commonwealth and Empire', 'Can I help You?', and Science Survey have continued, and the Brains Trust has returned to the air. Forces Educational Broadcasts are transmitted every morning and have gained a considerable civilian audience in addition to the Service listeners for whom they are planned.

OUTSIDE BROADCASTS

The Olympic Games gave Outside Broadcasting the biggest job that it has yet had to tackle. Not only had the BBC to carry out its own actuality reporting of 136 Olympic events at thirty different venues, but it had to provide facilities for these events to be covered by 120 visiting broadcasters from forty countries. In the result the Broadcasting Centre at Wembley handled some 400 broadcasts or recordings during each of the fourteen days of the Games. These broadcasts were generally fifteen minutes or less, but their very shortness complicated the operation, since it gave so much less time to plan or prepare for all the technical switching necessary between, say, a Radio Globo (Brazil) 'live' broadcast from basket ball at Harringay, to Norway's recording of the 1500 metres final at Wembley Stadium, or a Light Programme 'Round Up' involving not only a Wembley studio but two or three outside points as far afield as Bisley and Torquay.

The planning for all this was a preoccupation for many months before the actual opening of the Games. Nevertheless the sequence of national events, ordinary and extraordinary, was given full coverage. On the ceremonial side, the year was memorable for the Silver Wedding of the King and Queen, for the Garter Service at Windsor Castle when Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh were 'installed' by the King, for the unveiling of the Grosvenor Square Memorial to President Roosevelt, and for the installation of Field-Marshal Smuts as Chancellor of the University of Cambridge. There were also broadcasts from Westminster when the Speaker laid the foundation stone of the new House of Commons and when Mr. Winston Churchill unveiled a war memorial in the Abbey Cloisters.

In sport the BBC microphone was present when Cambridge set up a new record in the University Boat Race and when the Australian touring team retained the 'ashes'. The broadcasting of big professional fights, which had been on the increase in 1947, had to be reduced owing to a ruling of the British Boxing Board of Control.

On the entertainment side the volume of outside broadcasting was much reduced by fiat of the Musicians' Union.

BROADCASTS FOR SCHOOLS

By September, 1948, nearly seventeen thousand schools—almost half of the total number in the United Kingdom—were registered as listening to one or more broadcast series. There were forty-seven transmissions a week, the bulk of them for schools throughout the United Kingdom. The national cultures of Scotland and Wales were each represented by six series. More than half a million children were taking part in the Religious Service, and other popular series had school audiences of a quarter of a million.

Throughout the year the School Broadcasting Council continued to examine both the current output and the field of educational needs and opportunities. The results of their investigations were evident in the programme for 1948–9. The existing provision in science was then replaced by a series for older children dealing with 'Science and the Community' and another called 'General Science', designed to stimulate the interest of the eleven and twelve-year-olds. 'Bible Talks for Sixth Forms' gave way to 'Religion and Philosophy', a series with the wider aim of discussing with boys and girls some of the central affirmations of the Christian faith.

Two other series were somewhat modified. 'Off the Syllabus' was renamed 'Panorama', directed to children in all types of secondary school, and given a more direct reference to the contemporary scene; and new forms of presentation were devised for the popular series 'For Rural Schools', now renamed 'Living in the Country'.

The provision of Teachers' leaflets and illustrated Pupils' pamphlets was maintained and extended, an interesting innovation being the issue of a children's picture-book printed partly in colour to go with the broadcasts on 'Nature Study.'

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

This is a concise review of the main important programmes radiated in 1948.

An Empire Day feature, by L. du Garde Peach, was distributed widely by Transcription Service, while 'The Lost Reindeer', by Betty Davis, was beamed direct to North America for inclusion in a festival of Youth Drama in New York.

Outstanding also among Children's Hour productions have been a radio version of *Ballet Shoes*, adapted from the book by Noel Streatfeild, and also a serialized version of 'Toad of Toad Hall', with orchestral music and songs.

St. George's Day was commemorated by a stirring play, the theme of which combined Drake and William Shakespeare. This was a

neat conception from the pen of L. du Garde Peach who skilfully blended the drama of the Armada with that of Shakespeare.

Children's Hour Calendar is a now well-established monthly Sunday programme which covers anniversaries, the countryside, all kinds of events and personalities past and present, and many other contents embracing items of interest and topicality.

Lewis Carroll's immortal story *Through the Looking Glass*, originally adapted for and produced in Children's Hour by May E. Jenkin, found a niche in the main evening programme in serialized form during April and May. It was well placed after the nine o'clock News Bulletin. Transcription Service also recorded *Alice in Wonderland* for rebroadcasting in many parts of the world.

Lastly, mention should be made of two other programmes: *Seven Days*, a Passion play by Benedict Ellis, written largely in modern idiom, and also a Royal Air Force children's Christmas party recorded by Derek McCulloch at Gatow Air Station, Berlin. In addition to being heard on the Home wavelength, the latter was also radiated by the British Forces Network in Germany on Christmas Day.

GRAMOPHONE DEPARTMENT

The Gramophone Department continues to contribute music to the Third, Home Service, and Light programmes; but people in this country would probably be surprised at the number of programmes it sends out to overseas listeners. Here are some of its more important recent series:

FAR EASTERN SERVICE: 'Singing Together', a survey of choral music of all European countries arranged in twenty-six weekly programmes by Ronald Biggs and broadcast in Kuoyu.

FAR EASTERN ENGLISH SERVICE: 'Eastern Influences on Western Music', a series showing how European composers have absorbed Oriental characteristics in their music, presented in fifteen weekly programmes by Scott Goddard.

ENGLISH SERVICE TO INDIA: 'The Story of the Concerto', a series of sixteen weekly programmes showing the development of the concerto from Bach's time to the present day.

'Background to Music', which might be described as a more concise version of the Third Programme's 'History in Sound of European Music'. Both these series are presented by Princess Indira of Kapurthala.

GREEK SERVICE: 'Famous Operas', a series of twenty-eight weekly programmes. Each opera is briefly described and records of the chief arias, concerted numbers, etc., are played.

GENERAL OVERSEAS SERVICE: 'Nights at the Opera', weekly programmes by Barbara McFadyean which have been broadcast regularly since 1945.

'Listeners' Choice': a selection broadcast three times a week, for which requests come from countries as far apart as Spain, Finland, and the Gold Coast.

On the Light Programme the most popular gramophone feature has been 'Housewives' Choice' which attracts an average of three thousand requests a week. 'Collector's Corner' was recently revived on the Home Service, and the Third Programme has had a series 'The Art of Transcription' and first performances of many works by modern European and American composers.

RECORDED PROGRAMMES

In varying degrees and for various reasons, recording continues to provide an essential service to all programme-producing departments. The service extended by the staff of Recorded Programmes Department with the help of their technical colleagues has covered a wide field, the extent of which can be judged from the fact that 3,650 separate recordings or reproductions were arranged each week, representing about 425 weekly transmission hours, or forty-two per cent of the total BBC output. Needless to say, the 'service' side of the work has occupied most of the department's time and energy, but the small production unit has also been busy exploiting its ability to bridge space and time by the use of recording as a production technique. Programmes included the 'Old Curiosity Shop' series featuring unusual sounds recorded in various parts of the world, 'Sports Quiz' in which teams representing sports' writers and players were asked to identify excerpts from past sporting events, and programmes of Irish Folk-songs and customs based on recordings collected during a tour by a mobile recording unit to remote districts in N. Ireland and Eire. Each week since November, 1946, the unit has produced an item of feminine interest for 'Women's Hour', and it has also been responsible for the weekly 'Down your Way' series now nearing its 100th consecutive performance.

The preparation of edited versions of sports and other broadcasts forms a large part of the unit's programme output. Among the major events covered in this way were the Royal Wedding, the Garter Ceremony at Windsor Castle, and the O.U.D.S. *Masque of Hope* performed in the presence of H.R.H. Princess Elizabeth. Edited versions of at least two sports events were presented each week, and in all, the unit has been responsible for about 500 broadcasts during the year.

THE REGIONS

SCOTLAND

Scottish broadcasting is now better equipped to serve the nation than it has ever been. To name a few of the outstanding programmes in the past year may give some idea of the range of the output as a whole. National affairs were the subject-matter of the regular impromptu discussions 'Scottish Opinion' and the more formal 'Scottish Survey'. A new series of discussions on education aroused widespread interest and some controversy. In religious broadcasting the series, 'Search the Scriptures', with members of the congregation asking questions on the subject of the sermon and being answered from the pulpit was a new departure. The steady demand for radio versions of Scottish literary classics was met by versions of John Galt's *Annals of the Parish* and Stevenson's *The Master of Ballantrae.* Three plays by Mr. James Bridie were broadcast during the year. Feature programmes included both documentaries like the series 'The Way we do it', and thrilling dramatizations of true adventure like 'His First Command'—the story of a lifeboat's perilous journey to safety in the wartime Atlantic. Regular magazine programmes such as 'Science Review', 'Theatre in Scotland', 'Arts Review', 'Scotland round the World', and 'Scottish Digest' reflected the activities of Scots in various walks of life and parts of the world. There were regular running commentaries on League and representative football matches and Saturday's 'Sportsreel' attracted a large public. For the farmers, 'Farm Forum' was broadcast both from the studio and from many different agricultural districts. Among Gaelic programmes 'The Portals of the Night' on the theme of the dispersal of Gaeldom's children across the world was especially notable. The BBC Scottish Orchestra enlarged its already wide repertoire, and the series of concerts of the works of modern Scottish composers was broadcast monthly. In Variety the McFlannels continued to be the favourite programme. The microphone was out and about in the 'Scottish Country' series and 'Country Magazine', and the major events of the Scottish year, including the Edinburgh Festival.

WALES

Lessons for listeners wishing to learn Welsh provided one of the most remarkable features of broadcasting in Wales in 1948. Five reprints totalling 13,000 of the pamphlets to accompany the lessons were sold and the first twelve lessons were recorded and repeated. A second and longer series of lessons began in the autumn. The

Silver Jubilee of broadcasting in Wales was celebrated in February, with a week of special programmes. New studies of Welsh historical figures resulted in some outstanding productions, the subjects including Owain Glyndŵr, Owen Tudor, and John Penry, while Saunders Lewis' play on St. Germanus, 'Buchedd Garmon', commissioned and broadcast by the BBC before the war, was given an entirely new production. Another Welsh poet, Gwilym R. Jones, found inspiration for a metrical allegory in the legend of Madog, the twelfth-century Welsh prince said to have discovered America. Music output was strengthened by the formation of a new Welsh Chorus, and the Welsh Orchestra increased its range of contact with the Welsh people by a tour of North Wales and co-operation with choral societies, notably at the Three Valleys Festival. Talks launched a new series of public discussion programmes entitled 'Voice of the People' and in Variety 'Welsh Rarebit' and 'Noson Lawen', continued to lead the field in their respective languages. Gert and Daisy's 'Working Party' visited the Swansea Valley in the summer. Children's Hour, assiduous in supplying juvenile needs in two languages, found time to contribute serials to the Home Service for all Regions, including 'The Fifth Form at St. Dominics'. An innovation in religious broadcasts was to enable outstanding Welsh preachers to develop one theme in three consecutive Sunday services.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Northern Ireland broadcasting has two broad functions: to present the people to themselves and to reflect a particular part of the United Kingdom to the world at large; and a glance through the Northern Ireland programmes during 1948 shows a lively activity in both spheres. Early in the year a series of exchange programmes with Scandinavia introduced the folk music of Ireland to Norway, Finland, Sweden, and Denmark. A number of outstanding drama productions by Ulster authors—such as Joseph Tomelty's play, *The Singing Bird*, and John D. Stewart's study of craftmanship, *We built a Church*—were broadcast in all Home Services, and several were recorded by the BBC Transcription Service.

Listeners to the General Overseas Service heard a monthly 'Ulster Magazine' containing music, talks, interviews, and news of the 'Old Country' as well as various programmes for special occasions, Church Services, plays and large-scale serialized music programmes like 'Come into the Parlour', presenting popular Irish music of the last few generations, and 'Phil the Fluter', recalling the songs of Percy French.

The Northern Ireland Home Service was active during the year

reflecting the special characteristics and activities of the Ulster people. One notable feature was the very large number of microphone visits to the smaller towns and villages in the Province. In radio drama and feature programmes 1948 was an outstanding year. There was a play almost every week, including a particularly interesting performance in Ulster dialect of parts of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in which Mat Mulcaghey played Bottom. Jack Loudan's 'Red Plush and Gilt' described in dramatic flash-backs the history of the Belfast theatre in the last three centuries. Listeners also heard an account of the laying of the first Atlantic cable and—in a dramatized version of her diary—the story of an Ulster woman's adventures in Italy during the war years. Authors also found outlets for their work in the fortnightly series, 'Writing in Ulster' and other literary programmes.

NORTH COUNTRY

A comprehensive survey of the activities of the North Region during the year would fill this book. In every direction the North's programmes reflect a spirit of enterprise and adventure. Take 'Public Enquiry', for instance, more topical, more controversial than ever —its final subject for discussion in the spring series being the question: 'Is the Labour Government still the People's Choice?' Sports coverage has extended in scope by the introduction of speedway and ice-hockey commentaries; cricket coverage has been increased, and 'Sportsman's Club' frequently plays away at towns in the Region. Full half-hour excerpts from current film releases have been started for the first time. 'Over the Garden Wall', a North Regional series, went into the Light Programme; in June, 'Have a Go' celebrated its hundredth broadcast; precedent was set during the summer at Blackpool with the rental of a BBC studio for production of four shows a week; a novel 'Seaside Nights' series got right among the holiday-makers.

And what about music? Sir Thomas Beecham conducted the BBC Northern Orchestra at Bolton and in three public concerts in Manchester; Charles Groves conducted another highly successful series of midday proms at the Manchester Town Hall, with people turned away at practically every concert; a two-day visit by Sir Adrian Boult and the BBC Symphony Orchestra to Newcastle; and the return of the popular 'On Wings of Song' series. Drama moved from one success to another, particularly with 'The Good Companions', 'The Stars look Down', and 'A Single Taper', which was repeated in the Third Programme. Following the successful experiment of a school for Radio Dramatists last year, this idea was extended in the summer, when a successful two-day school for radio

script and story-writers was held. In Features, too, the Region has gone to the people in programmes designed to stimulate controversy as well as to inform, notably in 'Portrait of Liverpool' and 'Special Area'.

Northern Children's Hour has continued its interesting and informative programmes, many of them designed to make the children familiar with their own Region. Children themselves have contributed to programmes in many ways, including book and hobbies talks, and original music and poetry.

WEST OF ENGLAND

The West of England Home Service maintained a steady average of twenty hours of regional broadcasting each week. Day by day the regional news bulletin told the story of local affairs and events—and the consistent size of the large listening audience to this bulletin reflected the interest which people take in matters lying close to their own doorsteps. The region's microphones were present on innumerable public and sporting occasions and at scores of local ceremonies, collecting material for the news magazines and news talks which, with the news bulletin, helped to build up the complete radio reflection of the life and activity of the region. In 'Speak your Mind' and other programmes, local issues were threshed out at the microphone without reserve. The ordinary listener was able to make himself heard in unscripted public-discussion broadcasts, and his views were indeed lively and forthright.

The far extremities of the Region were visited by the microphone. 'Live' broadcasts came from Land's End, from Jersey, Guernsey, and Sark, and—for the first time, from the lonely island of Lundy.

In addition, the Region continued its task of encouraging the artistic and cultural activities of the West. Many broadcasts came from the Festival of the Arts held in Bath in April—the Bath Assembly—including a concert by the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the first appearance of the National Youth Orchestra. And the Region's music was greatly enriched by the re-creation of the Bournemouth Municipal Orchestra, which began regular broadcasts in December, 1947. Once again, after an interval of years, the West Region had become the home of a full Symphony Orchestra.

THE MIDLANDS

Two events of particular importance stand out in the past year in Midland broadcasting. The first was the week of special pro-

grammes in November, 1947, to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of broadcasting from Birmingham. This included the production of a 'Midland Scrapbook', in which many programme ideas which had their origin in the region were mentioned, notably, of course, 'Children's Hour', which began in 1922 as 'Children's Corner'. Then, in April, came the retirement of Mr. Percy Edgar, O.B.E., after an unbroken period of over twenty-five years in charge of broadcasting from the Midlands. Mr. Edgar's departure from the scene of his long and fruitful labours as Regional Controller was made the occasion of his own 'Scrapbook' programme, which formed his official farewell to listeners.

He was succeeded by Mr. H. J. Dunkerley, Deputy to the Controller of European Services, who had been Programme Director at Birmingham before the war. Shortly after Mr. Dunkerley took over, two important conferences with Midland agricultural and industrial interests were held with the aim of telling farmers and manufacturers what was being done in the Midland Home Service to reflect their activities and place in the national life, and to discover how best to maintain and improve liaison in the future.

During the year, much attention was paid by the Music Department to choral music, and in this way a good deal of encouragement was given to Midland choirs, particularly by combining four or five at a time and giving them the opportunity of singing with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra.

Two important serials, adaptations of *Adam Bede* and *Quality Chase*, a novel with a Birmingham background, were broadcast and adventure serials (but not of the 'blood and thunder' type) in Children's Hour proved very acceptable. The weekly topicality magazine, 'Around and About', achieved its hundredth performance in March, and the Midland News Bulletin, the listening audience to which is very large, helps considerably in engendering a regional consciousness.

TELEVISION

The year was one of experiment and consolidation. In January the first BBC Newsreel was televised; a weekly edition was soon extended to two editions a week. Women's programmes, started experimentally in the autumn of 1947, became a regular feature, and an hour's programme, 'For the Children', was presented every Sunday. Studio productions proved the popularity of plays, of which outstanding examples were *Hamlet*, in two parts, Shaw's *Pygmalion*, Priestley's *Jenny Villiers* and *An Inspector calls*, and an increasing number of plays specially written or adapted for Television. For

the first time, a musical comedy *No, No, Nanette*, was broadcast in full from a Television studio, and stars of the Continent were introduced to British viewers in 'Cafe Continental', to mention only one programme out of more than 150 variety shows which were staged during 1948 at Alexandra Palace.

The year was notable for the number of television débuts by stage and screen celebrities, Margaret Lockwood, Jack Hulbert and Bobby Howes, Sonnie and Binnie Hale, Sonia Dresdel, Kieron Moore, and Alastair Sim. Among them, Josephine Baker paid a special visit from Paris.

New ground was broken, too, with 'Inventors' Club', features such as John Grierson's 'UNESCO', and documentaries on Germany and on the Magistrates' Courts of this country. The popularity of the magazine programmes, 'Picture Page' and 'Kaleidoscope', continued undiminished.

Outstanding technically was the introduction of the highly sensitive C.P.S. Emitron camera, first used for the Royal Wedding scenes outside Westminster Abbey, and in December, 1947, for the first time in the studio for an ITMA broadcast attended by Their Majesties the King and Queen in the Concert Hall, Broadcasting House—when no extra lighting had to be introduced. Improved mobile television equipment was used for televising the Olympic Games from Wembley.

Outside television broadcasts advanced. Most notable of these were the brilliant pictures obtained of the Royal Wedding, followed in April, 1948, by those of the unveiling of the Roosevelt statue in Grosvenor Square and of Their Majesties' Silver Wedding celebrations. In the same month television history was made by a broadcast of *La Bohème* in full from the Cambridge Theatre. In the world of sport, besides the established favourites, the University Boat Race, the Cup Final, Oxford and Cambridge and International rugger, amateur boxing, Lords' cricket, Wimbledon tennis, and racing at Ascot there was a number of first events. Steeplechasing, University hockey, and the Rugby League Cup Final were all televised for the first time.

Paying an evening visit to Alexandra Palace in May, the Prime Minister was conducted on a camera 'tour' of the building. Without leaving his arm-chair in an anteroom, Mr. Attlee, by means of cameras placed at strategic points, was shown the transmitter halls, the make-up and wardrobe department, and the studios in which that evening's scenery was being struck and the scenery for the following day's production was being set.

In July Alexandra Palace was honoured by a private visit from Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh.

The opening of the Midland Television Station was forecast in

March with the BBC announcement that construction had begun at Sutton Coldfield.

Viewers continued to increase, and by the middle of the year, more than 50,000 television licences had been issued.

Overseas

BROADCASTS TO THE COMMONWEALTH

THE GENERAL OVERSEAS SERVICE

Broadcasts that are prepared for the interest of listeners in the Commonwealth naturally cover the whole world. The General Overseas Service is intended primarily for listeners of the British Commonwealth—but it is also followed by British people and others who speak English in many different countries.

In the Overseas Services this has been a year of Royal occasions and major sporting events. The General Overseas Service profited to the full from the unique opportunity afforded by the wedding of Princess Elizabeth in November, 1947. The ceremony and attendant pageantry were broadcast in their entirety, and edited versions were transmitted at intervals throughout the subsequent forty-eight hours. This event undoubtedly made the most effective overseas broadcast since the close of War Report, and reaction throughout the world can only be described as phenomenal. Six months after the wedding, letters were still being received, not only from correspondents within the Empire, but also from the U.S.A. and from other foreign countries. Similar coverage, though on a less elaborate scale, was given to the Royal Silver Wedding Anniversary in April, 1948.

A major experiment in overseas music broadcasts was made with the decision to transmit the first or second half of each day's concert in the Winter Prom Season in January. These broadcasts were given considerable advance publicity under the slogan, 'Come to the Proms', emphasis being placed on the fact that transmission was direct from the Albert Hall and that listeners should therefore receive a full sense of 'atmosphere', in addition, of course, to some excellent music.

The summer season of 1948 provided a number of engrossing problems in the technical and programme-planning fields. Outstanding were the Olympic Games, the Australian Cricket Tour, and the United Nations General Assembly in Paris. The Overseas Services detached from their own staff a team of planners and assistants to cover the complex demands of providing adequate

reports of the Games throughout each twenty-four hours. A special 'Olympics Report'—on the lines of Radio Newsreel—was devised, but this had to be supplemented by arrangements for frequent live commentaries and accounts by professional observers. The Cricket Tour was perhaps a greater problem in that it extended over several months as compared with the two weeks of the Games. For this purpose, special transmitters were allocated, the signal to Australia was strengthened by relay from transmitters in Ceylon, and the transmissions were simultaneously rebroadcast on medium wave by Australian Stations.

For the United Nations Assembly also a special daily transmission from Paris was arranged for the Overseas Services. This in turn was supplemented by reports in news bulletins, Radio Newsreel, and by speakers in current event talks. All these special operations were sustained by the normal day-to-day output of entertainment in all its forms, including a substantial proportion of first-class music and by talks and discussions in almost every field of human activities.

SPECIAL SERVICES FOR THE COMMONWEALTH

South Africa. The special interests of English-speaking listeners for which the General Overseas Service could not fully cater were provided for in separate Regional Services. Thus, while it was possible to carry special broadcasts for South Africa in the G.O.S., the programme directed to African and other Colonies were transmitted in the Colonial Service.

Daily programmes of news and other items for Afrikaans-speaking listeners were transmitted separately to South Africa.

African Colonies and the West Indies. There has been evidence of steadily increasing audiences for some of the programmes, especially in the West Indies and West Africa. Of these may be mentioned 'Caribbean Voices', a programme of prose and poetry contributed by West Indian writers, which has undoubtedly given an outlet to West Indians for creative literary work. As a direct result of one programme, a critical discussion, a Literary Club was formed in Jamaica. 'Health in a Tropical Country', a series of talks by Dr. K. W. Todd on simple methods of preventing disease, aroused great interest in the Gold Coast. Experimentally, the Home Service Schools 'Current Affairs' talks are being broadcast for school children in the West Indies and West Africa.

As an example of the direct influence of a particular broadcast this story is illuminating. A broadcast to West Africa included a discussion between a housewife and an expert on handbags on the

A. Stewart,
Northern Ireland

NEW REGIONAL CONTROLLERS

H. J. Dunkerley,
Midland Region

A favourite Scottish programme, the McFlannels. The 'Family' round the microphone

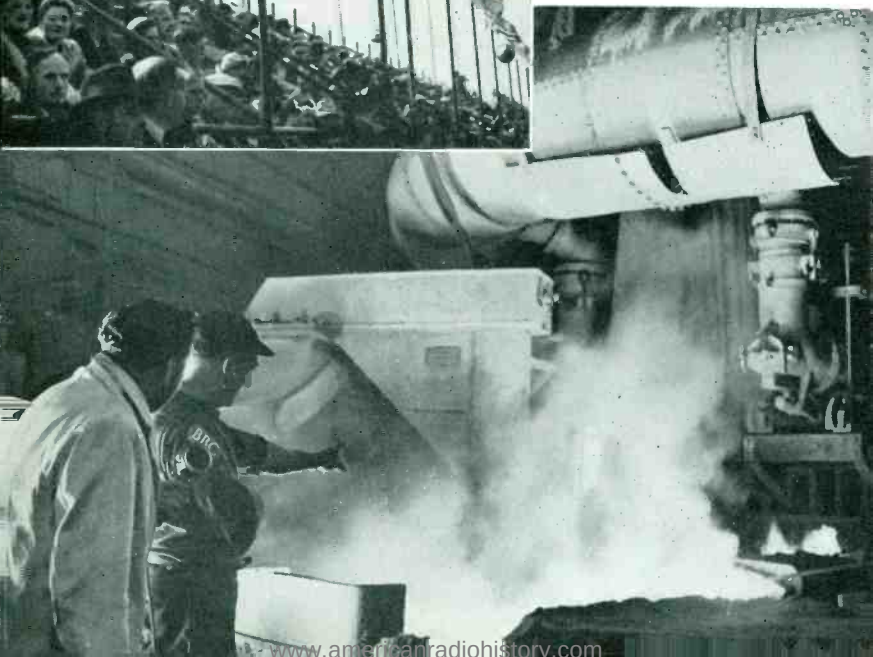
Norman Evans and Ethel Manners discuss the script of Over the Garden Wall *with Bowker Andrew*

Recording the sea at Land's End

The BBC Welsh Chorus rehearsing under its conductor Arwel Hughes

High above the crowd : BBC commentators at the Jersey International Road Races

Steel workers describe the tapping of a blast furnace for Progress Report



merits and faults of a snakeskin bag made in West Africa. As a result, some of the handbag-makers of West Africa have improved the quality of their work, and the first sample was sent to London for inspection; it is a beautiful piece of work.

THE PACIFIC AREA. In the Pacific Regional Service, sport naturally had a prominent place. Coverage was given to the M.C.C. tour of the West Indies, the Australian Rugby Union, and New Zealand Rugby League tours of this country, the Cricket Tests and Australian County games, the five England *versus* Australia Speedway Tests, and to the tennis at Wimbledon. In addition there were the regular weekly sporting newsletters and a series of interviews with leading British sportsmen.

The more serious aspects of British life and institutions were reflected in talks such as the weekly 'On the Land', 'Calling Australia', and the series 'Australians in Britain' included such speakers as Professor M. L. Oliphant and Sir Howard Florey.

CANADA AND NEWFOUNDLAND. Rebroadcasting of BBC programmes in Canada and Newfoundland has materially increased during the year. News bulletins and features have continued to be rebroadcast by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and the Newfoundland Broadcasting Corporation. In Canada there has been active rebroadcasting by the French language Network. Canada has also shown considerable interest in BBC broadcasts of international affairs.

INDIA AND PAKISTAN. The English programmes of the Eastern Service for India and Pakistan have been complementary to those directed to the new Dominions in the General Overseas Service. They seek to preserve and strengthen the cultural ties with this country. Children's and women's programmes have evoked considerable correspondence, but the main programmes are directed to the serious student of English. 'Book of Verse', for example, has continued its ambitious literary standards, and there has each week been a selection 'From the Third Programme', as well as a full-length play or feature, together with economic and political commentaries. The English programmes are, of course, specially related to events in India and Pakistan, and a striking memorial broadcast was made in honour of Mahatma Gandhi, half an hour after the news of his death was received in London.

The new Dominions of India and Pakistan were greeted as usual in the daily transmissions of news and programmes in Hindustani and English, and magazine programmes in Marathi and Bengali were broadcast twice a week. The political division of the Indian subcontinent has necessitated a change in our broadcasting mediums,

since Urdu has become the official language of Pakistan and Hindi of India. Plans are now taking shape for replacing the Hindustani transmission by two separate broadcasts more in keeping with the respective national idioms of India and Pakistan. This merely increases a tendency already apparent in our Hindustani programme which at present contains a cultural period in each of these mediums. (At the same time the daily programme in English for India, though slightly shorter than before, will be designed more than ever to meet the needs of the English-speaking intellectual.) The Eastern Programme follows closely developments in the subcontinent, and within half an hour of the news being received of the untimely death of the great Indian leader, Mahatma Gandhi, special memorial programmes were put out in Indian languages, as well as in English. For the present, an hour daily is allotted to the English programme and an hour to the other language programmes.

CEYLON. For the new Dominion of Ceylon there were also two programmes a week in both Sinhalese and Tamil.

MALAYA. The BBC's Far Eastern Service continued to broadcast a short daily programme in Malay, primarily devoted to news, with short talks of a generally topical nature. The main development was an agreement with the Malayan Government that this programme should be relayed by Radio Malaya, in order to provide better reception, and negotiations to this end were begun with Radio Malaya.

OTHER SPECIAL SERVICES for Colonial audiences continued throughout the year, including the regular transmissions in Maltese and Greek for Cyprus, and a variety of local-interest programmes for the Falkland Islands, Fiji, and other remote territories.

BROADCASTS TO OTHER COUNTRIES

REBROADCASTS BY STATIONS IN THE U.S.A.

The broadcasting of BBC programmes in the U.S.A. has increased during the year. American radio organizations have shown an exceedingly active interest in BBC Transcriptions, and 'World Theatre' received an ovation from listeners to New York's Municipal Station, WNYC, which carried the series. A signal achievement of the year has been the rebroadcast of 'British Commentary', a programme complementary to 'American Commentary' heard in this country. Political-discussion programmes like 'London Forum' have increased their audience through their rebroadcast by University Stations.

Two-way exchange programmes, 'Junior Town Meeting' and 'International Quiz', have afforded a meeting place on the air for British and American youth and University students, and have received wide publicity in U.S.A. A number of Independent Stations in the U.S.A. have continued to rebroadcast news bulletins and features.

Latin America

Both the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Corporation and the tenth anniversary of the Latin-American Service fell due in the period under review. Programmes celebrating these events were rebroadcast by many Latin-American stations both in Brazil and the Spanish-speaking republics who had been in friendly collaboration with the BBC throughout the war period. Many other stations in these countries produced their own programmes in honour of the Corporation, and BBC Representatives abroad had a busy but pleasant time accepting congratulations.

Records of the broadcasting version of *Don Quixote*, which was first produced and broadcast on short wave in 1947 to celebrate the fourth centenary of the birth of Cervantes, have been sent to all the Spanish-speaking republics. The opportunity to broadcast from their own stations this fine BBC production in twenty-seven half-hour episodes was received with enthusiasm in every country. In response to invitations the producer of *Don Quixote*, Dr. Angel Ara, made a most enjoyable visit to several Latin-American countries in May and brought back many ideas for new productions.

Interest in British industrial and scientific achievement in response to talks series on civil engineering, heavy machinery, and ship building has been very encouraging. Commentaries on the problems of resurgent Europe and life in Great Britain and her part in the modern world are now claiming more interest in Latin America. BBC news bulletins in Spanish and Portuguese continue to be rebroadcast in all Latin-American countries.

F. B. Thornton has returned from the Buenos Aires office to take charge of the Latin-American programmes. New staff has arrived from Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, and Peru. Jora Mora, in charge of the BBC's schools broadcasting for Latin America, returned from a leave visit to Colombia and Venezuela. In many countries BBC schools broadcasting is a regular feature of school life. Norman Zimmern is now away making a post-war check-up visit to the many Latin-American countries that he has been in such close touch with but not seen since he became Head of the Latin-American Service in 1940.

The development of air lines and the return of the great passenger

liners to south and central American routes after the bleak war years has brought a welcome flood of distinguished Latin-American visitors to keep our ideas refreshed. If we may pick out one in particular, it would be Heitor Villa Lobos, the Brazilian composer, whose visit we so much enjoyed.

The Far East

The period under review was marked by political developments of great significance for the Far East. Burma became an independent state in the first week of 1948, and the Federation of Malaya was inaugurated in the spring. An important by-product of the change in Burma was an agreement whereby the Burma Broadcasting Service began to relay the BBC's Burmese programme on the day that Burma became independent. This was a result of negotiations which followed talks between the Burmese Prime Minister, Thakin Nu, and the BBC during Thakin Nu's visit to London in 1947. The new relay was a valuable step towards the aim of securing relays of BBC broadcasts on all important broadcasting stations in the Far East. The British Far Eastern Broadcasting Service in Singapore, for which the BBC assumed responsibility on 8 August, 1948, relays the majority of the BBC's Far Eastern Service programmes, and there are also important relays by stations in Hongkong, Shanghai, and Canton. Arrangements are being made for the development of higher-powered transmissions from Singapore, which will still further improve reception.

The Far Eastern Service has continued to broadcast daily in Kuoyu, Cantonese, Japanese, Burmese, Siamese, and Malay, it has also beamed French and Dutch programmes, prepared by the European Service, to Indo-China and the Netherlands East Indies. All these programmes contain news bulletins designed to give an objective view of the main events throughout the world, together with British reaction to and comment on these events, including developments in the Far East. The news bulletins are supplemented by talks, most of which deal with social, industrial, cultural, and other changes now taking place in Britain, as we feel that in the reorganization of their own countries our Far Eastern listeners may wish to learn from our experience and perhaps profit from our mistakes.

In addition to these programmes, there is a daily half-hour in English addressed to the Far East in general. This consists of news bulletins in simplified English, English by Radio lessons, and talks of an extremely high cultural level. The English bulletins and lessons are designed for a general audience, but the talks are planned to meet the needs of that important section in all Far Eastern

countries which corresponds to the Third Programme's audience in Britain.

The Near East

On 3 January, 1948, the Corporation commemmorated the tenth anniversary of the first transmission in Arabic. Since this was the first regular foreign-language broadcast instituted by the BBC, the Corporation, in celebrating it, were recalling a turning point in their history. Beginning as a news bulletin, preceded by a few gramophone records, the Arabic Service has developed until it covers nearly three hours a day and presents in miniature all the principal features of BBC broadcasting. Its success can be deduced from the fact that recent international upsets, such as the failure of Iraq to ratify the treaty of Portsmouth, and the Palestine troubles, did not lessen the volume of friendly correspondence or impair the co-operation of Arab contributors to our programme.

The remaining two Near Eastern services are limited to an hour or less each day. In the Turkish transmission, which includes three news bulletins daily, the use made of the latter and of some talks by the Turkish Press, and the steady stream of correspondence, show what has been achieved. In the case of Persia, where the correspondence is less voluminous than from Turkey and the Arab world, a remarkably friendly spirit is shown even by politically hostile critics. A Persian Communist from Nishapur, after denouncing British policy and alleging that local intellectuals took a very poor view of the British Prime Minister's speeches, nevertheless asked the BBC to play a record for him. If we did not do so, he added, he would understand that this would be a mark of the Corporation's disapproval. Another correspondent expressed the hope that he had not embarrassed the BBC by asking awkward political questions.

By the time this Year Book has appeared, the Near East Service should have moved to their new quarters in the heart of London. While many of the staff and of our foreign visitors will regret leaving the beautiful surroundings of Aldenham, it is to be hoped that the convenience of a more central position in the capital will increase the efficiency of the service and the excellence of its output.

BROADCASTS TO EUROPE

The political temperature in Europe rose perceptibly in the period covered by this Year Book. The Communist coup d'état in Czechoslovakia, the Italian elections, the Cominform's denunciation of Tito, the siege of Berlin—these were all crisis points which

sent listeners to their sets and to the BBC's European Services with n eagerness which has not been known since the war. Sometimes has been mainly one nation which demanded information (it is no aggeration to say that in Czechoslovakia in February and March almost every set capable of receiving London was doing so day by day); at other times, most spectacularly in July when the Cominform denounced Tito, half the continent has needed an outside source of information and comment in the absence of solid enough explanation from nearer home.

To meet these demands the BBC has relied on the well-tried policy of providing full and objective news bulletins, comment matching the strength of British public opinion, and analysis letting in daylight from the whole of the outside world. It is unlikely that the effect of this will be immediately apparent; what is certain is that the outside news and views have poured in to those with sets to hear.

In circumstances of acute tension, when the main load of responsibility is borne continuously by news sub-editors and commentators, it is arbitrary in the extreme to select individual performances. But in detail it is fair to single out a programme broadcast in Czech on the night of Masaryk's suicide, ending with a recording of one of Masaryk's own BBC broadcasts of 1940 in which he tenderly recalled his childhood in his father's home. On a wider front much work has been put in to countries participating in the European Recovery Plan to develop interest in the community of effort which must be achieved.

Outside the political mainstream we may glance around the map on no more rational a basis than the alphabetical order of countries.

ALBANIA

From the International Court of Justice at the Hague a special correspondent of the European Service gave first-hand reports of proceedings in the Corfu Channel dispute daily in the Albanian service.

AUSTRIA

The English lessons started in the spring have proved popular among all classes and ages. For general programmes, the largest listening groups continue to be civil servants and professional and business people. Notable broadcasts during the year included talks by leaders of the Austrian political parties, and by Austrian M.P.'s visiting Britain.

BELGIUM

Some programmes which might be specially mentioned were: the interview with Field-Marshal Montgomery just before his visit to

Belgium, the programme on the induction of Lord Wavell as Constable of the Tower, a comprehensive series on contemporary British music, and a number of interviews with visitors from Belgium.

Bulgaria

Listeners in Bulgaria are now co-operating in a new radio 'Question and Answer' programme. The large number of letters received for this programme reveal a thirst for knowledge about our customs and institutions, and a genuine interest in our scientific and social developments.

Tickets for a piano recital by a young Englishman, arranged in Sofia by the British Council, were sold out before the recital was advertised, because of one reference in a BBC Bulgarian transmission.

Czechoslovakia

Political developments dominated the output to Czechoslovakia from the time when Czechoslovakia, under Russian pressure, withdrew from acceptance of the invitation to the Paris Conference.

During the February revolution, with increased listening to the BBC in Czechoslovakia, no effort was spared to provide the latest news of developments, as well as of Western reaction to them. Patrick Smith's despatches from Prague itself were notable.

Denmark

On 15 June members of Region III of the Danish Resistance Movement came over to London to present an inlaid table 'In thankful memory to the BBC for the encouraging voice during the war 1940–1945'. This was a sequel to the BBC's presentation to Kolding Museum of the chair from which that voice had broadcast the news of Denmark's liberation.

Finland

A Gallup Poll and a Listener Research competition in Finland have made it clear that, apart from the news service, the most popular BBC Finnish programmes are those about the everyday life of the British people, and in particular about the activities of young people. A regular Youth Programme in the Finnish Service now gives a picture of what young people in Britain think and do. New agricultural programmes have been started: one series concentrating on the work being done in the agricultural research stations, and another, for a less specialized audience, telling what is happening at different seasons on English farms.

France

Since April the gap of half an hour between the first evening hour and the second has been closed, so that the French Service is now on the air each evening for 2½ hours, without any interval. Listeners have begun to notice how much easier this makes the habit of tuning in to London.

The broadcast, in collaboration with Radiodiffusion Française, of Princess Elizabeth's wedding was widely relayed and had a huge audience in Western Europe and in Canada. The collaboration with Radiodiffusion Française was repeated when the Princess and the Duke of Edinburgh visited Paris.

Radiodiffusion Française and the French Government invited members of the French Service to Paris in May (to celebrate, a little previously, the service's tenth anniversary). During this visit members of the service were presented to the Président du Conseil and lunched with the French Foreign Minister at the Quai D'Orsay. Prizes were presented by the British Ambassador to the winners in the service's 'Listeners' competition'.

A listeners' survey in March showed that the 'casual' audience to the service was seventeen per cent of the French adult population (that is, about 5,000,000 people). It showed, too, that this regular audience varied between 250,000 and 1,500,000, according to the day of the week.

Germany

Reorganization of programme schedules has led to the introduction of several new series, such as the weekly reports from BBC correspondents all over the world, and a regular digest of what other radio stations are saying. Stress has also been laid on light and entertainment programmes; a fortnightly 'Quiz' with Frankfurt Radio Station has been proving especially popular. The 2½ hours of continuous broadcasting during the evening period has meant that full-length plays and features, and an increasing number of 'live' concerts, have been included in the main programme.

Outstanding broadcasts of the year included Marlowe's *Faust*, with Carl Ebert in the leading role, and two 'Radio Pictures' comparing coal-mining in the Ruhr and the North of England.

Greece

Such well-known personalities as Field-Marshal Lord Wilson, Professor Hadow, and Archbishop Germanos have come to the microphone to answer listeners' questions in the popular new fortnightly programme 'You ask us and we answer'. The Greek Press has given great publicity to this programme, which brings in numerous letters from Greeks all over the world.

Holland

Dutch listeners remain intensely curious about Britain; they show a preference for almost any programme on almost any aspect of life in this country; for instance, a series of programmes covering such diverse subjects as social security, health, heating, housing, Commonwealth relations, art, and the Church was a particular success. The most popular single item in the Dutch Service is the weekly talk given by the Dutch journalist, J. H. Huizinga; he, it is true, deals largely with politics—but even in his talks there are sidelights about 'Life in Britain' which, again, appear to be very acceptable.

Hungary

Since the Hungarian elections of September, 1947, which were fully covered in BBC broadcasts, London transmissions have been more than ever relied upon in Hungary for objective news and for the presentation of the Western outlook.

The Revolution of 1848 was commemorated by a series of historical talks written and broadcast by Mr. C. A. Macartney, of All Souls, one of the greatest European experts on Hungarian history.

The series was afterwards published by the BBC. The great Hungarian interest in the Olympic Games was fully reflected.

Italy

Although at the beginning of 1948 Italian interest was focused very strongly on the first parliamentary elections to be held under the new republic, evidence grew of a growing Italian interest in world affairs. The BBC's service has therefore considerably increased the proportion of broadcasts devoted to news and information in the broadest sense, by adding to its regular news bulletins and political commentaries a series of newsreels, special reports, and documentary features. One of the many favourable reactions to this policy came from a listener in Rome, who wrote: 'The peculiar exigencies of the times impose upon "La Voce di Londra" the duty of being the mouthpiece of the whole Western World.'

Norway

'There cannot be the least doubt', said the Norwegian Foreign Minister, Halvard M. Lange, 'that we are part of Western Europe, politically, economically, and culturally.'

In the cultivation of this feeling of fellowship and common destiny the BBC was greatly assisted by the ready co-operation of Norwegians. When attending the Paris conference, Foreign Minister Lange himself spoke in the BBC Norwegian Service about

the European Recovery Programme; the Minister of Trade, Lars vensen, made the opening broadcast in a new series designed to terest Norwegian seamen, and the Minister of Education and cclesiastical Affairs, Kaare Fostervoll, has also taken part in transmissions.

POLAND

A special series of broadcasts has described the Polish Resettlement Corps and the training of Polish ex-soldiers for civilian life. Early in 1948 a Polish programme assistant visited Germany for a series of talks on post-war conditions there with special reference to Westphalian Poles.

The Winter Sports of the Olympic Games were covered by Stanislas Faecher, well-known Polish sportsman. Poland's strong representation at the Olympic Games was reflected in many broadcasts from the BBC Radio Centre at Wembley.

PORTUGAL

Probably the most popular programme in Portuguese is 'London Album', a sort of radio newsreel reviewing outstanding events of the week in Britain. Interesting Portuguese visitors to London are brought to the microphone in the course of this programme, and their reactions to conditions in Britain add many pleasant pages to the 'Album'.

RUMANIA

During the past year the Rumanian Service has initiated a Letter-Box programme, in which listeners in Rumania participate fully. A large percentage of the letters deal with medical questions, and British sources in Rumania declare that the replies have been of wide-spread interest, and in many cases of real value. Doctors and engineers in Rumania can and do follow the latest developments in British research through the regular reviews of British medical and technical journals.

SPAIN

BBC transmissions to Spain consist of an afternoon news bulletin with a review of the British Press, and an evening news bulletin and commentary followed by a half-hour programme. One of the most successful programmes given during the year was a performance by the Spanish Society of King's College, London, of Tomás Breton's operetta *La Verbena de la Paloma*. Letters and telegrams of praise flowed in from all over Spain after this broadcast.

SWEDEN

A new series of programmes has stressed the common interests of

British and Swedish workers in corresponding industries. Swedish steel-workers, for instance, have heard about a North of England rolling mill, and textile workers have learnt about production methods in British cloth manufacture. All major British industries were included in this series, which has also dealt with social conditions, the problem of incentives, the relations between management and labour, and the role of Joint Production Committees.

U.S.S.R.

Reception of BBC broadcasts is said to be excellent in the U.S.S.R., and evidence exists of listening in country districts as well as in large towns. The audience includes people in many different walks of life—officials, doctors, professors, engineers, factory-workers, technicians, school teachers, and school children.

First in importance the BBC has given the full news of international affairs three times a day, and this has been backed up by comment expounding the British view of events from the editorial columns of the press and by individual commentators. Among supplementary programme material talks describing advances in British medicine are appreciated, particularly by the intelligentsia, but the most popular item appears to be the English lessons, which have sometimes been recommended by Russian teachers to their pupils.

Yugoslavia

Even before the Cominform's denunciation of the Yugoslav regime in July, there was increasing evidence of listening in Yugoslavia —not only in the towns, but also in tiny villages and in isolated collective farms. This varied audience has made it necessary to include a wide range of topics in the BBC's short programmes.

The English lessons specially prepared for a Yugoslav audience have many eager listeners; 1,500 advance texts, including forty ordered by the Yugoslav Ministry of Foreign Affairs (again before July), have been circulated every week.

English Broadcasts

Listener research and listeners' correspondence show that in all European countries the audience for the English broadcasts in the European Service is drawn from three main groups—the students of English (many of whom have learnt their English from 'English by Radio'), the cultured intellectual classes (who are much more interested in international affairs than their English counterparts), and the small but important class of foreign journalists and Government officials who listen to London for the objective presentation of

British news bulletins and views on world affairs. A continuous hour for English-speaking listeners has recently been introduced at 2100 GMT. This includes repeats of outstanding musical and spoken-word broadcasts from the Third Programme, and programmes on a high intellectual level bringing together the main strands of contemporary European ideas.

THE BBC TRANSCRIPTION SERVICE

The growing interest shown by Overseas Broadcasting Organizations in BBC programmes is particularly demonstrated in the increased demand for transcriptions. For example, the BBC has received from Canada a request for a series selected from the Schools Broadcasting schedules, and these are being supplied on transcriptions which will also be made available to the Colonial stations and any other interested broadcasters.

Another example of the interest in British Broadcasting has been the spectacular success of a series of programmes broadcast in the United States under the general title 'BBC Showcase'. This title embraces all types of programmes selected with a view to demonstrating the technique of broadcasting in this country. The great success of the 'World Theatre' series throughout the world has encouraged the BBC to issue another selection which will be taken from the current output of 'World Theatre' in the Home Service, coupled with other major Drama productions.

The fruits of the visit by the BBC team to India are being distributed this year on transcription in the form of the Feature productions that were broadcast by the Home Service under the title 'India and Pakistan'. The documentaries resulting from Leonard Cottrell's trip to East Africa and Geoffrey Bridson's sojourn in Australia complement the Indian reports.

The Regions in Britain are contributing an increasing proportion of material, and life in Britain has been currently reflected in a series of fifteen-minute Features entitled 'Looking at Britain' which include on-the-spot recordings in places from the Hebrides to Kent.

The Edinburgh Festival, the Eisteddfod, the Oxford and Cambridge Music Festivals, are some of the many outstanding events in the music world which have provided material for transcription, while special productions by Features Department have described the leading British films in the making. Every day a total of some forty hours on stations and radio networks in the English-speaking world is being filled by BBC transcriptions.

Latin America has recently received a number of adaptations into Spanish and Portuguese of outstanding productions in English.

Nesta Pain's dramatic Feature on Cholera, the radio version of Oscar Wilde's '*The Importance of being Ernest*', 'The Story of Steel', based on the life of Bessemer, are a random selection from the comprehensive flow of programmes to that part of the world. Over 250 broadcasting stations in Latin America make regular use of BBC transcriptions, more than sixty of them being in Brazil.

In the European field there has been a consolidation of output and programmes are limited to French, Italian, and German. French features and plays are carried by Belgian, Swiss, and French stations. BBC Transcriptions regularly appear in the schedules of the two Italian networks, as well as those of Sardinia and Trieste. A special series of documentary programmes about the British Dominions is at present in production.

All over the world stations are broadcasting BBC Transcriptions to teach English. The series of 'English by Radio', by A. S. Hornby, consisting of 104 lessons, is the most recent addition to the armoury, while old BBC English teaching favourites such as 'The Brown Family', so well known to European listeners, and 'The Baker Family' in Latin America seem to have found a permanent place in the broadcast schedules of many countries.

THE MONITORING SERVICE

The Monitoring Service continues to receive radio transmissions in telephony, telegraphy, and by the Hellschreiber process, from countries in all parts of the world, the following centres being covered daily: Ankara, Athens, Belgrade, Berlin, Brussels, Bucharest, Budapest, Buenos Aires, Cairo, Chungking, Copenhagen, Delhi, Helsinki, Hilversum, Lisbon, Madrid, Melbourne, Montreal, Moscow, Oslo, Paris, Prague, Rome, Rio de Janeiro, Sofia, Stockholm, Teheran, Tokyo, Vatican, Vienna, and Warsaw. Summaries of all transmissions are published weekly and, in addition, all urgent items of news are transmitted to the News Departments of the BBC by teleprinter.

THE ENGINEERING DIVISION

Operations and Maintenance

The Home, Light, and Third programmes were radiated for a total of 200,000 transmitter hours and the European and Overseas services for a total of 165,000 transmitter hours during the year. The number of transmitters for all services has remained unchanged,

though eight temporary low-power transmitters were replaced by permanent installations. Two remotely-controlled, unattended, transmitting stations were brought into service and have proved very reliable.

The outstanding event of the year for the studio and outside broadcast departments was the Olympic Games, certainly the most ambitious outside broadcast ever undertaken by the BBC. Outside broadcasts during the year totalled 4,750 and included, besides the Olympic Games, such high-lights as the Royal Silver Wedding Celebrations and the Test Matches.

In the mobile-recording field, larger and more powerful cars for carrying transportable equipment have been obtained, and also a van equipped with eight wire recorders for simultaneous multilingual commentaries.

Television

Transmission time has averaged 3½ hours daily, seventy-five per cent of which has come from the two studios at Alexandra Palace. Two notable improvements have been the introduction of a continuity room, resulting in a more polished method of programme presentation, and the provision of means for instantaneous cutting from one camera to another, which has speeded up the production of certain kinds of programme.

As with sound broadcasting, the outstanding television outside broadcast was the Olympic Games, which provided a stringent test for the two new sets of portable equipment delivered in July. This new equipment, manufactured by Electric and Musical Industries and by Pye Ltd., is much lighter and more compact than the pre-war mobile units, and will allow the number of outside broadcasts to be increased. New cameras also have been brought into experimental use during the year.

Research and Development

The research and development programmes have included a wide variety of projects during the year. The initial results of the experiments, begun during 1947, to determine the propagation characteristics of ultra-short waves have now been analysed, and the possibilities of common-wave working at these frequencies have been examined. These experiments were continued throughout the summer in order to collect more comprehensive data. On the audio-frequency side, a large number of different loudspeakers have been tested to find one that is up to the standard required for monitoring the programmes, and the general research work on studio acoustics has continued. The television research section has been expanded, and has designed and built equipment for extensive

appraisal tests on definition and colour. Towards the end of the year a start was made with the transfer of the research staff from London and Oxford to the new research station at Kingswood Warren in Surrey.

The remote control of unattended transmitters over trunk telephone lines has been accomplished and one station has been automatically monitored and remotely operated over a distance of fifty miles. A light-weight commentator's pack set, comprising an F.M. transmitter and a super-regenerative A.M. receiver has been designed and subjected to field trials.

Installations

Transmitters have been installed at Preston, Middlesbrough, and Brighton to radiate the Third Programme. The project to extend the television service to the provinces has been vigorously pursued during the year, and the first of the provincial television transmitting stations is now under construction at Sutton Coldfield, near Birmingham. The station will be equipped with 12-kW and 35-kW transmitters for sound and vision, and the transmitting aerial will be carried on a 750-ft. stayed-lattice mast. The construction of both transmitters at the manufacturers' works is reasonably advanced.

The construction of the VHF station situated at Wrotham, Kent, is also well under way. Initially this station will accommodate one 25-kW F.M. transmitter and one 18-kW A.M. transmitter, both operating in the 87·5–94·5 Mc/s band. A slot aerial will be used, the slots forming an integral part of the upper portion of a 500-ft. mast.

International Conferences

Two alternative draft plans for the European medium and long-wave broadcasting bands were prepared by a committee of eight experts, which met in Brussels during January and again in March. These alternative plans were submitted to the full European regional broadcasting conference which opened in Copenhagen in June.

A technical planning committee for H.F. broadcasting met at Geneva during the spring to do preliminary technical work for the international H.F. broadcasting conference which assembled at Mexico City in October.

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Third Programme	H. J. G. Grisewood
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Talks	R. A. Rendall
Finance	T. Lochhead
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Gramophone Department	Miss A. E. Instone
Music	Sir Steuart Wilson
News, Editor of	T. R. P. Hole
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Recorded Programmes	R. V. A. George
Religious Broadcasts	Rev. F. House
School Broadcasting	R. S. Postgate
Talks	N. G. Luker
Television Programmes	C. McGivern
Variety	M. F. C. Standing

THE BBC AT THE AIR-PORT

Field-Marshal Smuts (above) *and General Marshall* (below) *are met on arrival in Britain*

BBC observer Audrey Russell records two Siamese kittens at a London cat show

David Spenser, the new 'Just William' is taken to task by Violet Elizabeth (Anthea Askey) while 'Ginger' (Derek Rock) looks on

Overseas Services

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Controller	R. McCall
Editor, European Services	E. Tangye Lean
Assistant Controller, General Overseas Programmes	D. Stephenson

SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL HEADS

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Colonial Service	J. Grenfell Williams
East European Service	G. Fraser
Eastern Services	C. J. Pennethorne Hughes
European Productions	J. A. Camacho
Far Eastern Service	C. J. Morris
German Service	L. M. Fraser
Latin-American Service	N. H. Zimmern
North American Service	J. W. MacAlpine
Scandinavian Service	H. D. Winther
South European Service	A. R. Birley
West European Service	J. Monahan
European News Department	D. I. Edwards
Monitoring	M. A. Frost
Transcription	T. P. Gale

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E. Roberts
Rev. John Roberts
The Rt. Rev. the Bishop of St. Asaph
Wynne Samuel
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Sir Robert Webber
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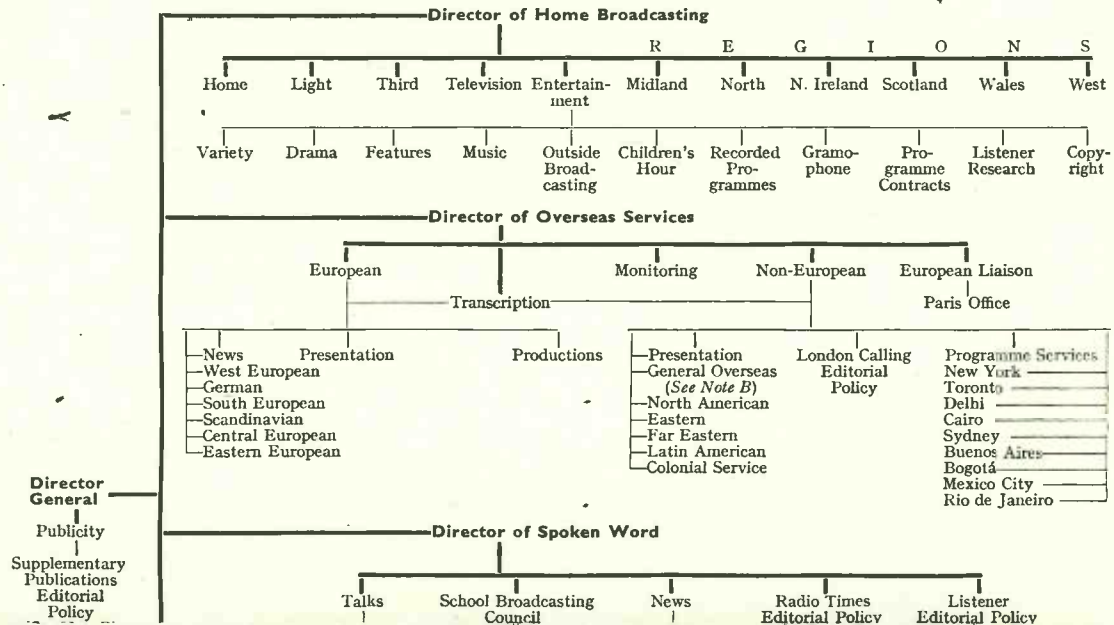
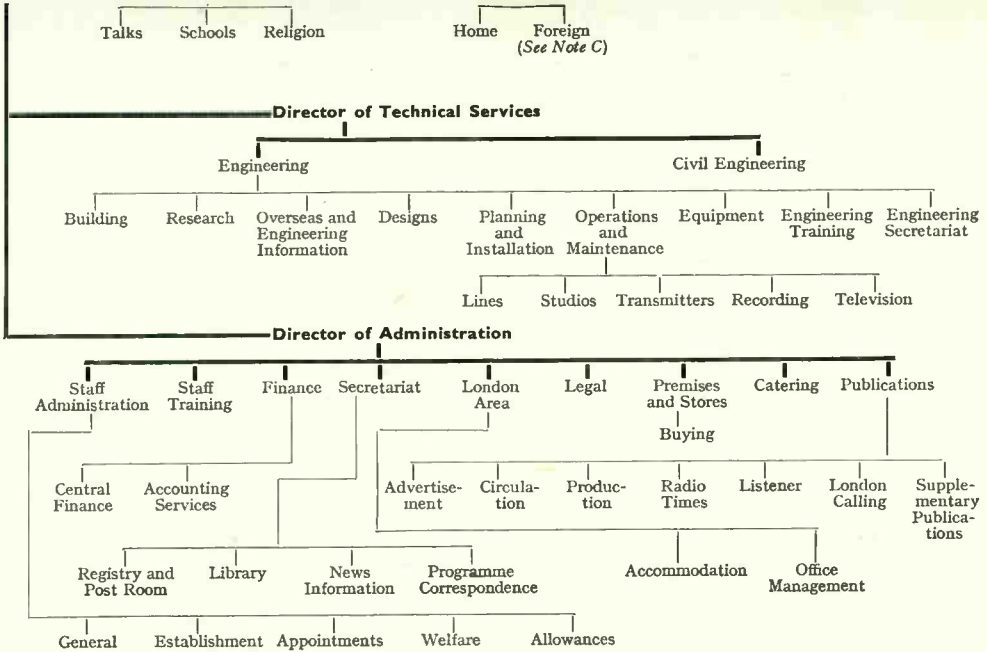
BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION: OUTLINE OF EXECUTIVE ORGANIZATION





Notes.—A. This Chart does not indicate the Administrative elements which are directly responsible to the various Heads of Establishments, *e.g.* Entertainments, Overseas, News, Engineering, etc.

B. General Overseas incorporates Pacific and South Africa.

C. Foreign News is the intake serving all the Corporation's output.

D. Responsibility is through the Divisions concerned.

The Origin and Development of the BBC

The first BBC was the British Broadcasting Company, Limited, formed in 1922 by the principal manufacturers of wireless apparatus. It operated under a short-term licence from the Postmaster-General, derived its revenue partly from royalties charged on the sale of wireless receiving sets, and partly from receipts for the issue of receiving licences, and had to provide a service to the Postmaster-General's 'reasonable satisfaction'.

When the first BBC came to an end in December, 1926, the number of licences had grown from 35,000 at the end of 1922 to well above the million mark. Daytime programmes had been added to the evening transmissions.

THE CHARTER. In 1926 the Crawford Committee recommended that broadcasting should be conducted by a public corporation to be known as the British Broadcasting Corporation, acting as Trustee for the national interest. The present BBC, the British Broadcasting Corporation, was created by Royal Charter on 1 January, 1927. The Charter provided that the Corporation should be controlled by a number of Governors appointed by the King in Council with a chief executive officer to be known as the Director-General. The General Manager of the Company, Sir John Reith (later created Lord Reith), became the first Director-General of the Corporation. The Charter declared that 'broadcasting had shown itself of great value as a means of education and entertainment', and it called upon the Corporation to develop these qualities 'to the best advantage and in the national interest'. The Charter expired at the end of 1936, but following the report of the Ullswater Committee, Parliament renewed it for another ten years with few changes. The new Charter expressly charged the BBC with the duty of carrying on the Empire Service, created in 1932, and the Television Service, created in 1936.

In 1946 the Government announced its intention of renewing the Charter for five years, from 1 January, 1947, a public inquiry into the broadcasting service to be held during that period. The new Charter which otherwise is substantially the same as its predecessors, requires the BBC to continue to broadcast an adequate and impartial daily account by professional reporters of the proceedings in both Houses of Parliament, and to maintain joint consultative machinery with the staff for the discussion of terms and conditions of employment and the operational efficiency of the service. The Government's reasons for renewing the Charter before holding an enquiry were: (*a*) the fact that the BBC had been operating under completely abnormal conditions for the greater part of the life of the existing Charter; (*b*) the need to study the effect of wartime

technical developments on peacetime broadcasting; and (*c*) the desirability of waiting for a renewal of international agreements on the allocation of wavelengths.

THE LICENCE. The BBC operates under licence from the Postmaster-General, who is the ultimate authority for wireless telegraphy in Great Britain. The licence lays down regulations governing the building of transmission stations, the height of aerials, the frequencies used, the aerial power, the line system, and other technical requirements. It prohibits the BBC from broadcasting commercial advertisements or sponsored programmes, and it retains for the Postmaster-General the right of veto over programmes. The only general restriction in force today is one that has obtained from the beginning—a veto upon the broadcasting by the BBC of its own opinion upon current affairs. Government departments can, on request, secure that their special announcements are broadcast. There is provision for Government control in case of national emergency, but this power has not been invoked, even in wartime. On the outbreak of war certain powers reserved to the Postmaster-General were transferred to the Minister of Information. Changes in the financial arrangements also became necessary, a Treasury grant-in-aid being substituted for the income derived from licence revenue. During 1946 the price of a listening licence was raised from 10*s*. to £1 per annum, and the television licence fixed at £2 per annum, and the Government announced that, from the end of the year, the net revenue from licences would revert to the BBC for the financing of its Home services, the cost of all Overseas services being met by the annual grant-in-aid from public funds.

SERVICES AND DEPARTMENTS

The intention in the following pages is to describe briefly the aims and functions of the various BBC services and supplying departments.

The Home Service

The Home Service in co-operation with the Regional Home Services provides a basic home programme for British listeners. It aims to appeal to a wide range of tastes and to reflect the life of the community in every sphere. Symphony Concerts, Chamber Music, Religious Services, Light Music, Variety, Plays, Talks, and Feature Programmes, all find a place in the Home Service. Six News Bulletins are broadcast a day, and while Parliament is sitting, a daily report of the proceedings in both Houses is given nightly at 10.45 p.m. On Saturdays in 'The Week in Westminster' Members of Parliament are invited, under an established rota system, to give a personal account of the week's proceedings. The world scene is

reflected in such series as 'World Affairs', 'Commonwealth and Empire', 'American Commentary', and 'Window on Europe'. The feature-programme technique which is used in 'Window on Europe' is also employed to present and draw attention to a variety of subjects such as History, Law, and Science. Other regular 'service' broadcasts are the talks for farmers, 'Can I help You?', and 'The Radio Doctor'.

On Sundays the Home Service broadcasts Religious Services at 9.30 in the morning and 7.45 in the evening. These Services reflect the worship of all churches in the main stream of the Christian tradition. On Sundays, too, serious music finds its place in the afternoon concerts at three o'clock.

In the field of entertainment, ITMA and Music Hall are regularly heard by many millions of listeners, while the audience for Saturday Night Theatre sometimes exceeds that of Music Hall. World Theatre is broadcast once a month and gives listeners an opportunity of hearing dramatic works by authors of international repute.

On Wednesday nights during the season there are regular broadcasts of Symphony Concerts given by the BBC Symphony Orchestra and other leading British orchestras, and once a month a special studio performance is given of an opera with the BBC Theatre Orchestra and distinguished soloists. The Home Service carries a wide range of outside broadcasts among which the Royal Wedding will long be remembered. Running Commentaries on sport are broadcast, notably on international rugby football matches and the All England Lawn Tennis Championships at Wimbledon. A weekly magazine entitled 'Saturday Sports Review' introduces famous sportsmen and others interested in sport, speaking about the week's events, future prospects, and other sporting topics of wide interest. The Home Service is broadcast on medium waves, and is organized on a regional basis with much local autonomy. Home Service: London (342·1 metres), Regions: Midland (296·2 metres), North (449·1 and 285·7 metres), West (307·1 and 216·8 metres), Scottish (391·1 metres), Welsh (373·1 metres) and Northern Ireland (285·7 metres).

The Light Programme

The Light Programme is a single programme transmitted over the entire country on two wavelengths—1,500 metres for general use and 261 metres for several thickly populated urban districts. Its title 'Light' does not mean that it is lowbrow. It aims to give the best in a wide field of entertainment, and would be more correctly described as a programme to suit those who require relaxation in their listening.

Naturally, much of the material broadcast consists of variety, light music, and dance music, though there is a great deal of other material of weightier import presented under an attractive guise to make it suitable for 'light' listening. In Radio Newsreel the Light Programme offers a balanced report and survey of current events from its correspondents all over the world. It is a unique feature in news-reporting by radio, and since it was established in October, 1947, has achieved a steadily growing audience.

Current affairs are also discussed in the 'Focus' programmes, whose aim is to present the essential facts of matters of topical interest so as to afford a basis for informed argument by the ordinary citizen. Good music forms a not inconsiderable part of the Light Programme output, and the works chosen are usually from the more popular classics. Woman's Hour, too, forms an essential part of the Light Programme plans. It is now listened to by millions of women every week-day afternoon except Saturday from 2 to 3 p.m., and has achieved an enviable reputation for helpfulness, integrity, and sincerity.

The Light Programme always extends a welcome to programmes from the BBC's Regions, for it is a programme which is national rather than metropolitan in scope and outlook.

As with other BBC Services, the aim of the Light Programme is to reflect the life and tastes of the community, and to this end the microphone leaves the studio as much as possible for public sporting events though early in the year restrictions were imposed by outside bodies on broadcasts from theatres and music-halls. The foundation of the Light Programme is and must remain entertainment, and the constant aim is to improve it in kind and in quality.

The main transmission comes from a high-power transmitter at Droitwich on 1,500 metres (200 kc/s) and is audible throughout the British Isles. In addition, there is an auxiliary service on 261·1 metres (1,149 kc/s) having a restricted range as follows:

Transmitting Station	*Area Served*
Brookmans Park	London
Burghead	Moray Firth area of Scotland
Plymouth	Plymouth
Lisnagarvey	Parts of Northern Ireland
Londonderry	Parts of Northern Ireland
Moorside Edge	S. Lancashire and S.W. Yorkshire
Redruth	Redruth, Cornwall
Redmoss	Aberdeen
Stagshaw	Tyneside
Westerglen	Edinburgh, Glasgow

The Third Programme

The Third Programme, which began on 29 September, 1946, is broadcast every night from 6 p.m. to midnight. Slightly more than fifty per cent of the transmission time is devoted to music, including opera and gramophone-record programmes; about twenty per cent to drama and poetry; fifteen per cent to talks, discussions, short stories, and other readings; and ten per cent to feature programmes. The remainder is composed of interludes between programmes, and of categories which are infrequently represented, such as religious services and variety.

The Third Programme is designed for the attentive listener, and it is not expected that anybody will listen to it continuously or use it for background listening. The aim is to include in each category only programmes which are of artistic value or serious purpose, and to give them the best available performance. The intention is to entertain and to interest the listener, and any educational purpose which may be served is a by-product of that intention.

The absence of news bulletins or other regular programmes broadcast at the same time of the same day in every week means that there are few fixed points in the schedule, so there is much greater flexibility in planning the Third Programme than other services. Programmes appealing to minority audiences, such as recitals of modern chamber music, can be placed in the Third Programme at the best listening times, which in other services must usually be reserved for programmes which are widely popular. Many broadcasts are repeated. Most productions of plays and feature programmes are given at least three times; talks and recitals are often given twice.

Although it is doubtful whether the Third Programme appeals to all the listeners even some of the time, or even to some of the listeners all the time, it does appeal not to a minority but to a number of minorities, the sum of which may compose a considerable proportion of the community.

The main transmission of the Third Programme comes from Droitwich on a wavelength of 514·6 metres (583 kc/s) and serves places within a radius of about eighty miles. In addition, there are low-power stations working on 203·5 metres (1,474 kc/s) and serving Aberdeen, Belfast, Bournemouth, Brighton, Bristol, Cardiff, Dundee, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Hull, Leeds, Liverpool, London, Manchester, Middlesbrough, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Portsmouth, Preston (Lancs.), Plymouth, Redruth, Sheffield, Southampton.

Religious Broadcasting

Religious broadcasting is planned to meet the needs of three distinct kinds of listeners: the churchgoers, the 'would-be churchgoers' (that is, those who are prevented by age or illness), and the very large number of people who listen-in to religious broadcasts, but who seldom or never attend church. Members of all three groups enjoy a programme like the 'Sunday Half-hour' of Community Hymn-singing in the Light Programme every Sunday night, the more reflective 'Think on these Things' which comes on at 10.45 p.m. and the talks and readings in 'Lift up your Hearts', at 7.50 a.m. every weekday in the Home Service. 'The People's Service' at 11.30 a.m. on Sundays in the Light programme brings the Christian message to four or five million people, many of whom would not otherwise hear it. The 'radio congregations' for the other two 'Sunday services', at 9.30 a.m. and 7.45 p.m. in the Home Service, include more of those who go to church or who would go if they could, and these broadcasts give opportunities to hear outstanding Christian preachers and to join in the worship of the different Christian denominations. On weekdays housewives and other people who have to remain at home can join in the Daily Service and hear the Tuesday afternoon broadcasts of Cathedral Evensong or Roman Catholic liturgical services. On Saturday evenings a short service, in various free or traditional forms, is broadcast from the studio. Christian Commentary at 7.15 p.m. on Fridays is an opportunity for a team of speakers in turn to review contemporary events in the light of their deepest convictions as Christians, and on Tuesday evenings religious broadcasting contributes from time to time talks on ethical, philosophical, and cultural questions. In the Third Programme religious broadcasting is more often represented indirectly than directly (for example, in the discussion between Bertrand Russell and Fr. Copplestone, S. J.), but acts of worship are broadcast on suitable occasions and programmes have included a notable series on 'English Cathedral Music'.

Music

The general year-to-year policy of broadcast music may be briefly summarized as being designed to give listeners the best and most interesting music (the terms are not necessarily synonymous!) old and new.

Symphony Concerts

Fortnightly public concerts, broadcast from the Royal Albert Hall; Sunday afternoon orchestral concerts from the studio; regular broadcast concerts by the BBC Theatre Orchestra; relays by the

Corporation's regional orchestras; concerts by other orchestral organizations, home and foreign; and, of course, the Promenade Concerts. Famous musicians from many countries are frequently invited.

Opera

Broadcasts of opera from the studio have become especially popular. These are given regularly throughout the season, in addition to important relays from opera houses at home and abroad. For example, Mozart's *Don Giovanni* was relayed from the Cambridge Theatre in December, 1947, and in the same month a new production of Britten's *Peter Grimes*, from Covent Garden, as well as two one-act operas by Ravel *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* and *L'Heure Espagnole*, in commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the composer's death. These were transmitted from Paris. Listeners have heard performances of operas by Puccini, Handel, Manuel de Falla, Scarlatti, Donizetti, Delius, Tchaikovsky, Monteverdi, Dvořák, not to mention Verdi and Boito, with Toscanini conducting, from La Scala, Milan.

Chamber Music and Recitals

The Third Programme has specialized in unusual chamber concerts and recitals by 'star' soloists, and the Thursday Recital in the Home Service has afforded listeners the opportunity to hear works by the great masters. A series of programmes of a unique character was inaugurated in January and broadcast weekly in the Third Programme. Under the general editorship of Professor Gerald Abraham of Liverpool University, and formerly head of the BBC's Gramophone Department the programmes which are to continue for three years, are designed to illustrate the history of European music from the Middle Ages up to today, and each contribution is in charge of an authority on the particular period dealt with. Entitled *The History in Sound of European Music*, the surveys have already created deep interest in the musical world.

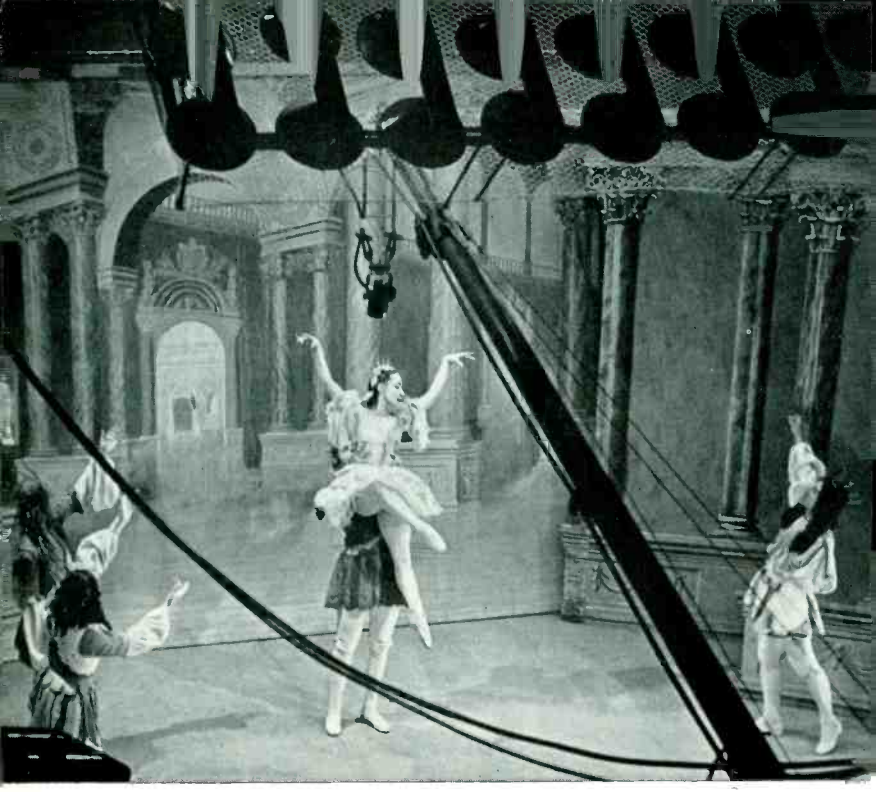
Drama

Broadly speaking, the function of the BBC Dramatic Department can be defined as the provision of material dramatized for broadcasting according to the requirements of the Heads of the various programme services with the exception of such dramatized material as is used respectively by Features Department and Children's Hour. This function, therefore, includes the finding, reading, and selection both of material primarily conceived in radio dramatic terms and of material conceived in other terms, e.g. stage plays,

Mrs. Burt, the wife of a Durham miner, who introduced H.M. the King on Christmas Day, 1947. Mr. J. C. Clarke, Newcastle Representative, holds the microphone

THE BBC AT CHRISTMAS

The microphone visits the Christmas Party at Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital



Ballet is a favourite with viewers

BBC TELEVISION

short stories or novels which can appropriately be adapted within the limitations and to the requirements of microphone production.

The department's activities range widely, including as they do at one end of the scale such daily serials as *Mrs. Dale's Diary* and the adventures of Dick Barton, through what may be termed 'the middle reaches' of Mystery Playhouse and Saturday Night Theatre to the more rarefied atmosphere of the World Theatre series and the dramatic productions of the Third Programme. Its aims may be loosely defined as follows:

(*a*) To maintain, whatever the basic quality, interest, or importance of the individual production may be, a generally high professional level both of acting and of technical interpretation.

(*b*) To make available to the listening public a regular series of classical plays of established international repute, qualified always by the axiom that they should be susceptible to microphone treatment and of entertainment as well as cultural value. The success of the World Theatre series has justified the attempt to carry out this policy.

(*c*) To encourage interested authors to write plays conceived specially in terms of the broadcasting medium.

(*d*) To fulfil the demand of the listening public, so strongly evidenced by Listener Research, for what may be termed 'popular dramatic entertainment'—a demand fulfilled for the most part by radio adaptations of stage plays with a reputation of success in the theatre.

(*e*) To present, either in dramatized serial form or in an individual performance, such novels and short stories as can be handled by the medium without unreasonable distortion either of form or of spirit.

(*f*) To give to the English listener some of the more outstanding examples of contemporary dramatic work from the Continent of Europe.

Features

The function of Features Department is the writing and production of factual programmes in the form best suited to each subject and the audience for it. Feature programmes are radio documentaries ranging over a wide field of historical and contemporary subjects. They are drawn from the fields of history, biography, literature, science, law, and most frequently, of contemporary events and personalities. These programmes are mainly the work of staff-writers and producers, working in collaboration with specialists on individual subjects. Free-lance contributions from professional writers are welcomed. Ideas should be submitted in synopsis form

in the first place. Features range in length from fifteen minutes to two hours, but normal lengths are thirty, forty-five, and sixty minutes. Most Feature programmes deal with one basic theme and draw for illustration on any suitable radio technique, dramatization by actors, direct or recorded speech, and recorded or direct-sound pictures. Features often make use of music specially composed for the purpose for each particular programme. Features Department provides special programmes to the Home, Light, Third, and Overseas Services of the BBC.

Variety

The output of the Variety Department ranges from comedy serials (e.g. 'ITMA'), and 'act' shows (e.g. 'Variety Bandbox'), through 'quizzes' and more serious but basically 'entertainment' features (e.g. 'Scrapbook'), to current and established 'popular' music in the dance, and, to a small extent, light music fields. Its artists are therefore drawn chiefly from the music hall and from musical comedy, and its music from dance bands and cinema organists.

The primary task of the department is to supply radio comedy in its various forms and this, some twenty programmes per week, represents the bulk of its peak-hour output.

Major and minor 'features' of a light character including biographical programmes (e.g. 'Gilbert and Sullivan'), comedy serials (e.g. the Basil Radford-Naunton Wayne light comedies), musical features (e.g. 'Vera Lynn sings'), average some dozen items per week. The remainder of the department's output consists of dance music in one form or another, and cinema-organ broadcasts; between them these may total up to sixty programmes in a week. The latter category of programmes provides the outlet for the popular songs of the day, and embraces the full range of dance music from concert orchestras to small jazz combinations.

The department, numbering some forty producers working under a Head of Variety and two Assistant Heads, one concerned with productions and the other with music, comprises also a Script Section through which it maintains contact with its many outside writers. Variety programmes consume a vast amount of new script material each year, and new writers are constantly being sought. The Variety Script section is their proper entry point into the broadcasting field. It studies in the first place all unsolicited material from outside contributors and seeks to encourage those who show promise.

Talks

Twenty-six producers in the Talks Department are responsible for some eighty programmes a week. Their names are unknown to

listeners, and the reason for this anonymity in people so near to worlds where anonymity is anything but the rule (in the worlds of politics and of literature, for example) lies deep in the tradition of British broadcasting.

The Talks Producer believes that as little as possible should come between the speaker and the listener, and his professional pride is to ensure that by every technical skill in his power he helps the speaker to give of his best.

It is a queer trade, with interests ranging from cookery to philosophy, from politics to farming; a trade in which one is on the lookout now for the most eminent expert on Jane Austen, now for the man who has crossed the Andes on a bicycle.

The Talks Department provides talks for the Home Service and for the Light and Third Programmes. It is responsible as well for discussions, for short stories and many readings, for the Brains Trust and Round Britain Quiz. In addition it produces the daily Forces Educational Broadcasts and also the bulk of the talks in Woman's Hour. Members of the department collaborate as well in programmes produced by other departments, such as Music Magazine and Theatre Programme.

The search for new speakers and new themes is an endless one and producers must see that the claims of studio and of office yet leave them time to spend in the world outside in which live both speakers and listeners. Naturally such a search is an expert job and within the Talks Department are specialists in many fields—in music and in art, in agriculture and in industry, scholars and poets of distinction, as well as men and women who have joined the BBC from the Services, from Fleet Street, from publishing, and from commerce, whose varying lives and interest are a rich source of radio material.

Outside Broadcasting

Ten million people would like to see the Cup Final, but ten million people cannot get to Wembley on Cup Final Day, and if they could there would only be seats for ninety-nine thousand of them. The first task of Outside Broadcasting is therefore to make good these missing seats both for the Cup Final and for most of the other big events of the year. Whether these events are annual, like the Cenotaph Service and the Derby, or only occasional, like a world boxing championship or a Pilgrim's dinner to Mrs. Roosevelt, they represent the MUSTS of outside broadcasting. In addition there are less compelling events—which nevertheless make good programme material—such as an after-dinner speech by Don Bradman, an excerpt from the Royal Tournament at Olympia, or a visit to a Union debate at one of the Universities. One criterion for choosing

events of this sort is that they should lead fairly quickly to an explicle climax at a predictable time. Most sporting events fulfil this ndition. Many ceremonial events do not, but with ceremonial ere is often the compensation of fanfares and fine music.

Apart from all these programmes which take listeners to particular events, there are a great many outside broadcasts that bring listeners the sounds of a performance rather than the story of an occasion. Of such are the Prom concerts at the Albert Hall, Sunday Services from Church and Chapel, and the variety programmes that can come, if the Musicians' Union permits, from factory canteens and from music halls.

School Broadcasting

The School Broadcasting Council for the United Kingdom was set up by the BBC and consists of fifty members. Some members are appointed by the Ministry of Education, some by associations of Local Education Authorities and other major professional and educational associations in England and Northern Ireland, some by the School Broadcasting Councils for Scotland and Wales, and some by the BBC after consultation with the Council.

The Council's principal duties are to guide the BBC in the provision of a service of broadcast programmes for schools in the United Kingdom and literature published by the Corporation thereon, and to stand sponsor for this service *vis-à-vis* the educational world.

The Council's work on the broadcast series, and the literature to accompany them, is carried out through five Programme Sub-Committees, each responsible for the series intended for children of a particular age-range. These Sub-Committees make their recommendations after considering reports based on evidence collected by the Council's Education Officers on their visits to schools and at their conferences with teachers. Much other evidence is sent direct to the Council by teachers.

In addition to this work on the Programme, the Council assists generally in the development of School Broadcasting, holds Summer Schools, arranges demonstrations for teachers and students, and issues a list of broadcast receiving apparatus approved as suitable for use in schools.

The BBC function of translating the Council's wishes into broadcasting is carried out by the School Broadcasting Department in London, and by smaller staffs in Scotland and Wales.

The Children's Hour

Children's Hour policy remains unchanged, continuing in its endeavour to provide young listeners with the best possible enter-

tainment in all fields of broadcasting output. The ideal is to present in the daily period a microcosm of BBC programmes, a children's BBC in fact. This is at home; abroad, the Transcription Service has carried a considerable number of Children's Hour programmes into many parts of the world. These have produced a number of letters from listeners overseas, and also reports not only from outposts of the British Commonwealth, but from the Continent of Europe. The Children's Hour Overseas Sunday programme has proved to be a genuine link between 'home and overseas' for those who used habitually to listen at five o'clock when resident in this country.

A number of visitors from overseas broadcasting organizations have shown great interest in the BBC's daily programmes for children, and have returned to their own countries with the intention of building programmes on similar lines.

Gramophone Department

The policy of the Gramophone Department is, briefly, to present music which could not be presented 'live'—in some cases not at all and in all cases not without considerable difficulty. The gramophone is, in fact, the most versatile of all broadcasters. It can present recitals by the great artists of the past and thus revive memories of famous performances; it can present condensed versions of operas by the world's finest singers, and it can assemble the world's greatest orchestras in the studio within a few minutes. It is also invaluable as an 'illustrator' for talks on various aspects of music, debates, and discussions. The department takes care that all programmes, Home or Overseas, shall be *musical* programmes with a definite entertainment value, but, on the other hand, listeners have made it clear that they welcome a certain amount of instructive commentary with these programmes. In general, the best available records are used (from a library of 250,000), but with an artist of historical importance or an obscure work of special interest it is felt that listeners will tolerate an old record rather than not hear the music at all.

Recorded Programmes

The main purpose of the Recorded Programmes Department is to provide a service which will meet the day-to-day requirements of all other programme departments. This it does by maintaining a close liaison between the departments who use recording as a broadcasting medium and the engineers who are responsible for the technical aspects of the work.

When a producer wants to record a programme or to arrange a reproduction of a programme already recorded he applies in the

first place to the Recorded Programmes Traffic and Information Unit. Having studied the various implications and accepted the commitment, dates and times are agreed with the producer, the necessary studios and recording or reproducing 'channels' are allocated, and the job appears with 500 similar entries on the daily operational schedules prepared by this Unit. The Unit is also responsible for the indexing and filing of the four or five thousand cellulose-acetate discs used each week. Details of the material recorded are compiled by Programme Reporters and Information clerks, and lists are circulated to the originating departments and to all other potential consumers in the various Programme services.

When the discs are no longer required for current programme use they are either returned to the manufacturers for respraying or passed to the Recorded Programmes Library for processing and permanent retention. Selection assistants from the Library staff have to listen to hundreds of recordings each week in order to select those which have historical value or are suitable for future programme use.

The staff of the Productions and Operations Unit spend most of their time either in the studio or on the road with recording cars helping other departments with their recordings, but they find time to produce at least one original programme contribution each day through the medium of recording.

Television

The BBC Television Service, opened originally in November, 1936, was the first of its kind in the world. After a wartime break of nearly seven years, it restarted in June, 1946. Its headquarters are at Alexandra Palace, 300 ft. above sea-level, overlooking London's northern suburbs. Vision and sound transmitters, with two studios, scene-painting and 'property' shops, and staff accommodation, are grouped round the base of a 300-ft. tower and mast radiating television programmes over a nominal radius of forty miles. (In practice many viewers pick up the transmissions at a distance of sixty miles and beyond.)

The television transmitter operates on the Marconi–E.M.I. system with a definition of 405 lines per picture, interlaced to provide fifty frames a second.

Programmes are transmitted every day of the week, Sundays included, with sessions each afternoon and evening. Afternoon programmes run for approximately an hour, from 3 to 4 p.m., with extensions in the case of plays or special outside broadcasts. Evening programmes extend from 8.30 to 10.0 p.m. In addition, demonstration films and newsreels are transmitted every weekday morning for the benefit of the radio industry.

Programmes cover a wide range of interests. Of the studio productions, plays are among the most popular and average two or three a week, the majority being given a second performance. Light entertainment takes a large share of programme time in the form of variety shows, musical comedies, light operas, and ballet. Documentaries and illustrated talks are included with magazine features such as 'Picture Page' (interviews with people in the news) and 'Kaleidoscope'. Several editions of the BBC Newsreel are televised weekly, besides occasional British and foreign feature films.

Studio shows are supplemented by outside events provided by mobile television units which range London and the Home Counties to distances up to thirty miles. Outside broadcasts include national ceremonials, entertainment from theatres, dance halls, and exhibitions, items of topical interest, and sporting events of all kinds.

Controller of the BBC Television Service is Norman Collins.

Overseas Broadcasting Services

The BBC has been broadcasting to listeners overseas since 1932, when, on its own initiative, it inaugurated a short-wave service to the Dominions and Colonies. The purpose of the original Empire Service of the BBC was to provide an English-speaking service which would bring broadcasting to colonial areas where local facilities were undeveloped, and would also provide some direct listening to Great Britain in the Dominions as well as an opportunity to collaborate with Dominion broadcasting organizations. The demand for more Empire broadcasting was such that this service grew rapidly. Today that service is recognized as a valuable link between the Mother Country and the other nations of the British Commonwealth. Foreign-language broadcasts were first introduced in 1938 at the invitation of the Government. They consisted of news services in Arabic to the Near East, and a service in Spanish and Portuguese to South and Central America followed also in 1938. Bulletins to the Continent in French, German, and Italian followed after Munich. The rapid extension of the BBC's foreign-language broadcasts during the war and the vital part they played in the country's war effort have become a matter of history.

The general purpose of the BBC in all its broadcasts to listeners within the Commonwealth or in other lands is to form a friendly link of information, culture, and entertainment; to give objective and impartial accounts of the news of the day, and to show what the British nation as a whole is thinking about the news. The political independence of the BBC extends to the external, no less than the domestic, services, and the entire cultural resources of the Corporation are behind them.

In the BBC Year Book for 1947 Sir William Haley, Director-General of the BBC wrote: 'The Corporation is also enjoined to plan and prepare its external programmes in the national interest and to acquaint itself with Government policies towards the countries involved. But it obtains such information in order to be properly informed in discharging what is, in the last resort, its undivided responsibility. In the explicit words of the White Paper on Broadcasting Policy "The Government intend that the Corporation should remain independent in the preparation of programmes for overseas audiences".'

Major-General Sir Ian Jacob, present Director of all the Overseas Services of the BBC writes of the aims of the BBC as follows:

'Many nations broadcast to their neighbours. Some use the opportunity to indulge in undisguised political warfare; others seek to amuse; others combine information with interest in a synthesis of friendship. It is among the latter that the BBC places itself in the confident hope that by straightforward, friendly, and impartial speaking it is contributing to the future peace of the world'.

The General Overseas Service

Broadcasts are prepared for the interest of English-speaking listeners both within and outside the Commonwealth and so are given world coverage.

The main programme in English is provided by the General Overseas Service, which in the course of the day and night goes to every part of the world, and carries programmes reflecting every aspect of life in Great Britain. In addition to general news bulletins, it includes many accounts of sport and activities of special interest to British listeners, and every type of entertainment programme. It also carries programmes of special interest to listeners in the U.S.A. and in all parts of the English-speaking world.

In addition to the General Overseas Service the BBC puts out programmes addressed in English to particular audiences within the Commonwealth and dealing with matters of special regional interest. The regional service to North America includes many programmes specially designed to meet the rebroadcasting requirements of U.S.A. stations.

The BBC broadcasts in twenty-one languages other than English for audiences beyond Europe. Some of these programmes, such as those addressed to India, Pakistan, and Ceylon, and those in Arabic, and in Spanish and Protuguese for Latin America, are full and varied broadcasting services amounting to several hours every day; other programmes, such as those to the various countries of South-east Asia and the Far East, vary in length

from fifteen minutes upwards, and all are prepared with the special interest of the different audiences in view. The charts on pages 144–5 will show what hours of broadcasting are available throughout the world.

The European Services

27 September, 1948, was the tenth anniversary of the inauguration of the BBC's European Service, which began with the broadcasting of French, Italian, and German translations of Mr. Chamberlain's speech at the time of the Munich crisis. The Service, which expanded greatly during the war, has now settled down to a peacetime schedule, and in the summer of 1948, it was broadcasting regular programmes in twenty-four languages during an average daily transmitting time of over forty hours, including relays of 'America calling Europe' for an average of nine hours a day.

The longest time on the air has been allotted to the French Service, with five hours daily and the German Service with 4¾ hours daily. The services to Albania, Austria, Belgium (in French and Flemish), Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia (in Czech and Slovak), Denmark, Finland, Greece, Holland, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Rumania, Russia, Spain, Sweden, and Yugoslavia (in Serbo-Croat and Slovene), vary from the two hours a day to Poland to the fifteen minutes once a week to Luxembourg.

But the European Service is not confined to foreign languages; broadcasts in English occupy 7½ hours a day, and include one of the most popular transmissions in the whole Service—English by Radio. Initiated in July, 1943, to provide European listeners who already had some knowledge of English with an opportunity of adding to their vocabulary, the fifteen-minute English by Radio broadcast—which is of varying difficulty on different days of the week—is now repeated fourteen times during the day. News summaries at slow speed or dictation speed are also broadcast four times a day for listeners learning English; and for less advanced listeners, lessons with explanations in their own language are broadcast daily in the French and German services, and once or twice weekly in sixteen other services. Advance texts of some of the lessons are printed in the programme bulletin of the European Service, which is issued in four editions to cover the broadcasts directed to the different areas of Europe.

Regular relays of European Service programmes are carried by various European broadcasting organizations, particularly in Germany, Austria, and Greece; and individual programmes of particular interest often find their way into the Home Service of the country to which they are directed.

In addition to news bulletins in the twenty-four languages referred to above, the European Service broadcasts regular reviews of the British daily and weekly Press, and commentaries on the international situation, on finance and industry, and on proceedings in Parliament. Talks are given by statesmen, industrialists, scientists, writers, musicians, sportsmen; European personalities visiting Britain speak in the service addressed to their country; and regular feature programmes take as their subject different aspects of life and thought in Britain. In presenting a clear, all-round picture of Britain and the British people as they are today, the BBC hopes that by straightforward, friendly, and impartial speaking it is contributing to the future peace of the world.

The Transcription Service.

The BBC Transcription Service enables audiences overseas to hear BBC programmes over their own stations from special recordings. The pick of many of the BBC's services in English is heard this way over stations throughout the English-speaking world; Latin-American, European, and Far Eastern audiences are provided on their own local wavelength both with selections of programmes from the corresponding BBC Short-wave Services, and, as do English-speaking audiences, programmes specially produced by the Transcription Service itself.

Better Reception . . . and how to get it

A service of two programmes (Home Service and Light Programme) is now provided capable of being satisfactorily received in almost all parts of the British Isles. In addition, the Third Programme has been made available in many areas, but the inadequate number of wavelengths allocated by international agreement to broadcasting in the United Kingdom has made it impossible to provide a service of this programme that can be heard in all parts of the country as easily as the Home Service and Light Programme. The revised wavelengths allocated to Great Britain at the European Wavelength Conference held at Copenhagen in June should in due course enable some improvement in Third Programme coverage to be made, but as a long-term solution to the ever-growing congestion on medium and long waves a chain of stations working on very short waves is proposed and as already announced a start has been made on the first of these, which will be near Wrotham, Kent. The present position is that listeners wanting the Third Programme and living within about eighty miles of the transmitting station at Droitwich should tune to 514 metres. In certain populated areas outside this range, listed on page 126, the programme is radiated on 203·5 metres and therefore this wavelength should also be tried.

The following notes have been prepared to help those listeners who may be having difficulty with reception. The first thing is to be sure that the receiver itself is not the cause of the trouble. Like any other piece of apparatus, a radio receiver gradually deteriorates in the course of time and an occasional overhaul is necessary. Some parts, such as valves, wear out and have to be replaced; tuned circuits get out of alignment and so on. This often leads listeners to complain that they cannot hear as many distant stations as they used to, while in extreme cases even the local station cannot be heard properly. Complaints of interference with reception also are frequently found to arise from faults in the listener's receiver.

Even if the receiver is in good order it cannot give of its best unless it is connected to an efficient aerial. Those listeners who happen to live close to a transmitting station may find that only a small indoor aerial is necessary for adequate reception of the local programmes, but the great majority will not get good reception unless a good aerial is used. Where circumstances permit the aerial should always be out of doors. The most important factor is height and the aerial should be supported at the highest available point. Length is less important and a sound arrangement is to make the horizontal and vertical parts of the aerial of about the same length. Vertical rod aerials with no horizontal or sloping portion at all are usually very satisfactory. Long, low aerials should be avoided as they may encourage night fading and distortion. An effective earth connection is desirable and, with battery sets, is essential. A rising main water pipe or a metal tube or plate buried in moist ground is recommended.

There are some receivers on the market, mainly portables, which have a small frame aerial inside the case. Such aerials have marked directional properties, and it will be found that if the set is slowly rotated, reception from any one station will vary considerably in strength. When the set is facing in a certain direction the strength will be at a maximum. At right angles to this direction it will be at a minimum. This property can be made use of in removing interference from an unwanted station by turning the set round until the interference is at a minimum.

Electrical Interference

Electrical interference to sound broadcasting is usually heard as a more or less continuous crackling or buzzing noise with clicks when the interference is switched on or off. It may be caused by trams, trolley buses, motors, fans, vacuum cleaners, lifts, bed warmers, etc. Interference to television reception may take the form of patterns or white flashes on the screen and may be caused by the ignition systems of motor cars or by electro-medical apparatus. The services

of the Engineering Branch of the General Post Office are given, free of charge, when available, to all wireless licence holders in tracing the source of interference and advising on its suppression. Listeners requiring assistance should complete the Electrical Interference Questionnaire, which can be obtained from any head Post Office.

The precaution which a listener should take against electrical interference is to erect an efficient outdoor aerial, if necessary, one of the 'anti-interference' type, now manufactured by several firms.

The Listening Public

Through the daily Survey of Listening conducted by the interviewers of its Listener Research Department, the BBC is given an estimate of the size of audience to every programme broadcast. In addition, the department maintains a voluntary Listening Panel of several thousand members who answer questionnaires on certain of the programmes they hear, and thus supply a qualitative judgment on the programmes to supplement the quantitative results of the daily survey.

The BBC's daily postbag of letters from listeners is a heavy one. All letters are acknowledged, and careful consideration is given to the views expressed and the suggestions put forward. As far as possible, answers are supplied to inquiries relating to specific items in the programmes, but under present conditions requests entailing extensive research or lengthy typewritten lists cannot be met. Copies of scripts are made available only in exceptional circumstances, but many broadcast talks are published in *The Listener*.

Information is also received from the BBC's own staff, members of which are stationed at widely separated points and come into contact with a wide range of listeners. This applies particularly to the staff of the Publicity Department, which supplies programme information to the Press and arranges conferences, exhibitions, and lectures on broadcasting.

Corresponding methods of research are used with overseas audiences as far as circumstances allow. Because their audiences are so dispersed, Listener Research has also had to develop the method of postal questionnaires, and the technique now employed yields most useful information about listening habits and programme tastes in the many countries overseas served by the BBC.

Correspondence from listeners overseas is always carefully studied, and every letter receives a considered reply.

How to Submit Scripts and Scores

New scripts and scores of real quality are always welcome. The following points should be carefully noted by anyone who has anything of this kind to offer to the BBC.

It is not advisable to work on a full script until the department concerned has said that the idea is acceptable. Listening to the programmes is the best way to get to know what is likely to be acceptable. Suggestions for serials already running are not generally of any use as a series is usually planned as a whole beforehand. Interviews are not given for reading over a script before it has been thoroughly examined. If a script has been accepted, the author will be invited to discuss it at the appropriate stage. All scripts, whatever the length or form, should be typed, accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope, and registered. The following notes may help contributors to avoid addressing material to the wrong department, or sending to a department material of a kind that it cannot use.

Music. The Music Department handles manuscript scores of serious music, including symphonies, choral works, concertos, and chamber music for a number of players. Any new work which is received is submitted to a reading committee of experienced musicians which meets in the early part of the year. With the reports from this committee before them, the Head of Music and his staff decide which of the works submitted can be included in the programmes when there are opportunities to do so. The BBC is always in touch with the music publishers, and new works by established composers are considered as soon as they are available.

Talks. Talks fall into two categories—the short topical talk, three to five minutes, and the fifteen- to twenty-minute talk which may be either a single talk or fit into a concerted series. Both kinds demand expert knowledge from the speaker and at the same time an informal conversational method of presentation. Short stories are also considered which can be suitably told over the microphone, rather than read; length: 1,200 to 3,000 words. Any suggestions for talks, or manuscripts, should be addressed to the Head of Talks, Broadcasting House, W.1.

Plays. The over-emphasized, over-publicized special technique of presenting drama through the medium of the microphone has now become crystallized so far, at any rate, as its fundamentals are concerned. There is a steady demand for new radio playwrights who are prepared to learn the technique with the help of certain members of the Drama Department who set aside time for this purpose. Plays of all kinds are wanted, and there is also a wider field for competent adaptations of short stories and novels. Before starting to write it is important to find out from the BBC Drama Department if a play on that particular theme would be acceptable. Adaptations should not be submitted until the writer has assured himself by consulting the BBC that the proposed adaptation would be acceptable and that the original author consents. All first communications should be addressed to the Play Librarian, Broad-

casting House, W.1 or to the Drama Producer at any of the Regional centres. Notes on radio drama, including a model synopsis, are sent to writers who are judged to show promise. The limitations of the technique of writing plays for broadcasting are best learned by listening, and by reference to Val Gielgud's *The Right Way to Radio Playwriting*. Plays submitted must be in typescript.

VARIETY. Variety programmes consume a vast amount of new script material each year, and new writers are constantly being sought. The Variety Script Section, Broadcasting House, W. 1 is their proper entry point into the broadcasting field. It studies in the first place all unsolicited material from outside contributors and seeks to encourage those who show promise.

CHILDREN'S HOUR. Here again there are numerous opportunities for fresh material—tales, talks, plays, and dialogue stories. Stories for younger children should be approximately 800–1,000 words, and for older children 1,500–2,000 words. Radio plays and dialogue stories should be timed, including musical interludes, to last from thirty to forty minutes. Manuscripts must be typed.

Tickets for BBC Audience Shows

At one time it was a relatively simple matter to keep pace with the demand for tickets for audience shows. When it was not possible to comply with all requests, a waiting list was drawn up and worked off in strict rotation as and when tickets were available.

Requests for tickets now average 4,000 a week, whilst the average number of audience shows in one week is twenty-four, and it has to be borne in mind that some studios can only take a small audience. With this large number of requests, it is impossible to have a waiting list, so a system has been worked out under which the complete post for each week is dealt with thus. Each letter is read and sorted into pigeon-holes bearing the names of the shows. All the available tickets are then sent off to requests for specific shows, and to those who have asked merely for a ticket but not specifying any particular show. Any remaining tickets are then sent to the balance of those who have asked for a specific show with a note saying it is regretted it is not in accordance with the choice requested, but with the hope that the invitation can be accepted and that the broadcast will be enjoyed. The unlucky hundreds for whom there are no tickets left get a note regretting that it was impossible to accede to their requests, but that if they care to apply again in about three months time the Corporation may be able to send them a ticket. There is no preference in the sending of the tickets, they are sent off in the order in which the letters are opened until the tickets are exhausted. A stamped addressed envelope should be enclosed with any application, and licences should never be sent. No telephone calls can be dealt with.

WHAT THE WORLD HEARS—BBC EUROPEAN SERVICES

As at 30 June, 1948

Areas served	*Albanian*	*Austrian*	*Belgian*	*Bulgarian*	*Czech*	*Danish*	*Dutch*	*English*	*Finnish*	*French*	*German*	*Greek*	*Hungarian*	*Italian*	*Luxembourg*	*Norwegian*	*Polish*	*Portuguese*	*Roumanian*	*Russian*	*Spanish*	*Swedish*	*Yugoslav*
	H.M.	H.M.	H.M.	H.M.	H.M.	H.M.	H.M.	H.M.	H.M.	H.M.	H.M.	H.M.	H.M.	H.M.	H.M.	H.M.	H.M.	H.M.	H.M.	H.M.	H.M.	H.M.	H.M.
EUROPE GENERALLY				0 15	0 45			3 45			1 0	0 15		0 15			0 45		0 15				0 15
CENTRAL EUROPE		1 30		0 15	1 0		0 30	4 15		4 0	2 45	0 30	1 15	1 45			1 30		0 30				0 30
S.E. EUROPE	0 15			1 0	0 45			2 30				1 15	1 0	1 45					1 0				1 15
AUSTRIA		1 30						3 0			3 30						2 0						
BELGIUM			0 30				1 0	3 45		5 0	1 30		0 15		0 15		0 45						
DENMARK						0 45		3 45								0 45						0 30	
FINLAND						0 30		1 15	0 36							0 45						0 30	
FRANCE			0 30				1 0	4 0		5 0	1 30		0 15		0 15		0 45	0 45			1 0		
GERMANY		1 15						3 0			3 30						2 0						
HOLLAND			0 30				1 0	3 45		5 0	1 30		0 15		0 15		0 45						
ITALY				0 15	0 30			2 0		0 30		0 30	1 0	1 45			0 30		0 30				0 30
LUXEMBOURG			0 30				1 0	3 45		5 0	1 30		0 15		0 15		0 45						
PORTUGAL							0 15	1 45		1 0							0 45				1 0		
SCANDINAVIA						0 45		2 15	0 36							0 45						0 30	
SPAIN							0 15	1 45		1 0								0 45			1 0		
U.S.S.R.																				1 15			

European Services may be heard beyond Europe as follows :

MIDDLE EAST: German 15 mins.; Italian 45 mins.; Polish 30 mins.; WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN: Spanish 1 hr.; EAST AFRICA: Italian 45 mins.; NORTH AFRICA: French 2¼ hrs.; CENTRAL AND SOUTH AFRICA: Belgian 30 mins.; French 3 hrs. 15 mins.; Portuguese 45 mins.

WHAT THE WORLD HEARS—BBC OVERSEAS SERVICES

As at 30 June, 1948

AREAS SERVED *	GENERAL OVERSEAS SERVICE: English	REGIONAL PROGRAMMES — FOR THE PACIFIC: English	FOR CENTRAL AND SOUTH AFRICA: English	FOR CENTRAL AND SOUTH AFRICA: Afrikaans	FOR WEST AFRICA: English	FOR CYPRUS AND MALTA: English	FOR CYPRUS AND MALTA: Greek (Cyprus)	FOR CYPRUS AND MALTA: Maltese	FOR CYPRUS AND MALTA: Turkish †	FOR WEST INDIES: English	FOR INDIA, PAKISTAN, CEYLON: English	FOR INDIA, PAKISTAN, CEYLON: Bengali	FOR INDIA, PAKISTAN, CEYLON: Hindustani	FOR INDIA, PAKISTAN, CEYLON: Marathi	FOR INDIA, PAKISTAN, CEYLON: Sinhalese	FOR INDIA, PAKISTAN, CEYLON: Tamil	FOR FAR EAST: English	FOR FAR EAST: Burmese	FOR FAR EAST: Cantonese	FOR FAR EAST: French	FOR FAR EAST: Japanese	FOR FAR EAST: Kuoyü	FOR FAR EAST: Malay	FOR FAR EAST: Siamese	FOR FAR EAST: Dutch	FOR NEAR AND MIDDLE EAST: Arabic	FOR NEAR AND MIDDLE EAST: Turkish	FOR NEAR AND MIDDLE EAST: Persian	FOR NORTH AMERICA: English	FOR NORTH AMERICA: French (Canada)	FOR LATIN AMERICA: Portuguese	FOR LATIN AMERICA: Spanish	EUROPEAN SERVICES ‡
Japan, Northern China, N.W. Pacific	6¼																½		¼		¼	½											
Australia		1¾																															
New Zealand	4	1¾																															
India, Pakistan, Ceylon	16										1	½ w.	¾	½	½	½																	
Burma, Malaya, Southern China, Indo-China, Netherlands East Indies	13																¾	¼	¼	¼	¼	½	¼	¼	¼								
Iraq, Persia, Persian Gulf	10																									2¾	1	¾					1½
Palestine, Turkey	17																									2¾	1	¾					

Egypt, East Africa	17																								2¾	1	¾					¾
Italy, Malta, Cyprus, Greece, Central Mediterranean	17					½w.	¾w.	½w.																								
Austria, North Italy	12																															
Gibraltar, Western Mediterranean	16½																															1
North Africa	9¼																								2¾							5¾
Central and South Africa	14½		¾w.	½																												4½
West Africa	12½				¾																											
Canada, Newfoundland, U.S.A.	7½																											8	¾w.			
North America (West Coast)	5¼																											8	¾w.			
Mexico	7¼																											8	¾w.		4¾	
West Indies	9½																													3½	4¾	
Central America, South America (North of Amazon)	9½																													3½	4¾	
South America (South of Amazon)	11½																													3½	5¾	

The figures show the Total Hours of Broadcasting Daily, unless marked 'w' (weekly).

* 'Areas Served' connotes *Directional Transmissions*, many of which may also be audible in other parts of the world.

† Talks in Turkish are included irregularly in the Greek (for Cyprus) programmes.

‡ This column refers to the various European languages carried beyond the limits of Europe. The chart (see p. 143) giving details of the European Service shows which languages are directed to the various areas.

BALANCE SHEET AS

CAPITAL, RESERVES AND LIABILITIES

1947 £		£	1948 £	£
	HOME AND TELEVISION SERVICES			
	CAPITAL ACCOUNT:			
	Balance of Appropriation for Capital Expenditure as at 31 March, 1947		3,936,369	
	Appropriation for the year to 31 March, 1948, for future Capital Expenditure		913,631	
3,936,369				4,850,000
	REVENUE APPROPRIATION ACCOUNT:			
	Balance (Unappropriated Net Revenue) at 31 March, 1948, carried forward			
7,624				42,661
3,943,993				4,892,661
	OVERSEAS SERVICES			
	CAPITAL ACCOUNT:			
	Balance of Appropriation for Capital Expenditure as at 31 March, 1947	3,414,334		
	Appropriation from Grant-in-Aid Account for the year to 31 March, 1948	17,485		
		3,431,819		
	Less: Plant, etc., discarded during the year to 31 March, 1948—at Cost	19,130		
3,414,334			3,412,689	
	GRANT-IN-AID ACCOUNT:			
	Balance of receipts over expenditure at 31 March, 1948, carried forward—per Account annexed		201,498	
250,638				
3,664,972				3,614,187
	GENERAL			
	Reserve for contingent contractual payments to staff	200,000		
100,000				
300,000	Reserve for estimated Income Tax 1948/9	1,200,000		
			1,400,000	
1,024,389	Creditors		1,027,840	
1,424,389				2,427,840
	Notes: 1. No provision has been made for Depreciation of Overseas Services Fixed Assets. Payments from Grant-in-Aid do not include any such provision but only the cost of the renewal of these assets.			
	2. No provision has been made out of Revenue since 1 September, 1939, for dilapidations and deferred maintenance of premises and equipment still to be carried out.			
	3. The balance of uncompleted work on contracts for Capital Expenditure amounted at 31 March, 1948, approximately to £159,000.			
£9,033,354				£10,934,688

REPORT OF THE AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS

We have obtained all the information and explanations which to the best of our knowledge and been kept by the Corporation so far as appears from our examination of those books. We have Grant-in-Aid Account which are in agreement with the books of account. In our opinion and to notes thereon gives a true and fair view of the state of the Corporation's affairs as at 31 March, and appropriations thereout for the year ended that date.

5, LONDON WALL BUILDINGS, LONDON, E.C.2.
22 *July*, 1948.

AT 31 MARCH, 1948

ASSETS

1947 £		£	1948 £	£
	HOME AND TELEVISION SERVICES			
	Fixed Assets			
	FREEHOLD AND LEASEHOLD LAND AND BUILDINGS:			
	As at 31 March, 1947—at Cost	3,019,660		
	Additions during the year—at Cost	145,279		
3,019,660		3,164,939		
1,368,705	*Deduct*: Depreciation accrued to date	1,507,305		
1,650,955			1,657,634	
	PLANT:			
	As at 31 March, 1947—at Cost	2,339,317		
	Additions during the year (less items discarded)—at Cost	144,048		
2,339,317		2,483,365		
1,637,607	*Deduct*: Depreciation accrued to date	1,772,907		
701,710			710,458	
	FURNITURE AND FITTINGS:			
	As at 31 March, 1947—at Cost	386,668		
	Additions during the year (less items discarded)—at Cost	14,920		
386,668		401,588		
268,614	*Deduct*: Depreciation accrued to date	290,214		
118,054			111,374	
	MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, MUSIC AND BOOKS:			
	As at 31 March, 1947—at Cost	123,225		
	Additions during the year (less items discarded)—at Cost	6,620		
123,225		129,845		
102,983	*Deduct*: Depreciation accrued to date	107,483		
20,242			22,362	
2,490,961			2,501,828	
	Current Assets:			
	Unexpended Balance on Capital Account represented by deposit with Bankers		2,348,172	4,850,000
	OVERSEAS SERVICES			
	Fixed Assets (see Note 1):			
	FREEHOLD LAND AND BUILDINGS:			
	As at 31 March, 1947—at Cost	1,044,504		
	Additions during the year—at Cost	4,800	1,049,304	
1,044,504	PLANT:			
	As at 31 March, 1947—at Cost	2,275,473		
	Deduct: Items discarded during the year (less additions)—at Cost	8,347	2,267,126	
2,275,473	FURNITURE AND FITTINGS:			
	As at 31 March, 1947—at Cost	94,357		
	Additions during the year (less items discarded)—at Cost	1,902	96,259	
94,357				
3,414,334				3,412,689
	GENERAL			
	Current Assets:			
568,210	STORES ON HAND: At Cost or under		596,853	
	DEBTORS AND UNEXPIRED CHARGES:			
	Sundry Debtors	371,122		
	Expenditure to date making good War Damage—not yet recovered	183,221		
	Unexpired Charges	73,312	627,655	
640,399				
1,919,450	BALANCES WITH BANKERS AND CASH IN HAND ON GENERAL ACCOUNT		1,447,491	
3,128,059				2,671,999
£9,033,354				£10,934,688

(*Signed*) SIMON OF WYTHENSHAWE, (*Signed*) JOHN ADAMSON — *Governors*

(*Signed*) W. J. HALEY — *Director-General.*

OF THE BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION

belief were necessary for the purposes of our audit. In our opinion proper books of account have examined the above Balance Sheet and annexed Net Revenue and Appropriation Account and the best of our information and according to the explanations given us the Balance Sheet with the 1948, and the Net Revenue and Appropriation Account gives a true and fair view of the net revenue.

(*Signed*) DELOITTE, PLENDER, GRIFFITHS & CO., *Auditors, Chartered Accountants.*

STATEMENT OF REVENUE EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH, 1948

	Home and Television Services		Overseas Services	
	Amount	Percentage of Total	Amount	Percentage of Total
Programmes:	£	%	£	%
Artists, Speakers, etc.	2,134,528	29·35	784,196	20·22
Permanent Orchestras	279,824	3·85	44,844	1·16
Performing Rights	481,829	6·62	146,471	3·78
News Royalties	83,750	1·15	—	—
Publicity and Intelligence	54,595	0·75	56,913	1·46
Salaries and Wages	965,918	13·29	1,148,971	29·64
Sundry Expenses including Travelling, Stationery, Postage, Cables, etc.	132,704	1·82	90,856	2·34
	4,133,148	56·83	2,272,251	58·60
Engineering:				
S.B. and Intercommunication Lines	189,005	2·60	109,119	2·81
Power, Lighting, and Heating	202,164	2·78	301,908	7·79
Plant Maintenance	132,392	1·82	119,444	3·08
Transport	100,653	1·38	38,486	0·99
Salaries and Wages	1,104,910	15·19	463,489	11·95
Sundry Expenses including Travelling, Stationery, Postage, Cables, etc.	84,712	1·16	21,639	0·56
	1,813,836	24·93	1,054,085	27·18

PREMISES:				
Rent, Rates, and Taxes	219,838	3·02	178,060	4·59
Telephones	37,740	0·52	15,533	0·40
Insurance	22,768	0·31	8,401	0·22
Household Maintenance	25,709	0·35	7,945	0·21
Alterations to and Maintenance of Buildings, Services, and Masts, etc.	162,494	2·24	29,942	0·77
	468,549	6·44	239,881	6·19
REGIONAL AND AREA ESTABLISHMENTS:				
Billeting, Hostels, and Catering	67,443	0·93	42,679	1·10
Salaries and Wages	347,898	4·79	117,542	3·03
Sundry Expenses including Travelling, Stationery, Postage, etc.	25,054	0·34	6,661	0·17
	440,395	6·06	166,882	4·30
MANAGEMENT AND CENTRAL SERVICES:				
Salaries and Wages	257,329	3·54	92,698	2·39
Sundry Expenses including Travelling, Stationery, Postage, etc.	31,889	0·44	11,816	0·30
	289,218	3·98	104,514	2·69
CONTRIBUTIONS TO STAFF PENSION SCHEMES AND BENEVOLENT FUND	121,242	1·67	40,436	1·04
GOVERNORS' FEES	6,571	0·09	—	—
	7,272,959	100·00	3,878,049	100·00

HOME AND TELEVISION SERVICES

NET REVENUE AND APPROPRIATION ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH, 1948

	£	£		£
Revenue Expenditure for the year as per Statement attached		7,272,959	Licence Income	8,927,363
Depreciation:			Net Revenue from Publications	1,047,253
Freehold and Leasehold Buildings	138,600		Interest on Bank deposit, etc.	11,804
Plant	135,300			
Furniture and Fittings	21,600			
Musical Instruments, etc.	4,500			
Amount written off for discarded assets	14,793			
		314,793		
Special Contribution to New Staff Pension Scheme		150,000		
Reserve for Estimated Income Tax 1948/9		1,200,000		
		8,937,752		
Balance carried down		1,048,668		
		£9,986,420		£9,986,420
Additional Reserve for contingent contractual payments to staff		100,000	Balance brought down	1,048,668
Transfer to Capital Account for future Capital Expenditure		913,631	Balance brought forward as at 31 March, 1947	7,624
Balance (unappropriated Net Revenue) carried forward		42,661		
		£1,056,292		£1,056,292

OVERSEAS SERVICES

GRANT-IN-AID ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH, 1948

	£		£	£
Revenue Expenditure for the year as per Statement attached	3,878,049	Balance of Grant-in-Aid brought forward as at 31 March, 1947		250,638
Special Contribution to New Staff Pension Scheme	50,000	*Deduct*: Balance at 31 December, 1946, repaid to H.M. Treasury		141,501
Transfer to Capital Account representing Capital Expenditure for the year	17,485			109,137
	3,945,534	Grant-in-Aid receipts for the year	4,025,000	
		Interest on Bank deposit	1,073	
Balance, being excess of Grant-in-Aid receipts over Net Expenditure to date carried forward	201,498	Receipts from sales of discarded assets, etc.	11,822	4,037,895
	£4,147,032			£4,147,032

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