

B B C

Handbook



1941 • PRICE 2/-





Mr. Duff Cooper first broadcast as Minister of Information on 16 May 1940

BBC
HANDBOOK
1941



THE BRITISH BROADCASTING
CORPORATION
BROADCASTING HOUSE
LONDON, W.1

No. 1633

*Made and Printed in Great Britain by
Hazell, Watson & Viney Ltd. London and Aylesbury*

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FOREWORD

by

SIR ALLAN POWELL, C.B.E.

Chairman of the Board of Governors

THE following pages give an outline of the way in which the British Broadcasting Corporation has met the call of war, and of its contribution to the national war effort of which it is a vital part. The full story cannot be told until the war is over, and only those behind the scenes can perhaps fully realize the very great demands on broadcasting which the war has made, is making, and will continue to make. Meanwhile, this book tells briefly how the Corporation has sought to seize national advantage and opportunity from the swiftly changing conditions of the past sixteen months, and how it has, without interruption, maintained and expanded its services, home and overseas, in the face of wartime difficulties and enemy action.

The Governors feel that they are speaking for the great body of listeners when, from personal knowledge, they pay tribute to the untiring devotion to duty, the ability and initiative, and, at need, the gallantry with which the staff have carried the high responsibilities of the national broadcasting services in time of war.

24 January 1941

Allan Powell

BROADCASTING IN 1940

THE story of British broadcasting in 1940 is the story of a war effort in a new sphere. It tells of the part played by broadcasting in the first major war in which the armaments of the nations extended—beyond land, sea, and air—into the ether. Propaganda is the fourth arm of modern warfare. The use of broadcasting as an instrument of propaganda in this war is a subject that must await the historian; but meanwhile listeners, who hear the war of words being fought out day and night all over the world, can read in this book an account, necessarily still incomplete, of how the BBC has played its part and of the purposes which lie behind its effort. In that story two themes run side by side. At home, in spite of wartime difficulties and in new wartime forms, broadcasting continues to provide varied services for an audience that listens more than it did in peacetime and still continues to grow. Overseas, new listeners in every continent tune in to the voice of Britain as it reaches them in an ever-growing variety of tongues, but with the same accents of sober truth.

In 1940 the BBC's home and overseas services involved ceaseless transmission throughout the twenty-four hours. Before the year was out the BBC was broadcasting in thirty-four languages, of which twenty-four had been added since the war began. Seventy-eight separate news bulletins—a quarter of a million words—were being radiated every day, with many other programmes besides, for listeners overseas. The Home Service, broadcast daily from seven o'clock in the morning to twenty-past midnight, had been joined, early in the year, by a new Programme for the Forces, which grew, to meet the special needs of its listeners, into a service running from a reveille at half-past six in the morning to a close-down at eleven at night. These services were being carried on by a wartime staff of great diversity, including engineers and technicians, programme planners, news editors, producers of talks and plays and variety shows, musicians, writers, translators, announcers, commentators, statisticians,

OVERSEAS SERVICE

and a host of other workers ranging from the transmitter mast rigger to the girl behind the canteen counter. Many were new workers, enlisted to help in the building-up of war-time services or to take the place of those who had left the Corporation for the time being to join the fighting forces, or to take up other work of national importance. Experts from the staffs of sister broadcasting organizations in the Empire had crossed the seas to help. News editors and programme builders with special knowledge of foreign countries, from Poland to Peru, and linguists of thirty different nationalities were numbered in the BBC's wartime staff. The dispersal of part of the BBC's small army and of its equipment to wartime stations at widely separated points up and down the country added burdens to the tasks of speakers, artists, and broadcasting staff alike, but it enabled the BBC to claim a record of unbroken services throughout the year, in face of the air attacks which had long been expected. When Broadcasting House was seriously damaged by enemy air action, and casualties were suffered among the staff, the normal service of broadcasting in English and in foreign languages was kept up without a break.

This is a snapshot of the BBC's war effort to date. That effort is still in full growth, and not yet within sight of its peak. What are the aims behind it? Mr. Harold Nicolson has written an article in this book on the aims of democratic propaganda. It is right that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Information should describe here the policy behind this country's propaganda effort. The BBC, no less than the three fighting services, has been *under orders* since the war began. The most imperative of those orders has been to tell the truth—in war as in peace.

Overseas Service

Overseas broadcasting, from the angle of the home public, may roughly be defined as seen but not heard. Parliament and the newspapers have brought this important side of propaganda deservedly into the forefront of public attention.

OVERSEAS SERVICE

Listeners to the Home Service have therefore seen in print much discussion of the Overseas Service, but except when a foreign bulletin has had occasionally to take up 'home' time, this incessant polyglot transmission of news by the BBC has gone into the ether for the most part unheard in our own island. But from the point of view of the BBC, the growth of the Overseas Service has taken the lead in the story of 1940. It is only some three years since the BBC ventured at all into the international field. Up till then it had confined itself to English. At the outbreak of the war, forty-four hours of programmes in foreign languages were being broadcast each week; by the end of 1940 that figure had risen to a hundred and forty-five, an increase of three hundred and thirty per cent. News bulletins followed one another all round the clock, changing every quarter of an hour, and reaching, in their own language and so far as possible at their most convenient listening times, the citizens of almost all the countries of the world. Take, for example, the period from five o'clock in the evening until midnight on a December Saturday in 1940. The home listener could move, more or less as in peacetime, from sea shanties in the Children's Hour to Rimsky Korsakov's 'Golden Cockerel', could meet some interesting people 'in town to-night', and renew his acquaintance with Gert and Daisy and Henry Hall. While he was doing this, BBC announcers in foreign languages were following one another in relays at the microphone. At the moment when the orchestra started up that familiar prelude to 'In Town To-night', a voice in another studio was telling citizens of Berlin that here was London about to give news in German, while at the same time listeners in Baghdad were hearing London's bulletin in Arabic.

Everything that the BBC does in these days is so closely connected with the war that it is worth remembering that in one important way the Overseas Service is a continuation of a well-established peacetime job. The Empire Service was started as a pioneer venture of its kind over eight years ago. Ever since then, the BBC has regarded it as one of its proud-

OVERSEAS SERVICE

est tasks to act as a link between the peoples of the British Commonwealth. The news bulletins and other programmes broadcast in the Empire Service to-day are directed even more widely, and are more widely heard, than they ever were before. But the war has brought other pressing needs to the forefront. British broadcasting must present the British case to friendly foreign countries. It must carry the truth across the barriers erected against it in enemy and enemy-occupied countries. It must provide allied but exiled governments, and others carrying on the struggle by Britain's side, with opportunities to speak to their peoples at home.

For the carrying-out of these tasks the BBC's world service of broadcasts is now cast into four main divisions—Empire, European, Latin-American, and Near Eastern. Each of these four main services is the subject of a special article in this book, contributed by the head of the service concerned. The General Manager of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation gives, in another article, an idea of what the BBC's service means to its listeners in North America.

The BBC is itself a listener. It does its listening on a large scale. Rather more than two hundred radio bulletins from forty countries in thirty languages is the regular daily listening programme of its Monitoring Service, whose task it is to report on foreign broadcasts. The 'monitoring' of the world's broadcasts has, in wartime, provided one of the most rapid means of ensuring the supply of news, propaganda material, and information, both for government purposes and for use by the BBC in its news bulletins. Some of the most momentous news of the year was first received in this country in this way. The Monitoring Service started work in August 1939, and has since been greatly expanded.

Home Service

You may have had difficulty in getting the nine o'clock news, et cetera, on nights when there have been air raids. The reason for this is that a broadcasting station is a very

HOME SERVICE

good navigational help to anybody flying towards it. To avoid giving this help to the Germans we, at the outbreak of war, established a system which confused the transmissions from the navigational point of view. This system, I am sorry to say, is apt to spoil reception in this country at certain places, but the Royal Air Force must accept the responsibility.

Here, in Air Marshal Sir Philip Joubert's words, is the explanation of a difficulty which caused much heart-burning among listeners who had the ill luck to be badly placed for reception of the Home Service programme. The BBC's engineers worked hard from the start to improve matters, short of giving any help to raiding planes. In 1940 two new medium waves were introduced, in addition to the two on which the programme was originally broadcast, and a short wave was also added. These improvements were a considerable help. Over the greater part of the country listeners could hear the programme with only occasional difficulties. It is a serious nuisance not to be able to hear the news and other programmes, but no listener would vote for improved reception at the expense of helping the enemy to find his targets more easily. Reception difficulties can often be mitigated, if not overcome, by owners of sets themselves, many of whom have had advice about this from the BBC's engineers during the year.

Programme for the Forces

Early in the war, when home broadcasting was confined to a single service, the BBC started to plan a second service for the men in the forces, including especially the B.E.F., then in France. Conferences were held with representatives of the War Office, Admiralty, and Air Ministry—all of whom backed the idea with enthusiasm. Mr. F. W. Ogilvie, Director-General, went to France to find out by personal contact what the men of the B.E.F. liked to hear and, equally important, how and when and where they could listen. That method of personal contact has been followed up

PROGRAMME FOR THE FORCES

ever since ; Major Longland's article on another page gives a picture of how it works. In introducing the new Programme for the Forces on 19 February 1940, the BBC's Chairman, Sir Allan Powell, explained that the BBC was out to give the men the kind of entertainment that they wanted, not what others might think it was good for them to hear. No one imagines that a man changes his individual tastes when he puts on uniform, but henceforward he listens, not at his own fireside, but in camp and canteen, in barracks and on board ship. This is bound to affect the kind of programme that is acceptable. News is always wanted. Programmes of serious appeal could be enjoyed as special opportunity served, but—apart from the news—light entertainment in one form or another was bound to top the poll on any count taken among the troops. So light music, dance music, cinema organ, and variety of every kind was what the Programme for the Forces mainly provided from the beginning for its listeners both in the Services and at home.

During the autumn of 1940 the BBC continued to devise special features for the entertainment of the troops in their billets up and down the country. News-letters for the troops from Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and India were regularly given. The announcement by the Secretary of State for War of a Treasury grant for the purchase of receiving sets was a welcome official recognition of the importance of radio as a means of information and recreation in a modern army. Sandy Macpherson plays his 'request items' for the men in their quarters and for their families and friends at home—this kind of personal link is what has made the Programme for the Forces most worth while.

The King and Queen

The year was marked by three inspiring broadcasts by His Majesty the King. On Empire Day—at a time when the fate of the B.E.F. in France and Belgium was still in doubt—he spoke grave words of encouragement to the peoples of the British Commonwealth. His message on that day was



Sir Allan Powell, Chairman of the Board of Governors



Their Royal Highnesses Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret Rose
(13 October 1940)

THE KING AND QUEEN

preceded by a special programme—' Brothers in Arms '—symbolizing the unity of the Empire. The institution of the George Cross and the George Medal was announced by His Majesty in a second broadcast, on 23 September, when he spoke from Buckingham Palace during an air raid alert ; the sirens were heard sounding the all-clear during the broadcast. At Christmas the King's message was, as ever, the culminating point in Britain's exchange of greetings by radio. ' The future will be hard, but our feet are planted on the path of victory and with the help of God we shall make our way to justice and to peace.' This was the conclusion and the keynote of the King's greetings to his peoples.

On 14 June—the day that Paris fell—Her Majesty the Queen conveyed in a memorable broadcast the sympathy and admiration of the women of this country for the women of France. This was the Queen's second broadcast in the year ; she had already, on 13 April, spoken at the microphone on the occasion of the eighty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Y.W.C.A.

On 16 July the King and Queen paid an informal visit to Broadcasting House, where they saw the BBC at work. Their tour included visits to the news-rooms and studios of the Overseas Service. Among those who were presented to their Majesties were members of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's overseas unit and of the Indian staff seconded from All India Radio, and the London commentators of the American broadcasting systems. .

Princess Elizabeth

The most notable day in the year's broadcasts to children was Sunday, 13 October, when Princess Elizabeth broadcast a message in the Children's Hour to children of the Empire. This was Her Royal Highness's first broadcast. Princess Margaret, who was at her sister's side while she was speaking, also made her maiden speech over the air by bidding their listeners good-night. The speech was recorded for inclusion that same evening in the first of the

PRINCESS ELIZABETH

new weekly programmes for children evacuated to Canada and the U.S.A.

Regional Contributions

Despite the disappearance in wartime of the various Regional programmes so familiar to peacetime listeners, the BBC's Regional organizations all contributed their special quota to the home and overseas programmes. Many people evacuated or billeted away from their homes were glad to hear programmes characteristic of the part of the country they knew best ; of this kind was the magazine programme, ' In Britain Now ', which, under general editorship from the West Region, ran for the greater part of the year, linking speakers from all parts of the British Isles. Other features, many of which were the work of Regional producers, are mentioned on a later page. They helped to let one part of the country know at first hand what another was doing, and thus to bring about a feeling of unity and common purpose in the war effort. Talks such as ' Ulster's Part in the War ' by the late Lord Craigavon, ' Workaday Thoughts in War-time ' from Wales, and the ' Northcountrywoman ' series served the same purpose, and, as the whole of Great Britain was very much in the news, the Regional microphone was taken here, there, and everywhere in pursuit of up-to-the-minute stories. Each Region could tell of new opportunities arising out of the war. An article on another page by Melville Dinwiddie, Scottish Director, gives the story of Scotland's part. For the rest, a single example must here suffice. Wartime difficulties prevented the National Eisteddfod of Wales from being held as planned, and it looked for a time as though for the first year since 1914 the festival might not be held at all, but the BBC came to the rescue, and with the collaboration of the Eisteddfod Council the main events and adjudications were broadcast, together with the annual address given by the Rt. Hon. David Lloyd George.

News and Talks

News is the biggest audience gatherer of all the BBC's

broadcasts. The six daily bulletins kept listeners informed of events, not only by means of the latest communiqués and reports, but also by first-hand accounts of their experiences by those who had news stories to tell. Airmen, sailors, soldiers, members of the civil defence services, and many others were brought to the microphone to give listeners a vivid background to the news of the day. The war reporting of the BBC's news observers was an especially interesting part of the service; the BBC's Senior News Editor tells their story on another page.

Broadcast talks in wartime gained more listeners than ever from an audience eager to hear the war commentaries, the famous 'postscripts', the national leaders, the commentators on Empire and American affairs, and the many speakers who have kept the spirit of free discussion alive in wartime in such series as 'Taking Stock' and 'Talking it over'. The article by Sir Richard Maconachie gives an idea of the immense scope of broadcast talks in time of war. The subject calls for a book to itself, of which the 'postscripts' to the news would alone provide a chapter. Mention would be made, in particular, of Mr. Maurice Healy, K.C., Mr. George Hicks, M.P., and Mr. J. B. Priestley, whose regular commentaries became famous. Capturing, as he said, the high mood of the country after Dunkirk, Mr. Priestley interpreted on successive Sunday evenings the country's determination to defy and defeat Naziism.

Cabinet Ministers and other Government speakers broadcast frequently, telling of their plans and reporting on the progress of the war. There were in the home and overseas programmes two hundred and twenty-five such broadcasts, of which forty-four were by members of the War Cabinet. On 10 May Mr. Neville Chamberlain came to the microphone to announce his decision to resign from the premiership, and, when failing health forbade any hope of his return to public life, a personal message was recorded by him at his home on 11 October. Mr. Churchill gave eleven broadcasts during the year; in seven of these he

NEWS AND TALKS

spoke to the country—and indeed to the world—as the nation's Prime Minister. Mr. Duff Cooper, Minister of Information, also spoke as occasion demanded.

Many of the Government broadcasts gave the lead to nation-wide campaigns. Praiseworthy indeed would be the citizen who obeyed all the broadcast exhortations of the year—to save and to salvage, to avoid careless talk and nip rumour in the bud, to cook economically and shop wisely, to stay put himself and to evacuate his children, to look out in the black-out, and to learn first aid, to dig for victory and keep pigs, chickens, rabbits, goats, but not rats—and if in listening to the persuasive voices on the ether he remembered his neighbour and kept his wireless set tuned low, then truly he deserved to win the war! Gert and Daisy were called upon to give hints on cooking; S. P. B. Mais turned chef; Will Hay and Claude Hulbert encouraged people to stay put; Syd Walker turned to good account that song of his 'Any old rags, bottles, or bones'; Will Fyffe gave a variety of tips. In the Children's Hour a salvage competition produced surprising results. When the winning competitors from Manchester broadcast their achievements, one had collected nine tons of scrap, and the other a quantity of varied metal, including a thousand-gallon water tank and a motor car. Children also responded in large numbers to an appeal to collect acorns for cattle food, and no doubt many made rat-catching their prospective career after hearing Lionel Gamlin interview two members of that profession.

In these campaigns food, whether in the ground or in the pot, was to the fore. Mr. C. H. Middleton gave his practical gardening talks on Sunday afternoons, and for small-holders Mr. John Morgan, M.P., whose voice will now be sadly missed, introduced the series 'Backs to the Land'. In the early morning there was 'The Kitchen Front', carried on with the help of the Ministry of Food, and every week there was a talk on 'The Kitchen in Wartime'.

Housework is a long way from being the whole story of women's wartime activity. Women are 'the force behind

the fighting line ' and were addressed as such in the ' Calling all Women ' broadcasts, which were started in July with an introduction by the Rt. Hon. Margaret Bondfield. ' Women in War ', an August series, brought to the microphone members of all the women's auxiliary services and of the nursing profession. One broadcast for women will be specially remembered—that of the Princess Royal on 26 June on behalf of the A.T.S.

Education

In peacetime the BBC's system of broadcasts for schools enjoyed world esteem. It has been carried on unabated in war, and at least two thousand schools not previously registered are known to have used the broadcasts during 1940. How the programmes have been adapted to meet new needs is told in this book by an expert working in the job. This side of the BBC's work is done under the auspices of the Central Council for School Broadcasting, and its value, more especially in wartime, has been stressed by the Board of Education, which stated in a published memorandum that ' school broadcasting has come to be recognized as a highly important national service '. The organization of groups of adult listeners for discussion purposes is another educational activity, with a complementary aim. This is the concern of the Central Committee for Group Listening. This Committee, too, has continued its work vigorously with additional wartime responsibilities. It is working in co-operation with the Central Advisory Council for Adult Education in H.M. Forces in order to encourage the formation of listening groups among men in the fighting services.

Religious Broadcasting

When the King appointed a National Day of Prayer, to be observed on Sunday, 26 May, arrangements were made to reflect his wish in the broadcast programme. In the morning service for listeners overseas the address was given by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and for home listeners by the Reverend Leslie D. Weatherhead, broadcasting from the

RELIGIOUS BROADCASTING

City Temple. Cardinal Hinsley spoke later in the morning in the home programme. The evening service was broadcast from York Minster with an address by the Archbishop of York. The day was also marked by the first of a series of Epilogues on the theme 'A very present help in trouble'. Sunday, 8 September, was also, at the King's request, observed as a National Day of Prayer. On this occasion, the lesson was read in the morning service by the Reverend Robert Bond, Moderator of the Federal Council of the Evangelical Free Churches of England, and the address was given by the Reverend R. F. V. Scott of the Church of Scotland. Cardinal Hinsley also broadcast an address in the morning, while listeners overseas heard the Dean of St. Paul's preach. In the evening the Archbishop of Canterbury addressed listeners in this country.

The essential unity of the Christian Churches found expression in two services broadcast during the year. Those taking part in the evening service on 28 January represented four great Christian traditions—Anglican, Orthodox, Lutheran, and Calvinist. The service included addresses by Pastor F. Christol of the French Protestant Church in London, by Dr. F. Hildebrandt, a pastor of the German Lutheran Church, by Dr. Nicholas Zernov of the Russian Orthodox Church, and by Canon Leonard Hodgson of the Church of England. The second service of Christian unity, on 12 May, was conducted by Malcolm Adiseshiah of the Christian Church in India, who broadcast an address. Other addresses were given by C. S. Tsai, a Chinese Christian, and K. Murase, a Japanese Christian.

The death, in October 1940, of the Reverend 'Pat' McCormick, Vicar of St. Martin-in-the-Fields since 1927, was deeply felt. St. Martin's has played a special part in the story of religious broadcasting. Sixteen years ago the first service ever broadcast from a church was conducted there by 'Dick' Sheppard. Up to the outbreak of war Pat McCormick used to broadcast from St. Martin's on one Sunday every month. More recently he had given valuable

RELIGIOUS BROADCASTING

help with the religious broadcasts in the Empire Service. Listeners all over the world will miss the friendliness and cheerful vigour of his voice.

A number of preachers were asked during the year to give addresses on successive Sundays—a new departure, in which the Reverend Jack Winslow, Canon F. R. Barry, and the Reverend J. S. Stewart were among those who took part. Prominent laymen who broadcast addresses at religious services included Lord Gort, on the anniversary of the Great War, Lord Kennet, at the annual service for seafarers, and Mr. R. A. Butler, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Of particular interest to listening groups was the series of talks 'A Christian looks at the World'.

In April Dr. J. W. Welch, Director of Religious Broadcasting, visited the Western Front to hold discussions with army chaplains, and with representatives of religious organizations such as the Church Army and the Y.M.C.A., on the subject of the religious broadcasts in the Programme for the Forces. In this programme a short service is broadcast every Sunday morning, also a religious talk later in the day. Another Sunday feature, which has found a welcome among its audience, is the 'Sunday Half-hour', consisting of community hymn-singing followed by a brief epilogue.

Appeals

The Sunday 'Week's Good Cause' appeals brought in £350,000 in 1940—by far the highest yearly total on record. Details of the scope of the appeals in wartime are given on page 117. The annual appeal on Christmas Day for the British Wireless for the Blind Fund was, this year, made by Mr. Ernest Bevin; contributions exceeded £10,000. The Children's Hour appeal made by 'Mac' on 10 November met with a record response; he asked for £1,500 to buy one mobile X-ray unit, and was sent nearly £15,000, which was handed over to the Red Cross for the supply of units in different parts of the country. Apart from these direct appeals, many announcements have also been broadcast about

APPEALS

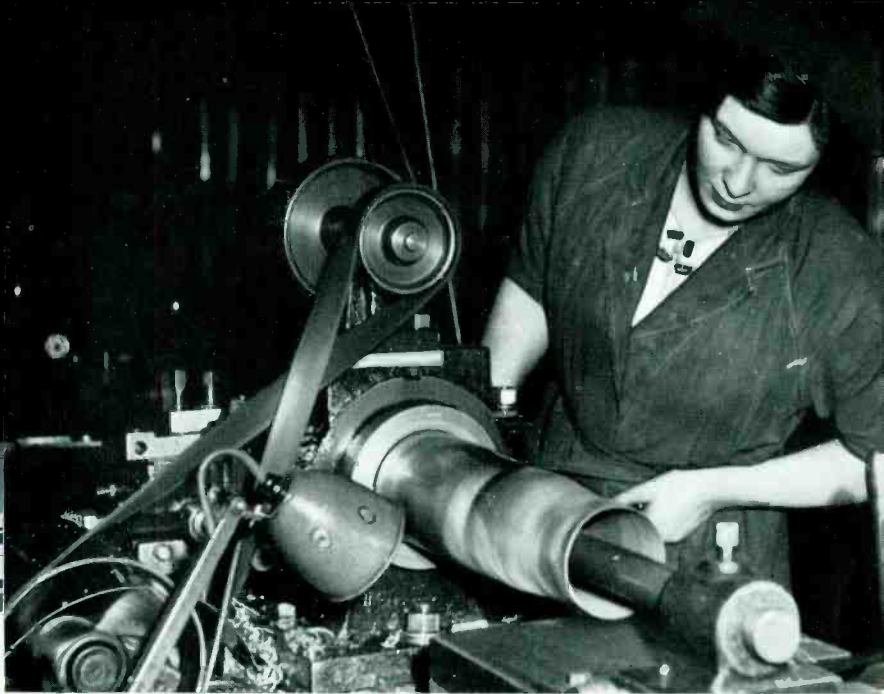
the material comforts needed both for the forces and civil defence services, and for the civilian population.

Music and Entertainment

With theatrical producers and concert managers faced with difficulties in a blacked-out world, it fell to the BBC to do all it could to keep music and drama alive in this country. Music not only provided that 'concord of sweet sounds' without which the world is only fit for stratagems and spoils; it also had its part to play in the war production drive. Programmes of music for factory workers have been broadcast since the end of June as a help to lessen strain, relieve monotony, and thereby increase efficiency. The initiative came from the factories, and in collaboration with recognized authorities the BBC carried out research among workers to discover their preferences, and among factories to establish their special needs. The result was the mid-morning and mid-afternoon programmes 'Music while you work'. Some three-quarters of a million people work to this accompaniment, and the programmes are having, as one manager put it, 'an important effect on the working happiness of an ever-increasing number of work-people'.

And when people knock off work, what then? It fell largely to the Variety Department to provide programmes of light relief, of fun and laughter, to which large audiences look for their amusement every evening. How the variety producers met this need is told on a later page. As a stop-press to what is there written, the first of a series of £100 prize competitions, which started in December, brought in no less than half a million entries, each with a twopence-halfpenny stamp for the Red Cross Penny-a-week Fund.

War may be a good subject to write about, but it was not the subject which listeners chose for their radio drama. Val Gielgud, Director of Features and Drama, asked those many listeners who set store by the broadcast of plays to express their preferences. The response showed that the majority wished to have their minds taken off the war when listening to a play on the wireless. Of the eight plays performed



' Work at War Speed '



Mr. Ernest Bevin, Minister of Labour, was present at the first concert for munition workers arranged by E.N.S.A. and broadcast on 22 July 1940

MUSIC AND ENTERTAINMENT

during a 'Drama Request Week' in October, all much in demand by listeners, not one was directly concerned with the war. The week opened with Rudyard Kipling's *The Cat that walked by himself* and closed with Noel Coward's *Cavalcade*; other plays performed ranged from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* to Chekhov's *The Proposal*.

Throughout 1940 Friday evenings continued to be earmarked for the broadcast of drama, and there was also a revival of the programmes which, in pre-war days, gave extracts, with the original casts, from plays running in London or on tour. Among notable productions of the year were Æschylus' *Seven against Thebes*, *Thunder Rock* with its original cast, Sir John Martin-Harvey in *The Burgomaster of Stilemonde*, *The Barretts of Wimpole Street* with Emlyn Williams and Peggy Ashcroft, and the last act of J. B. Priestley's *Johnson over Jordan* with Ralph Richardson, on leave from the R.A.F., in his original part of Johnson. *Pickwick Papers* went well as a dramatic serial at the end of 1939, and its popularity justified the experiment the following year of serializing *Vanity Fair*. Other series of interest were André Obey's *Noah sails again*, originally written for the French radio, Maurice Brown's adaptations of Kipling stories, the Claybury comedies adapted from short stories by W. W. Jacobs, in which authentic Gloucestershire voices were used, and the detective plays written for broadcasting by members of the Detection Club.

Feature Programmes

Pictures of the nation at work continued to be given in the dramatic form of the 'feature programme', the wartime development of which was vividly sketched by Val Gielgud in his article 'Radio Documentary' in the *BBC Handbook* of last year. When Mr. Herbert Morrison, at that time Minister of Supply, broadcast a call for a speed-up of arms production, he ended with the words: 'Work is the call; work at war speed. Good-night—and go to it!'. The last three words were echoed up and down the country. They

FEATURE PROGRAMMES

were the slogan chosen in June as the title of a series of broadcasts, to which Mr. Morrison supplied an introduction. Under the general editorship of D. G. Bridson, contributions came from producers in all the BBC's Regional centres. They included recordings made in armament factories in the Midlands, munition factories in the North, the coal-mines of South Wales, and the ship-yards of Scotland, while a programme showing the importance of the export trade drive, broadcast from Northern Ireland, brought the series to a close. Mr. Morrison also took part in the sequel, 'Keep at it'.

With their characteristic wide sweep, the producers of feature programmes offered glimpses during the year of British history, of local life and custom, of town and countryside from London to the Western Isles. On St. George's Day there was 'The English Journey' of J. B. Priestley. There was 'The English Countryman' presented by A. G. Street. There was 'The Old Country' and 'Parish Mag'. And there was 'The Land we defend', a series which reflected the quality of British patriotism throughout the length and breadth of these islands. The overseas work of the BBC was dramatized for listeners in the home country in three programmes, entitled 'The War in the Ether'—a notable trilogy.

The nation's preparation to meet invasion was reflected in an imaginative series entitled 'If the Invader comes', produced in collaboration with the War Office. The defence of Britain was further dramatized in such programmes as 'Spitfires over Britain', 'Watchers of the Sky', and 'Balloon Barrage'. Britain in attack in the air and on the sea was depicted in 'Bombers over Berlin', 'The Patrol of the *Salmon*', and 'Swept Channels'—an account of mine-sweeping by 'Taffrail'.

'Vivat Polonia!'—the title speaks of the heroic aim of the Polish army and air force, of which this broadcast was an expression. In this and in other programmes—among them 'Men of Good Will', 'Czechoslovakia fights on', 'The Air is our Sea'—was told something of the history, culture, and

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present deeds of the countries allied to Great Britain. Members of the Free French forces, and men from Norway and the Netherlands, were among those who broadcast together in 'Comrades for Freedom'.

Outside Broadcasts

To the Outside Broadcasting Department, whose work in peacetime was largely concerned with sport, fell the additional task of helping to give listeners a picture in sound of the life and work of the country in wartime. Sport was not, however, forgotten, and during the year racing and boxing contests were broadcast, also soccer and rugby matches in both Great Britain and France. Apart from the regular work of broadcasting music-hall programmes and public concerts from all parts of the country, outside broadcasts from London and the Regions continued to bring listeners concerts from military camps as well as those organized by E.N.S.A. Actuality features became prominent. There were broadcasts, for instance, from factory benches and canteens, and of A.R.P. and A.F.S. demonstrations. Other features included 'Going to Press' from a newspaper office during an air raid, 'Lines behind the Lines', showing the railways under war conditions, 'Any more Fares, please?' from a bus depot, and 'Telephone Services calling' from a telephone exchange and from a repair post in a bomb crater at St. Paul's. Programmes were devised to show how London and other cities were weathering the air attack. Outstanding among them were two programmes for listeners overseas, entitled 'London after Dark' and 'London carries on', broadcast during air raids at night from various points in the capital with the sound of London's barrage in action.

Recording

'You have been listening to a recording . . .' Some listeners cannot escape a feeling of disillusionment at these words. Others may perhaps realize that but for recording they would in wartime be deprived altogether of some of their best listening. Records are not just substitute pro-

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grammes. Gramophone recitals have always been popular. Recording plays an increasing part in bringing to the microphone much that would not otherwise be available. Events, naturally, do not always take place at times suitable for broadcasting, and are therefore heard in recording. Recording also allows an item to be repeated for those who missed the 'live' broadcast, or included in a later programme for listeners overseas. Similarly, broadcasts from overseas may be recorded, and subsequently relayed in the home programmes. Recorded despatches from observers in distant war zones give a vivid background to the news. The story of the Mobile Recording Service by which these records are secured is told elsewhere in this book. A selection of all these thousands of records is preserved by the BBC's recording department to form a unique library. Listeners will hear them again in the future. School-children will perhaps find their history lessons enlivened by them.

Home Guard

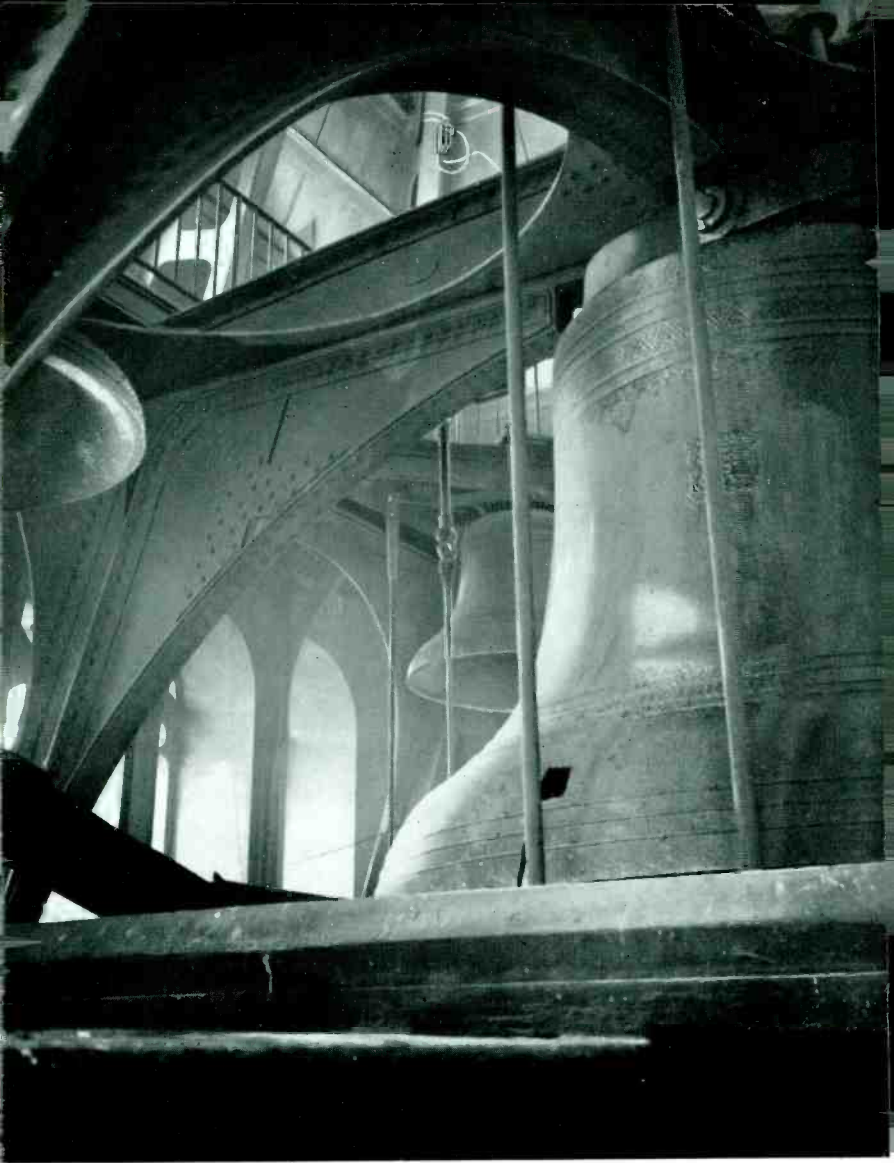
In May BBC units of the Home Guard were formed to defend the vital centres of radio communication. The military experience of ex-service officers and men on the BBC's staff was drawn upon to instruct the new recruits. Training was also undertaken in association with local military units. In the West Region instructors of the Bristol University O.T.C. and Clifton College O.T.C. helped to turn BBC announcers, actors, engineers, musicians, producers, and other staff into an efficient corps of volunteers.

BBC Billetees

Among those members of the BBC staff billeted in town or country in accordance with the Corporation's policy of partial dispersal, there are few who will not carry away pleasant memories of their welcome as the stranger within the gates. They will remember extra kindnesses which were not strictly in the bond. To those many listeners who opened their homes to men and women from Broadcasting House go the lasting thanks of all the BBC billetees.



H.R.H. the Princess Royal broadcast on 26 June 1940



The Clock Tower of Big Ben (the microphone is seen in the top centre)

PROPAGANDA

by

THE HON. HAROLD NICOLSON, M.P.

Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Information

The British public, I am glad to feel, have a healthy dislike of all forms of governmental propaganda. It may be for this reason that the Ministry of Information (which is our equivalent of the vast propaganda agencies maintained at enormous cost by the totalitarian States) is the most unpopular department in the whole British Commonwealth of Nations. The British public do not want to be told what they ought to think or feel; they much resent any Government Department which seeks to control what they should see or write or read or hear. They wish to express their thoughts freely and to have free access to the thoughts of others. The press also is enraged by the limitations which in wartime must be imposed upon the freedom of news; and I am bound to extend all sympathy to the ardent journalist who snatches a story red hot from the oven of history only to see it become cold and dry and stale upon the censor's desk. In so far as I am connected with the Ministry of Information, I regret of course that our motives should so frequently be misinterpreted, our intelligence be so cruelly underestimated, and our shining virtues and achievements be not merely ignored—which in itself would be hard to bear—but actually denied or turned to ridicule and contempt. Yet as a citizen of the British Commonwealth, and as a person who in times of peace wallows in the liberal point of view, I am glad that this great family of nations should refuse to imitate the subservience of the slave peoples, or to become that 'mutton-headed herd of sheep' which, according to their Führer, the German nation has always been and always will be. If the Ministry of Information were to become a beloved feature of our political life, then I should indeed feel that something had gone very wrong with the mental and spiritual health of my countrymen. The Ministry, like the black-out, is a regret-

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table necessity of war. Yet although we never hope, or even wish, to be loved, we should like to be a little less misunderstood. The reason for this misunderstanding is that many people imagine that the Ministry of Information is attempting (in some clumsy, amateurish, and most inefficient manner) to imitate the technique of Doctor Joseph Goebbels. Nothing could be more unfair. We are convinced that totalitarian methods of propaganda are not only foolish as such, but wholly inapplicable to a civilized community. If the British public saw that we were trying to do something quite different from what Dr. Goebbels is trying to do, then the misunderstanding between us might be diminished. I feel, therefore, that it will not be out of place to explain the essential difference between the theory and practice of German, or totalitarian, propaganda, and those of British, or democratic, propaganda.

Herr Hitler's theory of propaganda, as expounded with such a wealth of detail and such disregard for grammar in the pages of *Mein Kampf*, is already well known in this country. His purpose has been to create a mass of uniform and unthinking opinion completely subservient to his dictatorship. His avowed method is to appeal to the lowest instincts in human nature, namely to envy, malice, greed, fear, and conceit. He addresses himself not to the civilized mind of the German nation but to its primitive, and often unconscious, emotions. He seeks from these emotions to create a nucleus of inflamed sentiment which can be lashed to fever-point, now from this direction and now from that, and which in itself precludes the critical or even the rational frame of mind. He aims at constantly maintaining this high temperature of sentiment by the use of symbols and bogies, and by the constant provision of some new excitement or some new hatred. He employs repetition, exaggeration, emphasis, and the distortion of reality as deliberate weapons wherewith to stun and shatter the intelligence of the German people. He mouths fantastic promises, yells out imaginary threats, screams and weeps over fictitious grievances. He

forces the whole people to identify their own fears and hopes and passions with the personality of their Führer so that their Leader becomes for them the embodiment of the national consciousness and thus—however inconsistent his pronouncements, however wild his ambitions, however dangerous his adventures—the repository of the national will. By these methods an extreme condition of mass-hallucination is attained ; the nation's energy and expectancy are tuned to so hysterical a pitch that wars of conquest become the only outlet ; and a fine quality of self-sacrifice is distorted and disordered until it flickers on the edge of suicidal mania.

There are people, even in this country, who have been so impressed by the effects of this herd hysteria, by the actual efficiency with which Herr Hitler has carried out his own plan of forcing the German people not to think, that they forget to examine the very serious disadvantages which this method entails. Herr Hitler's method is bound to fail in the end, since it is based upon the fundamental fallacy that the actions of mankind are invariably and permanently determined by their lower and not by their higher instincts. In taking as the type of average human being the very low individuals with whom he had himself consorted, Herr Hitler ignored the indisputable fact that in the end it is the virtues and not the vices of the human race which prevail. He believes, evidently, that he can continue for ever pandering to the greed, the vanity, the self-interest, or the cowardice of his fellow-mortals. Indubitably he has succeeded within a limited area and for a limited time. But he has aroused in the world such a tide of antagonism as has faced him with a retribution which he will not be able to escape, since cynicism is an uncreative state of mind.

Even if we consider totalitarian propaganda from the purely practical and non-ethical point of view, it is clear that it contains within itself very serious dangers and disadvantages. In the first place, in that its purpose is to suppress free thought, it is obliged to stifle criticism. For if your avowed

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purpose is to appeal to the lowest common denominator in the nation's intelligence, then obviously (and Hitler has himself admitted it) you must exclude all intellectual considerations and all intellectual speculation. You are thus brought inevitably to interfere, not merely with primary and secondary, but also with higher education; and the mental currency of your country thereby becomes debased and the mind of the people impoverished.

In the second place, it is a demonstrable error to believe that the stability of any nation depends upon the uniformity of its thought; on the contrary, it is the diversity of opinion and interest which gives balance to the State. The durability of British institutions is due to their diversity; if one of them fails, there are always other forms, other alternatives, to take its place. By insisting upon the uniform and the machine-made State, Hitler has given Germany no possible alternative to his own system; this absence of elasticity and variation will, when disaster threatens, bring the whole fabric to the ground.

In the third place, the purely emotional appeal is subject to the law of diminishing returns; the strength of the dose has to be increased with every fresh injection. You cannot keep a whole people in a state of constant public excitement for twenty years; either they will suffer a nervous breakdown, or they will become immune to stimulants. Boredom, panic, or lethargy is bound to result.

And in the fourth place, no permanent propaganda policy can in the modern world be based upon untruthfulness. The day will come when Herr Hitler will desire with all his soul to be believed by his own people and by the peoples of the world. He will then find that, having forged so many cheques, having issued so many fraudulent balance sheets, he is unable to borrow five pounds upon the market. Even in propaganda, honesty is the best policy every time.

Although we can in this way detect many fallacies in the Hitlerian theory of propaganda, it would be foolish for us to underestimate its great potency as a short-term expedient.

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Hitler has been able to convince his people, and especially his young people, that his movement is some historic challenge to the old world-order and that every German man and woman has an historic part to play. And since the main malady of the modern world is a sense of personal frustration, Hitler in inspiring his people with a sense of personal opportunity has managed to compensate his countrymen for their appalling lack of self-reliance by giving them a mystic confidence in their destiny as a race, their mission as a *Herrenvolk*. Yet even here there is a flaw in his argument, which will increase and become a wide cleft or fissure. For if the Germans are to regard themselves as a superior race, then why should they be treated as slaves, who cannot be permitted to think, or speak, or hear ?

Considerations such as these bring me to the essential difference between totalitarian and democratic, between autocratic and liberal, propaganda. The former appeals to mass emotion, whereas the latter relies upon the free mind. Thus, whereas the totalitarian method is essentially a short-term method—being a smash-and-grab raid upon the emotions of the uneducated—the democratic method should be a long-term method seeking gradually to fortify the intelligence of the individual. In other words, the ‘passionate idea’ which is at the root of all totalitarian propaganda cannot be maintained indefinitely, since the emotions of man cannot remain permanently strained. By contrast democratic propaganda, although its effects are less immediate and far less sensational, does aim at creating a durable state of common sense. Totalitarian propaganda is akin to revivalism ; democratic propaganda is akin to education.

If that be true, then what system should the democratic propagandist adopt ? The answer is, I suggest, extremely simple. He should seek to provide the individual with true facts and common principles. He should concentrate in every way possible upon the rapid provision of plentiful and accurate news. In so doing he should remember always

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that accuracy is more important than speed, since it is upon his unfailing truthfulness and precision that the 'credit' which he seeks to acquire must in the long run be based. In the second place, he should consistently adopt common standards such as the public will recognize as shared by themselves. There are three such standards which the democratic propagandist should always keep in mind; or in other words there are three main principles, common to the mass of mankind, upon which he should always insist. The first of these principles is that truthfulness is more effective than untruthfulness and honesty more durable than cunning. The second is that there does exist a difference between 'right' and 'wrong', and that this difference is readily appreciated by the vast majority of mankind. And the third is that most people know the distinction between foolishness and sense.

It is upon this basis that any Ministry of Information, in a democratic country, should strive to work. Its task will never be easy. There will always be those who are so irritated by the necessary restrictions of war that they will throw suspicion upon the sincerity of the Ministry's intentions. There will be those, again, who become impatient of the slow and often indiscernible results of a long-term policy, and who will clamour for the drums, the fireworks, and the mesmerism of the totalitarian system. There will be many occasions upon which, for reasons which it is not always possible to explain, information has to be delayed or even withheld. Yet I am convinced that, if these precepts and principles are unflinchingly respected, a large measure of public confidence will in the end be acquired; and that it will be realized that the Ministry is seeking, not to form or to suppress the diversity or liberty of the country's thought, but to provide the men and women of this island and of the world with true facts and directives such as will enable them to come to correct conclusions in their own unconquerable minds.



Mr. Winston Churchill first broadcast as Prime Minister on 14 July 1940



Mr. Vincent Massey,
High Commissioner
for Canada in the
United Kingdom



Mr. Noel Baker,
M.P., broadcasting in
the series 'Britain
Speaks'

THE EMPIRE SERVICE

by

R. A. RENDALL

Director of the Empire Services

The Empire Service of pre-war days—the nucleus around which the BBC's present overseas services have grown with their many branches into broadcasting in foreign languages—could now perhaps be more justly described as a world service conducted in English and Empire languages. It includes daily broadcasts in Afrikaans, in Hindustani, and in French for French Canada, together with weekly or bi-weekly broadcasts in Burmese, Cypriot, and Maltese; it also relays from the BBC's European Service some of the more important of the bulletins in one or other of the European languages for the benefit of foreign-speaking people in the Empire. During the past year we have attempted to reconcile the increasingly insistent claims for a 'round-the-clock' news service for all parts of the world with the demand for programmes of special interest to listeners in many different countries. The development of such programmes has provided new and exciting opportunities for programme experiment; 'specialization', too, has brought to London a number of broadcasters from overseas who are playing a very important part in adapting our programmes to the special and ever-changing needs of the Empire at war.

The audience for news from British sources and for British comment upon it is to be found in all four quarters of the globe. It is not confined to those Britons posted abroad on one or other of the many occasions which draw men and women from this country to the other side of the world. An audience more solid and compact by far is also found among the peoples of the great Dominions. There are, too, the peoples of India, of the Colonial Empire, and again within the Dominions, whose native tongue is not English, but who nevertheless understand it. In addition, any broadcasting service in English which aspires to the title of world service must also cater for another great listening audience—that of

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the United States of America. The BBC's Empire Service goes beyond its name to fulfil this purpose, and now provides a special transmission for reception in North America.

Since the beginning of the war short-wave listening has increased throughout the world. Listeners in Great Britain are, therefore, the more able to appreciate the fact that distinguished speakers, actors, editors, announcers, and engineers work through the night in London and elsewhere to provide programmes that are listened to at breakfast-time in Singapore or after tea in Saskatchewan. But it is a fallacy to suppose that 'twenty-four hours is enough'! Indeed time is the cause of most of the difficulties of planning a world service. Wherever they may be, listeners expect to be able to hear London calling at any time of the day or night and to receive the latest news; but there has also been an increasing demand for a choice of programmes—particularly for the 'presentation' of programmes—better suited to the habits and tastes of the main audience groups. To address programmes to 'primary' audiences at different times and yet by the disposal of the available transmitters always to serve several 'secondary' audiences, are our present objectives. For instance, the North American transmission, which is intended to serve primarily Canada, the United States of America, Newfoundland, and the West Indies, starts at 10.45 p.m. Greenwich Mean Time, this being 11.45 p.m. British Summer Time in London, 6.45 p.m. Eastern Daylight Saving Time in Montreal, and 5.45 p.m. Eastern Standard Time in New York. The programme runs until 4.35 a.m. GMT, which is 11.35 p.m. EST or 12.35 a.m. EDST. The time in the West Indies is one hour earlier than in New York, and four hours earlier than in San Francisco. Before he can allow himself to consider the niceties of balance and taste, the programme planner must therefore adjust his programmes to these differences of time. The North American transmission may be taken as a typical example: any features intended specially for the West Indies or for Newfoundland

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are placed at the beginning of the programme, but the primary listening public for the whole transmission is nevertheless in Canada and the U.S.A. The variation of time between east and west within these countries has further to be taken into account. For this reason the most important talk during the evening—that under the title ‘Britain Speaks’, which J. B. Priestley, Leslie Howard, Air Marshal Sir Philip Joubert, and others have made justly famous—is recorded and repeated later in the transmission for the benefit of listeners in the west.

The broadcast of news in this transmission, which includes, for instance, an item ‘Headline News’, read by a Canadian announcer, is intended primarily for listeners in North America, but is widely heard in other parts of the world—that is to say, by secondary audiences. We know that this particular news service is listened to in Australia, India, Malaya, East Africa, and Central America, and we hope before long that we shall be able to make it more easily available to the many British listeners in South America who have also shown their interest in the North American transmission.

The new policy of broadcasting a specialized service for four primary audiences at different times of the day has been marked by a change of nomenclature. The numerical designation of the six transmissions was abolished, and a geographical name was given to each of the Empire services distributed over four broadcasting zones of the world. They are now known thus: (1) Pacific; (2) Eastern; (3) African; (4) North American.

In all these transmissions it is, of course, the news that listeners want most; consequently the news bulletins at fixed times form the backbone of the programme schedules. We try to give the news as quickly as respect for accuracy permits, and as fully as we can, short of gratuitously helping the enemy. Unlike that enemy, we believe that ‘news’ and ‘views’ are, and should continue to be, essentially different. Talks therefore—particularly talks about the

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news such as are given by news commentators and by people 'in the news', together with talks complementary to the news such as, for instance, 'Britain Speaks' or 'Matters of Moment'—have proved to be second in importance only to the news itself.

For the rest—in feature programmes, actuality broadcasts, plays, music, variety, and entertainment of all sorts—we are attempting to adjust the supply to the demand. Naturally that demand varies greatly. A variety programme on the English model, for instance, will find a more appreciative audience amongst the British community in an African colony than it would with a Canadian or Australian audience, which already has a wide choice of first-rate entertainment of a different and more familiar type. Our aim, therefore, must always be to give to listeners only those types of programme of which we can supply better examples than are likely to be available to them from sources nearer home. We draw for this purpose on many of the plays, feature programmes, and the like that are broadcast for listeners in the home country, but we produce, too, a regular stream of programmes for overseas listeners exclusively. We try especially to give vivid pictures of the people of Britain at war, letting the people speak for themselves and so for their country. Programmes of British music are broadcast every day as part of this same task—the projection of Britain.

Whenever the BBC is discussed, announcing is always likely to become the subject of heated argument. Some heartily blame the BBC for inflicting a so-called 'Oxford accent' on the world; others—especially those in distant parts of the Empire—are grateful for what they are generous enough to regard as an object lesson in the speaking of a language whose original home they may never have seen. The BBC's object is to give to the world the news read by people who belong to these islands, and to do away with affectation without discouraging variety of accent. Two announcers from overseas have already joined the staff, and we hope to welcome others. Listeners overseas naturally

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wish their fellow-countrymen to be represented in the programmes, and they like to hear English spoken in the way to which they have been born and bred ; but we are nevertheless encouraged to believe that, when it comes to the news, they prefer the bulletins to be read with the authentic accent of the voice of Britain.

The Empire Department is not only concerned with providing a short-wave service from Great Britain. It acts also as a focal point for the development of exchange programmes, for the exchange of staff, and all other forms of co-operation between the broadcasting organizations in the Dominions and Colonies and the BBC. During the past year the exchange of programmes has been far more frequent and the co-operation much closer than ever before. Home listeners are growing familiar with the ' Dominion Commentary ', which is a regular series of talks originating in the broadcasting studios of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, and listeners to the Programme for the Forces may have heard some of the many programmes recorded in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and India, which are broadcast primarily for the entertainment of the troops of those countries stationed in Great Britain. In the same way the Empire Service includes a number of programmes especially arranged for the British troops—or for the Imperial forces—in the Near East, in East Africa, and in the Far East.

In the exchange of staff the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has led the way. In addition to its own overseas unit in London, it has given the BBC its first North American Programme Organizer. The Australian Broadcasting Commission and All India Radio have also seconded senior officials to act as programme organizers for the Pacific transmission and Indian programmes.

Another striking development in Empire broadcasting, which has been stimulated by war conditions, and is closely associated with the development of specialized programmes and with the interchange of staff, is the growth of rebroad-

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casting. A service attempting to cater for the whole world must necessarily be broadcast on short waves ; but listeners in this country, of whom an increasing number are getting the habit of short-wave listening, will readily appreciate that, however good short-wave reception can be, a service from the home station on medium or long waves provides a stronger and more reliable signal. To meet the needs of those who would otherwise receive the BBC transmissions imperfectly or not at all, all Empire broadcasting services now pick up, and rebroadcast from their own stations or over their own systems, selected items from the BBC's short-wave programmes. In the U.S.A. rebroadcasting has also increased greatly ; BBC news bulletins or talks are now carried by some eighty independent stations as well as by the Mutual Broadcasting System over its entire network. Listeners overseas therefore can receive our programmes either direct on short waves or through their local stations on medium and long waves, or, as in some colonial territories, through the local wireless exchange systems, many of which rely mainly on the BBC programmes for their service. And so it is that throughout the whole world there are homes where domestic arrangements are regularly adjusted to the family's wish to be round the loudspeaker when some favourite broadcaster from London—Vernon Bartlett perhaps, or Wickham Steed, or Howard Marshall—is known to be going to talk.

The development of rebroadcasting is significant, not only because of the enormously increased audience which it creates for the output from this country, but also because it provides a fine practical example of the representative organizations of free nations working together in voluntary association. We look forward in 1941 to extending the scope of our own service and of our relations with those other British broadcasting services overseas ; thus we hope to give our further share of proof of the Commonwealth's just claim to be an international order that is at once progressive and humane.

THE EUROPEAN SERVICE

by

JOHN SALT

Director of the European Services

It seemed to many, in the early days of broadcasting, that radio was one of the few scientific achievements that could scarcely be harnessed to evil purposes. Radio appeared to have the merit of leaving the listener free to make an individual choice, to pick from the ether what seemed to him good and by an easy movement banish the rest to the outer darkness. It was not foreseen that the whole powerful instrument might come under an official control, not only at its source but also at the 'listening end'. But that has come about in Germany. For years past it has been virtually obligatory to listen to the voice of Hitler. Loudspeakers for this purpose were long ago installed in all restaurants and public places, and those who stayed at home and did not listen came under the watchful eye of the local Nazi boss. When war broke out the chain of compulsion was completed; all listening to foreign stations was prohibited on pain of heavy penalties. Only the official voice might be heard. Few will disagree that this is a fundamental misuse of broadcasting. But the misuse creates inevitable reactions. It has created to-day a positive need in Germany, and in the countries she has invaded, to hear the forbidden voice—the voice of Britain. It is this need that the BBC's European Service is doing its best to meet.

The service of broadcasting in European languages started on 27 September 1938, when Mr. Chamberlain's speech on the eve of Munich was broadcast in French, German, and Italian. During the year that followed, a daily service of news bulletins was given in those languages, with bulletins in Spanish and Portuguese for reception in the Peninsula. Since then the history of the service has been bound up with the history of the war. News services in Hungarian, Polish, Czech, Rumanian, Serbo-Croat, and Greek were all begun before the first month of war was out. Further

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bulletins were needed as the war situation developed. Services in Turkish, Bulgarian, Swedish, Finnish, Danish, Norwegian, and Dutch were soon begun. In November 1940 Albanian was added to the list.

The services thus created vary in scope. At the end of 1940, eight news bulletins were being broadcast daily in German and six in French. In other languages the service was less ambitious, consisting in some cases of a single daily bulletin.

News ranks first in any foreign service. The aim throughout must be to create and maintain an unrivalled reputation for prompt and reliable news. A further aim must be to make each separate service sensitive to the special needs and circumstances of the different audiences to which it is addressed. Many factors have to be taken into account. In shaping each bulletin the news editor must remember, for instance, the geographical distance of the particular audience from the scene of action, the extent of its familiarity with, or ignorance of, the background of events reported, and the political or economic importance to them of any given piece of news. In each language service there must therefore be news editors qualified by close current knowledge of the country concerned and of its people to prepare bulletins that will give information of interest and significance. The editors must work in consultation with the expert translators and announcers, for nearly all of whom the language in which they work is their mother tongue. And they must, through regular meetings, keep in close touch too with outside experts who can give authoritative guidance.

All the news services include talks on topical subjects amplifying the news, sometimes by foreign speakers and often by British men and women speaking in a foreign tongue. But there are many other kinds of broadcasts which also have an appeal for European listeners. Magazine programmes, dramatic dialogues and sketches, special recitals of music, feature programmes, and popular songs, all have their place and have been specially developed in recent months. The French are given every morning and evening

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a half-hour magazine programme which makes a special feature of lively discussion. This has led to the creation of slogans, some of them set to music, which have been repeated all over France. From 18 July onwards an additional five-minute period has been placed each day at the disposal of the Free French organization headed by General de Gaulle, who through the BBC French service had frequently appealed to Frenchmen to continue the struggle alongside Britain. The Germans are given a regular feature, called *Vormarsch der Freiheit* ('March of Freedom'), which brings together in a dramatic way the many forces uniting to defeat Nazi aggression. King Haakon and the Crown Prince of Norway have broadcast on a number of occasions in the Norwegian service. Listeners in the Netherlands have—in addition to the BBC's bulletins in Dutch—a special period, entitled 'Radio Oranje', which is given under the auspices of the Dutch Government; its opening on 28 July was marked by a broadcast by Queen Wilhelmina. The Czechs also have a special period, which serves as a link between the Czech forces in this country and those who are carrying on resistance at home. The Belgians are given a special programme in French and Flemish on alternate days. A special Spanish programme has been started, and others are in preparation.

The technical arrangements for these various services are still being developed and improved. The basic service must be by short wave; that is to say, all programmes are carried on short-wave transmitters giving the best reception in the area concerned. But medium waves can be used to strengthen the service in various ways. Their limitation is that they are of little or no value during the hours of daylight except for the western areas nearest to this island, but during darkness they are used to the fullest extent. As regards short waves, different aerial systems are required for covering Scandinavia and the Iberian Peninsula, and the system most suitable for France will not give the best signal strength in Greece. Each case must be studied on its own merits. Another kind of problem is the necessity of radiating the

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French programme on transmitters which, in addition to France itself, will cover West Africa, Tunis, Syria, and French Indo-China. The late-night bulletin is also of interest to French Canadians.

Not the least of the technical problems is the jamming to which most of our European transmissions are submitted by both Axis partners. This is one aspect of what might be called the transmitter war, and the side which has the largest number of transmitters, and the most conveniently placed, has the advantage. But there are certain ways of helping listeners to overcome the difficulty, and the results are not unsatisfactory.

The schedule and content of programmes for Europe are based on continuing study of the potential listeners in each country, and on a wealth of information reaching us from a large variety of sources. In the earlier stages of the war there was plenty of direct evidence, even from Germany. It was possible to meet travellers and obtain first-hand accounts, and our correspondence from Europe as a whole had reached the high total of a thousand letters a week by the time of the invasion of Holland. Every letter was answered personally in the language in which it was written. With the Germans in control of Norway, Denmark, Belgium, part of France, and Rumania, in addition to Poland and Czechoslovakia, correspondence became more difficult to obtain, but the mailbag is again increasing very satisfactorily.

In Germany we know that there is a large listening audience in spite of universal spying and savage prosecutions. Even if we had no direct evidence of this, the pains taken by the Nazis to counter in their home bulletins all awkward news given by the BBC indicate that the authorities fear the audience which heard the original. Experience so far has proved that, if listeners are determined to hear the truth from outside, in spite of all the difficulties and penalties, there is no completely effective way of stopping it. The same is true of Italy.

In occupied countries the need to hear London is felt even

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more strongly. In Poland the Germans have made the possession of a wireless set illegal, yet our bulletins are taken down and circulated widely in leaflet form. At the request of the Polish Ambassador, the BBC introduced a service of broadcast messages, giving news of the safety and whereabouts of Polish refugees all over Europe. The Polish 'letter-box', as it came to be called, was carried on from October 1939 until July 1940; during those months an average of a hundred and thirty-one names was broadcast daily, and a grand total of thirty-four thousand reached.

In Czechoslovakia anything broadcast by the BBC is known throughout the country within a few hours. An interesting example of how the bonds between the Czechs and ourselves can be strengthened was afforded by the broadcast speech of President Beneš when the Provisional Czechoslovak Government was recognized by this country. On that occasion a recording was made by the London Philharmonic Orchestra of a fanfare from the opera *Libusa* by Smetana, the performance of which has been forbidden by the Germans. This fanfare was used to herald the President's broadcast. Shortly afterwards we heard of the great pleasure that it had given listeners in Czechoslovakia.

In countries overrun more recently by the Germans the populations do not possess the same experience of organizing resistance, but nevertheless the part played in this by broadcasts from this country is rapidly increasing. As with Poland and Czechoslovakia, the governments of Norway, Belgium, and Holland are in London, and also the headquarters of the Free French forces. With all of these the BBC maintains close contact, and the planning of programmes is often worked out in collaboration. The latest evidence from Norway goes to show that far more people listen to the BBC than to their own German-controlled home bulletins, and that the Germans are perturbed by the effects. Travellers from Denmark report that almost every household tunes in regularly to the BBC news bulletins. In Holland, both the bulletins and the Dutch Government programme, 'Radio

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Oranje', are being very well received, and provide a real focus for resistance. The Germans go to some trouble in trying to discredit these programmes, both in their broadcasts and in their newspapers, and make their usual wild assertions about the origin of the announcers.

At the time of the collapse of France the confusion was so great that it was impossible to predict how public opinion in that country would develop. Gradually, however, certain tendencies became clear, and there were signs of a rapidly increasing desire to hear about the outside world from London. This was reflected in the many attacks made on the BBC by radio and press, both in occupied and unoccupied France. By the end of the year it seemed clear that the tide had turned and that Frenchmen were more and more beginning to accept the view that the freedom of France depended on a British victory.

It is impossible to describe here the reaction to our broadcasts in all the countries to which they are addressed. Germany has in Europe the advantage of a better geographical position and the control, for the time being, of transmitters stretching from the Arctic Circle to the Pyrenees. Against this disadvantage we can set the facts that those who value their freedom must hope for the defeat of the Axis powers, and that their numbers are increasing. Among all such, the broadcasts from London will achieve a growing currency and value. Perhaps the most significant way of regarding the European Service is from a military point of view. First, it can weaken the war effort in Germany and Italy by encouraging those who oppose the dictator regimes and look forward to something better. Secondly, it can build up resistance in all the occupied countries and make necessary the maintenance of large armies of occupation. Thirdly, it can contribute indirectly to the demoralization of those armies. By these means it can prepare the way for the coming victory.

THE LATIN-AMERICAN SERVICE

by

C. A. L. CLIFFE

Director of the Latin-American Service

A continent with nearly ninety million inhabitants and another sub-continent with thirty million ; more than forty million people whose native tongue is Portuguese, and eighty million who speak Spanish ; nineteen free republics (including one that covers a larger area than the U.S.A.), each with a fierce pride in its own independence and democratic traditions ; a territory stretching seven thousand miles from north to south, from the frontiers of the U.S.A. to the utmost extremity of Cape Horn—that is the potential audience of the BBC's Latin-American Service, and the territory which it covers.

This service has suffered certain vicissitudes since its birth. The importance of making reliable news of British origin available to these great republics of the New World has long been appreciated. But when the Latin-American Service was inaugurated, the transmitter facilities available did not allow of more than one nightly bulletin in Spanish and one in Portuguese, together with a small amount of musical material which was shared with the transmission designed for North America. By July 1939 new transmitters had been built, and a full service of three hours of news and programmes, presented entirely in Spanish and Portuguese, was broadcast every night to Latin America. This promising young service was cut short by the outbreak of the war. The number of foreign languages used by the BBC increased by leaps and bounds, transmitters were diverted to these new services, and the Latin-American Service had, for a period, to be greatly reduced in scope. But in the summer of 1940 still further new facilities became available, and the Latin-American Service was once more restored to its full length of three hours a night. These three hours comprise news bulletins and programmes of widely varying types. For an hour and a quarter nightly,

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they are announced and presented in Portuguese for Brazil ; for the remainder of the time the service is entirely in Spanish.

As in all the BBC's overseas services, it is generally agreed that the news bulletins hold pride of place in the Latin-American Service. Two bulletins are broadcast each night in Spanish, and two in Portuguese. They are so arranged as to reach South America during the evening hours there, at times which will be convenient for the greatest number of listeners, allowing for the differences of clock-time that exist between the east and west of the continent. On the contents of these bulletins it is not necessary to dwell : the principle which informs them is the same as that which has made the BBC's bulletins in English and other languages so widely acceptable all over the world. The Latin-American has a firmly-rooted conception of what is *caballesc* : he finds that integrity, which he so admires, in the bulletins which come to him from London, and there is a wealth of evidence to show that the influence of these bulletins grows daily more widespread. In particular, when France fell and the whole world wondered what would happen next, it is definitely known that the BBC news and talks played a leading part in reassuring Latin America that, come what might, Britain was resolved on pursuing the struggle to a victorious conclusion.

The dissemination of the BBC's bulletins is helped by the fact that a large number of radio stations in Latin America regularly rebroadcast them, thus making them easily available to listeners who do not possess short-wave sets, or who live in districts where short-wave reception is not easy ; and the BBC's broadcasts also form the basis for written bulletins which are regularly supplied to the local press by the Press Attachés at our embassies and legations. In a number of places, too, the BBC's bulletins are diffused in squares and cafés by a public address system. Many hundreds of people are known to gather together in public places to hear the news in this way ; and the BBC has

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received impressive photographs of a crowd of some fifteen hundred people, assembled in the public square of a city a thousand miles up the Amazon, listening with the closest attention to the voice of London, as it resounds from the huge loudspeakers suspended in the palm trees.

It should be noted here that the announcers engaged on the transmissions for Latin America are distinct from those who broadcast to Spain and Portugal. The Portuguese language, as it has developed in Brazil, differs materially from that spoken in the mother country. Similarly, in the Spanish-speaking countries, there is not one, but a dozen different forms of speech, all distinct from the Spanish spoken in Madrid or Malaga. The BBC has been successful in finding a type of South American Spanish for use in its broadcasts, which has met with general acceptance throughout the continent.

Next to the news bulletins come the talks. These are given nightly in both languages, and range over a wide field. A special fortnightly series has brought to the microphone a number of distinguished speakers, including Mr. Duff Cooper, General de Gaulle, Mr. Herbert Morrison, Sir Archibald Sinclair, and many others. These speakers have given their talks in their own language, and translations in Spanish and Portuguese have followed. Regular commentaries on international affairs and the events of the week, embodying the British point of view, have been in the safe hands of such writers as Gerald Barry, Sir Charles Petrie, and Wickham Steed. Salvador de Madariaga, most eminent among Spanish elder statesmen, has broadcast fortnightly talks on the progress of the war, with an inimitable touch and a distinction all his own. These talks have been reprinted in many Latin-American papers. Two commentators on the events of the day, in a slightly lighter and more personal vein, have won many friends and listeners to their talks, given twice weekly to Spanish America and Brazil under the microphone names of 'Atalaya' and 'P. Xysto' respectively. Weekly talks under the title 'La France'

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have sought to bring to Latin America something of the spirit and achievement of Free Frenchmen; and Latin-American residents in this country have told their fellow-citizens, in talks dealing with a variety of subjects, how Britain can 'take it'.

But perhaps the most notable achievement of the Latin-American Service, since its reconstitution in July, has been a series of feature programmes, specially designed for Latin America, and produced in Spanish and Portuguese. Many of these 'features' have taken the form of dramatized reconstructions of great events in the history of South America; others have dealt with the war effort of this country. They have combined historical accuracy with a strong emotional appeal, and it is clear that they have fired the imagination of the Latin-American public. Many have been designed to celebrate the national days of the various republics and have dealt with the exploits of the great liberators, such as Bolivar and San Martin. In all cases, these programmes have been rebroadcast by one or more local stations, and have aroused enormous interest and enthusiasm. Leading articles have been written round them in many of the principal newspapers, and the theme of these has always been twofold—the warmest appreciation of the programmes, especially emanating, as they do, from a Britain in the throes of total war, and the clearest recognition that in Britain's victory alone lies any hope of the survival of all those things which the Latin-American nations hold most dear.

A number of these feature programmes have been preserved in permanent form on gramophone records. These have been distributed to broadcasting stations and other organizations throughout Latin America, and the programmes have repeated their success in this form.

The musical programmes broadcast are of all types, ranging from symphony to dance band. Outstanding among these programmes have been a series of concerts of operatic music given by the BBC Theatre Orchestra and Chorus.



Mr. J. B. Priestley and Mr. Leslie Howard broadcast jointly in the series
'Britain Speaks' on 17 July 1940



The late Commander Bickford,
D.S.O., with Stephen Potter of
the BBC. on the bridge of
H.M.S. Salmon

Mr. J. A. Camacho, Latin-
American Programme
Organizer



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Letters from listeners in Latin America are warmly welcomed by the BBC, and all are answered in the writer's own language. Many listeners ask questions about various aspects of the British war effort and, when it is possible and the subject is of general interest, the answers are given over the microphone.

Printed bulletins in Spanish and Portuguese, containing the programmes and editorial matter, appear weekly and are widely distributed, by air-mail where necessary. The recipients include all newspapers and most broadcasting organizations in Latin America. Nearly two hundred newspapers, including all the most important, regularly give the hospitality of their columns to BBC material, and indeed relations with the press in Latin America are most cordial. Since the war began, many editors have made a point, in their correspondence with the BBC, of expressing, not only their appreciation of the trustworthiness of the BBC's news service, but their heartfelt enthusiasm for the cause which Great Britain represents.

THE NEAR EASTERN SERVICE

by

S. HILLELSON

Assistant Director of the Near Eastern Service

In the course of the year 1940 the Arabic service of pre-war days has become a Near Eastern Service. In terms of programme time and output, broadcasts to the Arab world still take the foremost place in the activities of the band of specialists who speak to the Near East. The Arabic service claims the distinction of being the first-born of the foreign language services of the BBC, for it came into being in January 1938, and Arabic was the first foreign language broadcast regularly from a BBC transmitter—if foreign be the right word to apply to a language spoken by many citizens of the Empire. When news bulletins in Turkish were instituted it was logical to entrust editorial direction to those who had won their spurs in the Arabic service and, for a time, broadcasts in Greek were largely for reasons of administrative convenience (and geographical proximity) added to their responsibilities. The Greek service has now taken its rightful place in the European Department, while the Near Eastern Department has taken over the pleasant new task of broadcasting news bulletins in the sonorous tongue of Iran.

A high degree of specialization in presenting British news is assured by entrusting control to men who in addition to linguistic scholarship possess an intimate knowledge of the Moslem East and its various problems. This specialization differs essentially from that produced in the laboratories of the German propaganda service, for it does not attempt to influence listeners by appeals to sectional passion, prejudice, or vanity; neither does it distort news in a vain endeavour to gain credence for stories broadcast in Arabic which are flatly contradicted by statements made, perhaps on the same day, to other audiences in other languages. Specialization in the BBC is based on careful study of the needs of the audience in such matters as language, presenta-

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tion, and special interests. It ensures that broadcasts are given at times judged suitable in the light of local habits, and that, out of the vast amount of news material daily, the subjects of paramount interest to the area in question are given prominence. It studies the tastes of the varied audiences in popular entertainment as well as in programmes of educational and cultural value in order to produce broadcasts which appeal not to a special class or group, but to the largest possible number of people. If it is remembered that the Arab world, within its essential unity, contains a great variety of social, economic, and political groups, it will be realized that the task is difficult, but three years' experience of broadcasting in Arabic has shown that it is worth while.

The Arabic news service has been strengthened in 1940 by the addition of an early morning bulletin to the old-established evening broadcast. This was done in response to requests from many quarters, springing from an increased demand for authentic news in time of war. Programmes of entertainment and talks have developed along the lines which past experience has shown to be successful, and it has been the aim of the service to do all that broadcasting from London can do to satisfy the thirst for knowledge and enlightenment which is characteristic of the Arab people. The subjects on which talks have been given ranged from discussions on Eastern literature, art, and history to problems of modern science, medicine, and technology, and special prominence has been given to news commentaries and talks dealing with the political and military problems of the world at war. During part of the campaign in France and Belgium, an Egyptian member of the BBC staff became an accredited broadcast correspondent with the armies and gave first-hand impressions of the battle-zone.

There has also been progress in the presentation of musical programmes. Gramophone records available to all and sundry no longer form the mainstay of the programme as they did in the early days of the service ; frequent use is

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now made of musical performances recorded in Cairo by the most popular artists of the Arab world for the exclusive use of the BBC. In obtaining these recordings Egyptian State Broadcasting has given most valuable help. In addition, it has recently been found possible to enlist the services of talented musicians, both Egyptian and 'Iraqi, for live performances of vocal and instrumental music from our own studios.

An entirely new departure has been the use of colloquial Arabic, which made a first appearance in broadcasts directed to Morocco. The bulk of Arabic broadcasts has always been given, and will continue to be given, in the polished idiom known as classical or literary Arabic—that is to say, the medium which is common to the educated classes of all Arab countries, and which has a proud tradition in religion, scholarship, science, and literature. Apart from occasional experiments everything that is written and printed in the Arab world is composed in this literary language hallowed by tradition, cultivated with passionate intensity by generations of scholars and writers, but spoken only on formal occasions and never in the privacy of the home or in the public life of the bazaars. The broadcaster has no option but to adopt the only idiom which is understood everywhere, though the degree of understanding may vary with the standard of education ; he must, at the same time, recognize the fact that he cannot hope to achieve the intimate appeal which only the language of the home can convey. But the popular speech cannot be entirely neglected, and it has been judged right to use it in occasional programmes which lend themselves to this treatment. For North Africa, for instance, there is now a daily news bulletin read by a Moroccan speaker in the Moroccan dialect.

In Turkey the linguistic reforms of Kemal Ataturk have swept away an outworn tradition, and created a vigorous modern Turkish, thus relieving the broadcaster of all doubts as to the right form of speech to be used in the Turkish service. The broadcasts to Turkey are confined to news



Two senior members of the Near Eastern Service

Men of the first Canadian
contingent with Gerry
Wilmot of the CBC
Overseas Unit



E. L. Bushnell, a
member of the staff
of the Canadian
Broadcasting Cor-
poration, seconded
to the BBC as North
American Pro-
gramme Organizer

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bulletins given twice daily, in an early morning period and at 6.10 p.m. GMT, and news talks given at regular intervals. On special occasions short addresses by distinguished speakers have been added to the news proper: thus at the opening of the Izmir Fair in August two ministers of the Crown—Lord Lloyd and Mr. Amery—spoke from London to our Turkish allies in their own language—an achievement which, it is believed, no other country can rival. The sober, realistic sense of the Turkish people specially appreciates the policy of providing ‘straight’ news which is traditional in the BBC, and the Turkish press has not been slow in detecting the contrast between the British broadcasts and those of our enemies. The feeling of speaking to friends and allies has been a constant source of strength to all connected with the Turkish service of the BBC, and the response of listeners, as reflected in their letters and in the Turkish press, has been most encouraging.

This is what a Turkish listener wrote from a small Anatolian town: ‘A large crowd of over one hundred peasants listen to your daily news broadcasts. I nicknamed your interval signal, which is a great favourite over here, “the trumpet of justice”. Some laughed, and I explained, “Dear friends, Britain is our ally and has taken up arms to protect the rights of smaller nations”.’

Another letter from Turkey written in English contains the following passage: ‘To every sort and condition of Turk, England is the hero of the hour, and news from London is really considered the only news worth having, both for its reliability, its interest, and because it has a certain glamour about it.’

The mailbag of the BBC is of never-failing interest; in proof of this one more example may be given from a letter written by an Arab resident in West Africa: ‘Respectful greetings from one who admires and appreciates your humanitarian efforts on behalf of the Arabic-speaking peoples. Behold, your weekly programme reaches me regularly except when it is delayed in the post owing to the

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present war crisis brought about by that insubordinate house-painter, that insatiable and low-born tyrant, that man-slayer, Hitler. May God destroy him and his adherents, and grant humanity rest from his evil craft—a task easy to God. Behold us here, constant auditors of your broadcasts, which are the greatest, best arranged, most richly expressed, and most intelligible in language of all Arabic emissions.'

THE BBC'S AUDIENCE IN NORTH AMERICA

by

MAJOR W. GLADSTONE MURRAY

General Manager of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation

The serious turn taken by the course of the war in the summer of 1940 created all over the North American continent a new interest in British broadcasting. Countless listeners in the U.S.A., Canada, Newfoundland, and the West Indies had personal cause for interest and anxiety on behalf of relatives, friends, and acquaintances in the Old Country; and this anxiety was sometimes heightened by reading pessimistic or sensational accounts of Britain's danger in American newspapers. They felt the need for some calm reassurance, for the sound of old familiar voices from across the Atlantic, and above all for reliable news of what was actually going on. To meet this situation a rapid extension of the opportunities for North American listeners to hear the voice of Britain was obviously necessary. There were two ways in which such listeners could hear British programmes. The first was by tuning in on short wave to available transmissions of the BBC's Empire Service; the second was by listening to certain BBC programmes included on the national network of the CBC, either relayed direct (such as news bulletins) or rebroadcast (such as the 'Shadow of the Swastika' programmes).

During the first part of the year the American radio stations did not rebroadcast any material put out by the CBC, and until the summer the BBC's Empire Service contained no programme aimed primarily at an audience in the United States. Nevertheless, its special programmes for Canada gave the BBC valuable experience of the needs of North American listeners in general; for instance, the type of voice, style of announcing, form and subject of programme most acceptable to transatlantic tastes. This experience was reinforced by the presence at Broadcasting

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House since December 1939 of an overseas unit, sent across by the CBC.

The foundations of successful co-operation between the BBC and the CBC had thus been well laid when the need for its expansion suddenly arose. The first step was the inclusion in the Empire Service of a new series of talks, 'Britain Speaks', addressed specially to the United States of America. As this was very favourably received, further efforts were made to please North American listeners. Thus, a Canadian announcer was employed; the news bulletins were shortened; news commentaries on the American model were introduced; the custom of announcing the names of news readers and others was adopted; and the general style of announcing and presentation was radically changed. J. B. Priestley and Leslie Howard were established as regular contributors to 'Britain Speaks', and Vernon Bartlett, George Slocombe, and A. G. Macdonell¹ became the first BBC news commentators. At this stage the need for expert advice from the 'other end' was strongly felt at Broadcasting House; that need was immediately met when the CBC agreed to second their General Programme Organizer, Mr. E. L. Bushnell, who accordingly took up the duties of North American Programme Organizer in London in August. As a result, a new plan of programmes was brought into operation; it included, besides news bulletins and 'Britain Speaks', broadcasts by British stage and screen stars, variety programmes, light music, gramophone recordings of tunes requested by listeners named at the microphone, and 'Canada calls from London', a magazine and variety programme, together with talks and news-letters in English and French.

That this reorganized programme was on the right lines was shown by the favourable comment it received in the Canadian and American press. Hitherto, the efforts of the BBC had received but small attention in these quarters.

¹ The news of A. G. Macdonell's untimely death on 16 January 1941 was received as this book went to press.

IN NORTH AMERICA

But from now on, frequent comments began to appear, of which the following are typical :

England's new short-wave schedule, which went into operation a few days ago, indicates changed tactics in broadcasting. Most of the programmes are centered about British preparations for invasion, and these are handed down the air lanes in such a variety of ways that something fresh is always coming to the ear. A review of the first new set of programmes showed that England isn't wasting time on fairy tales.

(New York Times, 14 July 1940)

' Britain Speaks ', now a fortnight old, is a vast improvement over the stodgy stuff that BBC used to short-wave to North America. With swing bands and torch singers, brisk news and political comments, ' Britain Speaks ' is at its best when Novelist-playwright John Boynton Priestley holds forth.

(Time, 29 July 1940)

It is also worth noting that in a recent report the Princeton Listening Centre described the programme as ' frank in tone, lively in pace, and with no stand-offishness '.

Along with this favourable comment went a marked increase in the rebroadcasting of BBC short-wave programmes by American and Canadian stations. Such rebroadcasting, of course, not only makes the BBC better known, but gives greatly increased coverage to its programmes, since they thus become available on the medium waves to which the great majority of North American listeners are accustomed to tune. The lead in this rebroadcasting was taken by the CBC, which rebroadcasts daily over its national network two BBC news bulletins (morning and evening), the BBC ' Radio Newsreel ', two series of talks, ' Questions of the Hour ' and ' Britain Speaks ', and, weekly, ' With the Troops in England ', ' Off the Record ', a French news-letter, and ' Les Voix Françaises ', besides other incidental programmes. Many CBC stations can be heard south of the border, so

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that these programmes are assured of a large listening audience in the United States as well as across Canada. But in addition, according to the latest reports, as many as eighty independent stations in the U.S.A. are now rebroadcasting BBC news bulletins, or the series 'Britain Speaks'. Moreover, two recent outside broadcasts describing London during air attack, 'London after Dark' and 'London carries on', were rebroadcast on national networks in the United States—the first by the Columbia Broadcasting System, and the second by both that system and the National Broadcasting Company. Also, the network of the Mutual Broadcasting System rebroadcasts two BBC news bulletins every day.

Correspondence from listeners is one of the best means of judging the effect of British broadcasts in North America. Since the replanning of the North American service, treble the number of letters have been received by the BBC from Canadian listeners. Their growing familiarity with British broadcasting is well expressed by a listener in Ontario, who writes: 'Over here we never fail to hear London every evening, and Big Ben is getting to be actually one of our house clocks.' Listeners in the U.S.A. are also writing to the BBC in London at the rate of a hundred letters a week and more, excluding the considerable correspondence addressed to those who take part in 'Britain Speaks'. At its New York office the BBC was receiving practically no letters from listeners three months ago, but, shortly after the new programme began, the postbag amounted to some eighty letters a day, either asking for information, calling for copies of talks, or expressing appreciation or criticism. A notable feature of all these letters is the gratitude which listeners express for the opportunity which the BBC provides of hearing a steady and unperturbed voice from London, giving a balanced account of news. A letter from Massachusetts is to the point here; it runs—'The good work being done by your broadcasting stations is bringing truth to many people who have, in the past, been too often under the spell

of the false Nazi propaganda'. Fears are allayed, and the feeling of relief shared by many stimulates sympathy towards Britain and her cause. A listener in California writes: 'There are many of us Americans here who are proud to think of England as our Motherland, and who sit and listen every day to your broadcasts and are cheered and encouraged by your voices. One of our favourite features is your Sunday service heard here on the Pacific coast Sunday evenings.' The unruffled calmness and courageous tone of J. B. Priestley's broadcasts are also shown to have helped in doing away with anxiety. Thus, a mother and daughter write to say that his talks 'acted like a tonic, and we have not felt afraid or discouraged since'. Vernon Bartlett, second in popularity, is praised for the frank and informative character of his talks.

The CBC's postbag also contains many letters indicating appreciation of its rebroadcasts of BBC programmes. Many of these letters come from across the American Border. 'I can assure you', writes a correspondent from the University of Michigan, 'that your very fair and objective presentation of news, and the occasional special talks by prominent Britishers, are creating an excellent impression in this country.' Again, a lady from Brynmawr, Pa., writes: 'I am British, and I must tell you that for the first time during these months I have felt heartened about the progress and outcome of the war, through hearing Mr. Noel Baker's broadcast.'

No doubt Canada's support of British broadcasting will be more effective when the high-powered short-wave transmitter is constructed. The CBC has ordered a 7.5 kilowatt basic unit, which should be operating early in 1941. While not powerful enough to cross the oceans reliably, this transmitter will add considerably to the North American audience of both BBC and CBC. The steadying influence of British news and British talks uttered by voices that carry conviction is increasingly important.

BROADCAST TALKS IN WARTIME

by

SIR RICHARD MACONACHIE

Director of Talks

Broadcasting in war is still a subject 'in search of an author', but the reason why so little has been written on it can hardly be any general disbelief in its importance.

The Listener Research Department estimates that on 14 July over sixty-four per cent of the adult population of this country heard Mr. Churchill speak, and more than two hundred years have passed since Swift told Stella that 'in war opinion is nine parts in ten'. Even when allowance is made for the normal margin of error in Mr. Silvey's statistics—and indeed in Swift's—it is clear that the broadcasting of talks has a considerable part to play in the formation of public opinion, and consequently in the conduct of the war. This conclusion is reinforced when one remembers the speed—not of sound but of light—at which the spoken word reaches the radio audience, its immediacy of emotional appeal, and the community of feeling engendered by listening in company with millions of one's fellow-countrymen.

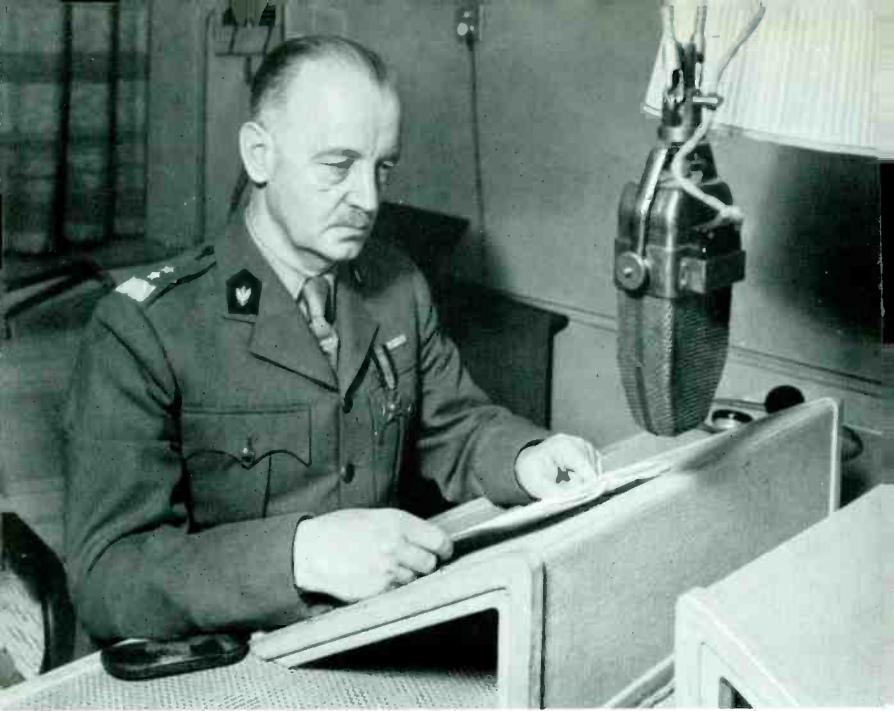
But although 'the wireless' has long been a familiar article of domestic furniture, this is the first great war in which broadcasting has played a part, and the producer of wartime broadcasts is thus treading an unblazed trail which he can trace only as he goes along—largely by trial and error—and of which he cannot as yet see the end. Certain principles are, however, taking shape and some of the functions of broadcast talks as a contribution to the national effort are plainly discernible—to explain the significance of events as they occur; to keep the essential issues clearly before the nation; to inspire determination to see the war through; to reflect the personal experience of the man and woman in the front line; and to tell the ordinary citizen what he must do, and how and why, to cope with the practical problems that confront him in the new conditions of 'total war'.

**Air Marshal Sir
Philip Joubert**



**The Hon. Harold Nicolson,
M.P., Parliamentary Secretary
to the Ministry of
Information**





General Sikorski, Prime Minister of Poland

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It is under these heads that most of the year's talks have been planned. Once or twice a week Cabinet Ministers have made use of the microphone to explain the new measures for which they have been responsible, and the direction in which the co-operation of the public is required. The Prime Minister's broadcasts, though few in number, have been of world-wide significance, as interpreting both the policy of the Government and the spirit of the country. The progress of military operations has been the subject of weekly commentaries by speakers representing the three Services, and several of these, although newcomers to broadcasting, such as Major-General Sir Ernest Swinton, Vice-Admiral Sir James Somerville, Air Marshal Sir Philip Joubert, General Sir Hugh Elles, and General Sir Walter Kirke, have established themselves in popular favour. The economic aspects of the war are dealt with in Donald Tyerman's series 'The Economic War', and other series which deserve special mention have been 'Onlooker's' sixteen talks, broadcast weekly from 9 February to 14 June, and W. A. Sinclair's 'The Voice of the Nazi', which gave a brilliant analysis of the aims and methods of German propaganda. Personal experience is the theme of the popular series 'The World goes by', and practical instruction the aim of talks regularly broadcast on a variety of subjects: farming, gardening, cookery, first aid, health, air raid precautions, and so on. Several of these series are placed in the morning or early afternoon, and together with others on more general topics, are intended specially for women.

Although various practical considerations have inevitably tended to curtail the number of talks contributed from the Regions, the importance of reflecting local conditions throughout the country has been kept in mind, and talks from Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, and all parts of England have been regularly broadcast, notably in the composite programme entitled 'In Britain Now'. The main object of this series has been to give a picture of the national effort seen in a diversity of aspects but with the unity of a

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common aim. But in their other talks the Regions have covered a wide range of topics: Scottish County Councils described by John R. Allan with his own dry humour; Ralph Wightman's market day in a West Country town; the generations of Northern families drawn from life in 'Family Album'; Bill Oakley's bicycle; the 'Junk' which George Nash, despite all rules of A.R.P., continues to find in his attic—all these and many more have served to remind the listener that even in 1940 it has been possible to be gay as well as grim.

The great part played in the war by the Dominions and the Colonial Empire has been the motif of the fortnightly 'Dominion Commentaries', and of the series 'In it together', in which the speakers were members of the Dominion and Indian contingents and Colonial visitors to this country.

The growing significance for the British listener of the trend of public opinion in America has been recognized not only by the continuance of the American commentaries so long identified with the name of Raymond Gram Swing, but by the relaying, thanks to the courtesy of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, of several of the talks in the series 'Let's face the Facts', addressed to the people of Canada by American and Canadian speakers.

It is clear from this brief account of the lines on which broadcast talks are planned in wartime that most of them tend to have a 'moral', and to be, therefore, in the sense of the word explained by Mr. Harold Nicolson elsewhere in this book, 'propaganda' of the democratic variety. As such they come under the general control of the Ministry of Information; but in practice this control is exercised in varying degrees. Broadcasts by Cabinet Ministers, for instance, are arranged entirely by the Ministry, and the Corporation has no responsibility for them. In the case of other talks on matters of public importance, the Ministry either gives general 'directives', or approves suggestions submitted by the Corporation. Details in regard to treat-

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ment and choice of speakers are then worked out by talks producers with the appropriate Government Department.

It is unfortunate, from more than one point of view, that exhortation and instruction fill so much of the time available for talks, but war is a hard taskmaster and its exigencies tend to leave less and less room for recreation. Space has, however, been found for two important series not directly concerned with the national war effort—'Taking Stock' and 'The Writer in the Witness Box'—and it is hoped that conditions may before long allow of a larger proportion of entertainment, in the widest sense of the word. One suspects that the listener (like the producer) may soon become conscious of a 'saturation point' for admonition, and demand from his wireless set less work and more play; more talks, for instance, like William Aspden's pictures of the country-side, or W. D. H. McCullough's joyous account of his return to the bicycle.

Short talks of five or six minutes in length have been a strikingly popular innovation. When these immediately follow a news bulletin, as in the case of the well-known 'postscripts', there is, of course, a large audience ready made for them. 'The Kitchen Front' series, however, does not start with this advantage, and the fact that although these talks have now been broadcast every weekday for five months the audience for them is as large as ever suggests that for the listener in war conditions brevity may be in itself attractive.

It seems at first sight that, in times like these, the planner of broadcast talks must find an abundance of material ready to his hand, but as soon as he sets to work on it he discovers certain difficulties. Heroes are seldom remarkable for their powers of self-expression, and proficiency in broadcasting is not yet recognized as a qualification for promotion in the public services. Consequently speakers who, from their experience and official position, might seem best fitted to inspire and instruct, too often demonstrate, under the fierce test of the microphone, how narrow is the line which divides the teacher from the bore and the prophet from the prig.

BROADCAST TALKS IN WARTIME

But the discovery of suitable speakers is not the planner's only difficulty in time of war ; he is faced also with a certain restriction of material. It is a commonplace that the value to the enemy of many kinds of information depends largely on the speed with which he can obtain it, and since no other medium can rival radio in speed of transmission, broadcast speech naturally requires particularly close censorship.

Other restrictions are imposed by changes in popular taste. In peacetime, for instance, there is a constant demand for discussion at the microphone of the questions which divide the political parties, but since the outbreak of war and the consequent impulse towards national unity, the British public, as a correspondent recently put it, now seems to be 'sick of party politics'. This, of course, is a natural change which it is not difficult to appreciate. Far less easy to foresee are the rapid variations in the temper of the audience corresponding to the shifting vicissitudes of the war. Questions which were being widely discussed in April of this year had come to seem academic, if not trivial, by July, while certain matters like air raid precautions and first aid, which in the early phases of the war appeared to be of practical interest only to the pessimist, suddenly acquired a painfully topical importance. Hence the planner's dilemma. If, as in peacetime, he thinks and plans well ahead, working out a careful scheme for the broadcasts in a series, and taking time to find suitable speakers, he runs the risk of seeing his plans abandoned at the eleventh hour and all his work thrown away ; while, if he trusts to improvisation, the results are only too likely to show lack of arrangement and evidence of haste.

Such are some of the problems which confront the producer of broadcast talks in wartime. His clouds, however, have a silver lining ; for he finds that speakers generally appreciate, more clearly than in less critical times, the value of their contribution to the national effort, and are, consequently, more ready to adapt themselves to the requirements of broadcasting. Yet few speakers during the past year have been people of leisure. For most of them broadcasting has

BROADCAST TALKS IN WARTIME

been an 'extra job' to be fitted in between long days of exacting work, and has meant awkward journeys to the studio, sometimes through the discomfort of the barrage and the 'blitz'. The tendency to regard broadcasting as a more or less harmless sideline is so familiar that it passes almost unnoticed, but the future student of history will surely be puzzled to find that in the second year of the war the use of such an obviously potent weapon as the microphone was still mainly dependent on the patriotism or good will of individuals who could be persuaded to undertake the broadcasting of talks in their spare time.

Listeners, too, have more than played their part by showing that in spite of all the distractions of war conditions they retain their interest in broadcasting. Even the twopence-halfpenny postage has failed to stop the welcome flow of their comments. These range from the tersely abusive, sometimes in block capitals on an unsigned postcard, to the charming letter received during a recent air raid from a lady who forwarded, by carrier, a book weighing over ten pounds, as evidence that a statement she believed she had heard in a broadcast was incorrect. To all his critics, courteous or otherwise, the producer of talks has cause to be grateful, since their comments show that the audience is not merely listening but interested. So long as he has evidence of such interest he is content to remain in his traditional obscurity, not grudging his colleagues in other departments the generous publicity they receive at the microphone and in the *Radio Times*. Even the question he is often asked by puzzled relatives—'But if you aren't an announcer, what on earth do you do?'—will not perturb him, for he knows that his work matters enough to be worth while, and, in wartime at any rate, is difficult enough to be exciting.

MUSIC

by

SIR ADRIAN BOULT

Director of Music

Although the outbreak of war presented the BBC's musical staff with difficult problems, many of these had been satisfactorily solved by the beginning of 1940, and the inauguration of the Programme for the Forces in February further relieved the pressure on the very limited programme-time previously available for musical broadcasts of all types. In particular, the Programme for the Forces enabled us to present more light—and comparatively light—music, including those classics which have passed from the 'very popular' to the 'hackneyed' class, without, of course, losing their intrinsic value, and which still give pleasure to enormous numbers of listeners. In 'Orchestral Half-hour', for example, items requested by Service listeners have been included in that programme. It thus became possible to use the time available in the Home Service mainly, though not exclusively, for more serious music. But although many difficulties have been finally overcome, the fight against others goes on, and must go on. The wide field of international artists has been largely closed to us, and many British artists normally available have been called up for service with the forces. Those that have been available have often had to work in trying conditions, and I should like to pay tribute here to their patience and cheerfulness.

Despite these handicaps, the record of musical broadcasts for the year is impressive. There have been few peaks of interest, perhaps, but a high general level. This is the result of deliberate policy. To be of outstanding interest—and 'interest' is by no means synonymous with 'value'—a work must be either new or comparatively little known. But the limitations of programme-time have made it necessary to plan each programme so as to appeal to a wide audience; limited audiences with specialized tastes and interests can no longer be catered for. Hence, although there have been

occasional concerts of works by contemporary composers and occasional revivals of forgotten masterpieces (for instance, all three of Byrd's masses, a number of performances of Schubert's earlier symphonies, and a series of little-known Haydn quartets), the larger part of the picture has been filled by the well-tried work of the great classical masters. The evidence is general that the musical public turns to these sources for mental and spiritual recreation more eagerly than ever to-day. Yet, despite this emphasis on the classics, the claims of the native composer have not been overlooked ; of the total broadcasting time occupied by serious orchestral music, chamber music, choral works, and recitals no less than one quarter has been devoted to the music of British composers. British song writers have also been extremely well represented in both general and special programmes. Nor has the art of our allies been neglected. French music, in particular, has had a large share of the programmes, and the guest artists have included a number of representatives of allied nations—notably, among conductors, Alfred Wolff from Paris. Two friends whom we were proud to welcome to Bristol a very short time after they had suffered from close contact with the war were Gregor Fitelberg from Poland and Désiré Defauw from Brussels. We have also arranged outside broadcasts of orchestral concerts of special significance for international as well as national reasons.

As in peacetime our programmes are still built round certain permanent features. Thus the symphony concerts on Wednesday evenings and the concerts on Sunday afternoons continue to be the two most important orchestral broadcasts of the week, while a large-scale work of chamber music and an instrumental recital by an outstanding artist are the central points of each week's recitals. Other prominent features of our policy have been such series of recitals as those devoted to Bach's forty-eight preludes and fugues, Debussy's songs, Mozart's 'Haydn' quartets, and Beethoven's Op. 18 quartets ; weekly organ recitals ; frequent performances of madrigals and part-songs by the BBC Singers ; and the two

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series 'Music in the Cathedral' and 'Worship through Music', in which works of various styles intended for church use were performed by the BBC Chorus.

Not that choral music has been by any means monopolized on the air by the BBC's own choirs ; on the contrary, there have been broadcasts by many well-known 'outside' choirs. Indeed, despite the hampering circumstances of the times, we have continued the policy of representing as fully as possible the activities of outside musical societies and orchestras. From October last, when the seasonal schemes of most of the societies began, there has been hardly a week without at least one programme from one of these sources, either from a provincial centre or from the studio. A few enterprising towns carried through their music festivals, and programmes from the Eastbourne, Bournemouth, Hastings, and Torquay festivals were broadcast. Perhaps even pluckier has been the struggle of Sadler's Wells, which was the only 'outside' source of opera in the country during 1940. A number of single acts were relayed from this theatre, and I was very happy to accept an invitation to conduct 'Don Giovanni' there last June. The BBC's Music Productions Unit has done what it could to compensate for the scarcity of outside opera, and, although the limitations of programme-time imposed on all branches of broadcasting curtailed its activities, it produced a number of operettas and comic operas (nearly all by British composers). And studio opera is to be resumed before long.

The orchestra of the Music Productions Unit, the BBC Theatre Orchestra, has been seen by the public for the first time ; six public concerts were given with great success in various towns. The BBC Symphony Orchestra has also continued to give a certain number of its main concerts in public—regularly in the Colston Hall, Bristol, and occasionally at other towns. Visits were made for the first time to Newport and Cardiff ; here, in Wolverhampton, and in towns of the West Country, the orchestra was enthusiastically received, and when, later in the year, we began a new

series of lunch-hour concerts at fortnightly intervals in the Colston Hall, the response was overwhelming. I think I may say that we all have a great affection for our new Bristol friends (or audiences). Indeed, the orchestra's removal from London has considerably altered the musical centre of gravity of the country and may have a far-reaching effect on its post-war musical culture.

In any account of the BBC's musical activities, light music must bulk largely—for it bulks largely in the programmes and is probably listened to by considerably larger audiences than those which enjoy serious music. In addition, light music performs various 'background' functions, notably in the new feature 'Music while you work'.

The bulk of our light music has been provided by an emergency group of players formed in London in September 1939, and evacuated to the West Country, where they evolved into a number of units of varying size and style, covering a wide range of light music. With the aid of skilled arrangers, each group has developed an individual repertoire. The most important of these units is the BBC Salon Orchestra, which, under Leslie Bridgewater's direction, consists of eighteen players. Compositions have been specially written during the year by many British composers, who have been able to exploit the virtuoso abilities of the members of this orchestra. Here again, however, there has been no question of the BBC's own organizations monopolizing the microphone; in spite of ever-increasing difficulties, many favourite light orchestras of pre-war days are still on the air both from studios and as outside broadcasts. Considerable use has been made of light orchestras in the provinces, to say nothing of military and brass bands. The BBC's own military band broke new ground with a specially presented series of programmes entitled 'Follow the Drum'.

Incidentally, in all programmes we have tried to make a sharper distinction between those that are purely 'background', those that are public events with a special setting, and those that have the more intimate atmosphere of the

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studio—hoping that thereby we have been able to bring our artists and our music closer to our listeners.

The gramophone, always a valuable auxiliary of radio, was no longer called upon to meet innumerable emergencies as in the first few weeks of the war ; the gramophone programmes of 1940 returned more or less to the normal. Among the numerous illustrated talks during the year the most noteworthy were those by Sir Thomas Beecham on Delius, by Malcolm Sargent on Tetrizzini, by John McCormack on 'Some of my Favourite Gramophone Records', and also Francis Toye's series 'Conductors of the World'. Outstanding among the more popular series addressed to the widest audience were 'These you have loved' and 'I know what I like'.

One of the most important points of the BBC's music policy is the establishment of closer and friendlier relations with listeners. This has been developed along three main lines : one we may call 'listener participation' (community singing and the like), the others being the encouragement of amateur music-making and the encouragement of intelligent listening. In addition to the ordinary community singing programmes, 'Join in and sing', which have proved very popular, community hymn-singing on Sundays has been developed into the 'Sunday Half-hour': twenty minutes of familiar hymns from some church, chapel, town hall, or Service group, followed by an epilogue. In order to encourage amateur music-making up and down the country, a series 'Music-makers' Half-hour' was started in January. Week by week, different musicians came to the studio to talk about various forms of music-making and the problems they present to music-makers. More than half of each period was devoted to illustrations, and the programmes proved to be of considerable interest to general listeners as well as to those at whom they were specially directed. In connexion with the series, the recording van travelled into country districts, and records were made of amateur music-making, sometimes in remote villages. These were made up into



The BBC Scottish Orchestra, conducted by Ian Whyte



'London carries on'—Michael Standing of the BBC with others in the crypt of the church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields during an air raid; the late Reverend Pat McCormick is speaking into the microphone

feature programmes. A new series of even wider scope began in October.

Equally important is the need to encourage intelligent listening to music. So in July we started a Sunday series of fifteen-minute programmes called 'Everyman's Music'. The underlying idea was this: as we realize the part that music of an enduring nature can play in the refreshment of the mind, so we realize that many people are glad of a trusted companion whose guidance will ensure that the significance of that music is reached. Sir Walford Davies and Alec Robertson have been the chief contributors to this series.

Finally, some mention must be made of the work we have been doing on behalf of British folk-music. Now more than ever is it essential that the people of Britain, always rather heedless of their rich musical heritage, should be reminded of the true roots of our musical tradition. Many folk-songs have been included in the school programmes, in the community series 'Join in and sing' already mentioned, and (in modern arrangements) in the programmes of the BBC Singers. The series 'Music from an English County', originally designed to include both folk-music of each county and music by local composers, afterwards developed into 'Britain and its Music', in which the county boundary was overstepped. But the same underlying principle remained: to present the best and most characteristic music of a particular region. These programmes, given by folk-singers, choirs, fiddlers, pipers, accordion-players, were among the most interesting of the year's musical broadcasts.

I began this account of our activities by mentioning some of the difficulties and limitations under which our programmes have been produced, affecting in some degree their scope and variety. But there has been gain in other directions, chiefly in a greater reliance on our native resources and a corresponding disclosure of the richness of our national musical heritage.

GAIETY IN THE GRIMNESS

by

A. P. LEE

Press Officer, West Region

John Watt speaking :

' You know, there just isn't a foolproof formula for churning out big radio successes. I know. I've used the same one several times ; once it's a winner, the other times a flop. . . . Every year we put on at least twenty different series of shows. Out of that we're really lucky if we land one big hit like " Band Waggon " or " Garrison Theatre ". You can never tell with the public.'

The Director of Variety did his department less than justice. You can't make everything a ' Band Waggon ' (radio would be deadly dull if you did) ; but as well as this universal favourite, broadcasting offered last year other programmes whose popularity is perennial—the ' Kentucky Minstrels ', ' Eight Bells ', ' Henry Hall's Guest Night ', ' The Pig and Whistle ', Saturday-night ' Music Hall ', ' Sing Song ', ' In Town To-night ', and old chums like Syd Walker.

The year 1940 was the biggest the Variety Department has tackled. It was called upon to provide that light relief to help make tolerable the war's restrictions on normal life. It had somehow to jazz the black-out blues. It found a humorist in Hitler, and in Haw-Haw a figure of fun. It knocked some good sound nonsense into the thick head of Mars.

And the Programme for the Forces, too ! The bulk of this fell to Variety's charge. The department became, in point of fact, responsible for well over a hundred programme ' spots ' a week. More and more producers were recruited to keep this activity going, and also to take the place of younger members of the staff who went to join the fighting services. The BBC Regions, even though their staffs were depleted, contributed their share. Their own Regional programmes disappeared with the war, but many a local

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dish added to the nation's zest. The North Region established an attractive series, 'King Pins of Comedy'; Scotland brought in Sir Harry Lauder and Harry Gordon of Inversnecky, and also arranged sophisticated little shows like 'Black-outs for the Black-out'; Northern Ireland added 'Irish Rhythms' and the native flavour of its *ceilidh* bands; it also sent James Moody and the 'Three in Harmony' to entertain from 'somewhere in England'; the Midland Region retained its musical shows, and Wales its own comedy—in addition to adopting part of the variety repertory company—while the West Region continued its popular 'Dance Cabaret' features from hotels.

Amid the welter of schedules, rearrangements, planning and replanning, the Variety Department always managed to keep one eye open for the needs of the overseas services, and moulded shows to be good entertainment not only for listeners at home, but for those in distant corners of the world wherever English is spoken.

It was, however, to the men in the fighting services that broadcast variety aimed to make its first appeal; nor did popularity with the forces mean anything but popularity with the home front too. A show such as 'Sandy's Half-hour' was the link between listeners on both fronts; its reward was an almost staggering load of mail, all of it carefully examined by the patient Mr. Macpherson. In addition, this most popular of all cinema organists contributes his 'Half-hour' for Canada and for the troops in the Near East. Also appealing to home listeners, although addressed to the forces, is that novel experiment 'Have you met Annette?' with Betty Astell playing sweetheart by radio to men in uniform; also the camp concerts from barracks, aerodromes, and naval stations, the 'Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer' shows for the personnel standing by in lonely outposts, and the Carroll Levis series 'Carry on!' which included workers in the front line at home.

While branching out into new programmes to meet new

GAIETY IN THE GRIMNESS

needs, the Variety Department strove still to be lively and inventive along the lines of well-established policy. 'Garrison Theatre' has opened its doors in every home, and introduced a new star and a new personality in Jack Warner. 1940 was the natal date of 'Hi, Gang!', a show which, with its talented American team of Vic Oliver, Bébé Daniels, and Ben Lyon, has already exceeded the half-year without interruption—with no one to object how much it is extended. Other new features were 'Dandy Lion', a bold experiment at creating an original radio equivalent of the supremely successful Disney cartoons; 'Star Time', presenting the greatest artists in their own line in the performances for which the public love them best; 'Send for Dr. Dick', making a star out of Dick Francis; the 'Good Old Timers' built round Marie Lloyd, Little Tich, Dan Leno, Jenny Hill 'the Vital Spark', and other great ones of the music-halls, the 'Saturday Spotlight' which in summer filled the space of 'In Town To-night'; the witty 'Thanking yew' with Cyril Fletcher; and lastly C. B. Cochran's very own show, 'Cock-a-Doodle-Do'.

Although every show can't be a 'Band Waggon' nor a 'Hi, Gang!', there were during the year several which were prime favourites and well beloved by listeners. 'Itma' spoke for itself, 'Danger! Men at Work' merited two revivals during the year, and 'Howdy, Folks' continued to greet listeners even when its chief conspirator, Eric Barker, joined the navy, while 'I want to be an Actor' found a new lease of life by going out of the studio to visit camp concerts, giving the army and the R.A.F. a chance—gleefully accepted—to go on the air. A happy tradition was continued by presenting radio versions of 'Pinocchio' and 'Gulliver's Travels', while John Watt began negotiations for the broadcasting rights of 'Fantasia', the latest Disney, even before its New York première.

The favourite 'Scrapbook' programmes were not allowed to die when their part-author, Charles Brewer, went back to the R.A.F. instead of remaining Assistant Director of



'Star Time'—Evelyn Laye and Frank Lawton with Ronald Waldman (producer)
and Hyam Greenbaum (conductor)

Jack Warner and Joan Winters, stars of 'Garrison Theatre'





' For the Forces '

GAIETY IN THE GRIMNESS

Variety. Leslie Baily transformed them into 'Everybody's Scrapbook', and instead of devoting each one to a particular year, made them albums of things worth remembering, so winning a new success.

Enemy action proved unkind to the seaside concert parties, but the BBC was able, nevertheless, to find as many good summer broadcasts as before, and this patronage prolonged the life of some of these jolly shows, because municipalities found there was good propaganda in letting the radio prove that they were carrying on as usual in spite of difficulties.

Drawing on two other forms of entertainment, radio kept a series of programmes running through the year. The film festival—producing such hits as 'Love Parade', 'The Wizard of Oz', 'Alexander's Ragtime Band', 'Forty-second Street', and 'Monte Carlo'—began a run that was shared by the weekly musical comedy. Often the original stars came to play their old parts in radio versions of shows like 'Evergreen', 'Anything goes', 'Toni', 'Gay Divorce', and 'Nymph Errant'.

Between these and relays from theatres and music-halls, John Watt is justified in saying, by no means complacently, but with considerable relish, 'We had all the big names of variety and musical comedy in 1940'. When you mention Vic Oliver, Cicely Courtneidge, Flanagan and Allen, Evelyn Laye, John McCormack, Sir Harry Lauder, Binnie Hale, Bébé Daniels and Ben Lyon, Jack Buchanan, Max Miller, Arthur Askey and 'Stinker', Edith Evans, Carroll Levis, C. B. Cochran, Will Fyffe, Carl Brisson, Sir Seymour Hicks, Gracie Fields, Sonnie Hale and Jessie Matthews, Jack Warner and Joan Winters, George Formby, Leslie Henson—you've only begun the muster-roll of household names presented by radio variety during the year.

LISTENING IN 1940

by

R. J. E. SILVEY

Listener Research Director

The work of the Listener Research Department now enables the BBC to measure the extent of listening to the Home Service and the Programme for the Forces, and the figures showing the audience for each news bulletin are among the most interesting in its records. Two-thirds of the entire adult population are regular listeners to broadcast news, if 'regular' is taken to mean listening virtually every day to at least one bulletin.

Although the habit of listening to news is general, it is more common in some parts of the country than in others. For example, during a week which may be considered typical, listening to news was found to be most prevalent in Scotland, where the average adult heard thirteen bulletins out of a possible forty-two; in Wales the average number heard was twelve, in the West of England eleven, in the North and in London ten, and in the Midlands nine. In no region, be it noted, is the average number of bulletins listened to as many as two per day. The belief that a substantial section of the population habitually listens to every news bulletin broadcast is not founded on fact.

Each bulletin has its own type of audience. The bulletin at 7.0 a.m., being listened to mainly by early workers, has a predominantly masculine audience. The audience at 1.0 p.m. is predominantly feminine. Southerners listen more at 9.0 p.m. than at 6.0 p.m. Northerners and Scotsmen listen more at 6.0 p.m. than at 9.0 p.m.

The number of people who listen to each bulletin is naturally affected by a variety of considerations, though the audiences for some bulletins fluctuate much more than others. The nine o'clock news almost always claims the largest number of listeners. It is quite usual to find that sixteen million people (excluding children) have listened to it. The six o'clock news is not usually heard by quite as

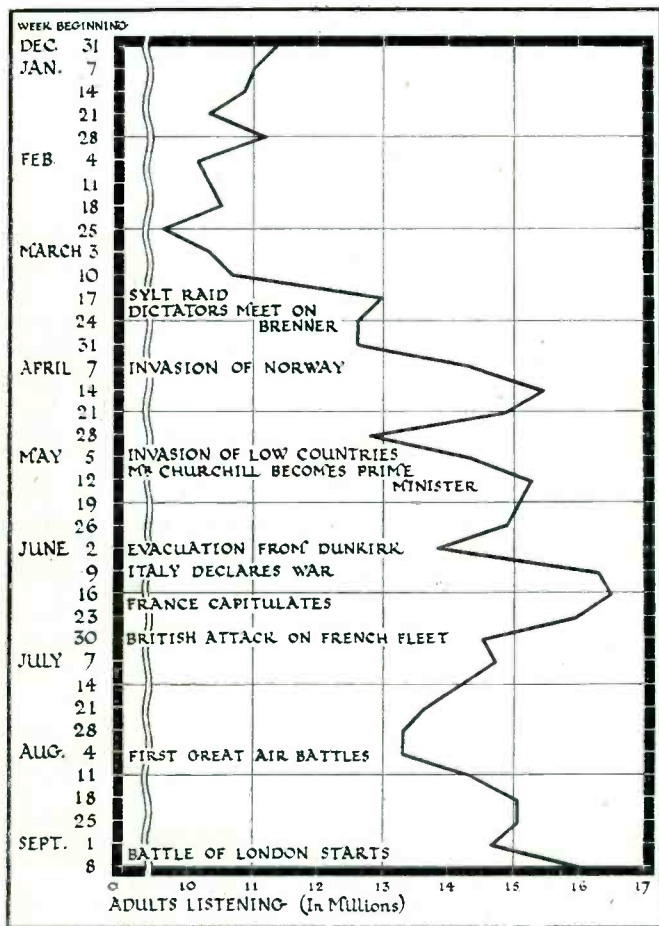


CHART I
 THE AUDIENCE FOR THE 1.0 P.M. NEWS BULLETIN
 Weekly Averages between 31 December 1939 and 8 September 1940

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many, though fourteen or fifteen millions is a fair average. There is less variation in the size of the audience for these bulletins than for any others.

The bulletin at 1.0 p.m. has been listened to each day by anything from ten to seventeen millions in 1940, though its average is usually about thirteen millions. The fluctuations in the audience for this bulletin provide an instructive index of the extent to which changes in events play their part in drawing the public to their loudspeakers (see Chart I).

The numbers of people who listen to the two early morning bulletins, at 7.0 a.m. and 8.0 a.m., vary very considerably. For example, on the first Monday in June some seven and a half million people listened at seven o'clock and nearly eleven millions at eight o'clock. This was about twice as many as listened to these bulletins in the bitter cold of early February.

How, it may well be asked, are these figures arrived at? The answer is that they are estimates based upon a continuous sampling of the population. Since December 1939, eight hundred persons have been interviewed each day and have been asked, among other things, to indicate on a printed list the programmes they had listened to on the previous day. Since the daily sample has been so planned that all types of the population are represented in their proper proportions, the results provide, within known statistical limitations, a picture of the quantity of listening hour by hour and day by day. In this way, British broadcasting provides itself with an equivalent to the salutary check which the entertainment industry obtains from the 'box office' or the newspaper proprietor from his 'net sales'.

Chart II gives estimates, derived from the same source, of the average audiences for eleven well-known series in October 1940. Saturday-night variety is listened to by nearly eleven millions—almost a third of the entire population, but, significantly enough, the 'War Commentary' is heard by over seven millions and the 'American Commentary' by nearly six. 'The Kitchen Front', a series of

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talks for housewives on 'what to eat and how to cook it', commands an audience of well over five millions, and the 'World goes by' is listened to by three and three-quarter millions. 'Music while you work', a series of programmes broadcast daily at 10.30 a.m. and 3.0 p.m., is designed

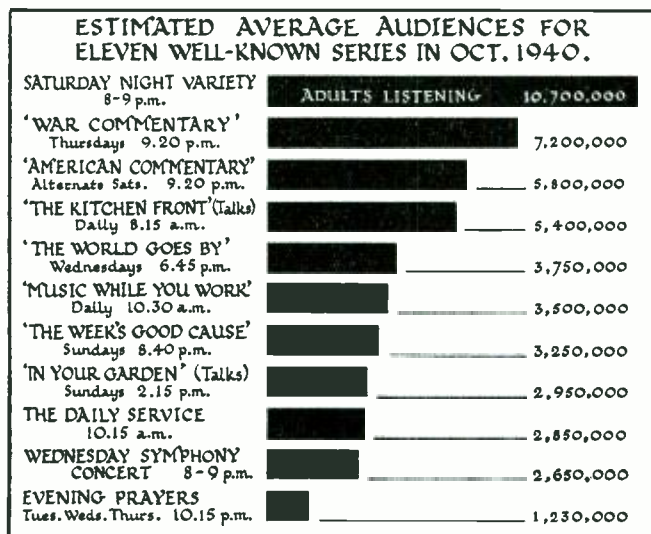


CHART II

primarily for use in factories, but is in fact heard regularly in a great many homes as well. The audience of all types is estimated to average three and a half millions for the morning session and rather under three millions in the afternoon. 'The Week's Good Cause', one of the oldest regular BBC features, is usually listened to by three and a quarter millions, and the gardening talk on Sunday afternoons by nearly three millions. The Daily Service, broadcast at 10.15 a.m., cannot, of course, be listened to by those who are out at work, but nearly three millions of those who are able to listen do so. The Wednesday symphony concert usually

LISTENING IN 1940

commands an audience of over two and a half millions, and the short sessions of evening prayers, broadcast three times a week in the late evening, are heard by some million and a quarter listeners.

When Her Royal Highness Princess Elizabeth broadcast a message in the Children's Hour on 13 October, it was heard by nearly eighteen million grown-ups. The Prime Minister's famous broadcasts in the anxious months in midsummer drew the public to its radio sets to an extent which has not been equalled since. On one occasion his listeners included over sixty-four per cent of the adult population. But no audience in 1940 has been larger than that which listened to His Majesty the King on Empire Day: it numbered over twenty-four millions.

SCOTLAND'S WARTIME CONTRIBUTION

by

MELVILLE DINWIDDIE

Scottish Director

The restrictions imposed by the war on broadcasting throughout Great Britain affected Scotland very severely. When a broadcast programme designed for the entertainment of a nation possessing its own music and traditional folk-lore is suddenly merged into a greater system, much of its identity is inevitably lost, and the things which Scottish listeners enjoyed had in wartime to be necessarily curtailed in a single Home Service programme to meet the needs of the whole of Great Britain. The readjustment of wavelengths at the beginning of the war marked the end of the Scottish Programme as such, and for the first few weeks there was little or no specific Scottish material. Even the loyal endeavour of an announcer to include some Scottish folk-music or a record of a bagpipe tune as a fill-up after announcements in Gaelic was sometimes frustrated by lack of time. An occasional talk on some Scottish aspect of the war, a religious service of the Church of Scotland, and regular contributions by the BBC Scottish Orchestra, with items of Scottish flavour sparingly included, were all that one could find. Not even when the survivors of the *Athenia* were brought to the Glasgow studios could the name of that town be mentioned. Members of the Scottish programme staff could not avoid a feeling of frustration in their work, which in peacetime had been mainly devoted to reflecting the life and outlook of the Scottish nation.

But before the first month of the war was over, plans were being laid to give Scotland a greater share in the Home Service. For some weeks we were able to include eyewitness accounts of football matches when none was to be found elsewhere in the programmes. A religious service, conducted by the Right Reverend Professor Archibald

SCOTLAND'S WARTIME CONTRIBUTION

Main, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, was a valuable contribution in these early days; and, at the beginning of October, the Scottish Council for School Broadcasting began to co-operate fully with its English counterpart in providing suitable material for school-children.

It became apparent that listeners north of the Border were being starved of entertainment which they could enjoy at suitable listening times. There was no Gaelic, except an occasional announcement, and that meant much heart-burning in the Western Isles from where so many men had joined the Royal Navy. Representations were made, and a Gaelic news summary and a weekly programme in that language began in November 1939. Listeners greeted with eagerness the programmes in the language they understood best—song and story and talk, or a play, and once a month a religious service in Gaelic. They expressed their thanks in most appreciative terms. One of them, when asked whether he enjoyed the purely English variety material such as 'Band Waggon' and 'Garrison Theatre', replied, 'Yes, we listen to it, but with an apology to ourselves!'

Search was also made for new ideas which might form a Scottish contribution acceptable to British listeners as a whole. Scotland had already provided physical exercises for school-children, and the possibility of similar broadcasts for adults had been discussed. In time of war the need was pressing, and as the broadcast programme began much earlier in the day than in peacetime, exercises seemed good material for inclusion before breakfast. The proposal was made, and, as man's well-being is not physical alone, an extension of the idea was suggested, namely, that a short period of 'spiritual exercises' should be included. Both suggestions were approved, and starting on the morning of 4 December 1939, a 'Thought for To-day' was broadcast under the title 'Lift up your Hearts', followed by ten minutes of physical exercises for men and women on

SCOTLAND'S WARTIME CONTRIBUTION

alternate mornings. Before long it was known that something like one million women and seven hundred and fifty thousand men were following the physical exercises regularly. An exceptional old lady of ninety-three years was reported to be doing those for both men and women every day, while notwithstanding the fact that the exercises were progressively graded, one man of about sixty complained that they were far too simple and slow for him. Later on, the period was extended to twenty minutes, to include two sets of exercises for young and old, and in the autumn—thanks to the advice of a most helpful panel set up by the Central Council of Recreative Training—a further improvement came about when separate sets of exercises for men and women of all ages were given each morning instead of on alternate days.

The spiritual exercises also proved their worth, and, although the speakers remained anonymous, an appreciative audience increased in numbers. To know that something like two million people were listening to this short broadcast every morning was a great encouragement to those who organized it. That number was doubled in May, when the broadcast was given in the five minutes before the eight o'clock news bulletin.

Such contributions to the Home Service, although from Scotland, were not wholly satisfying to Scottish listeners. Nor were programmes on the war effort such as 'North Sea Harvest' and 'Clyde Built' entirely sufficient, however much appreciated; but gradually more space was given to Scottish artists, such as Sir Harry Lauder, Will Fyffe, and Harry Gordon. Scottish productions of plays and features were also regularly inserted. Opportunities for hearing religious services from Scotland were necessarily fewer than in peacetime, but those that were broadcast at intervals were eagerly awaited. Starting in September, a 'Scottish Half-hour' was broadcast regularly in the Home Service on Tuesday evenings at half-past seven. Such popular items as 'bothy' concerts, music from the Borders, 'At the Bursts',

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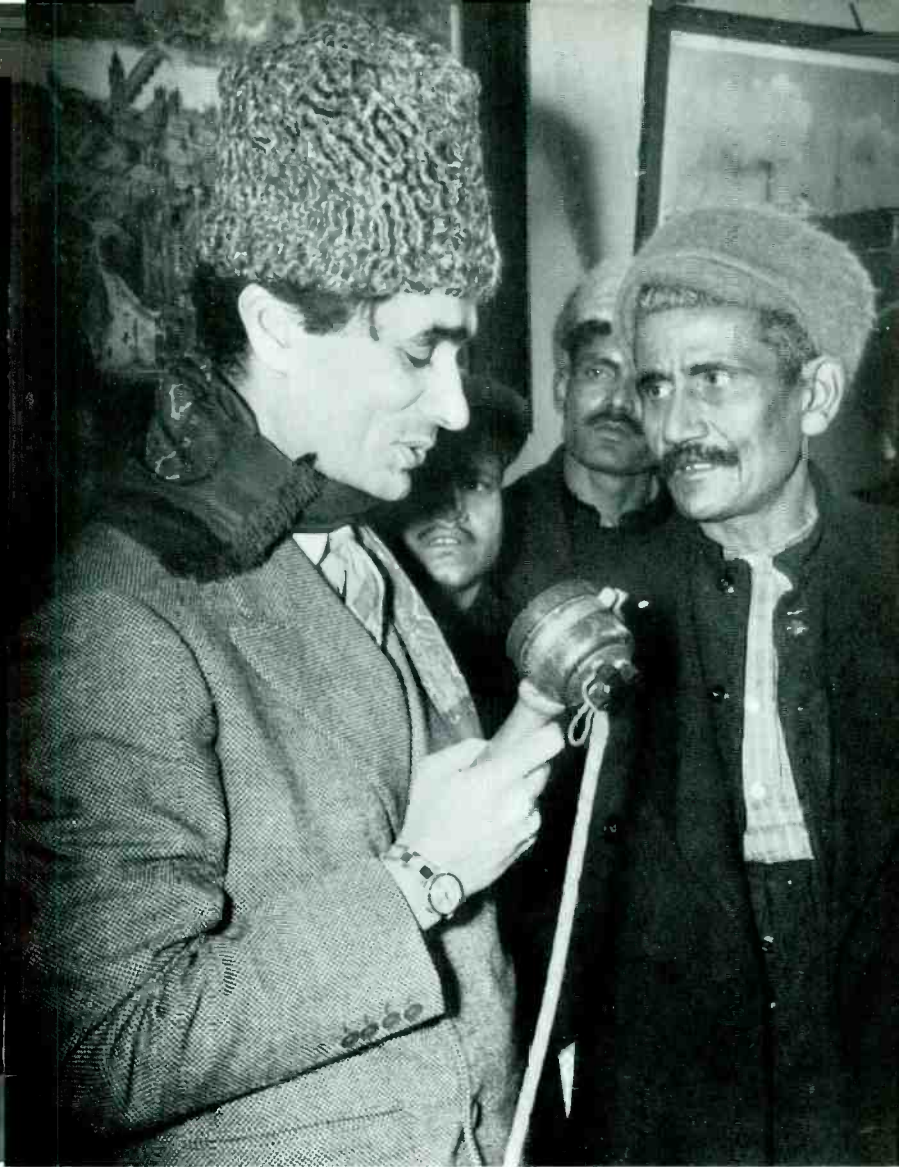
and plays like 'The Scarecrow' were put on for listeners in different districts, because it was felt that to provide a really satisfying broadcast for listeners in the north-east or south-west once a month was better than to try to please the whole nation at one time every Tuesday.

Meanwhile, steps had been taken to reflect the war situation as it developed in Scotland. A war news section made contact with local personalities up and down the country so that early information could be obtained about any great deed of the war. Among the many impressive recordings made for the rest of Britain and the world to hear were those by the survivors of the *Altmark*, the captain and crew that brought the remaining half of the tanker *Imperial Transport* back to port, the children who were torpedoed going to Canada, and the survivors of the *City of Benares*.

Material of this kind was greatly in request for overseas transmissions, especially for those offered to Empire listeners. Indeed, during the year Scotland has made a larger direct contribution to listeners abroad than to those at home.

The presence of large contingents of the armies of our allies, the Poles and Norwegians, also gave scope for some interesting sound pictures, showing the army life and culture of these wartime guests. A series 'Men of Good Will', in which the Polish Army Choir and men of the Polish and Norwegian forces took part, proved a most interesting mixture of personalities.

To sum up, the time and work which Scottish broadcasting during the past year had been compelled to take away from its own listeners has been put to the gain of Great Britain and the Empire; and if Scotland cannot boast a separate programme in wartime, it may be consoled with the reflection that Scottish song and speech, Scottish wit and humour, have been made available as never before to the English-speaking peoples of the world.



Z. A. Bokhari, a member of the staff of All India Radio (seconded to the BBC as Indian Programme Organizer), interviewing Indian seamen, survivors from the *Altmark*



... and this is Alvar Lidell reading it'

ANNOUNCING AND ANNOUNCERS

by

ROBERT MACDERMOT

Programme Organizer (Home Service)

One of the minor effects of the outbreak of the war, but by no means the least spectacular in Broadcasting House, was the disappearance of the announcer's dinner jacket. Up to the beginning of September 1939 the stiff shirt was seen—and heard by the microphone!—whenever a programme was announced before an audience, or whenever a distinguished speaker came to the studio. Still to be seen by the curious are two dinner jackets which hang in the cupboard of a dressing-room in the basement of Broadcasting House. They are the monuments to the change in the announcer's job.

When war came, the job changed overnight. Voices which for years had begun each announcement with 'This is the National Programme' or 'This is the Regional Programme'—and had often succeeded in getting them mixed—now had to adapt themselves to the unfamiliar statement, 'This is the BBC Home Service'. Government announcements were read from the most unlikely places at the most unlikely times; the public were adjured at intervals to retune their receivers to 391 or 449 metres; secret instructions were learnt by heart and then forgotten because some wayward official changed his mind; keys which opened boxes containing keys which opened safes were secreted in every cranny; and on one never-to-be-forgotten day an announcer in a pair of shorts crossed the hall before the horrified eyes of the commissioner.

In the early days we worked in shifts of two—and worked for twelve hours at a stretch. We were frequently up all night, prepared to give any further news in the small hours at one, three, and five o'clock—there never was any!—then we would fall into bed at seven o'clock and sleep until it was time to be on duty again in the afternoon. This manner of

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life, if it did nothing else, gave the home announcers a fellow-feeling with their colleagues, the overseas announcers, who form a separate staff and work, as a matter of course, in shifts all round the clock. Not only are news bulletins in English sent out to all parts of the world at all times, but as the war progressed the BBC began broadcasting in an increasing number of languages, and each new language brought with it its staff of trained announcers, some of whom combined the art of announcing with the task of translating the news into their own tongue.

To revert to the early months of the war, the announcers' lot in those days often meant long periods of standing-by when they had to be ready at need, and the two men who were on duty together developed strange and individual hobbies while they waited. One of the nicest sights I remember was Joseph Macleod in one corner studying a Russian grammar, while in the other Edward Ward (then still an announcer) was drawing with great care and neatness exotic Chinese characters.

Gradually life became more settled, and the excitement of improvisation was lost. A new development was the division of announcers into news readers and programme announcers. The programme announcers specialized in the task of presenting programmes at the microphone adequately and attractively, leaving a number of their colleagues free to concentrate upon the news and to keep in closer touch with the News Department. In peacetime, apart from occasional 'write-ups' and sometimes libellous photographs in the press, the announcers were mainly anonymous; now, in wartime, all that is changed. No longer, I hope, does one hear those questions which are the bane of every announcer's private life: 'Are you the one who reads the news?', or even 'Are there any announcers besides you and Mr. Hibberd?'. The voice now has a name; and to make identification more easy the news reader gives his own before each bulletin. The reason for this is not a hankering after self-advertisement—although at first some listeners unfairly

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took it to be so ; in wartime listeners must be able to recognize instantly the authentic voice of British broadcasting, and then, in any possible emergency, they will be on their guard against some lying imitation by the voice of the enemy.

I left the department myself at the end of 1939, but am still in close enough touch with announcers to know what magnificent work they have done and are doing now. I can only speak with first-hand knowledge of the London announcers, but I know that those in other parts of Britain have had as many difficulties to contend with and have surmounted them as ably and as unobtrusively. Nobody, I think, would have known that on one occasion an announcer was unhurriedly reading the news while trying feverishly to ward off the attentions of a cat whose presence in the studio is still a mystery, or that on another a gramophone record which was being talked about by one announcer was being fetched by a colleague from five floors above.

Announcers are in the very front line of broadcasting and constantly under fire, both literally and metaphorically. No new country comes into the news but abusive letters are received which nearly all begin, ' Are none of you announcers *educated* ? '. If, for instance, Lodz is pronounced in the correct Polish manner (which is strangely unlike its appearance on paper), the announcer is decried as a pedant ; if he anglicizes, he is a stubborn ignoramus. Despite this barrage he manages to carry on a very specialized and difficult job with calmness and efficiency, knowing full well that every word is listened to by millions—millions who listen with closer attention than ever before and who can be elated or depressed by the very inflections of his voice.

To those who hear an announcer at work, it must appear a comparatively easy job. There seems to be nothing particularly difficult about the little bits with which an announcer intersperses a programme of gramophone records, nothing particularly difficult about the short introduction he gives before an orchestral concert, nothing particularly difficult in

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the few words he says before you hear Flanagan and Allen—yet each of these demands careful and methodical preparation. In fact, a lot of the announcer's work is done before he ever goes near a microphone—the checking of the date of a musical comedy and of the stars who appeared in it; the consultation with some expert about a new musical work and the emphasis to be placed upon it; the pronunciation of an artist's name; the knowledge that a certain eminent don likes to be called plain mister and not professor; the ability to make at least a passable shot at any place name—on sight; the cajoling of difficult artists and the sympathizing with shy ones; the technical knowledge without which he is useless; and, finally, the obsession with time. The clock must haunt him in his dreams, for when he is in the studio he is in charge of that programme, whatever it may be, and it is his responsibility to see that it finishes to time, neither leaving too long a gap before the next programme follows nor allowing another piece of music to start which is then ignominiously faded out. When he is not in the studio, his eye is constantly on the clock for fear he misses his next assignment. And during the greater part of the day one of the senior announcers is entirely responsible for the smooth running of broadcasting. It is up to him to cope with the situation when the Programme for the Forces is due to join the Home Service in four minutes and the latter is going to overrun by three, or when a gale has brought down the Post Office lines with the result that no programmes can come from north of the Trent for the next five hours. All this quite apart from the vocal training he must undergo if he is not to offend the Londoner with a trace of Lancashire accent nor antagonize the Scot because he can't pronounce the *-ch* in Loch Rannoch.

He is, in short, a compound of actor, writer, engineer, linguist, musician, psychologist, and general 'good mixer', who knows that when he drops a brick the crash goes round the world.

BROADCASTING TO SCHOOLS

by

R. C. STEELE

Senior Education Assistant (Schools)

At the beginning of the war we were all prepared for a *blitzkrieg*. What kind of *blitzkrieg* no one exactly knew, but we were all agreed that everything would be very different, that instead of leisurely long-range planning we should be living from hand to mouth, improvising even from tents or caravans for the needs of the moment whatever they might be. We envisaged our audience not in peaceful classrooms but wherever two or three might be gathered together in the name of Education. When this proved to be an over-romantic view—or one at least in advance of its time—we had to readapt ourselves to a modified peacetime routine, which has brought us to the middle of the second school year of the war. Is something similar going to bring us to the middle of the third? Here is a very brief synopsis of the story of school broadcasting since the war and the problem facing it.

A 'peacetime routine' means that we had a printed schedule of forthcoming broadcasts issued term by term and strictly kept. The main framework of the programmes was on familiar lines; broadcasts were given not from caravans but from proper studios, and the majority of our audience listened as usual in their own classrooms. The important decision that normality as far as possible was to be the keynote was taken within a month of the outbreak of war, and there can be little serious doubt that it was a wise decision. A headmistress wrote in May: 'From the first moment of wartime broadcasting until the present week the broadcasts have been invaluable in school teaching. My school was closed from 4 September to 8 September to allow myself to arrange with two evacuee schools who were to be evacuated to my school. The short broadcasts to scholars were one of the "real" links with our past educational methods—like lifebuoys in a queer turbulent scholastic sea.'

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A 'modified peacetime routine' means that we could not quite follow the splendid isolation of Jane Austen, who wrote her novels during the Napoleonic War without mentioning it in any of them. Education should be independent of war but cannot ignore it any more than, in peacetime, a school could ignore an earthquake; the school broadcasts programme has been affected in both presentation and content. In presentation the broadcasts have been made more self-explanatory; in content they are simpler. Incidental references to the war are neither obtruded nor avoided, but there are two new programmes in which the war necessarily bulks larger than anything else. These are a weekly talk on current affairs and a daily five-minute news commentary, in which items of news are explained with the object of encouraging more intelligent interest. Both have been widely welcomed.

Of two other experiments which arose directly out of the war, one called 'If you were French' was a series of feature programmes which ran last summer, designed to show British children something of the daily life of the French people. Some eleven-year-olds who were asked about this before the series began thought that the journey to France took a fortnight, that wine was made of cherries, and that the chief product was pop-guns; it was surprising how many had not heard of the Marseillaise, though several must have heard it without knowing. Thirteen-year-olds, of course, know a good deal more than this, the main 'educators', outside their geography lessons, being illustrated papers and Maurice Chevalier. But in spite even of the latter the typical Frenchman still remains to many the comic, bearded man who gesticulates and eats frogs. These broadcasts were meant to encourage a better understanding of the French people and a sympathy for their problems, which were shown dramatically and, as it were, from the inside. A vivid recollection from them is the hollow echo of footsteps down the streets of evacuated Strasbourg.

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The other experiment was a programme specially designed for children unable to go to school who might listen by themselves at home. The subject was the adventures of a certain Mr. Cobbett among Red Indians and elsewhere. The *Radio Times* co-operated by establishing a 'Cobbett's Corner', in which listeners' questions were answered every week, and hints were given how to make models of things that had been described. Children listened to these broadcasts in school as well as out of it.

Now to the problem! No single picture could be drawn of conditions in the schools. At the worst there are no schools at all, but unfortunately the worst is to be found in only a few very limited areas, while you might travel over whole districts and hardly realize that it was not still 1938. Between these two extremes there is every kind of condition, and obviously details of the picture are changing all the time, but the chief impression which remains is that the educational system will stand a great deal more battering than it has yet had. In one of the most heavily bombed cities, for instance, schools which have lost no more than their windows and perhaps a few bits here and there off the roof, start work again as soon as the debris is swept away. Schools like these, if they have used school broadcasts, are not likely to be deterred from using them as long as their sets remain intact; we have a duty to continue to broadcast to them. Rather paradoxically the threat of bombing seems at present to be doing more harm to education than the actual bombs. Even where the time spent by children in air raid shelters is not great the sirens have a high nuisance value, and the frequent interruption of their time-tables makes a big demand on the adaptability of teachers. School broadcasting, which has to work to a fixed schedule, is particularly vulnerable here, but some schools have already begun using their sets in the shelters and others will no doubt follow their example, as the Board of Education, which has blessed school broadcasting in two of its *Schools in Wartime* leaflets, is advising.

Because of raids, the fear of raids, evacuation, and the

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black-out, children are spending less time in school than formerly, and in some way or other the curriculum has to be shortened. The future historian will study this period for the light which it throws on the real progress made by modern ideas of education, which, where they have fallen on stony ground, have withered away while—to mix parables—the stone is given to the children instead of bread. Fortunately such a retreat to the dull grind of the three Rs is far from general and may only be temporary. Last winter, in some of the cities where schools were not allowed to open, the teachers went round visiting small groups of children in private houses, work done was anything but dry bones, and broadcasts were used in the most enterprising ways. Another school, unable to obtain enough textbooks, embarked on a bold project in which five series of school broadcasts were made the nucleus of the whole syllabus and every subject taught was skilfully linked with them.

In whatever way the schools may solve their problems the wireless can give them very important help. Its main wartime functions seem to be not very different from those in peacetime, but like most other things they stand out in a stronger light. They are, first, to help to enliven in every possible way what the schools are already doing. Here broadcasts can help all schools; the more schools have had to cut their teaching down to bare necessities the more they will be in need of enlivenment. The basic subject in all elementary schools is and must be English; there are now six English broadcasts for them instead of two—in Scotland indeed there will be seven by the time these words are printed. The chief gainers by this increase have been the infants, the younger juniors, and the rank-and-file philistines of twelve and thirteen who used to find some of the pre-war 'Senior English' rather too literary for them. The popularity of all these innovations is a sign of the need for them, and the same may be said of 'Games with Words', which have adapted the spelling-bee technique so successfully that 'Games with Numbers' are to follow—to the greater gaiety



When schools were closed



Major Longland talks it over

'Parlez-vous français'—Rollo Gamble ('Bill') and John Glyn-Jones ('Bob')



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of the three Rs. Another established subject is science, and this the producers have had the levity to dramatize—to be told that ‘science broadcasts have been crying out for this kind of treatment for a long time’. Few children, I should think, will forget ‘Conquering the Air’; few, as they listened, with their hearts in their mouths, to Lilienthal’s experiment in gliding, can have helped sharing the uncertainty of the onlookers or the adventure of the pioneer.

History, geography, music, if ruthless or harassed head teachers have not omitted them—Baedeker once advised tourists to the universities, ‘If pressed for time, omit Cambridge’!—all provide the subject-matter of excellent broadcasts, and thus, as in past years, help schools with their regular work; all have their enthusiastic followers.

Secondly, broadcasts should spread new ideas. Good examples of this function during the past year have been, as before, Ann Driver’s ‘Music and Movement’, which custom cannot stale, and ‘The Practice and Science of Gardening’. The latter has the topical theme ‘Increasing the Yield’, and Dr. Keen in his first broadcast described how several schools were already increasing it. In this way the good ideas of a few can be made an incentive to all; another recent instance of a quite different kind has been a programme on the recorder, a musical instrument which is still too little known. In this programme schools were able to appreciate the recorder played well by schoolboys and then expertly by Mr. Edgar Hunt.

In both of these last instances the new ideas have already been tried with success by actual children, and both also illustrate the third function of broadcasts, which is to reflect the spirit of the schools at their best. Broadcasting in this sense is a national service and a democratic one; it can have infinite value in establishing and maintaining standards which have grown up among us.

LISTENING WITH THE FORCES

by

MAJOR RICHARD LONGLAND, R.E.

BBC Liaison Officer with the Army

When the B.E.F. went overseas in September 1939 it was with the expectation of going into battle in a very short time. Kits had been cut down to the last ounce and the radio set, which had been so popular in the barrack-room at Tidworth or Aldershot or Colchester, found no place in a lorry or a tool van where equipment was fitted in with hardly an inch to spare.

By the end of the year things were very different. With the eternal ingenuity of the soldier when he is far from home the B.E.F. began to settle in and to make itself as comfortable as the bitter weather and active service conditions allowed. Almost simultaneously with the display in hotel and café windows of the notices 'Eggs and Chip', 'Hot Bathes', and that very irritating plural 'Sandwichs', radio sets began to appear. French sets were cheap and plentiful and the scanty profits of canteen funds were strained to the last franc to buy them. When the Nuffield Trust came forward with its magnificent grant for the provision of radio sets for the forces, listening was in full swing.

First in popularity came the news. In more distant regions of France, where home programmes came in only faintly, groups would stand in silence round the set, holding their breath to catch any faint sound which would tell them how the war was going. Newspapers in English were still scarce and, however crowded the day and however few the hours of leisure, men always gathered round the set at news time.

Soon it became obvious that we were in for a winter of siege warfare. As darkness fell earlier and as outdoor work became more difficult, listening tastes grew in their demands and the BBC decided to plan a new programme entirely for the forces, to be built up on the expressed tastes and preferences of the soldiers, sailors, and airmen. The Director-

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General and some of his staff visited the B.E.F. and had personal talks with the men. Then a rapid postal 'sample' of the B.E.F. was taken. Though tapping only a fraction of the force, it showed that tastes in widely different units were on the whole more or less alike on the main items. 'Something to cheer us up . . . something to keep us in touch with home . . . let's hear how the Wanderers are doing . . . and the Wolves . . . and the Spurs . . .' Most of the demands were for bright, cheerful music and variety, stuff that you could beat time to and laugh at and sing with when the winter winds were whistling through the chinks in the barn, and the bleak landscape of North-eastern France was made still more bleak and cheerless by a thick covering of snow.

The advice and help of Navy, Army, and R.A.F. authorities were sought at the outset, and facilities were readily given to enable the BBC to get into touch with the men. So much value was set upon the radio programmes for the troops in France that the War Office decided in March to appoint, as their BBC Liaison Officer, a major in the Royal Engineers, who had been a BBC public relations officer when war broke out.

Armed with an array of questions from all the BBC departments, this officer was soon exploring the roads and lanes of France, running the B.E.F. to earth. It wasn't just a matter of spending a jolly afternoon surrounded by the whole of a battalion all ready to give their views on the programmes, but a sort of treasure hunt with a map reference for the first clue, then a drive over skiddy pavé and some miles of twists, crashes, and bumps over unsurfaced lanes, and finally a tentative halt at a small signboard with a number on it and a cryptic coloured device.

An adjutant appears, slightly surprised at seeing a sapper major coming to ask the troops what they thought of the broadcast programmes, says that he will be delighted to help but that it is rather difficult to point out where the men are because they are so scattered. 'H.Q. Company is in

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the village here and one of the other companies is up that road, and B Company is over the hill in the brickworks. Perhaps you'd like to ask the R.S.M. about the radio.' Hastily assuring the adjutant that, valuable as the regimental sergeant-major's comments might be, there is a possibility that a strict sense of military discipline might prevent the worthy warrant officer from speaking his mind fully, the liaison officer eventually finds his way to the billets.

At first the men are as surprised as the adjutant, but it only needs a few remarks about any well-known programme item or broadcaster to break the ice, and then out comes a flood of questions and suggestions. 'Can't we have the dance music earlier . . . later . . . we don't get back from work until . . . we're digging defence works until . . . we stand to at . . . it's time for guard mounting then . . . more dance music, sir . . . don't listen to him, he's swing mad . . . it's organ music I like . . . nice bit of variety.'

And so, out of all this rapid fire, the liaison officer builds up, piece by piece, a picture of how that unit lives and works and rests. Then he asks some questions. Do they like the announcers—musical comedies—dance music—talks—church services—sport—plays—thrillers? Do they like crooners? There is a chorus of assent at this. 'Yes, we do because they help us to learn the words of the songs.' An interesting point this. In the last war, when the army marched whenever it had to move, the marching song was something essential. Anything with a good swing was taken up and sung on the road and in a few days the whole battalion knew the words. But the advent of swing has pushed the words into the background, and good songs are relatively few. But although an army moving by lorries, tanks, vans, and cars doesn't need songs to march to, it still wants songs to sing, and that's why the crooner is popular.

More bumpy muddy rides round the country to find the other companies. Often it takes several days to visit the whole of one unit and do the job completely. But not only battalions must be visited. Troops standing in draughty

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pill-boxes, units in rest camps in the back areas, R.A.S.C. companies carting food and stores all day and sometimes half the night, A.A. gunners at their gun sites in the middle of muddy fields, craftsmen of the Ordnance Corps in their workshops, sappers making roads and bridges—they all have their different working hours and their various tastes.

Very often a big canteen was a good hunting ground. All that was needed was to get three or four men at a table in the corner and to begin going through the week's programmes with the *Radio Times*, marking suggestions and alterations. Three or four men, coming in after the day's work, ask the corporal at the bar, 'Who's that officer?' 'Dunno—bloke from G.H.Q. I think.' 'What's he doing?' 'Asking something about the radio, I think.' And then someone drifts across to the table in time to catch a remark about Sandy Mac or Big-Hearted Arthur or Stinker, and he stays to listen and soon to join in; presently the group is not four but forty, and the questions come like hail.

'It's pretty grim in the early mornings, sir, before breakfast. Can't we have some music then, while we dress?' And very soon the Programme for the Forces, in response to that request, was on the air at 6.30 a.m., and the troops went in to breakfast whistling the tunes they had just heard.

Sometimes the words 'I'm from the BBC' would produce the instant reply, 'Have you heard our dance band?', and outside one of the huts somebody shouts, 'Turn out the band, quick, the BBC man's here'. If the band was really good, in a few days' time the unit would see the BBC recording van with Bernard Stubbs and his team, and the whole company would crowd round for the long-awaited chance of shouting into a microphone. The playback would be received in awed silence, punctuated with slightly self-conscious giggles as the company crooner at last realized what his voice was really like, but feeling thrilled to know that in a week or so that record would be heard on the air.

Little by little the picture grew, and the programme planners, back in London, were receiving a steady flow of

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answers to their questions about leisure hours, the best times for star items, and just when the minority tastes could be satisfied without robbing the majority of its entertainment. That flow of questions and answers was stilled on the opening of the Flanders campaign. It was resumed only in the autumn when the army, miraculously home again, had settled in. Then the BBC was at pains to re-establish that personal touch with the units by means of which the programmes could be kept sensitive to their needs.

The listening problem alters every week as more and more sets reach the forces. The work of 'listener research' continues, as it did from the beginning, not only into the needs of the army but also into those of the navy and the R.A.F. Tastes vary with the work and living conditions of the men. First-hand information about them will continue to be necessary as long as the BBC maintains its aim of giving the troops the stuff that they really want.

All that work in France seems a long time ago now, but many things stick in the memory. The delighted faces of the Indians when they heard that there was to be a special half-hour for them on Sundays in their own tongue. And the German company of the Pioneer Corps who were playing Mozart on their own chamber orchestra, and the sapper company song that had to be so heavily censored before we could record it, and, last of all, the soldier who came up after a lecture and gave the liaison officer a scrap of paper. 'Could you ask Sandy to play this tune, sir? It's for my wife. I was to have gone on leave, but leave was stopped and . . . it's a long time since we've seen each other.' He got his tune.

WAR REPORTING

by

R. T. CLARK

Senior News Editor

The BBC news observer was not just a wartime development. He has been in evidence for quite a long time, since 1934 to be exact. The reporter is an integral of any news service, but, in broadcasting, news reporting has problems all its own—partly because of the medium to be used, partly because of the limitations, technical and political, under which the BBC's news service must work—which do not exist to embarrass the newspaper. It was significant that the first attempt at direct reporting by broadcast was made from abroad: Ralph Murray was sent to describe the arrival in Calais of the British troops on their way to do police duties in the Saar. With his later descriptions of the scenes on the night of the plebiscite and afterwards, the experiment justified itself so far as to make it certain that from that time onwards the observer would be a member of the News Department. Murray was the first of what is now a fairly long succession of observers, both free-lance and BBC staff, and it was his work at meetings of the League of Nations, whether of the Council or the Assembly, wherever they might be held, that determined the creation of a corps of BBC observers.

It was not long after the Saar experiment that direct reporting from the scene of action was extended to events at home, and it was to meet that extension that Richard Dimbleby and Charles Gardner joined Murray. With the help of some non-members of the staff—names like Edward Halliday and Kenneth Adam come to mind at once—these three were responsible for some excellent reporting before the war. I shall only mention Murray's talks from foreign capitals in the critical twelvemonth that ended in September 1939; Charles Gardner's reporting of air events in which an observer actually spoke from an aeroplane for, I think, the first time in this country; and Dimbleby's

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reporting of the great Fen floods, of the Royal tour in Canada, and of the flight of the Spanish Republican armies into France. It was in this last report that listeners first heard from their loudspeakers the sound of guns being fired in anger. From his report on the Franco-Spanish frontier Dimpleby turned the microphone southward, and the noise of what were then rebel guns pounding the Republican retreat could be plainly heard at British firesides.

Plans to cover the war were made long before war came. Admittedly we based these plans on the completely wrong idea that from the start there would be, as in 1914, violent action. We lost Murray to government service. Dimpleby was selected to go with the B.E.F. wherever it might go, accompanied by a recording unit; Gardner was to cover air activities here when the *blitzkrieg* came down on us; and, to cover the Royal Navy, Bernard Stubbs was transferred to the news staff.

But all the plans went wrong. There was no *blitzkrieg* in the air, and Gardner actually got to France with the Advanced Air Striking Force before Dimpleby was established at G.H.Q. Both soon found wartime reporting very different from peacetime work. Not only was there a whole crop of restrictions of which they had not dreamed when they went out, but there was actually less happening in a month at the Front than used to happen in a week at home. Both of them, none the less, managed to send back, either directly or by record, reports which gave to us here a vivid idea of how our troops were faring. It was a doldrums period, and right in the middle of it came the war in Finland. It was not safe to make transfers, so out to the Finnish war went Edward Ward, to make a name for himself and to break new ground in microphone reporting by talking from a front line.

When the Finnish war came to an end, transfers became necessary. Nothing was happening in France, and Stubbs had exhausted all the opportunities the Silent Service could for the moment offer him. There seemed a chance of action in the Near East; and while Ward remained at home,



Charles Gardner, BBC news observer, on the job

A mobile recording unit on the front at Dover





Edward Ward, BBC news observer

Stubbs went out to G.H.Q. in France and Dimpleby to exploit fresh fields in Egypt. It was bad luck for him, for hardly was he well out of reach of a recall when Hitler moved. But it was soon pretty clear that there was no place for reporters of any kind in a great retreat. Stubbs, and Ward who had gone out to help him, managed to get some records out through Boulogne and to talk from Paris, but they were both speedily involved in the general exodus. Stubbs got back direct from the French capital, but listeners may remember Ward's vivid account of his adventures in his escape from Bordeaux.

Much had been learned in these hectic weeks—perhaps more about the limitations of broadcast war reporting than of its possibilities. It was, therefore, with no great hopes of sensational results that Dimpleby went to Greece to watch the Italians being flung out of Albania, while Ward went off to replace him in Egypt.

It would not be fair to judge any of them by the sometimes meagre results of their efforts. It is fairer to remember that they never shrank from hardship or danger, never grumbled at lack of food or lack of sleep, and what men could do, they did to get their story. I am not going to record their adventures, tragic or comic, first because whatever they endured was just part of a job that had to be done, and secondly because they have all published books, except Dimpleby, who, I gather, is still writing his.

What is certain is that the news observer has come to stay. The war experiences have been immensely valuable, and our pondering over them will bear fruit perhaps even before the war is over, certainly in the days after it. I do not think that, now, any broadcast news service will be regarded by anyone in this country as complete without its corps of professional staff observers at home and abroad. And that in itself is an achievement.

MOBILE RECORDING

by

R. T. B. WYNN

Senior Superintendent Engineer

A vital task of broadcasting is to give an accurate and vivid impression of contemporary life and current events. The most direct way of doing this is by means of sound pictures which combine the actual sounds of events with the voices of the men and women taking part in them. Sometimes this can be done by roving microphones, connected by telephone line to a studio centre, but the most interesting topical material is sometimes to be found at places remote from telephone lines or at times unsuitable for broadcasting. It must then be collected by means of a mobile recording unit.

Before describing the activities of the mobile units in wartime, let us look at the equipment itself. It is of two kinds—a heavy type mounted in a large van and a light portable apparatus carried in a saloon car. Each of these has its special uses ; both make records in the form of discs which are somewhat similar in appearance to ordinary twelve-inch gramophone records, but consist of a coating of special cellulose varnish on a base of aluminium. They are ready for playing as soon as the record has been cut, without any of the elaborate intermediate processes involved in making ordinary records, and each disc can be played twenty or thirty times before it becomes noticeably worn. The recording machines are similar in principle to those used in the disc-recording rooms at BBC studios. Electric currents, corresponding to the sound waves picked up by the microphone, cause vibrations of a recording stylus which cuts a wavy spiral track in the varnish on the surface of the disc. The spiral motion is obtained by causing the recording head which carries the stylus to move slowly across the surface of the disc while the latter is rotating on the turn-table. When the disc is played, currents similar to those which were applied to the recording cutter are produced by the vibrations of the needle in the gramophone pick-up ; after

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amplification these currents can be made to reproduce the original sound through a loudspeaker, either directly or through the medium of wireless transmission.

A mobile unit of the heavier type consists of a motor van, weighing about six tons when laden, the body of which is divided into two compartments. One compartment is acoustically treated so as to form a small studio suitable for speech. The other contains two sets of recording equipment (so that a continuous recording can be made by passing from one turn-table to the other as each disc is finished) together with the associated amplifiers, the controlling and switching equipment, and the battery-charging plant. Recordings can be made either of speech from the microphone in the studio compartment, or of speech or other sounds picked up by other microphones outside the van and connected to it by cables. The van can work away from its base, if necessary, for several weeks at a time and, since the equipment is all operated from batteries which can be charged from the engine of the van, it is self-contained and independent of electric supply mains. The size of the van makes it possible to accommodate the most complete technical equipment for controlling the programme and checking the accuracy of the recording, and also to employ the most robust and convenient form of recording apparatus. The turn-tables can be made level by hydraulically operated adjustments so that recordings can be made when the van is standing on a slope. The speed of the turn-tables can be accurately adjusted, and gramophone pick-ups and a loudspeaker are provided for reproducing sound from the records when necessary.

Although these heavy recording vans are well suited to many kinds of recording work, experience has proved that a lighter form of mobile equipment is also necessary. In 1938 the BBC News Department felt the need for a mobile unit which could travel rapidly to any part of the country, obtain a topical news story, and bring the records back the same night (to London or any other BBC studio centre) to be

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cluded in the news bulletins. The apparatus had to be sufficiently compact to fit into an ordinary saloon car, light enough to be carried into a building or set up in an aeroplane, and robust enough to withstand travelling over bad roads at high speeds. Although it would normally be used in the car, the apparatus had to be readily movable so that it could be carried by hand to places to which the car could not be taken. It had also to be independent of external power supplies and to be suitable for use not only as a recording unit, but also for direct outside broadcasting work where suitable Post Office telephone lines were available to carry a 'live' broadcast. It was also necessary to provide facilities for reproducing a recording and connecting the output to a telephone line where there was not time to bring the records to a studio centre. The equipment had also to fit into the car without any modification of the standard bodywork and without fitting any special mountings in the car.

The present design of the light recording unit is the result of a study of the problem by BBC engineers. It is not possible for such a compact unit to provide all the advantages of the heavier one—it cannot make a continuous recording lasting longer than the duration of a single disc (about four minutes), and it lacks many of the facilities and refinements which are provided by the heavy van. But where speed is essential it has a great advantage, because the saloon car is not subject to the statutory speed limit of twenty miles an hour, which is imposed on the large van ; moreover, it can be manœuvred more easily in narrow streets and parked in more restricted spaces.

The apparatus consists of three main parts : the recording machine, the amplifier, and the power-supply unit. The recording machine, which is shown in the inset photograph facing page 108, consists essentially of a heavy turn-table, the cutter-head, and the tracking gear which gives the correct spiral form to the groove. The turn-table is driven by an electric motor operated from a twelve-volt accumulator battery. The shaft of this motor carries a small rubber

wheel which is in contact with the rim of the turn-table, so that the latter is driven smoothly and evenly at a considerably lower speed than that of the motor. The same motor also drives the tracking mechanism; this includes a lead-screw which is supported behind the turn-table and extends across the width of it. As it rotates, this lead-screw carries a rigid arm slowly across the turn-table from the outer edge of the disc towards the centre; to the end of this arm is attached the cutter-head, which looks very much like an ordinary gramophone pick-up except that instead of a steel needle there is a steel cutter, the edge of which is accurately shaped to carefully calculated angles. The action of the currents which are passed through the cutter-head is to vibrate the cutter from side to side and so produce a waviness in the spiral groove corresponding to the sounds which are being recorded.

The weak currents produced by the microphone are applied to the input of an amplifier which gives an output sufficient to operate the recording cutter. This amplifier has three stages of amplification and uses the principle of 'negative feed-back' to neutralize any distortion which may arise within itself or in the recording head. The first section of the amplifier is the same as that used for ordinary outside broadcasts, and it may be employed for this purpose by switching off the output stage and connecting the telephone line to the terminals provided. In this condition the amplification is sensibly the same for all frequencies from fifty to eight thousand cycles per second, i.e. for all the notes on a piano from the lowest G to more than an octave above the highest note. On the top of the amplifier there are two input sockets—one for connecting a moving-coil microphone, the other for connecting either the electrical pick-up for reproducing recorded discs or a three-channel microphone mixing unit; the latter is used for selecting or combining the various outputs when more than one microphone is used. On the front of the amplifier there are mounted a peak programme meter and a controlling

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'potentiometer'—or volume-control—to ensure that the correct volume is applied to the recording head throughout the recording.

The recording machine is provided with two main operating levers—one to engage the tracking mechanism to start the traverse of the cutter across the disc and the other to lower the cutter-head on to the blank disc at the moment when the recording is to start. Provision is also made for varying the depth of the cut, the angle of the cutting stylus, and the speed with which the recording head moves towards the centre of the disc. This last adjustment determines the pitch of the spiral track, i.e. the number of grooves per inch which appear on the disc. During recording, a brush moves across the face of the disc and sweeps up the thread or 'swarf' which is cut from it, and which is thus prevented from becoming tangled round the cutter. The sweeping movement of the brush is derived from the clamp which holds down the centre of the disc, through a small rubber-tired wheel which is fixed eccentrically on one end of the brush holder. The brush can be removed and an electrical pick-up plugged into the same socket for playing back the recorded disc. When the pick-up is plugged in, the necessary electrical connexions to the amplifier are made automatically.

To obtain faithful reproduction of the original sounds the speed of rotation of the turn-table must remain constant at the standard rate of seventy-eight revolutions per minute. The speed is constantly checked by means of a 'stroboscope', which consists of a number of holes drilled in the outer rim of the turn-table and of a neon lamp which shines through these holes from beneath. This lamp is supplied with alternating current from a small specially designed oscillator mounted in the case of the recording machine. The spacing of the holes in the rim of the turn-table is related to the rate of flashing of the lamp in such a way that the light appears to remain stationary when the turn-table is rotating at the correct speed, but to move round the turn-table in one

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direction or the other when the speed is too fast or too slow.

The power-supply unit contains a motor-generator and smoothing circuits for the high-tension supply to the amplifier, the controls necessary for the low-tension circuits, and a variable resistance for regulating the speed of the turntable. This unit is elastically mounted to reduce vibration and supplies direct current at four hundred volts; it is driven by the accumulator battery. There are two small circuit breakers, one to control the motor-generator and the other to control the filament supply to the amplifier; these switch off the current if an accidental short circuit occurs.

In order that the equipment can be assembled and put into operation with the least possible delay, the connexions between the various units are made by means of interconnecting cables fitted with plugs and sockets, the cables being carefully screened, where necessary, to prevent electrical interference. The whole of the equipment operates from two batteries, each consisting of five nickel-iron accumulator cells. One of the batteries has a capacity of a hundred and twenty ampère-hours and the other of eighty ampère-hours, the supply for the filaments being taken from the larger battery. The turn-table motor and the motor-generator take their supply from the two batteries connected in series.

The equipment is normally carried in a fourteen-horse-power saloon car and is arranged as shown in the photograph facing page 108. The supply unit is seen on the floor behind the driver's seat. The amplifier rests on the top of it and the recording machine stands on the rear seat of the car. The batteries are carried in the luggage boot and their connecting cables run through the back of the rear seat. The luggage boot also contains cable drums holding up to four hundred yards of screened microphone cable, telephone sets for communication between the microphone points and the recording engineer in the car, the three-channel mixer, loudspeakers, a telescopic microphone stand, and a kit of tools. There are also head-phones for checking the

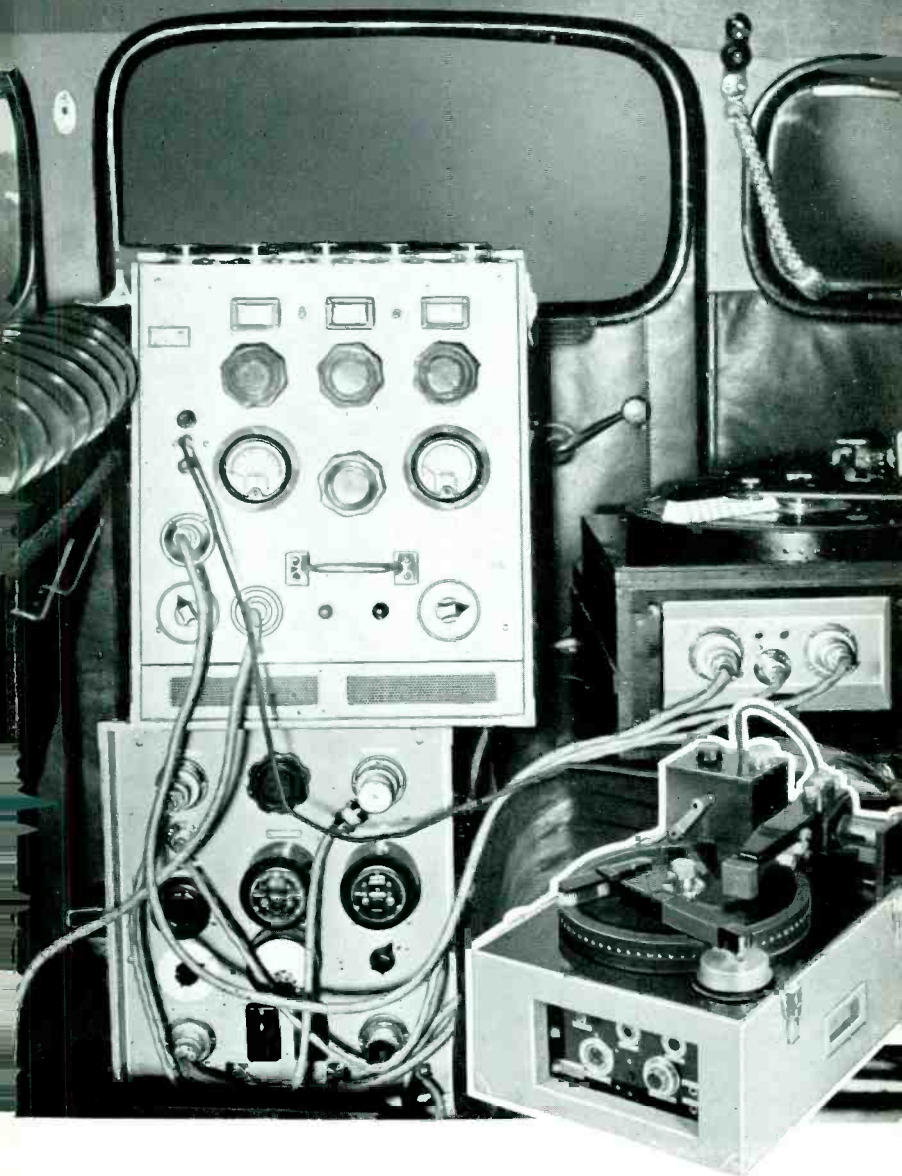
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programme when it is not convenient to use a loudspeaker.

When the records have been made, they are either taken to one of the BBC studio centres or played back in the car itself, the output being connected by a telephone line to the studio centre. Lines used for the transmission of a programme are specially tested by the lines engineers of the BBC and 'equalized' so that they respond equally to all frequencies within the range necessary for the faithful transmission of music. For reproducing recordings in this way, the car is taken to a telephone exchange where connexions can be made directly to the telephone lines. In order that the recording may be started at precisely the right moment to fit into the broadcast programme of which it is to form part, it is necessary for the recording engineer in the car to hear the cue which is the signal for him to lower the pick-up on the record and 'fade up' the output. This cue may either be taken on another telephone line from the studio centre, or it may be heard on a portable receiver tuned to the programme in which the recording is to be inserted. In the latter case, the recording engineer will hear the announcer say: 'We are now taking you over to . . . to hear our observer, whose commentary has been recorded earlier to-day'—or the commentator may speak directly at the microphone, starting on a signal from the engineer, to link together the various recorded items into a connected story. Each section of the recording is then played over at the appropriate points in the observer's talk. Smooth presentation of this type of programme demands close co-operation and complete understanding between the recording engineer and the programme staff both at the outside broadcast point and in the studio centre.

Although the equipment is normally operated from the car while stationary, recordings have been made while on the move—following processions, in aeroplanes in the air, in express trains, at sea, and even in a submarine diving.

Since the beginning of the war, some of the mobile recording units and the men who use them have seen



Interior of the saloon recording car (Inset) The recording machine



In a Y.M.C.A. canteen—an episode in 'London after Dark', broadcast to North America and relayed throughout Canada and U.S.A.

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dangerous and exacting service. On the declaration of war one of the saloon cars was loaded on to a cross-Channel steamer at Dover. It passed through the French customs without delay, and was driven to Paris, where it was left for a time in a deep garage ready for action. When BBC war correspondents were allowed to accompany the B.E.F. early in October 1939, the BBC unit, consisting of a commentator, a programme official, and an engineer, took possession of the car. Accommodation was provided at G.H.Q., and an attic was made into a small studio.

During the winter, the extreme cold made it difficult to cut good records, partly because frost patterns formed on the blank discs and affected the surface, and partly because the liquid in the batteries was affected. Temperatures as low as forty degrees Fahrenheit below freezing were encountered, and the engineer even had to take the discs to bed in order that they might be in good condition for cutting next day.

One of the many programmes recorded by this unit took place in the Maginot Line, where the apparatus was taken out of the car and set up on a truck on the miniature railway system which ran through the underground forts. Another was the recording of a march past of the band of the Chasseurs Alpains, which was taken at six o'clock in the morning in a blinding snow-storm in the Jura Mountains. Many of the broadcasts from France were relayed through the Lille station of the French Post Office, where the French engineers did magnificent work in fixing up lines at very short notice. The mobile unit was also sent from time to time to the R.A.F. headquarters for the use of a second BBC commentator there. The same equipment was used by one of the American broadcasting companies and by the French war correspondents attached to the B.E.F., and also for 'live' broadcasts of the concert parties arranged by E.N.S.A.

During May the unit accompanied the army to Brussels and beyond, then back to Lille, Arras, and Amiens. By this time, it had two sets of equipment at its disposal. Then came the rapid move to Boulogne, during which some of the

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equipment had to be abandoned at Amiens. The cables between Boulogne and London were still intact, and several despatches were given by BBC observers from Boulogne. After a few days, during which there was frequent bombing, the equipment was brought back to England.

Meanwhile, a second recording unit was with the Advanced Air Striking Force near Rheims ; it was through this unit that many listeners at home first heard the sound of falling bombs. The enemy had been particularly active in this area for some time, and during one of the despatches from the R.A.F. a salvo of bombs dropped close to the open window of the studio.

Since their return, these recording units have still been engaged in reporting incidents in the war. One of the most outstanding of these recordings was made on the cliffs of Dover. The unit had just taken up its stand there, when a convoy was seen steaming slowly up the Channel. Just as the convoy was passing the point where the recording car was stationed, German dive-bombers attacked it. Anti-aircraft guns went into action, followed by squadrons of fighters. The recording of this action with the running commentary which accompanied it gave a realistic impression of the successful battle which ensued. The records were taken to London and broadcast in the nine o'clock news bulletin that same evening.

During another broadcast from 'Hell-fire Corner', the recording unit was machine-gunned by a Messerschmitt ; it suffered no damage and the German machine was brought down by anti-aircraft fire. It also recorded the shell-fire from the long-range guns installed by the Germans on the Channel coast when shells fell in Dover for the first time.

Meanwhile, the work of the mobile recording unit continues—bringing to listeners at home and overseas the sound and scenes of Great Britain at war.

REFERENCE SECTION

Control

The BBC is a public corporation, created by Royal Charter and controlled by a Board of Governors. It works in wartime to the direction of the Ministry of Information in all matters, both general and particular, affecting the national effort. Its Charter remains in force.

The BBC's Board of Governors, normally consisting of seven members, was, on 5 September 1939, by Order in Council, reduced to two—the Chairman and Vice-Chairman—so as to meet wartime conditions. BBC Governors are appointed by the King in Council, and alteration in their number is provided for in the Charter.

The Corporation maintains broadcasting stations under Licence from the Postmaster-General, with whom it has also an Agreement containing certain general provisions as to the way in which the broadcasting service shall be carried on. At the beginning of the war, certain of the powers reserved to the Postmaster-General under the Licence and Agreement were, under a supplemental agreement between the BBC and the Postmaster-General, transferred to the Minister of Information. The powers thus transferred to the Minister relate mainly to programme matters, hours of broadcasting, and the possible control of the service in emergency.

In peacetime the Postmaster-General had the right, in case of emergency, to take over control of the BBC's stations. No Postmaster-General ever used this power, nor was it exercised at the outbreak of war. The right still stands, but it has been transferred in wartime to the Minister of Information.

Another power thus transferred to the Minister is that of veto over programmes. The Minister is authorized, as was the Postmaster-General in peacetime, to require the Corporation to refrain from sending any broadcast matter, either particular or general, that he may specify by a notice in writing. The only *general* restriction in force to-day upon the matter that may be broadcast is a veto upon the broadcasting by the BBC of its own opinions upon current affairs; the BBC has always been under this restriction.

Although, as explained, some powers have been transferred in wartime to the Minister of Information, others, relating mainly to technical matters, remain with the Postmaster-General.

Under the Licence and Agreement, Government Departments can, on request, secure that their special announcements are broadcast.

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Parliament has regular opportunities for discussing BBC affairs, for example when the Annual Estimate for broadcasting is presented. Questions about broadcasting policy may be addressed to the responsible Minister in Parliament.

Before war broke out, it was decided that, in the event of war, the BBC should work closely under the guidance of the Ministry of Information. Speaking in Parliament on 12 June 1940, Mr. Duff Cooper, who became Minister of Information in May 1940, said: 'I am satisfied that the willingness and efficiency with which the BBC carry out my directions, whether general or particular, on all matters considered to be in the national interest, give me such control as is necessary over news and propaganda in time of war.' Mr. Duff Cooper made it clear, on 11 June 1940, that he did 'not intend to take over the administration of the BBC, or to be responsible in any way for their entertainment programme'. The liaison between the Ministry and the BBC involves close daily co-operation. The regular meetings on policy held by the Minister are attended by BBC representatives, and representatives of the Ministry attend similar meetings at the BBC.

Organization

BOARD OF GOVERNORS	Sir Allan Powell, C.B.E. (<i>Chairman</i>) C. H. G. Millis, D.S.O., M.C. (<i>Vice-Chairman</i>)
DIRECTOR-GENERAL	F. W. Ogilvie, LL.D.
DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL	Sir Cecil Graves, K.C.M.G., M.C.
CONTROLLERS	Sir Noel Ashbridge, M.I.E.E. (<i>Engineering</i>) B. E. Nicolls (<i>Programmes</i>) Sir Stephen Tallents, K.C.M.G., C.B., C.B.E. (<i>Overseas</i>) T. Lochhead, C.B.E. (<i>Finance</i>) A. P. Ryan (<i>Home</i>) G. C. Beadle (<i>Acting</i>) (<i>Administration</i>)

BBC policy is controlled by the Board of Governors, to whom the Director-General is directly responsible. For administrative purposes the work of the BBC is organized, under the Director-General and his Deputy, in a number of Divisions. In May 1940, two new Divisions were created to meet expanding wartime needs. All overseas broadcasts became the concern of the 'Overseas Division', and the 'Home Division' took over control of news and talks in the home programmes. There are now six Divisions—Engineering,

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Programme, Overseas, Home, Administration, and Finance—each under a Controller. The Director-General, his Deputy, and the Controllers form the Control Board, which prepares questions of policy for consideration by the Board of Governors and decides questions of administration.

Advisory Bodies

The BBC developed in peacetime a large network of councils and committees to advise and help it in various fields of activity. It has not been practicable in wartime to ask all these bodies to carry on as before; meetings have of necessity been curtailed. A number of committees have, however, continued their work and have given valued help to the Corporation. They include the Central Appeals Advisory Committee (Chairman, Dame Meriel Talbot); the Central Committee for Group Listening (Chairman, Principal J. H. Nicholson); Central Music Advisory Committee (Chairman, Sir Hugh P. Allen); the Central Religious Advisory Committee (Chairman, the Bishop of Winchester); the Central Council for School Broadcasting (Chairman, Sir Henry Richards), and its Scottish counterpart, the Scottish Council for School Broadcasting.¹

The Central Council for School Broadcasting and the Central Committee for Group Listening both work with grants from the Corporation and have their own staff. The Secretary of both bodies is A. C. Cameron; address, 6 Duchess Street, London, W.1. The BBC has overriding power in respect of Corporation policy, finance, and programme production, but, subject thereto, the functions of the Central Council for School Broadcasting include the supervision of programme arrangements, the organization of research and experiment, and the control of the listening end of the broadcasts to schools. The Central Committee for Group Listening supervises the organization of discussion groups.

Staff

Many of the BBC's established staff have been released for service with H.M. Forces and for other forms of national service. Since the beginning of the war up to the end of 1940 six hundred and sixty-nine had joined the forces, forty-nine had enrolled in civil defence services, and fifty-four had been seconded to, or obtained temporary employment in,

¹ Chairmanship vacant following the death of Sir Charles Cleland, on 19 January 1941.

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Government Departments. All these men and women remain on the Corporation's books and any deficiency in their Service pay as compared with their BBC pay is being made up by the Corporation. The expansion of many of the BBC's services made it necessary to engage a considerable number of 'unestablished' staff for the duration of the war. During 1940 twenty of the Corporation's staff died, or were killed, on active service or as the result of enemy action.

Finance

Every one in Great Britain using a wireless set (registered blind persons excepted) must pay an annual licence fee of ten shillings, which is collected by the Post Office. Until the outbreak of war an agreed percentage of the licence revenue so collected was, in accordance with the BBC's Licence and Agreement with the Postmaster-General, paid over to the BBC to maintain its services. The financial provisions of the licence were, however, modified by a Supplemental Deed, between the Postmaster-General, the Corporation, and the Minister of Information, under which the Corporation's activities were financed, as from 1 September 1939, out of the Parliamentary Grant for Broadcasting on the basis of estimated expenditure. In other words, the BBC's income was in peacetime related to the licence revenue; in wartime it receives a grant from the Treasury to meet its estimated requirements.

Wireless Licences

It was announced in the House of Commons on 20 August 1940 that the number of wireless receiving licences in force on 31 July was approximately 9,132,200. This is the highest total recorded in this country since broadcasting began.

Wavelengths

The Home Service is broadcast every day from 7.0 a.m. to 12.20 a.m. on three medium waves: 449.1 metres (668 kc/s), 391.1 metres (767 kc/s), and 203.5 metres (1474 kc/s). On most receivers indicating the pre-war stations, the tuning point for these waves will correspond respectively to 'North Regional', 'Scottish Regional', and 'Clevedon' (or on older receivers 'Bournemouth-Plymouth'). The programme is also broadcast on the short wave of 49.38 metres (6.075 Mc/s).

The Programme for the Forces has been broadcast on the medium wave of 373.1 metres (804 kc/s) and on the short wave of 41.49 metres (7.23 Mc/s). On 2 March 1941, the medium

wavelength is to be changed; on and after that date the programme is to be broadcast on the medium wave of 342.1 metres (877 kc/s)—marked on most receivers as 'London Regional'—and, as before, on the short wave of 41.49 metres. The hours of transmission are from 6.30 a.m. to 8.0 a.m., and 10.30 a.m. (Sundays 10.20 a.m.) to 11.0 p.m.

Censorship

How are the BBC news bulletins safeguarded against the inclusion of items, say about air raids, which may sound innocent enough, but might, if broadcast, give useful information to the enemy? There is, and has been ever since the war began, a double line of defences to protect the broadcast news. First, there is the government censorship. The object of this is to save the press and broadcasting from giving anything away to the enemy. The censorship is not just a necessary evil; it is in wartime a real and daily help to a responsible news editor. The second line of defence used by the BBC does more than the negative job of keeping the enemy in the dark. It aims at ensuring for listeners to the BBC a thoroughly *accurate* service. The passing by the censors of a news item for general publication does not mean that the BBC will, without more ado, use it. Items are further subject, in advance, to a check with the specialist authorities concerned; for example—in matters concerning the fighting services—with naval, military, or air officials. The BBC does not take any chances with the news. What it says about the progress of the war has official knowledge and opinion behind it.

Broadcast News

News bulletins in English are broadcast each day in the Home Service at 7.0 a.m., 8.0 a.m. (on Sundays 9.0 a.m.), 1.0 p.m., 6.0 p.m., 9.0 p.m., and 12.0 midnight. There is one daily bulletin in Welsh at 5.0 p.m., and two weekly bulletins in Gaelic at 10.45 p.m. on Tuesdays and Fridays.

By the end of the year, seventeen bulletins in English were being broadcast daily in the overseas services, and sixty-one in other languages, making a total of seventy-eight bulletins each day. Bulletins in foreign languages frequently include news talks. Talks are also given in the special programmes which are broadcast daily in Arabic, Czech, French, German, Italian, Norwegian, Portuguese, and Spanish, and in the weekly programme in Afrikaans. A list of the overseas news services (daily unless otherwise stated), with date of origin, is given on the following page.

REFERENCE SECTION

DATE	LANGUAGE	PRESENT SERVICE
Dec. 1932	English	17 bulletins
Jan. 1938	Arabic	2 bulletins
Mar. 1938	Spanish (for Latin America)	2 bulletins
	Portuguese (for Brazil)	2 bulletins
June 1938	Portuguese (for Europe)	2 bulletins
	Spanish (for Europe)	2 bulletins
Sept. 1938	French	7 bulletins
	German	8 bulletins
	Italian	6 bulletins
Sept. 1939	Afrikaans	2 bulletins ; 1 weekly news-letter
	Magyar	1 bulletin
	Polish	3 bulletins
	Rumanian	1 bulletin
	Czech	3 bulletins
	Greek	2 bulletins
	Serbo-Croat	2 bulletins
Nov. 1939	Turkish	2 bulletins
Feb. 1940	Bulgarian	1 bulletin
	Swedish	1 bulletin
Mar. 1940	Finnish	1 bulletin
April 1940	Norwegian	3 bulletins
	Dutch	3 bulletins
	Danish	1 bulletin
May 1940	Hindustani	1 news review
July 1940	Slovak	3 bulletins (weekly)
Aug. 1940	Maltese	1 news-letter (weekly)
Sept. 1940	Cypriot	2 bulletins (weekly)
	Flemish (for Belgium)	1 bulletin (alternate days)
	French (for Belgium)	1 bulletin (alternate days)
	Maghrabi (Arabic dialect)	1 bulletin (except Sun-days)
	Burmese	1 news-letter (weekly)
Nov. 1940	Albanian	1 bulletin
Dec. 1940	Icelandic	1 news-letter (weekly)
	Iranian.	4 bulletins (weekly)

The Time Signal Service

The time signal, which gives the time to a normal accuracy of one-twentieth of a second, is sent out from Greenwich Observatory to the transmitters, and a sequence of signals is broadcast all over the world throughout the day. Each signal consists of six dot seconds—or 'pips' as they are called—the first at five seconds to the hour, and the sixth exactly at the hour. The hour is therefore given by the *last* 'pip' of the time signal, but by the *first* hour stroke of Big Ben. When Big



Enemy action—a studio in Broadcasting House



'Pass, friend'—Elizabeth Cowell, announcer, shows her pass to a member of the BBC Home Guard

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Ben strikes the quarters, however, it is the first note of the stroke which gives the quarter. The chart below gives the times at which the signal is normally broadcast in the BBC's home and overseas programmes. Times are subject to alteration. It may be necessary, occasionally, for a signal to be suppressed if superimposition on a current programme is inadvisable on artistic grounds.

TIME (BST)	HOME PROGRAMME	OVERSEAS PROGRAMME
2.00 a.m.		North American Latin-American
3.00		North American
4.00		North American
8.00	Home Service (Sundays excepted)	Pacific
9.00	Home Service (Sundays only)	Pacific
10.00		Pacific
10.15	Home Service (Sundays excepted)	
12.00 noon		Eastern
1.00 p.m.	Home Service	Eastern
2.00	Forces	
4.00		Eastern
5.00	Forces	
6.00	Home Service	
7.00		African
8.30		African
10.00	Forces	African
11.00		African
12.00 midnight	Home Service	

Big Ben is normally broadcast to home listeners at 7.0 a.m. in both the Home Service and the Programme for the Forces, at 11.0 a.m. in the Programme for the Forces only, and at 9.0 p.m. in the Home Service only. Big Ben is also broadcast several times each day in the various overseas services.

Big Ben at Nine.—The broadcasting of Big Ben before the nine o'clock news bulletin in the Home Service was introduced, in response to many requests, on 10 November 1940. The striking of the quarters and the hour takes a minute. The object of the broadcast is to give a daily signal for all those who wish to set aside a moment during the day for silent prayer or quiet thought.

'The Week's Good Cause'

During 1940, a record total of £355,434 was subscribed to the 'Week's Good Cause' appeals, broadcast in the Home

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Service on every Sunday of the year, save one. The appeals have reflected many aspects of the war. The majority were for the relief of distress and for welfare work in this country, including appeals on behalf of men and women serving in H.M. Forces, merchant seamen, and life-boat crews, also on behalf of British refugees from abroad and from the Channel Islands. Appeals were also made for the Lord Mayor of London's National Air Raid Distress Fund, and for the relief of distress among the people of five countries allied or friendly to Great Britain. Two appeals were made for overseas missionary work. The following are the most notable results of the year (where an exact figure has not been obtainable, a reasonable estimate is given) :

1940	APPEAL	SPEAKER	RESULT
Jan. 7	Finland Fund	Dr. Tancred Borenus	£80,000
14	Anglo-Turkish Relief Fund	Lord Lloyd of Dolobran	42,000
Mar. 31	Finland Fund (second appeal)	Hon. Edward Ward	20,000
May 26	Church of Scotland huts for the Forces	Very Rev. C. L. Warr	13,025
June 2	British War Refugees' Fund	Rt. Hon. Sir Nevile Henderson	23,606
9	King Haakon's Fund for Relief in Norway	Admiral Sir Edward Evans	10,000
Aug. 25	British Sailors' Society	Rt. Hon. Ronald Cross	11,100
Nov. 24	Lord Mayor's National Air Raid Distress Fund	Norman Birkett	21,572
Dec. 8	Lord Mayor's Greek Relief Fund	The Lord Mayor of London	24,160

Relays from Overseas

During 1940, 426 programmes from overseas were successfully relayed in the BBC services, either 'live' or from recordings. Among these were 101 relays from France, the majority by line although this means of communication ceased on 20 May. More distant relays, taken by short-wave radio, included 92 from Egypt, 80 from the U.S.A., 70 from the Dominions, 20 from the Dutch East Indies, 5 from India, and 4 from Turkey.

American Broadcasters in Great Britain

The three big broadcasting chains of America—the Columbia Broadcasting System, the Mutual Broadcasting System, and the National Broadcasting Company—have representatives in Great Britain to collect and broadcast news to the U.S.A.

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At the outbreak of war a department was formed within the BBC to give general assistance to the American broadcasters and, with authority delegated by the Government, to censor their scripts. The object of the censorship is of course to prevent the broadcasting of information that might be valuable to the enemy. The Americans are left quite unfettered in the expression of their opinions. The BBC gives them studio facilities, and its special unit has helped them to see various aspects of life in wartime Britain. During the year the three American companies have made over 1,400 broadcasts from this country.

Medium-wave Reception of the Home Service

Listeners over the greater part of the country can normally obtain good reception of the Home Service by tuning to one or other of the three medium wavelengths on which it is broadcast, i.e. 203.5 metres, 391.1 metres, or 449.1 metres. But even where reception is usually good, it is liable, for the reasons explained by Air Marshal Sir Philip Joubert (see page 12), to deteriorate during air raids. At these times, a listener with a modern receiver, especially one with a good aerial, ought as a rule to be able to hear the Home Service, though maybe with less than usual quality or strength. Often only one wavelength is affected; the programme can then be obtained by switching to one of the alternative wavelengths.

In some areas, listeners may have trouble in getting the programme, quite apart from the temporary difficulties which arise during air raids. In these areas, reception is at times subject to alternate fading and surging or to distortion, the degree of which varies according to the locality. These troubles are not due to faults in the receiver or in the BBC transmitters. Unfortunately, they are inherent in the wartime system of broadcasting to which Sir Philip Joubert referred. The areas concerned are not extensive and have been reduced since the Home Service has been broadcast on additional wavelengths.

There is no radical cure for these troubles, but improvement can sometimes be made by modifying the form of aerial used with the receiving set. The modifications suggested for this purpose diverge in some respects from the standard practice recommended for good reception in normal conditions. These special suggestions for rectifying wartime difficulties are included in the paragraphs below entitled 'Advice on how to get Good Reception'.

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Medium-wave Reception of the Programme for the Forces

To give increased coverage and to improve reception in some parts of the country, the Programme for the Forces is from 2 March 1941 to be broadcast, not as before that date on the medium wave of 373.1 metres, but on the medium wave of 342.1 metres. Reception is, however, subject to the same wartime difficulties as those described in respect of the Home Service and the same palliative measures may prove useful.

Short-wave Reception of the Home Service and the Programme for the Forces

The Home Service and the Programme for the Forces are broadcast also on the short waves of 49.38 metres and 41.49 metres respectively. Short-wave reception both by day and by night is by means of waves reflected from the upper atmosphere. Fading may therefore be observed by day as well as by night, and at both short and long distances from the transmitter. To secure the best transmission between two points by short wave, it is necessary to change the wavelength according to the time of day, the season of the year, and the distance. Many listeners who have all-wave receivers must have noticed that, while reception of the Home Service and Programme for the Forces on short waves is good during daylight hours, it often becomes poor after sunset. It is no consolation to them to be told that it remains good after dark to those who live much farther away—outside the British Isles in fact. The only way of covering the British Isles satisfactorily at night in winter from a transmitting point within them would be to use a longer wave—one of the order of seventy-five to eighty metres. No waves of this length are available to the BBC, and, if there were, few ordinary receivers in the hands of the general public would be capable of receiving them. The BBC has not, therefore, been able to maintain a satisfactory service on short waves to listeners in the British Isles after dark throughout the winter. As the year progresses, however, it will be found that good reception on both 49.38 metres and 41.49 metres will continue until a later hour each night until midsummer day. The advantage of listening to the Home Service and the Programme for the Forces on short waves is that short-wave transmission does not at present afford navigational aid to aircraft, and is not subject to the system of broadcasting which, on medium waves, has been made necessary in this country.

Interference from Continental Stations

At times when the home programmes are received weakly, the listener may perhaps find increased interference from continental stations working on adjacent wavelengths. The extent of this interference will depend on the 'quality of the receiver, i.e. its 'selectivity'. If the listener has a receiver with poor selective powers, foreign stations may come through strongly at times when the home programme is heard at its weakest. It may even seem at times as if a foreign station is operating on a BBC wavelength when, in fact, it is keeping strictly to its own.

Advice on how to get Good Reception

Installation.—The efficiency of every receiver is improved by the provision of a good aerial and earth system. Although a modern receiver gives sufficiently *loud* reception with only a few feet of wire for an aerial and no earth at all, it is then working all the time near its most sensitive condition. This means that noises due to interference may become prominent, and it may upset the tuning or cause instability, with consequent bad quality.

The aerial should be such as to allow the programme to be received at as great strength as possible compared with these noises. An outside aerial is advisable—one as high as possible within the limits stated on the back of the wireless receiving licence. The down-lead from the aerial should be kept away from neighbouring objects. The receiver should be near the point where the down-lead enters the house; if reception is required in another part of the house, it is more satisfactory to use a separate loudspeaker than to extend the aerial lead. The earth connexion should be short and direct and may be taken to a copper-plate buried in the earth or to a main water pipe. Gas pipes should not be used, since the joints are poor electrical conductors. If an indoor aerial is used, it should not run parallel to electric lighting or telephone wiring, which may be embedded in the walls or ceiling.

Maintenance.—When a receiver has been in use for some time, the listener has usually become so accustomed to it that he may not notice a gradual deterioration in performance and quality of reproduction. A periodical overhaul should be carried out, say, every year so that any necessary readjustments or renewals can be made.

Interference.—There are three main causes of interference: atmospheric disturbances, electrical interference from

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apparatus in the listener's neighbourhood, and the transmissions of other stations.

Atmospheric disturbances are not as a rule severe in this country except during thunderstorms. This kind of interference cannot be prevented.

Electrical interference is usually heard as a more or less continuous crackling or buzzing noise with clicks when the interfering apparatus is switched on or off. It may be caused by trams, trolley-buses, motors, fans, vacuum cleaners, lifts, etc. The services of the Engineering Branch of the General Post Office are given, when available, free of charge 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 ('Report of Interference'), which can be obtained from any head post office.

The precaution which a listener should take against electrical interference is to install an efficient outdoor aerial, if necessary one of the 'anti-interference' type now manufactured by several firms. Where an all-mains receiver is used, interference may be introduced through the mains connexion, in which case a suppressor should be fitted in this lead.

Electrical interference, where present, increases when a programme can only be heard weakly, because at such times the 'gain' of the receiver (i.e. its sensitivity) is enhanced by the automatic gain control or by the listener himself advancing the volume-control. Conversely, when a programme is received strongly, even without increased volume-control, a modern receiver automatically lowers the gain, and electrical interference, unless severe, becomes negligible. A good aerial is therefore an obvious advantage.

If the receiver is deficient in the property of selectivity (which enables it to discriminate between the wanted station and unwanted stations working on other wavelengths), other programmes may be heard as well as the wanted programme even if the latter is at good strength. Unless the receiver has gone out of adjustment since it was first installed, there is little that can be done to overcome this type of interference, because the selectivity of a receiver depends on its fundamental design.

The medium- and long-wave broadcasting stations in Europe work on wavelengths which were agreed at an international conference in Lucerne in 1933. The Lucerne Plan was revised by the European Broadcasting Conference, at which the BBC was represented, held at Montreux in March 1939, and agreement was reached as to a new plan, the

Montreux Plan. This was to have come into force in March 1940, but owing to the war its application has been postponed indefinitely.

Reception in Wartime.—The following suggestions are made in order to meet the special reception conditions in areas where, as explained above, reception may be poor as a result of the wartime system of broadcasting. These measures are palliative only, and the degree of their success depends on various factors. Where the trouble exists, however, they are worth a trial.

(1) Use a straight vertical aerial without flat top portion or long horizontal leads, spaced a few feet away from the house if outside. Where the programme is strong, notwithstanding distortion, the short aerial should be put inside the room and suspended vertically above the receiver.

(2) Disconnect the aerial, and connect the earth wire to the aerial terminal of the receiver instead of to the earth terminal. For battery-operated sets not of a self-contained portable type, but using an aerial and earth connexion, try reversing the positions of the aerial and earth wire leads on the terminals of the receiver. In general, this remedy is only successful where the programme strength is always good although distorted, and where some distortion occurs in daytime as well as after nightfall.

(3) Use an extemporized frame aerial made by winding about ten turns of insulated wire round the edges of a cardboard or wooden box (with sides, say, about two feet square), the ends of the wire being connected to the aerial and earth terminals of the receiver in place of the usual aerial and earth wires. The box should be stood on edge and turned in various directions until the best results are obtained. This method is only suitable with a modern receiver of high sensitivity, but, where the strength of the programme is good at all times although distorted, it has been found to give satisfactory results in certain localities both in daytime and after dark.

The first two of the above methods are not possible with a self-contained portable set which includes within it a small frame aerial, but this type of receiver works in the same way as an ordinary receiver to which the third method has been applied. With such receivers, an improvement may be obtained in certain cases by turning the receiving set to a position giving the best results.

BBC Publications

The BBC publishes three weekly journals—one of them

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possessing the largest circulation of its kind—and also a number of more specialized publications.

The movement of population, shortage of paper, difficulties of transport and communication, have complicated the task of producing and distributing a journal such as, for instance, *Radio Times*, which in peacetime was received into some three million homes. The circulation of this paper could not but be affected by the outbreak of war; listening habits were upset, the choice of programme was restricted to a single Home Service with the subsequent development of a special Programme for the Forces, and, as many items had to be of last-minute topicality, it was not easy to give full information about all broadcasts a week in advance. In spite of these drawbacks readers proved to be loyal to the paper, broadcasting settled down to its wartime basis, and the circulation figures began to rise nearer to the peacetime level.

RADIO TIMES

Radio Times, incorporating *World Radio*, publishes details for the week of the Home Service and of the Programme for the Forces. It also includes articles on current programmes and on those who take part in them, together with news of future plans, letters from listeners, and illustrations.

Radio Times is published every Friday, price twopence. Subscription rates, including postage, are as follows :

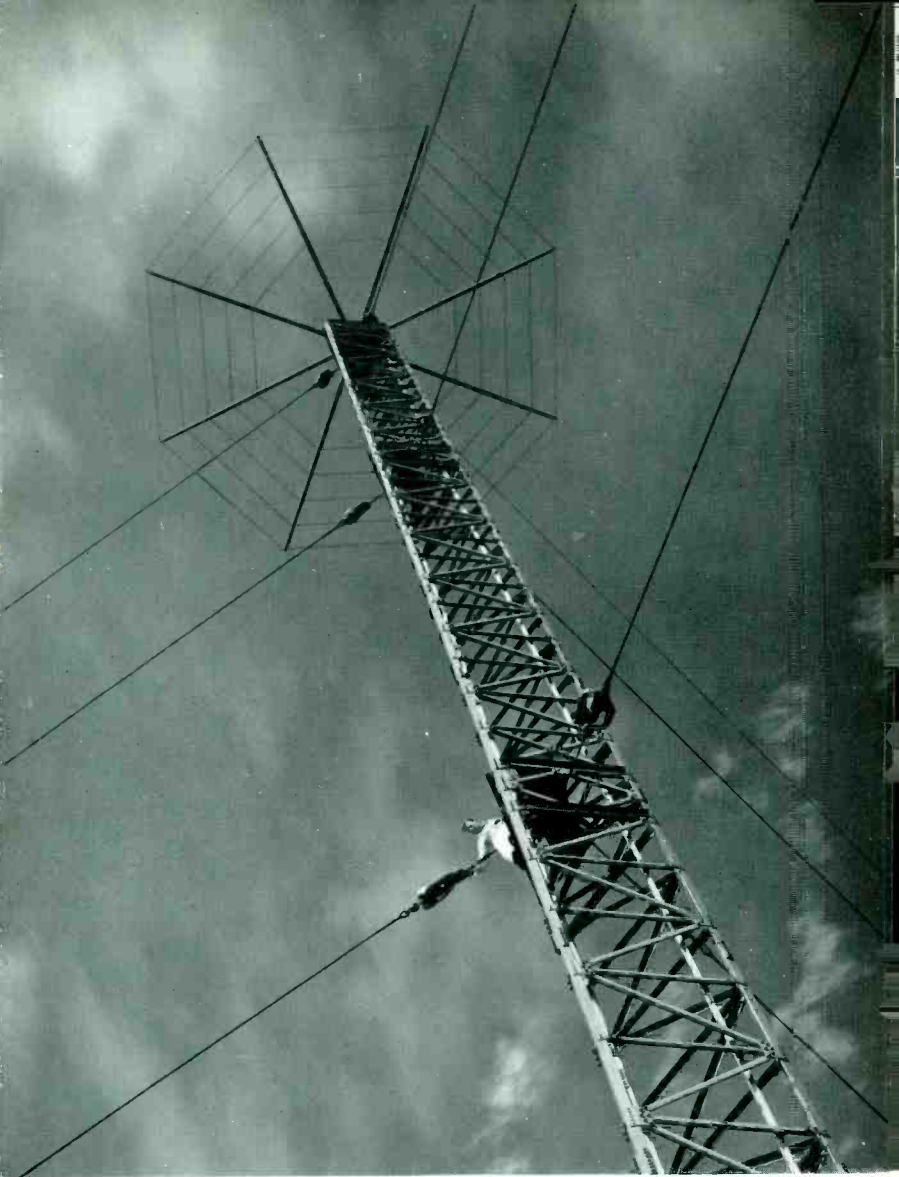
Subscription for :	12 months	6 months	3 months
Inland	15s. 6d.	7s. 9d.	3s. 11d.
Overseas ¹	13s. 0d.	6s. 6d.	3s. 3d.

By arrangement with the Admiralty, free copies of *Radio Times* are sent, if required, to ships of the Royal Navy.

¹ Under the censorship regulations, it is no longer possible in wartime for private individuals to post newspapers and periodicals to any of the countries on what is known as the censorable list.¹ A regular order for the despatch of BBC publications abroad may, however, be placed direct with the BBC, or with a newsagent possessing an export permit. No despatches can be made to enemy or enemy-occupied territory. The 'censorable' countries at the time of going to press are : Afghanistan, Andorra, Bulgaria, China, Eire, Estonia, Finland, France (unoccupied), Greece, Hungary, Iran, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Monaco, Northern Ireland, Persian Gulf, Portugal, Rumania, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tangier, Thailand (Siam), Tibet, Turkey, U.S.S.R., Vatican City, Yemen, Yugoslavia, or any dependencies thereof, together with free dependencies of enemy-occupied countries.



Risaldar Major Mohammad Ashraf Khan with members of the Indian contingent
after a visit to Broadcasting House



A mast aerial

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THE LISTENER

The steady increase in circulation which *The Listener* has maintained since the beginning of the war is a measure of the interest which, in wartime, belongs to the broadcast of talks on the widest range of subjects and of pronouncements on the war. Many of these are published each week, either in full or in part, with illustrations. With its 'Radio News-reel' of pictures based on the week's broadcast news, its book reviews, and its independent critical articles, *The Listener* affords a comprehensive and authoritative picture of modern life and of a nation at war as expressed through the medium of the microphone.

The Listener is published every Thursday, price threepence. A single specimen copy is sent free on application. Subscription rates, including postage, are as follows :

<i>Subscription for :</i>	<i>12 months</i>	<i>6 months</i>	<i>3 months</i>
Inland	20s. od.	10s. od.	5s. od.
Overseas ¹	17s. 6d.	8s. 9d.	4s. 5d.

Half-yearly bound volumes in light blue cloth titled in gold can be supplied price 12s. each (or by inland post 13s.); orders should be placed in July and January for the volume just completed.

Although large stocks of back numbers of these BBC journals were destroyed by enemy action, it is possible to supply recent issues subject to their being still in print, and some earlier issues, at the following rates :

<i>Radio Times</i> (issues at 2d.)	Price 3d.	(by post	4½d.)
(„ „ 6d.)	„ 8d.	(„ „	10d.)
<i>The Listener</i> („ „ 3d.)	„ 4d.	(„ „	5½d.)

LONDON CALLING

London Calling is the BBC's overseas journal. The main edition gives detailed programmes of the BBC's North American, Pacific, Eastern, and African transmissions, and is issued sufficiently in advance to enable it to reach parts of the world within three or four weeks' mailing distance of London. Its principal circulation has developed in North America. A subsidiary edition, which gives advance schedules of the various fixed-time broadcasts, circulates in more distant parts.

Both editions give details of times of transmissions and

¹ See footnote on page 124.

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wavelengths, and publish, with illustrations, a selection of the topical talks broadcast in the BBC's home and overseas programmes. They also contain a number of special features such as the weekly 'London Letter' and articles by personalities well known to listeners overseas.

The subscription to *London Calling* is 10s. od. a year (including postage) or the equivalent in local currency.¹ For the convenience of North American listeners the annual subscription of \$2 throughout the U.S.A. may be sent to Mr. Gerald Cock, British Empire Building, 620 Fifth Avenue, New York City. The subscription for Canadian readers is \$2.50 and may be sent to Mr. W. F. L. Edwards, 394 Bay Street, Toronto, Ontario.

THE ARABIC LISTENER

The Arabic Listener is published bi-monthly; it has the distinction of being the first Arabic periodical to be printed and published in England. Distribution is carried out mainly through British representatives in all parts of the Arabic-speaking world and in countries where there are Arab communities. In addition, many copies are sent direct to individual subscribers all over the world.

The contents include reprints of talks broadcast in the BBC's Arabic service, though original material is frequently printed. Book reviews and a leading article appear in each number. The work of leading Arab authors has been published, including short stories. There are also illustrations.

OVERSEAS PUBLICITY

A *Weekly Programme Guide*, with editorial, is issued for the use of the press throughout the Empire and in the U.S.A. It contains information three weeks in advance about the Empire Service, and is supplemented by a weekly morse message, which gives later information and reaches a wider area. Special telegrams are also sent to those more remote parts of the Empire where arrangements for the reception of the morse message cannot be made. A European programme bulletin is issued each week for the use of the press and for distribution to British representatives abroad. Bulletins are also issued for the benefit of Spanish-speaking Latin America and in Portuguese for Brazil. Special editions are also designed for distribution in Spain and Portugal. For Turkish listeners a bulletin is published in Turkish and distributed through the Ministry of Information.

¹ See footnote on page 124.

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MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS

These include *New Every Morning*, the prayer-book of the daily religious service at 10.15 a.m. (paper cover 1s., by post 1s. 3d. ; cloth boards 1s. 6d., by post 1s. 9d. ; pocket edition 1s., by post 1s. 2d.). A companion volume of special wartime prayers is published under the title of *Each Returning Day* (limp cloth 1s. 3d., by post 1s. 6d.). Two special wartime booklets have been issued : *The Care of Children in Wartime*, by Mrs. Creswick Atkinson (2d., by post 2½d.) and *Wartime Recipes*, by Irene Veal (6d., by post 7d.), both published by Lett's Quikref Diaries, Ltd., by arrangement with the BBC.

The *BBC Diary 1941*, published by Lett's Quikref Diaries, Ltd., with the authority of the BBC, contains full information about BBC activities and personalities, in a handy pocket size (in various styles from 1s. 9d. to 6s., plus purchase tax, postage 3d.), and the *Listener Calendar 1941* (also published by Lett's Quikref Diaries, Ltd., by arrangement with the BBC, at 2s. 6d., plus purchase tax, by post 2s. 10½d.) presents a series of photographs of the scenes behind memorable broadcasts.

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Broadcasting House, Meirion Road, Bangor. Bangor 561

West Wales Representative : T. J. Pickering.
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Plymouth Director : E. G. D. Liveing.
Ingledene, Seymour Road, Mannamead, Plymouth. Plymouth
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British Empire Building, 620 Fifth Avenue, New York City.
Telephone : Circle 7-0630. *Cables :* Broadcasts, New York.