

"Studded with entertainment"

—Frederick Lewis Allen

Sound and Fury

-an Informal History of
BROADCASTING

by
**FRANCIS
CHASE, JR.**



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SOUND AND FURY

An Informal History of Broadcasting

By

FRANK CHASE, JR.

Compared with the theatre, the newspaper, and even the motion picture, radio is still in swaddling clothes, but its growth to maturity has been so rapid that today it touches intimately and helps to mold the lives of more Americans than the theatre, the newspaper, and the motion picture combined.

In its twenty-odd years of life (and you can take "odd" in both senses) it has brought hundreds of colorful personalities before the public as entertainers, propagandists, popular educators, and plain "blue sky" artists. *Sound and Fury* presents them all in sharply etched and lively portraits, as diverse a company as any novelist could create.

It is a reporter's story of broadcasting in all its aspects. For sheer reading interest it rivals the popular social commentaries of Stanley Walker and Frederick Lewis Allen. The goings-on in radio, even the mature radio of today, are frequently amazing, sometimes significant and always amusing. Mr. Chase has made the most of the bizarre and fantastic elements in which the industry (of art, if you will) abounds.

SOUND AND FURY

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By FRANCIS CHASE, JR.



HARPER & BROTHERS PUBLISHERS
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SOUND AND FURY

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FIRST EDITION

For
1st Sergeant Howard J. Long, U.S.A.

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SILENT NIGHTS

THE CHATTER OF CODE FILLED THE EARPHONES OF THE LONE operator on duty in the wireless room in the Brooklyn Navy Yard. With practiced fingers, the operator jotted down the dots and dashes until they ended with the customary, coded figure, thirty.

Then—from ever so far away—he heard the voice of a woman singing. A woman singing in the navy yard? Of course, he was only hearing things. He lifted the earphones from his head. The singing stopped.

Suspiciously, he put the phones back to his ears, listened carefully, and was frightened. The voice was in the earphones! Anyone knew voices couldn't come over the wireless, he reassured himself . . . or could they? He listened again.

"Angels!" he shouted aloud. "Angels singing in the air!" And with that, he rushed from the wireless room to notify the communications officer. The young lieutenant on duty that night entered the wireless room smiling suspiciously.

"You've been listening too much," he told the blue-jacketed operator as he lifted one phone carelessly to his ear. The smile faded into a pale incredulity. "It's impossible!" he managed to gasp finally.

How were these two to know that, by an odd chance, they had become part of an historic moment? After all, that was in 1907 and everyone—barring a few visionaries—knew that a voice couldn't be sent over wireless.

The lieutenant called the New York *Herald-Tribune*, and a skeptical rewrite man, to whom he was switched, thought that he was being tricked by the hireling of a rival sheet. "I'm busy right now," he stalled, "but I'll call you back at the navy yard in five

minutes." Five minutes later, when he put through his call, he learned that he was really talking to the communications officer at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. He took down the facts, wrote a two-paragraph item and put it, with a full measure of misgiving, upon the city desk.

Next morning, Dr. Lee De Forest, at breakfast in a Nineteenth Street restaurant, casually glanced through the morning paper as he munched at his toast. Halfway down a column on an inside page, well-buried by a make-up man fully as skeptical as the rewrite man who had first taken the story, he read a short item which caused him to leave his breakfast unfinished and rush back to the laboratory with a new enthusiasm. Tinged with doubt and haunted by disbelief as the story was, it was still an accurate description of a broadcast which he had made in the purest fun and without a hope or a prayer that it would be picked up anywhere on the night before.

That night, he had taken two guests to his laboratory atop the old Parker Building, then standing at Nineteenth Street and Park Avenue, to see the telephone transmitter upon which he was working. One was a woman journalist, who, he hoped, might write a piece about his experiments; the other was a flawless mezzo-soprano. The women were politely interested in his gadgets, but the journalist insisted upon passing over the more practical items in his laboratory to focus her attention upon a Rube Goldberg type of apparatus with wires, coils, generators, a gramophone horn (which served as a microphone), and batteries sprawled all over that corner of the room.

"That," said Dr. De Forest, "is the most unusual wireless set in the world. It will send the human voice through the air." He pushed a button and the instrument started to crackle and buzz. He was none too sanguine about its really working, but the other two didn't know that. They looked at him suspiciously. "Perhaps Madame Farrar would like to be the first to sing over it?"

Madame Eugenia Farrar, young Swedish concert singer, laughed, stepped up to the crackling transmitter and sang, "I Love You Truly." De Forest applauded and, as an encore, she did "Just A-Wearyin' for You."

Today Madame Farrar recalls that broadcast with a smile.

"When I sang that night, I hadn't the slightest idea what lay ahead for radio. Neither did Dr. De Forest, I'm sure. He was as surprised as my journalist friend to read in the paper next day that the broadcast was a success. You see, my journalist friend—who didn't work for the *Herald*—hadn't bothered to write it up and was badly scooped."

That afternoon, De Forest called the editor of the *Herald-Tribune* and explained what the radio operator at the Brooklyn Navy Yard had really heard over the wireless. The editor listened patiently. "So, what good is the gadget now that it works?" De Forest scratched his head and tried to think up an answer. He couldn't. The editor of the newspaper which, twenty-four years later was to be broadcasting a great forum for the enlightenment of the American people, shrugged his shoulders and went back to his pencils and paste pots.

Six months later, when the United States Fleet sailed out of the navy yard for a round-the-world cruise, each vessel was equipped with a De Forest wireless telephone, largely because Rear Admiral Robley Evans had been at first deeply intrigued and, later, pragmatically impressed by "angels singing in the air."

Unquestionably, that broadcast by De Forest was the first strictly modern broadcast of a human voice by radio, but there had been other, partially successful transmissions before. In fact, the paternity of radio is a question any radio engineer is willing to fight about, while Marconi himself is reputed to have called it a "prime example of bastardy." The truth of the matter is that any number of physicists contributed to the birth of the voluble youngster.

James Clark Maxwell, of the University of Edinburgh, in 1867, was the first to encounter the force which is the very life of radio—ether waves. In 1875, Thomas Edison, working on his electric bulb, also took notice of the phenomenon due to these waves which he called "etheric force." But it wasn't until twelve years later that the German physicist, Heinrich Hertz, devised electrical instruments with which he was able to define the traveling speed and power of these waves and many of their physical qualities. Augusto Righi, an Italian working at Bologna, improved on Hertz's instruments, inspired his fellow countryman, Calzecchi-

Onesti, to uncover the effect of these waves upon metal and, eventually, to construct the tube which is the backbone of radio sets. Sir Oliver Lodge improved upon this tube, and a Russian, Popoff, working in Germany on Franklin's lightning rod, improved Lodge's effort by adding the antenna.

But it remained for Guglielmo Marconi, second son of an Italian businessman and an Irish mother, to actually harness those waves for use. Marconi attended neither the public schools nor the university, but, fascinated by electricity, studied the mysterious force under Righi and Rosa in his native city of Bologna. In 1894, when he was but twenty years old, he succeeded in ringing a bell on the first floor of his home by pressing a button on the third floor with no wires connecting the two. Impressed by this accomplishment, his father gave him funds with which to construct more elaborate equipment and, the next year, he had succeeded in sending Morse signals a distance of several blocks. That year, too, he took out his first patents and, patriotically, offered them to the Italian Government which refused them as "not serious enough to deserve official consideration."

Stalemated in Italy, Marconi set out the following year for London, where his mother had connections, and his first London test for an audience composed largely of skeptical journalists from Fleet Street was the transmission of a message in Morse code from a terrace on the Houses of Parliament across the Thames to a receiver in St. Thomas Hospital. The transmission was a success and, several months later, the unbelieving journalists were using this new invention to report the international regattas for the American Cup with a transmitter located on the yacht of the Prince of Wales and a receiver in Osborne House. The wireless was used that year, too, by Queen Victoria to receive hour-to-hour reports on the condition of her son, injured in a fall. When, in December, 1901, a wireless signal was successfully transmitted from Poldhu, in Cornwall, across the Atlantic to St. Johns, Newfoundland, the English press foresaw an era "in which lasting peace must be born of the intimacy of understanding which the wireless will promote among nations."

Soon, too, the magic blue sparks were set to work saving lives,

particularly at sea where ships were being fitted with wireless; and in 1912, when the "Titanic" struck an iceberg on its maiden voyage, the "Carpathia"—receiving the Marconi signal—steamed through the fog to pick up seven hundred survivors. At a wireless key in New York City for forty-eight hours without relief, one young wireless operator for the American Marconi Company maintained the city's only contact with the rescue ship. The operator's name was David Sarnoff.

In science, as in art, "the reach must exceed the grasp." Just as the invention of the telephone followed logically upon the invention of the telegraph, scientists were already beginning to foresee the day when the voice might be transmitted through the air as the wireless was now able to send dots and dashes. This was obvious, too, to the executives who guided the destinies of the great Bell Telephone system; and from a primary feeling of dismay at the competition such a wireless method of communication might afford their costly and far-reaching web of lines, they turned quickly to a more practical viewpoint. The first great expenditures for the laboratory research essential to the refinement of wireless were made by the telephone and telegraph interests which, at the same time, took out basic patents on these developments as rapidly as they came out of the workshops. In fact, those most closely connected with the wireless—and the still unborn radio—welcomed this interest, for there were few who foresaw for radio any other usage than as a medium for point-to-point communication. Of course, there were still great hurdles to be surmounted before radio—practically and dependably—could convey the human voice for any great distance. Marconi's spark transmitter was incapable of generating the continuous frequencies demanded for the sustained carrier-wave of radio, and the arc developed by the English physicist, Duddell, in 1900, was but a crude, sputtering instrument which filled transmission with static and noise.

It was the invention of the "grid" tube by Dr. De Forest, in 1906, which removed this last important obstacle from radio's path and made his broadcast on that evening in 1907 of monumental importance. Oddly and significantly, that first broadcast

was of an "entertainment" caliber; but by 1907, the telephone company and its manufacturing concerns had invested a small fortune in radio and owned so many of the patents essential to both transmitters and receivers that radio's development as a means of commercial, private communication was a foregone conclusion. United States entry into the war in 1917 served to further divert the development of radio into this specific channel by emphasizing the need for wireless communication between widely separated forces in the field and between airplane observers and the artillery for which they were range-finding. Pioneer workers in radio—men like Marconi, Conrad, De Forest, Armstrong—now turned their energy and inventive ability toward making radio an effective implement of war. Twenty-three years later, they were to understand how well they had succeeded.

During all this early period of development, only one of radio's pioneering godfathers had a feeling that the science of broadcasting had a bigger part to play in modern life than as a refinement of telephony. David Sarnoff literally grew up in radio. He was born in Russia, the eldest of five children, in 1891, and, in 1900, was brought to the United States by his parents. A few years later, upon the death of his father, he became the principal wage earner for his family, selling newspapers on the street corners in downtown New York. Between editions, to supplement this income, he became a messenger boy for the Commercial Cable Company and, enthralled by this new magic, he spent his evenings studying wireless telegraphy until, in 1908, he was able to qualify as an operator. His first assignment was in a lonely Marconi station on Nantucket Island; later, he took a sharp wage reduction in order to return to New York and attend a technical school in the evenings. By 1916, the ambitious youth held an important post in the commercial department of the American Marconi Company and, that same year, he wrote a memorandum to Edward J. Nalley, the company's general manager, which was almost prophetic in its text.

I have in mind [he wrote in part], a plan of development which

would make radio a household utility in the same sense as the piano or phonograph. The idea is to bring music into the home by wireless.

While this has been tried in the past by wires, it has been a failure because wires do not lend themselves to this scheme. With radio, however, it would be entirely feasible. . . .

The problem of transmitting music has been solved in principle and therefore all the receivers attuned to the wave-length of the transmitter should be capable of receiving such music. The receiver can be designed in the form of simple "radio music box" and arranged for several different wave-lengths, which should be changeable with the throwing of a single switch. . . .

The same principle can be extended to numerous other fields as, for example, receiving lectures at home; also events of national importance can be simultaneously announced and received. Baseball scores can be transmitted in the air. . . . The manufacture of the "radio music box" including antennae, in large quantities, would make possible their sale at a moderate figure of perhaps \$75 per outfit. The main revenue to be derived will be from the sale of the "radio music boxes" which, if manufactured in lots of 100,000 or so, could yield a handsome profit when sold at the price mentioned above. . . . The Company would have to undertake the arrangements, I am sure, for music recitals, lectures, etc. . . .

The last paragraph of this remarkable memo was particularly farseeing.

Aside from the profit to be derived from this proposition, the possibilities for advertising for the company are tremendous; for its name would ultimately be brought into the household and wireless would receive national and universal attention.

But the future of radio—any investment house or banker in Wall Street would have told you so in 1916—lay in the field of commercial communication. If no charge beyond the initial sale price of the receiver could be made, how would the cost of broadcast programs year after year be defrayed? The Marconi Company, General Electric, Westinghouse and the Bell Telephone Company continued in their efforts to develop radio for point-to-point communication. By the end of the war, the telephone com-

pany had installed several test links in its system, the longest being the link from the California mainland to Catalina Island. If this proved successful, the telephone company said, the submarine cable would be taken up and other radio links installed. Actually, tests on this link were successful enough, but something entirely unforeseen had arisen to cancel its workability. Many amateurs had become interested in wireless during the war years, and, building their own receivers and transmitters, were already talking with one another across long distances. Now, one of the chief amusements of this clique was eavesdropping upon supposedly private telephone conversations in these various radio links; complaints—even threats of suits—poured in to the telephone company from outraged patrons, and in 1919, telephone officials were forced to conclude that radio was still a product of the future. But the word, "radio," had a different connotation for them from what it has for Americans today.

About this time—1919—Radio Corporation of America absorbed the American Marconi Company and, with it, the Marconi Company's energetic commercial manager David Sarnoff. In the winter of 1920, months before KDKA went on the air with its regular broadcasts, the youth who had grown up in radio was again laying his "radio music box" idea before his chief, now Owen D. Young, chairman of the board of General Electric and its affiliated RCA. This time, with the telephone interests definitely "cooling off" toward radio, the idea was more cordially received by executives who felt that they had foster-fathered a rather perfect child of science—but could find no place to bed and board it. But even as company bigwigs were bandying the idea about, broadcasting was born by a miscarriage out in East Pittsburgh.

The first World War was well over by the fall of 1920, but that did not necessarily mean that peace obtained. Herbert Hoover was appealing to Americans to help stay the ravages of starvation which rode roughshod over an exhausted Europe and the Near East. Poland, with the blessings of the French, was fighting a sort of Holy War against Bolshevism while conservative newspapers were hopefully predicting the quick collapse of Communism. Turkish Nationalists and Armenian armed forces, too, were at

swords' points with the extension of Communism again the *causa belli*. In defeated Germany, Russian propagandists were finding a fruitful field. The Reparations Committee, from Paris, had just ordered the already exhausted Reich to turn over to the Allies 275,000 tons of shipping as compensation for sinking the German fleet at Scapa Flow. The mark was barely worth the paper it was printed upon and Baron von Lersner, head of the German Peace Delegation to the Paris Convention, had just denounced the treaty of Versailles as the cause of the many "Bolshevist" outbreaks in Germany. "Destruction of that treaty," he said, "must be a first German aim."

In America, as Governors Cox and Harding waited for the electorate to choose between them for President at the polling places, Nebraska farmers were burning corn in their stoves because they couldn't sell it for enough to buy coal. Henry Ford's newspaper, the *Dearborn Independent*, edited by Ford's spokesman, W. J. Cameron, was raising anew the anti-Semitic issue and breathing fresh life into the infamous Ku Klux Klan. Rumors that Mrs. Woodrow Wilson was the real President were whispered about every speak-easy and—oh yes, a chap named John Gordon went over Niagara Falls in a barrel.

Such was the state of the world as Americans went to the polls on November 2, 1920, to choose a President, and it would be difficult today to say whether that choice or another event which occurred on the same day will leave a more lasting mark on the face of the earth. As the returns signifying a Republican avalanche began to pour in from all parts of the country, a small group of laughing, joking men gathered in a small room in the meter factory of the Westinghouse Company in East Pittsburgh. As rapidly as the telegraphed returns were received in the offices of the *Pittsburgh Post*, they were telephoned to this room, filled with wires, storage batteries, condensers and electrical equipment. There, a tall, quiet man—Dr. Frank Conrad—read them into the microphone which took them out into the ether to where some ten thousand amateur wireless operators and their friends were gathered for the special event. It was radio broadcasting's opening night. The audience was small, judged by present-day audiences, and the pro-

gram—a bare recital of figures as they were received—would hardly pass muster today when the great networks amplify the returns with commentaries of political analysts, talks by party leaders, anecdote and news gathered as the election progresses. But the opening night was a huge success. It was even more significant than successful, for it marked the formal about-face of those who guided radio's destiny. No longer was radio to be an adjunct of the telephone system. Radio, from that day on, was to grow and thrive as a public service in its own right. The change in policy was quite the child of chance.

Back in 1912, Dr. Frank Conrad became interested in radio and built his first receiver in his garage at Wilkinsburg, Pa., following it shortly with a transmitter. An engineer at Westinghouse, he began to turn more and more toward radio in his research work, and at the outbreak of the war, was one of those enlisted to spend full time perfecting radio. Conrad built the first successful airplane-to-land transmitter during this period.

After the war, he was made chief assistant engineer at Westinghouse, working under the late H. P. Davis, then Westinghouse vice-president in charge of radio research and, later, chairman of the board of the National Broadcasting Company. A large part of Conrad's work was developing and checking transmitting equipment, and for this purpose he had established more than a hundred listening posts. Finding that the use of spoken signals to test apparatus soon became monotonous, Dr. Conrad resorted to music from phonograph records. It was then, early in 1919, that he made his first discovery about broadcasting. Not only were his transmissions being received by the operators employed by Westinghouse, but hundreds of other amateurs—many with small crystal sets—were also receiving his broadcasts and, more important, enjoying them. Hardly a day passed without mail from such fans requesting him to play certain records. Finally, in self-defense, he announced that he would broadcast records each Wednesday and Saturday evening for two hours beginning at 7:30. This was radio's first request program. Later, live talent—vocalists and instrumentalists enlisted from among Conrad's friends and acquaintances—began to appear on the broadcasts, and by the winter of 1920, his informal programs boasted a large

audience. To Conrad, interested in the science of broadcasting, this audience had no particular significance. But to a large Pittsburgh department store, the fact that wireless broadcasting could attract and hold an audience had definite possibilities.

One morning, Conrad's chief, Mr. Davis, called him into his office and showed him an advertisement clipped from the morning paper. The department store was advertising radio receivers which could pick up "Dr. Conrad's popular broadcasts."

"We've been off on the wrong foot, Frank," Davis told him that morning. "We've been thinking of radio solely in terms of the telephone, which is impractical because such transmission can be picked up by anyone with a receiver. But there's no reason why we shouldn't turn this very difficulty into an asset by making a public service out of radio and transmitting news and features to the public."

In short, he reasoned, if Dr. Conrad's broadcasts of phonograph records could evoke such a public response, then the real radio industry lay in the manufacture and sale of radio receivers to the public and the supplying of radio programs that would make people want to own receivers.

This was the conclusion reached by David Sarnoff four years before, but where Sarnoff arrived at his conclusion on the basis of personal judgment, Davis had had his decision foisted upon him by a year of experimental broadcasting and an alert department store. There was still no slightest idea of the advertising potentialities of broadcasting. There was simply a feeling that, now partially divorced from the telephone industry, broadcasting was the business of those who manufactured and sold radio receivers. The early radio stations, then, were largely those set up by Westinghouse, General Electric, RCA and Bell Telephone's WEAf, in New York, where telephone engineers hoped still to perfect a radio transmitter capable of sending private messages through the air.

Westinghouse established three other stations besides KDKA, its pioneer outlet, and by the fall of 1922, two other important groups had entered the broadcasting field. L. Bamberger and Co., in Newark—a large department store—built WOR as a medium for advertising its merchandise, and WOR was followed by sta-

tions owned by Wanamaker's, Gimbel Bros., in Philadelphia, the Shepard Stores, in Boston. All of these stations contributed to the growing technique of programming, for as the novelty of radio wore off, the necessity for good programs was apparent.

A second important group to enter the broadcasting field in its infancy were large newspaper publishers who sensed in broadcasting an allied industry which, in other hands, might become highly competitive. Among the newspapers to establish stations during these early years were: the *Atlanta Journal*, the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Dallas News*, the *Kansas City Star* and the *Chicago Daily News*. From the very start, these newspapers made good use of their stations in broadcasting news flashes in lieu of the expensive and nonprofitable extra editions which they had long felt essential to good public service.

Before the end of 1922, six hundred radio stations were on the air and, without strict government supervision of broadcasting channels, broadcasters were forced to iron out their difficulties by gentlemen's agreements. Fortunately, during those first two years, most of the broadcasters were gentlemen and the agreements they worked out were adhered to. None of the stations were on the air for more than a few hours each evening, but because many of them were broadcasting on the same frequencies, time-sharing became a common practice. One station, for example, would be on the air from seven until ten each evening, signing off at ten to permit another station, using the same wave length, to broadcast for the remainder of the evening. Some stations even shared time on an every-other-night basis, and broadcasters—as well as radio fans—spoke laughingly of the "silent nights" of early broadcasting. Even where stations were not sharing time, there were many silent nights for all of the early pioneer stations. Technical difficulties were constantly cropping up, power failures occurred and, in electrical storms, listening was out of the question.

Occasionally, in spite of agreements, the time-sharing deals of broadcasters ran into difficulties. In the winter of 1923, WJZ, a Westinghouse station in New York, had arranged with the Manhattan Opera Company to broadcast a series of Wagnerian operas. At the time, WJZ was sharing time with WHN and, according to the agreement, was supposed to sign off promptly at eleven

o'clock. But the operas were long and when eleven o'clock rolled around that first night, Dr. William H. Easton, managing WJZ, assumed that WHN would stand by graciously to permit completion of the historic first broadcast of an opera to the public.

But they didn't [Dr. Easton recalled]. They called me up next morning and properly bawled me out for running overtime. Of course, they were right, so I gave orders next evening to shut down our broadcasting on the dot at 11:00.

"Die Walküre" was the opera scheduled next evening. For the first time, lovers of Wagner all over the country were getting their favorite musical fare at no expense. The chords preluding Wotan's farewell were heard and the listeners were settling down to hear the greatest music ever written when, bang! Off went our switch and, a split second later, WHN came on the air with a jazz pianist!

The telephone at WJZ began to jangle furiously.irate listeners were quick to register their complaint, and to each of them Dr. Easton had one answer. "Don't call us, call WHN." And that listeners did go to the trouble to call WHN was evident next afternoon. Dr. Easton had a telephone call from that station's manager who informed him that, for the remainder of the series, WHN would be pleased to stand by until WJZ had finished their opera broadcasts.

WJZ, which was the second in the string of Westinghouse stations and later NBC's Blue network outlet in New York, is in many ways typical of hundreds of other radio stations throughout the United States in its establishment and growth. Westinghouse early realized that if they were to sell radio sets throughout the nation, they must have broadcasting stations scattered across the nation to bring entertainment to prospective purchasers of receivers. A second reason for the establishment of WJZ in New York was to take advantage of the wealth of talent to be found in that city.

Charles Popenoe, a mechanical engineer who later became treasurer of the National Broadcasting Company, was placed in charge of the project. The budget for the new station was almost

nonexistent, but Popenoe managed to squeeze a space ten by eighteen feet out of a cloakroom in the company's New York quarters to serve as a studio. The engineer was put in a cubbyhole atop the roof, which turned out to be a fortunate thing. In those days of gratis performances, broadcasters dared not ask to see a script beforehand or to audition talent. They just took a chance. Once, in the winter of 1922, a state legislator invited to broadcast took the occasion to vent his spleen on everyone and everything he didn't like down in Albany. Secure in the studio, he spared none of his political enemies and with a red face and a grand disregard for the laws of slander and libel, he stood before the microphone a solid hour before retiring from sheer exhaustion.

It wasn't until later, long after he had left the studio, that he learned his speech had been on the air for exactly three minutes; that the engineer on the roof had switched him off and a phonograph record on at a signal from the station manager.

Sometimes the engineer in his little cubbyhole must have felt like switching others off the air and only by the exercise of the most exacting self-control was his hand stayed. The only control an engineer had over volume in those days was in shifting the microphone—a tomato-can gadget—farther away from the performer who spoke too loud or closer to the soft-spoken. It was easy to "paralyze" the microphone by shouting into it. One of the shining moments of WJZ's early days was the appearance of Madame Johanna Gadski, and station officials had donned tuxedos to welcome her to the studio. Thomas Cowan, chief announcer, gave a glowing introduction to the listening audience; then Madame Gadski, renowned for her powerful voice and laboring under the illusion that the louder she sang the farther her voice would carry, stepped to the mike. Her first blast almost knocked the engineer out of his booth and he spent a bad half hour replacing fuses and burnt-out tubes. Cowan, too, had a bad time of it, for as he moved the microphone farther and farther away, the noted singer kept following until they were right up against the cloakroom wall where further retreat was out of the question.

But whether programs during those early years originated in

Pittsburgh or Schenectady or New York, the one point they all had in common was that no payment was made for talent. If, in 1922, anyone had suggested to the average station manager that, four years later, Sir Harry Lauder would be paid \$15,000 for a ten-minute radio appearance, he would have turned you over to the gentlemen in white coats with the strait jacket. The result was that a large percentage of the early radio programs were of a "public interest" character rather than of the entertainment caliber. KDKA, off to a flying start technically, also managed to keep out in front in the program field and scored many notable "firsts" during 1921 and 1922. In fact, almost the entire field of present-day broadcasting may have been seen in embryo at East Pittsburgh during this era of "silent nights."

For the first few months following its inaugural broadcast, KDKA depended largely upon phonograph records in building its programs. But as its listening audience grew, the station—ably managed by Davis—began gradually to get away from "canned" programs. One of the earliest innovations was a staff orchestra, composed of musicians from the Westinghouse plant; later the KDKA Little Symphony was formed with company musicians, and the formation of this group posed a real problem for the sound engineers. The studio was still the little room from which Conrad had read the election returns, but the formation of the orchestra called for larger quarters. An auditorium was tried, but resonance drove them eventually into the open air. The summer rains about Pittsburgh led to the setting up of a large tent on the roof of the plant; and the tent served very well until a high wind blew it away one night just before broadcast time. Forced to move back indoors, the sound engineers hit upon the idea of pitching the tent inside an auditorium and, later, of simply draping the walls of the auditorium with burlap—a far cry from the non-resonant walls and ceilings of the modern studio. But the burlap was the forerunner of the monk's cloth with which many studios are still draped.

On January 2, 1921, KDKA broadcast the first "Church of the Air." Many ministers looked askance at radio during those early months, but the Rev. Dr. E. J. Van Etten, pastor of Pittsburgh's Calvary Episcopal Church, saw the possibilities of radio

as an aid to the pulpit and broadcast the first church service ever to go out over the air. In that same month, radio was to demonstrate its worth as a power for good when Herbert Hoover voiced an appeal for aid for starving Europeans over KDKA—and received as a result of that appeal contributions totaling more than \$25,000. On February 15, 1921, KDKA transmitted an address by newly elected Congresswoman Alice M. Robertson, of Oklahoma. The first sports event ever to be broadcast—the Johnny Ray-Johnny Dundee boxing match in Motor Square Gardens, Pittsburgh—was broadcast over KDKA on April 11, 1921. On May 9, the first theatrical program—by remote control from the stage of the Davis Theater—was also broadcast and, three months later, the first play-by-play description of a baseball game was transmitted from Forbes Field. That summer, the Department of Agriculture made available for broadcast over KDKA the government market reports, permitting KDKA to lay the groundwork for radio's vast service to the farmer.

David Sarnoff had not been idle during the months which had elapsed since he placed his proposal for commercial broadcasting before Owen D. Young and the opening of KDKA's regularly scheduled broadcasting, and on July 2, 1921, an event with an international flavor gave him an opportunity to try his wings. The combination of Jack Dempsey and Tex Rickard had done something for boxing. No longer was it the back-alley pastime of hoodlums, but a respectable form of entertainment which was beginning, more and more, to attract a better class of patronage. On that July 2, the Manassa Mauler was scheduled to crawl between the ropes to do battle with Georges Carpentier, handsome ex-dancer and French war hero with a large feminine following. Suddenly, the big question wherever Americans met had become: Would the heavyweight crown remain in this country?

KDKA was the only commercial broadcasting station in the country at the time. WJZ, in the New York area, was not opened until three months later, but the great sports spectacle seemed such a grand opportunity to test broadcasting's appeal that Sarnoff was determined to make use of it. Major Andrew J. White was at the time editor of RCA's magazine, *Wireless Age*, and Sarnoff

asked him to arrange the broadcast. White summoned Harry Walker and J. O. Smith, RCA engineers, and learned that General Electric had a transmitter in the New York area which had been ordered by the navy but which had not yet been delivered. They borrowed it, secured permission from the Lackawanna Railroad to string an antenna between two of its towers in Hoboken, and set up a special telephone circuit connecting the transmitter with a pair of seats in Boyle's Thirty Acres in Jersey City, where the fight was to be held.

The trio installed the transmitter in a galvanized iron shack used by the railroad porters as a bunkhouse and stayed up until four in the morning testing their apparatus. Without going to bed, Walker and White went to the arena to install their microphone at the ringside. They spent the entire morning at the arena, dampened by the warm, intermittent showers and plagued by the gnawing fear that something would go wrong at the last minute. White had little time to plan how he would cover the fight. There was no precedent for such a broadcast. But once the fight began, he lost himself in his enthusiasm and, with his eyes upon the two figures in the ring, gave a clear word picture of the action that was occurring.

Meanwhile, Smith—at the transmitter in Hoboken—was having his troubles, too. The equipment was not built for the power required for such a broadcast. Neither was it built for continuous service, and Smith, standing close by to see that transmission suffered no interference from faulty equipment, was partially blinded for weeks afterwards by the glare of the tubes. Once, in the middle of a round, a tube exploded and without waiting to cover his hand, Smith yanked the hot base from the socket and inserted another one. Later, he had to have his hand dressed for the burns at a hospital. Meanwhile, the transmitter grew hotter and hotter. By the end of the fight, it was a worthless mass of molten metal. But 200,000 people who were not in Boyle's Thirty Acres heard the fight and, by letter, wire and telephone, voiced their hearty approval.

A few weeks later, when Westinghouse began installation of equipment for WJZ, RCA had arranged to share part of the cost of operation and to aid in building programs for the station which

was to accomplish for programming what KDKA had done for commercial broadcasting. The WJZ transmitter was located in Newark and, for a while, its studios were also there. It was a real problem for Popenoe to coax talent—which wasn't being paid for its services anyway—to ride a streetcar, via the Hudson Tube, to Newark for a broadcast. It wasn't long until the broadcasting executives managed to wangle an increase in budget that permitted them to send taxis into New York for talent which graciously volunteered to appear on its programs. But even this improvement in transportation failed to overcome a busy vaudevillian's aversion to spending so much of his off-stage time in travel. By 1922, Popenoe had induced RCA and Westinghouse to open a studio in the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel and connect it by direct wire with the transmitter in Newark—and from that day on, a noticeable improvement in programs occurred.

But the most significant development of those early years was the establishment in May, 1923, of the Radio Broadcast Central, in Aeolian Hall, by RCA. Radio Broadcast Central was two great radio stations in one—WJZ and WJY, each operating on a different frequency. The purpose of the hydra-headed setup was to bring specialization into the field of broadcasting—the age of specialization was at hand in other fields, remember—so that listeners might choose their programs by choosing their stations. WJZ was to broadcast classical, serious programs while WJY would be devoted to jazz and the lighter type of divertissement.

How successful this policy of broadcasting might have become will never be known, for the era of silent nights was already behind the broadcaster and, ahead of him, lay an era of wave-jumping and jamming which filled the air with chaos and brought down upon the broadcaster the stern hand of Uncle Sam—and just in time, for anarchy was on the air.

*NIGHTS WHICH WERE BETTER
SILENT.*

BY THE SUMMER OF 1923, CERTAIN IMPORTANT TRUTHS about the business of broadcasting had become apparent. In the first place, broadcasters were awakening to the fact that radio was no longer a novelty to be sold only on its magic ability to send a voice through the air. The public was beginning to demand that the voice be good, that it have something worth-while to say; in short, that good programs be broadcast.

At the same time, except for the stations operated by the manufacturers of radio apparatus, the newspaper-owned stations and the department store transmitters, the hands of the broadcaster were tied by the very important matter of income. The sponsored program had not yet been conceived and little in the way of funds was available for the hiring of professional talent. One of the amazing facts about broadcasting was that, with no seeming possibility of gain, radio stations had, nevertheless, sprung up like mushrooms across the land. By 1923, more than a thousand stations had been licensed and assigned broadcasting frequencies on the already overcrowded 360-meter band, considered best for broadcasting in those days, and the cry of "Gold!" from a lonely millstream in California in 1848 could have held no greater allure for the gold-hungry pioneers of that day than the discovery of broadcasting by KDKA held for modern pioneers, hungry for a medium of self-expression.

Many of these early stations—like Colonel Henderson's in Shreveport, La., or Brinkley's in Kansas—served only to amplify the personal ideas and hobbies of their owners. Once, at an early hearing of the Department of Commerce, when Henderson's

use of profanity on the air was being challenged, the doughty Colonel (who spent hours on the air condemning chain grocery stores) broke up the meeting by declaring that he operated his station for "the greater glory of God and the damnation of chain stores!" Other broadcasters were glorified amateurs interested principally in the technical side of transmission, and the contribution of these amateur engineers to the science of broadcasting has been appreciable.

During 1921 and 1922, it was enough that these broadcasters read newspaper items into the microphone; that they provided musical interludes by means of phonograph recordings. A few of the larger stations even boasted their own newsmen for local events, and a Boston station scored heavily by having a staff man spend a day in the cell with the hunger-striking Nicola Sacco, convicted with Bartolomeo Vanzetti of having murdered a Boston paymaster and his guard in a holdup, and later broadcasting his experience. There had been an effort—KDKA again leading the field—to adapt radio to the field of education. But for sheer entertainment, the broadcasters had to scratch.

The listener, tuning his none-too-sensitive receiver, found himself receiving not one station, but two or even three stations at the same time. Today, there are many new broadcasting bands open to broadcasters and less than 900 licensed commercial broadcasters, yet the available air channels are as crowded as sardines in cans. In 1923, with more than a thousand stations broadcasting on a single band, the situation was almost unbearable for the listener. The year before, the Department of Commerce, acting under the Communications Act of 1912 which was enacted to regulate commercial wireless communications, had moved to eliminate much of the interference and conflict between stations by licensing them in two classes. Class B would include those stations of high power, good rendition and good programming, and these stations would be licensed to operate on the 400-meter band. The smaller, local stations would be licensed to operate on the 300-meter band. By conferences of broadcasters in the spring and summer of 1923, commerce officials strove to put this system into effect, but without any real powers under the act, beyond licensing and assignment to wave lengths, they could only point a way.

Only by agreements between broadcasters as to time sharing and other details in their own areas, was the plan made effective.

But a discovery by broadcasters, late in 1923 and early in 1924, was acting to void these conferences. Commercial sponsorship, already a paying fact on WEAJ, in New York, was spreading. Coupled to the possibility of at last reaping a profit, broadcasters were learning that, both from the matter of available audience and from the standpoint of technical transmission, the hours between 9 P.M. and midnight were the best for broadcasting. With real gold in the offing, the gentlemen's agreements wore thin. Chaos rode the air waves, pandemonium filled every loud-speaker and the twentieth century Tower of Babel was made in the image of the antenna towers of some thousand broadcasters who, like the Kilkenny cats, were about to eat each other up.

An adequate radio law enacted by a Congress alert to the situation might have saved many a hectic night of listening for a public already sinking millions of dollars per year into radio. But commerce officials were like Keystone comedy cops directing present-day traffic in Times Square. Mailbags heavy with complaint were delivered to the department each day—some days more than 12,000 such letters were received—but the department was unable to take any positive action. Broadcasters began to take matters into their own hands. They learned that, by twisting the dials of their transmitters, they avoided conflict with another station. Soon, most of the thousand licensed stations were broadcasting on frequencies other than those assigned by the Department of Commerce—and, far from clearing the ether, this new practice was only clouding it the more. Conflict became more frequent, the heterodyne whistling of interference more shrill, clear reception of programs seemed a thing of the past, and broadcasting, by the selfish actions of those to whom clear reception was a thing to be promoted and fought for as a matter of self-interest, faced disaster as the public gradually ceased listening.

The Communications Act of 1912 specifically gave the department the power to license and assign broadcasting frequencies. But with almost all broadcasters shifting their frequencies from day to day (until the listener hardly knew where to look for his favorite station) it was difficult to choose a starting point for its

prosecutions. Then, early in 1925, a Chicago broadcaster asked the department to shift his wave length to a more suitable one, then occupied by another broadcaster. The request was refused. Whereupon the broadcaster shifted his transmitter to operate on the desired wave length anyway. An injunction was filed in the court of United States Judge Wilkerson, in Chicago, who ruled, to the dismay of Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover, that the law of 1912 did not apply to commercial broadcasting and that the department had no authority to assign any particular wave length to any broadcaster!

With this judicial release from restraint, the ether waves took on all the earmarks of a gold rush. New broadcasters rushed to get on the air, to stake out their claims on wave lengths, while old ones were busy elbowing each other aside and helping themselves to the wave length, power and time they deemed best. Most of the larger broadcasters preferred to recognize the department's right to regulate broadcasting and abided by their original agreements. They had too much at stake to join with the fly-by-night stations in jumping claims and poaching. But even the large stations were not spared. WJZ, the *Detroit News'* pioneer station, long immune from interference and conflict, found a Chicago wave-jumper riding on its back. WEAf's broadcasts were afflicted with an annoying whistling background. It was a radio reign of terror, with broadcasting opportunists busy killing the goose which had begun to lay golden eggs. The public became at first irate, then disgusted with broadcasting. Frantically, through such organizations as the National Radio Co-ordinating Committee, broadcasters with a large stake in the industry lobbied in Washington to get the Congress to enact necessary legislation. There were no cries in 1925, 1926 and 1927 of government interference with broadcasting. Rather, broadcasters complained that the government made no move to police and regulate the industry.

Between the months of July and December, 1926, the Department of Commerce reported that 105 stations had gone on the air. During that same period, the department had been notified of ninety-four wave-length changes by various stations while many of the station managers, who no longer felt themselves

under the department's supervision, made such changes without consulting or notifying anybody. Meanwhile, there was much talk in Congress, much debate over the rival Dill and White radio regulatory bills. But no action.

All this time reputable broadcasters—who never knew from one night to the next whether their broadcasts would be heard or smeared out by interference—were laboring with the problem of presenting programs to attract listeners. During the first two years of commercial broadcasting, KDKA had continued to maintain a foremost position in the matter of programming as well as excellent transmission. But by 1923, the center of broadcasting began to shift eastward to the New York City area. This was due, first, to the fact that New York offered the greatest reservoir of talent in the world, and second, to the management of station WEAF.

The American Telephone and Telegraph Company had never given up the idea of radio transmission as a part of the telephone system, and early in 1921 established an experimental broadcast station, WBNY, on the roof of its 24-story building in New York. The location was not an ideal one for broadcasting, however, and the static and interference due to its location caused the company engineers to move it to the Western Electric Building, on West Street, overlooking the Hudson. With the change in location, the station's call letters were changed to WEAF; and with the finest equipment, developed over the years of company experiment with radio, WEAF soon became a favorite station among early radio listeners because of its excellent transmission.

It was not strange then that the Queensboro Corporation, a gigantic real estate promotion group, having decided to try radio as a medium for selling lots, should turn to the most widely heard station in the New York area, WEAF. These first commercially sponsored broadcasts were a series of ten-minute talks on the advantage of owning a home in Jackson Heights in Long Island City. The response was not an overwhelming one and sponsors were not eagerly shoving each other aside to be first in line to buy radio time. The truth is that talk alone—unless it be on an absorbing subject—seldom does a good selling job.

One of the first sponsors to recognize this was Browning,

King and Company, a New York clothing house, which introduced the sponsored musical program and made the introduction, "You will now have an hour of dance music by the Browning, King Orchestra," a familiar one to all early radio listeners along the eastern seaboard. WEAF was radio's first "toll" station, and with the air lanes already crowded with broadcast stations, rental of its facilities to advertisers seeking ether outlets seemed to offer a means of recouping at least a part of the station's operating costs. But the first broadcasting rates had been placed at a figure so low—\$35 per hour—that as late as 1924, WEAF executives were broadcasting pleas to listeners to contribute as much as they could to aid the station in hiring good talent. The response to this appeal was so negligible that the few minor donations were later returned.

The first really big radio show to hit the air waves was "The Eveready Hour," sponsored by the Eveready Battery Company to plug its B-batteries, used in early radio sets. Its first program went on the air over WEAF on December 4, 1923, and judged even by today's standards, it would not be found wanting. The first program, in addition to presenting both a concert orchestra and a jazz band, also had a one-act play, "The Bungalow," with Gene Lockhart, Eva Taylor and Lawrence Grattan in principal roles. It was the first program to pay artists who appeared before its mikes, a thousand dollar fee for a single appearance by Will Rogers long remaining the tops in radio pay. It was nothing compared with the salary Rogers was drawing for theatrical appearances. In fact, when auditors of J. M. Mathes, Inc., the advertising agency handling the show, noticed that his check had not been cashed six weeks later, they called upon him in his "Ziegfeld Follies" dressing room. The check, forgotten, was found in a suit hanging in a cabinet.

One of the most popular presentations on this pioneer variety show was a tale of stark adventure on the Galapagos Islands as told by a New York taxi driver, Red Christianson, who had been marooned there. This tale, by popular response, repeated several times on the series, never failed to draw a terrific mail response from listeners and as late as the autumn of 1941, it was presented again on Mort Lewis' "That Was Radio" program and still drew

a heavy mail response. Still another favorite of the "Eveready" series was Edgar White Burril's reading of Ida Tarbell's "I Knew Lincoln." This, also by popular request, was repeated during the week of Lincoln's birthday for many years afterward.

The earliest "Eveready" programs offered a wide variety of entertainment, ranging from the classical concerts of the Flonzaley String Quartet to a dramatization of the then best seller, *Trader Horn*. The winter shows were an ever-changing galaxy of bright stars and performances, but in the summer of 1924, Wendell Hall, the Red-headed Music Maker, was put on as a substitute. Hall, who played the ukulele and sang, is perhaps best remembered for "It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo'." He was one of the first of radio's stars and his marriage to Marian M. Martin, Chicago newspaperwoman, in June, 1924, was such an important event to the Hall following that it was solemnized as a part of an "Eveready" broadcast. This particular broadcast was, too, the first in which remote control was used. The wedding took place in the WEAJ studios, but the organ music for the service was "piped" from the loft of the Skinner Organ Company, on Fifth Avenue.

Already, names like Graham MacNamee, Milton Cross, Major Andrew White were known to almost every household. Radio's star system was beginning to take hold and, more important, radio was reaching a stage of development where such stars could begin to look for payment for their services, even on non-sponsored broadcasts, such as the Democratic National Convention of 1924. Many of the wealthier stations had arranged for direct telephone lines to the Convention Hall in New York, where they had their own reporters, but most stations received reports by telegrams, which were read over the air. WNAC, of Boston, unable to afford a direct line to New York, arranged to take its broadcast off the air on a receiver in Worcester, whence the program was transmitted by telephone (at greatly reduced rates) to Boston. Alwyn Bach, now on the announcing staff of WOR, was assigned to sit in a stuffy hotel room in Worcester with the relay receiver, the engineer and a microphone and make station identification announcements.

One night during the convention, which nominated John W.

Davis, the broadcast went one hour, two hours, two and a half hours without a station-break cue from the New York announcer, Graham MacNamee. Finally, Bach—tired and hot—left the engineer at the receiver and started to take a bath. Just as he was settling down into the cool tub, the engineer rushed in with the microphone, "You're on, Alwyn!" he yelled. And from the tub, Bach made his announcement.

It was during this same convention that MacNamee, thinking the microphone before him had been switched off, made an aside remark—entirely uncomplimentary to a certain leading political light—which was heard by some twenty thousand listeners. An engineer rushed in. "That went out over the air, Graham," he told the announcer. A few minutes later, another station employee rushed in. "That's a live mike, Graham," he said. "Everybody heard what you said." In the next five minutes, eighteen different individuals came to the broadcasting table—they didn't have booths then—to tell him that his remark had been broadcast. But when the telephone rang and the station manager started to repeat this umpteenth-told piece of information, it was more than MacNamee could stand. He tore the phone from the wall and threw it across the room.

With the growth of a radio star system, sponsors began to find themselves in a sort of show business. People like Wendell Hall, Vaughn de Leath, Jones and Hare, and, later, Milton Berle, Ethel Shutta, Tony Wons and other pioneer radio performers were in constant demand for personal appearances in various communities, and the endless detail and burden of maintaining troupes, scenery, stagehands were proving too much for the sponsor who recognized the importance of having his radio performers heard outside the New York area, but wondered if the headaches he was encountering in such a procedure were worth the benefits to be derived.

J. M. Mathes, handling the Eveready Hour, hit upon the idea of a network which would permit entertainers in New York to be heard in various parts of the country by means of telephone lines connecting various stations with the New York outlet. Mathes, unaware that chain broadcasting was already an accomplished fact—A. T. & T.'s WEAJ was connected with WJAR,

owned by the Outlet Store, in Providence, R. I.—took up the matter with George McClelland, then commercial manager of WEAF. Later, the idea was presented to Walter Gifford, at that time a vice-president of the telephone company. Mr. Gifford was greatly impressed by the possibilities and, perhaps, a bit perturbed by their scope. "If radio is going to reach this stage," he said, "maybe we'd better think of withdrawing from the radio business before we find ourselves running a radio business instead of a telephone company."

Actually, Mr. Gifford was beginning to realize that, even if radio had not been successfully adapted to the telephone system, the telephone system might find an ever-increasing source of revenue from radio. The meeting of Gifford and Mathes marked a definite turning point in the telephone company's broadcasting activities. It marked the point—not obvious for two years to come—where A. T. & T. began to retire from the field of actual broadcasting and play an increasing part in the mechanics of chain broadcasting. Mr. Gifford asked Mathes to draw up a map showing vital key sales areas of the country and the local stations Eveready would like to use. Meanwhile, on February 12, 1924, as a test, the Eveready Hour was sent over the already existing WEAF-WJAR network and, as a result of that test, the network was extended during the following months to include stations as far west as Chicago. Within a few months, twelve stations were affiliated.

For the first time, the bright stars of the New York area were being heard throughout the country, thanks to this telephone network set up by A. T. & T. Also, for the first time, A. T. & T. was beginning to see a means of recovering much of the money it had invested over a long period of time in radio broadcasting.

WJZ, operated by the Radio Corporation of America, also had its network of outlying radio stations in 1924, but because WEAF was owned by the telephone company, RCA engineers were forced to use other than telephone lines in connecting its network. They turned first to already existing telegraph lines of the Western Union Company, but the cable designed for dots and dashes proved a poor conductor of the spoken word and instrumental sound. Western Union officials, however, as alert as tele-

phone executives to the potentialities in such a network, set to work to construct special lines for connecting broadcasting stations. All of this development came, peculiarly enough, at the very period when a public, disgusted at the sad state of reception, was beginning to turn away from broadcasting—and when the future of the industry was any shade but rosy. It evidenced, first, a firm belief in the future of radio by most of those who had had a hand in its development and, second, a determination on the part of the legitimate broadcasters to solve the technical problems which now beset them.

Chain broadcasting came into being because commercial sponsors were anxious to extend the reach of their individual programs. But chain broadcasting was also the result of the broadcasters' demand. Outside of the large theatrical centers, the pitiful lack of talent available to station program directors made such a system of broadcasting essential if a public, attracted to radio by its novelty, was to be held. Programs—and not just broadcasts—had become the lifeblood of the industry. So, overnight, the Baron Munchausen of Jack Pearl; the warblings of Ethel Shutta and Ruth Etting; the hilarious comedy of Ed Wynn and Milton Berle were no longer the peculiar property of Broadway. Radio gave them to the nation. But perhaps none of the early broadcasters are so closely associated in the public mind with the development of radio as an entertainment medium as the team of Jones and Hare.

Billy Jones and Ernie Hare were to the recording industry of 1921 what Amos and Andy became, in 1929, to radio. A vocal duet, their comic songs and sentimental ballads had endeared them to the record-buying public and when, in 1921, they began to broadcast on WJZ, in Newark, their very appearance on the air was in the nature of an endorsement of the new medium for many listeners. Executives of the recording company to which they were under contract bitterly opposed their appearance on radio but, inasmuch as radio broadcasting was unforeseen at the time of signing their recording contract, no bar to such appearances existed. The popular pair went merrily along their broadcasting way. By 1923, with commercial sponsorship beginning, they were among the first to be snapped up and for

the next seven years, were on the air continuously. They were known variously, with sponsorship changes, as "The Happiness Boys," "The Interwoven Pair," "The Best Foods Boys," "The Taystee Loafers," and, however they were known, their clean-cut comedy and blended voices were received and welcomed in thousands of homes.

In 1933, Jones and Hare left the air to make an extended personal appearance tour. Nineteen hundred and thirty-three was the year when many of the great new shows which still are network favorites were making their bow; and when the prime favorites of other days returned fourteen months later from their tour, they found that a fickle public had all but forgotten them. A new type of show—the Rudy Vallee type of glorified variety presentation—had replaced the individuals and personalities who had dominated early broadcasting. There were plenty of places for the team in minute niches of these greater shows. There were no sponsors willing to take a chance on two men and a piano when the trend was toward giant musicales. The pair held out for awhile, were finally forced to accept guest appearances on Rudy Vallee's show, The Maxwell House Show Boat and similar shows. They were invariably introduced as veritable Methuselahs of broadcasting. Their day in the sun had drawn to its end.

In 1937, the Gillette Razor Company decided to bring back some of the old favorites of broadcasting in a show over the Yankee network. Milton Berle was hired as master of ceremonies, and Jones and Hare were given a good spot on each broadcast. Suddenly, fan mail—and razor blade orders—demonstrated that there were still plenty of listeners in America who remembered, and fondly, the grand old team of early radio. The Sachs Furniture Company hired the team away at a much larger salary for their own show over WMCA. Things were again beginning to look rosy for the team. But they were on WMCA just a few weeks when pneumonia caught up with Ernie.

The first week, Sachs put a substitute act on, but when the doctor advised them that it would be a long time before Ernie would be able to appear before a microphone again, it was decided that Marilyn, Ernie's daughter, would take his place. At her father's request, she sang "Deep in a Dream" on that first

broadcast. Fan mail poured in and the sponsors decided that, even after the return of Ernie, they would keep Marilyn on the program as soloist. The next week, she did "Deep Purple" for her father—and hurrying home, found an ambulance outside the door. The doctors had ordered Ernie removed to the hospital two hours before, but he wouldn't leave until he heard Marilyn sing. It was the last time he heard her sing. Ten days later, he died.

Life had been unable to drive a wedge between Jones and Hare. Where other entertainment teams—Gallagher and Shean, Wheeler and Woolsey, Laurel and Hardy—had split up for various reasons—money, jealousy, old age—Jones and Hare seemed to go on forever. Not even death seemed able to split the team, for, at the request of the public and of the sponsor, Jones and Hare (this time Marilyn) continued on the air until 1940 when death came for Billy Jones.

It is a strange commentary on the memory of listeners—or a sign that, in programming, the industry had made great strides forward—that so few of the early great names of radio are heard on the air today. But it is a fact that few of the names of the twenties are even remembered today. In many cases, sponsors feel that they no longer command a large listening audience, that the broadcasting pattern has changed. In a few cases, performers have left the microphone to take executive positions in broadcasting.

There is the case, too, of Jessica Dragonette whose absence from radio for financial reasons caused her many fans to clamor for her return.

Miss Dragonette's radio career began in 1925 over WEAf on a non-sponsored program called "The Musical Comedy Hour." Her thrillingly beautiful voice soon won for her thousands of followers—more vocal than most radio followers—and she was soon known to radio listeners as "Vivien, the Coca-Cola Girl," on a sponsored program. Her next series, running two and a half years, was on Philco's "Theater Memories," then with the Hoover "Sentinels." (Who doesn't remember the stirring march of the rug beaters used as a theme song on that show?) In 1930, she was

signed by the Cities Service Concert as soloist and remained there until her break with broadcasting.

Radio stars, like other stars, require the services of a manager, and the manager must be ready to fight at the drop of a hat to protect his client's interests. Radio business is show business and show business is run that way. Some stars employ firms which make a scientific business of management. Some put their affairs in the hands of a good lawyer. Others employ a relative. Little Jack Little, another pioneer radio performer, was managed by his wife. Gladys Swarthout is managed by her husband. Jessica Dragonette is managed by her sister. Management is a business which quickly brings gray hairs or baldness, according to sex, and those in the business can recognize a manager blocks away by the worry lines that crisscross his forehead. A manager's duty is to make the most money possible for his client.

In 1937, Cities Service was paying Miss Dragonette a weekly salary of \$1,250 and Miss Dragonette—or her sister—felt that the singing star was worth much more. When Cities Service refused to raise the pay check, Miss Dragonette signed with the Palmolive Company for \$2,500 per week—or twice her former salary. The story is told about radio circles that this latter salary was given the diminutive starlet by her new employers under the misapprehension that she was already receiving a figure close to that at Cities Service. Learning of her true salary at Cities Service, the new bosses are reported to have gnashed their teeth and become, suddenly, very frigid about the studios from which Miss Dragonette broadcast.

But here is a case where the public has all but demanded her return. In some cities, Jessica Dragonette Clubs have actually boycotted radio until her return, and her following is terrific even today after four years away from the ether waves. A concert tour undertaken by Miss Dragonette following her radio breach gave a vivid demonstration of her appeal. In Minneapolis, 15,000 people—defying a blizzard and a taxi strike—jammed a huge auditorium. In Chicago, 150,000 people came from all over America to hear her sing in Grant Park.

Her absence from radio is one of the big puzzles of the industry to listeners. To commercial sponsors and broadcasters, however,

there is no mystery at all. Miss Dragonette has set a price of \$2,500 per week on her services in a period when a daytime serial, costing less than a thousand dollars a week, sells more soap than the old "Palmolive Beauty Box Theatre" ever sold.

But if the birth of the networks in 1924 meant that the rich entertainment gifts of New York were to be given to every backwoods home owning a radio receiver, it meant, too, that these same backwoods folk were to give to New York—and other urban dwellers of the land—an insight into the wealth of Americana which exists in various sections of our country, far from the main traveled highways. Microphones were to bring into American homes the quaint, old-world Easter sunrise services of the Moravian Church from the old village square in Winston-Salem, N. C. It was to go to Abingdon, Virginia, for the folk festivals held there annually (now under the wing of Eleanor Roosevelt). It was to go down into the Renfro Valley of Kentucky for the mountain folk songs sung and played by Renfro Valley folk—perhaps the purest strain of Anglo-Saxon stock in America. New York was to learn of the "Grand Ol' Op'ry," which, since 1925, has made WSM, Nashville, Tenn., one of the richest—from a standpoint of earnings—stations in the United States.

Radio was only a few years old when the fiddlers who infest the Great Smokies began to pour into Nashville to see for themselves what this miracle of broadcasting really was. They used to come to George Hay, manager of the station, and ask, "Does thet there thing—" indicating the microphone—"really shoot a fellow's voice out through the air so's folks for miles around kin hear him a-talkin'?"

"Better than that," Hay would assure these bearded gentry from the back hills. "It'll even send the music you scrape out of that fiddle a thousand miles away." Then, one day as he was making this stock remark, an idea struck him. A thousand miles away, few people had ever heard the old mountain ballads which were familiar to those about Nashville. The idea led to the founding of "Grand Ol' Op'ry," which has been on the air now every Saturday night for seventeen years.

George Hay is still master of ceremonies of the show, just as he

was on that first Saturday night when it took to the air. He plays the "solemn old judge," and the remainder of the troupe came down out of the hills to participate. Uncle Dave Macon was one. For years, he had followed a double-shovel plow, and, in the evenings, he used to take off his shoes, prop his feet up on the porch rail and plunk at his five-string banjo. When "Grand Ol' Op'ry" went on the air, he was one of the first to try out for it, was an instant star and turned professional in his fifty-seventh year. Today, Uncle Dave is the acknowledged "King Bee" of the seventy members of the show. He is known as the "Dixie Dew-drop," and, at seventy-one, never misses a performance. The performances are long, too. The late Uncle Jimmy Thompson, a fiddler, was responsible for that.

One night in its early years, "Grand Ol' Op'ry," was on the air from the dingy little studio which then housed it. Uncle Jimmy scraped his bow over the singing strings and, hot as a dilly, the strains of "Tennessee Waggoner," and "Give the Fiddler a Dram" came out of the box to the tapping accompaniment of Uncle Jimmy's foot. Presently, Hay said, "Uncle Jimmy, you've been playing for more than an hour. Guess we'd better call it a night."

"Hour, fiddlesticks!" was Uncle Jimmy's retort. "A man kain't git a-warmed up in a hour. This here program's got to be longer." So, from an hour on the air, "Grand Ol' Op'ry" was expanded to four full hours and, with two exceptions, it's been that way ever since. President Roosevelt borrowed a half hour from the show on one occasion for a "fireside chat." Another half hour was nipped from the program on the occasion of a memorial program for Will Rogers.

A couple of years ago, Uncle Dave made his first trip to New York to make some recordings. The great buildings, the hustling, thriving streets of the great city amazed the old mountaineer and made him feel right proud of the country he lived in. He felt so proud that, walking down Broadway, he couldn't resist the urge to pull out his old banjo and start a-strumming.

A New Yorker saw the plug hat, the shiny gold teeth, the gates-ajar collar and the goatee and thought he'd have some fun.

"Where you from?"

"Tennessee," Uncle Dave told him, not missing a beat on the banjo.

"Strange people down there," the New Yorker kidded the old fellow as the gathering crowd tittered.

"Yeah," was Uncle Dave's comeback, still not missing a beat, "but they don't come in bunches like they do up here."

Among the musical aggregations appearing on the show are the Fruit Jar Drinkers, the Possum Hunters, the Gully Jumpers and the Crook Brothers. None of the old group has ever left although several, including Uncle Jimmy, have died. What will never die—and what makes "Grand Ol' Op'ry" an important radio show—is the music they make. It is the only real folk music, barring the negro spirituals, of America, stretching back through the years to the earliest settlers. Little of it, until the beginning of this broadcast, had been set down on paper. It was just handed down by word of mouth, from father to son, through the years. They number such ballads as "Bully of the Town," "How Many Biscuits Can You Eat—Forty Nine and a Ham of Meat," "Rabbit in the Pea Patch," "The Cross-Eyed Butcher," and countless others. Songs are added as new singers and performers pour down from the hills of Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina and Alabama to try out for "Grand Ol' Op'ry," bringing new ballads with them; and the performing staff of the broadcast is constantly being enlarged by the addition of this new blood.

Actually, "Grand Ol' Op'ry" is an institution rather than a program. Students of American music are constantly making pilgrimages to Nashville to study at first hand the folk music offered there. Yet, once the people of Nashville sought to banish it from WSM. Nashville is a thriving city with a full measure of civic pride. Many of its leading citizens felt that four uninterrupted hours of hillbilly music over its leading radio station would give outsiders the wrong impression of Nashville. They petitioned the station owner to take it off the air. When news leaked out that the "Grand Ol' Op'ry" was doomed, a deluge of letters poured in from all parts of the country protesting. Educators, musicians, citizens in all walks of life were listening to the Op'ry. It was a great show. And the clinching argument for its continuance

came from Hollywood where a leading producer signed the entire group to make a motion picture which, he said, "should be a lasting American document."

Meanwhile, technically, the transmission of radio programs was going from bad to worse with Congress taking its own sweet time about doing anything positive to better the situation. Substantial and responsible broadcasters, by 1925, had almost begun to despair of any relief from the piracy which was threatening the very existence of radio broadcasting. In the absence of any Congressional action, these leading broadcasters sought to solve their own problems by the medium of competition. David Sarnoff, of the Radio Corporation of America, felt that a network of broadcasters could provide programs of such worth that the fly-by-night wave-jumpers, scattered across the country, would be forced out of business by the sheer lack of listeners. The RCA setup in Aeolian Hall—WJZ and WJY—was in a strategic position to build programs and serve as a basic origination point for broadcasts which might be piped across the nation. Westinghouse, General Electric and RCA were vitally interested in the development of broadcasting; the first two manufactured radio equipment, the latter sold it. And the three, pooling their resources, were quite capable of setting up such a network which would not only solve the program problems of a great many stations—and produce a real revenue as well—but which might also serve to eliminate much of the radio freebooting that was taking place.

One real difficulty stood in the way of such a network. The telephone company, which owned WEAJ and—the year before—had started its own network in an effort to make that venture into broadcasting pay, owned the only available lines capable of transmitting faithfully and efficiently programs from the origination stations to the outlet stations. RCA's network was forced to use telegraph lines, which were not too satisfactory.

But by 1925, the telephone company had reached the conclusion that broadcasting was a gigantic business in its own right and that the telephone company should decide whether to continue in that field or withdraw entirely. By withdrawing from actual broadcasting, it would be able to make available to networks at profitable toll charges its meshwork of lines and con-

concentrate entirely upon the telephone business—if it decided to stay in the broadcasting business, however, the company must be prepared to expand with the growing industry and divert much of its effort and expenditures to that field.

At this juncture, Owen D. Young, chairman of the board of General Electric, began conversations with the telephone company for the purchase of WEAJ and the leasing of telephone lines to carry programs of the new network. General Electric, Westinghouse and RCA were jointly planning.

WHOLESALE ENTERTAINMENT, INC.

REASON FOR WEAF'S PRE-EMINENCE IN THE FIELD OF commercial broadcasting was a series of agreements between A. T. & T. and other broadcasters giving the telephone company the sole right to operate a "toll," or commercial, station. A. T. & T. had financed much of early radio experiment in the hope that radio might be profitably adapted to the telephone system, and as a result held many vital, basic patents necessary to the manufacture of both receivers and transmitters. In 1920, A. T. & T. licensed General Electric, RCA and Western Electric (and later extended the agreement to include Westinghouse) to use these patents in the manufacture of radio equipment. In return, these manufacturers agreed that A. T. & T. should have the sole right to operate a toll station. So, while WEAF and its telephone network sold time on the air long before 1926, WJZ, the RCA station, and its network could broadcast only sustaining programs.

The preliminaries to organization of a network by RCA and its enthusiastic general manager, David Sarnoff, involved endless conferences with Walter Gifford, of the telephone company, through the early spring of 1926. The growth of network or chain broadcasting, involving a wide use of telephone lines, promised A. T. & T. tremendous and growing annual income from broadcasting *IF* A. T. & T. would encourage broadcasters to use such networks by relaxing the agreements which prevented them from earning an income from such broadcasting. On the other hand, relaxation of that restriction would mean stern competition for WEAF and its network from the aggressive and vitally interested so-called "Radio Group," consisting of RCA, General Electric, Western Electric and Westinghouse.

The position of RCA, on the other hand, in no way blocked the path of the telephone company's "best interests" if Gifford really meant to retire from the field of broadcasting. RCA was perfectly willing to purchase WEAf and sign a long-term agreement to use telephone lines in preference to the unsatisfactory telegraph lines they were using at that time. So, amidst the blue smoke of rich coronas in RCA conference rooms, the National Broadcasting Company was born.

Actually, nothing new except a corporation had come into being. The two networks were already operating concerns. Only a new direction was given them. In the sonorous pronouncements of Owen D. Young, in the more visionary utterances of David Sarnoff, the policies along which RCA's newest subsidiary was to operate were laid down. It was to be a "great force for the cultural improvement of the American people." It was to be the measuring rod by which American broadcasting, guided by NBC's beacon light, would be kept upon a high plane.

With the overemphatic expressions of devotion to the public weal, peculiar to public service companies, they decided that NBC must never make a profit. Instead, it would be the patron saint of the broadcasting arts. "If we make a profit," their spokesmen assured the world, "it will go right back into the broadcasting of better programs."

With all due respect to NBC's fine record and its obvious influence for better broadcasting, the business of broadcasting in itself was not supposed to show a profit in 1926. RCA, Westinghouse and General Electric—manufacturers and distributors of radio receivers—were well aware that if they expected to continue their profitable sale of receivers to the public, they must arrange, first, to put better programs on the air and, second, to eliminate, through such competition since Congress refused to act, the wave-pirates and frequency-jumpers who infested the ether. NBC, as the wholly owned subsidiary of RCA, was the best means of achieving both these ends. And if NBC could achieve these ends, no profit from its operations was necessary to justify its existence.

In July, 1926, the meeting of minds, which was but a settlement of price in view of the telephone company's desire to retire

from broadcasting and RCA's intention of extending its operations in that field, occurred. RCA agreed to pay one million dollars for A. T. & T.'s radio properties (WEAF and its network) and it was understood RCA would use exclusively, except where they were not available, telephone lines in transmitting programs to its affiliated stations. A. T. & T. rescinded the whole agreement regarding toll broadcasting and agreed not to re-enter the competitive broadcasting field for a period of seven years under penalty of refunding \$800,000 of the original purchase price.

The sale contract took effect on November 1, 1926. Fifteen days later, the new network of nineteen stations was ready to go. A ballroom at the Waldorf-Astoria was converted into a studio for the most stupendous show radio had yet undertaken. A carefully selected audience in white ties and ermine wraps filled one end of the ballroom. At the other end, nervous technicians puttered about loudspeakers installed to reinforce voices and eliminate the undignified shouting often necessary before the mikes of those days. It was an impressive affair that started with a fanfare of trumpets. Radio maestros love trumpets, use them on the slightest provocation. This time, the fanfare was fully justified.

Those who participated in that program were Dr. Walter Damrosch; Harold Bauer, the pianist; Cesare Sodero, conducting a light opera company; Weber and Fields; the dance orchestras of Ben Bernie, George Olsen, Vincent Lopez, and B. A. Rolfe. A startling demonstration of what might be expected in future from this newborn giant of the broadcasting industry was a talk by Will Rogers which was relayed from Independence, Kansas:

The same month saw the commercial rebirth of the old WJZ-RCA network. To distinguish the two—which largely covered the same areas—NBC dubbed the large WEAF network its "Red" network (long before the appearance of Mrs. Dilling); the WJZ network, its "Blue." It is difficult to draw a line of demarcation between the two. Some key stations—as WEAF, in New York, and WMAQ, in Chicago—are always Red network stations. Others—as WJZ, in New York, and WENR, in Chicago—remain permanently Blue stations. But in other cities, where NBC has only one outlet, stations may be used for either Blue or Red programs dependent upon the markets an advertiser wishes to reach.

One important difference in the two networks, however, should be noted here in view of later involvement with the FCC on monopoly charges. The Red network carries NBC's heaviest burden of commercial programs with sustaining shows held to a minimum under "public interest" requirements. NBC Blue network, on the other hand, carries most of the important sustaining shows built by NBC. So, roughly speaking, the Blue network has developed into the "cultural" network, the network which NBC publicity men have said is a measuring rod by which other broadcasters might set the sights of their program guns.

To head the National Broadcasting Company, Merlin H. Aylesworth, public utility attorney of the Northwest and former president of the Utah Light and Power Company, was chosen. His experience in operation of public service corporations was an invaluable asset to a corporation doing business in so many states. Aylesworth, Lenox Lohr, who succeeded him, Niles Trammell and others who have shared in directing NBC's operations through the years have invariably brought a genuine enthusiasm to their work while the self-assumed role of watchdog of the ether (easily understood in the light of NBC's investment) is at once a salutary influence upon the industry and, at the same time, a rather comic sort of spectacle. I think NBC employees—from Mr. Aylesworth down to the lowliest page boy—were genuinely shocked and embarrassed to learn that, in 1930, the network had made a profit of \$2,167,471. Employee education at NBC is among the best in the country—and part of the employee education there had been retention of the oft-asserted dictum that NBC was not operated for profit, but as a medium of cultural development for the American people.

The poverty-stricken beginnings of the Columbia Broadcasting System are in startling contrast to those of NBC—and a more colorful tale of big business on a shoestring may never be written again.

Back in the spring of 1926, a group of eastern radio broadcasters, attempting to solve the problems of wave-piracy by mutual agreements, were meeting at the Astor Hotel in Manhattan. Among the guests at the hotel was one George A. Coats, promoter and paving machinery salesman. Deeply impressed by the en-

thusiasm of the radio men who filled the lobby, he sat in on their sessions, decided that radio was a business to get into. A secondary decision—and an astute one—was his recognition that furnishing entertainment to broadcasters, rather than the operation of transmitters, afforded the greatest opportunity for a minimum of cash. Mr. Coats had a minimum of cash.

Mr. Coats arranged a meeting with Arthur Judson, who managed most of the leading concert stars and who, Mr. Coats had learned, had met with but little success in his efforts to sell his stars to NBC which, by this time, had started broadcasting. Mr. Judson brought Major Andrew J. White, onetime editor of RCA's *Wireless Age* and then connected with General Electric's WGY, into the picture. Francis Marsh, a New York song booker, made a fourth at these early conferences. Judson wanted an outlet for his talent; Coats wanted an entree into a coming industry; White itched to start a new network; and Marsh sought an outlet for his songs. A little later, Edward Ervin, assistant manager of the New York Philharmonic Symphony Society was added and the quintet—without any money to speak of—organized United Independent Broadcasters, Inc. That was in January, 1927.

With the company a legal entity and Major White in the director's chair, United Broadcasters took a lease on WOR, in Newark, for four days a week and Mr. Coats set out to sign up radio stations. He returned to New York two months later very much pleased over bagging sixteen stations. But Major White couldn't share his joy. Coats had guaranteed each station ten hours of broadcasting per week at \$50 per hour. White knew that the new network couldn't stand an \$8,000 per week outlay and he was very frank in letting his inexperienced colleagues understand why.

The face-saver for the newly organized group of entertainment purveyors was provided by the approaching collapse of the phonograph industry. Rumor had reached the ears of executives of the Columbia Phonograph Company that its rival, Victor, was about to join RCA to protect its great resources through reinvestment in broadcasting, the coming industry. At this moment, Major White, desperate, approached Columbia with an offer to sell the operating rights of United Independent Broadcasters, Inc. Columbia snapped up the offer, organized the Columbia Phonograph Broad-

casting Company to act as sales agent and operating company for the network and, on September 18, 1927, with almost as much fanfare as NBC had brought to its first broadcast, the new network went on the air.

For its debut in broadcasting, Columbia presented Deems Taylor's American opera, "The King's Henchman," with Deems Taylor serving as narrator. When the appointed time for Columbia's broadcast came and control-room operators west of the Alleghenies threw their control switches, nothing happened. In fact, nothing happened for fifteen minutes—until telephone linesmen could repair the wire break that had occurred a half hour earlier in a thunderstorm. Once the lines were repaired, however, it seemed the program would never end. CBS' first broadcast ran an hour and a half overtime!

Columbia operated the network at a loss of \$100,000 per month until, at the end of three months, it had had enough. White's group bought the network back for \$10,000 and 30 hours of free broadcasting for Columbia.

Major White and his United Broadcasters couldn't afford to lose even one hundred thousand. But again, their lucky star rode high. White knew a dentist, Dr. Leon Levy, of Philadelphia, who had a friend, Jerome H. Louchheim—wealthy Philadelphian and owner of the Keystone State Construction Company—who was also interested in radio. Major White persuaded Louchheim to put \$150,000 into his network. With the check in his pocket, White started on a new trip of the hinterlands to persuade affiliated stations to accept a new and less profitable, but more practical, contract in lieu of the old one.

The new contract was similar, in many ways, to the one CBS uses today. It provided fifty dollar per hour payments to the stations for all commercial time used, agreed to provide sustaining programs without cost to these stations. It also provided for a network option on all commercial (evening) hours under which stations could not refuse to take a network program during this period.

When Major White returned to New York again, all sixteen stations had accepted the new agreement.

The NBC contract of those early days charged for sustaining

programs but had no time options with local affiliates. As a result, stations often refused to accept large NBC network shows when local programs offered more revenue, and NBC sometimes found itself in hot water with advertisers who wanted certain outlets at certain times and couldn't get them.

Among the earliest accounts to be placed with CBS was that of the Congress Cigar Company, manufacturers of La Palina cigars. Cigarette competition had driven La Palina sales down from 600,000 a day to 400,000 and the cigar company decided to try radio for twenty-six weeks in an effort to regain sales. The La Palina Smoker was one of the earliest dramatized shows on the air featuring La Palina, the only lady present in a circle of men, who, night after night, told exotic tales of adventure and intrigue.

At the end of twenty-six weeks of broadcasting, La Palina sales had leaped to a million a day. This accomplishment made an impression upon the sales manager of the Congress Cigar Company, who was the son of the owner and whose name was William S. Paley. The youngster—he was only twenty-five then, in 1927—began to feel much as Coats had felt the year before—that here was a business for him. There were several notable differences, however. In the first place, young Paley was a wealthy man. In the second place, he looked upon radio as an avocation, cigar making being the field in which he expected to make his large inheritance multiply. Unlike many rich men's sons, Paley was—and is—plagued by a driving ambition.

By the sheerest coincidence, Paley's brother-in-law happened to be Dr. Leon Levy, the Philadelphia dentist responsible for bringing Major White and Louchheim together, and when Paley learned of Louchheim's flier into the broadcasting business and his holdings in United Broadcasters which, in turn, held the Columbia Phonograph Broadcasting Company, he went to work on Louchheim and, by the summer of 1928, had persuaded that gentleman to sell his interests to him. On September 26, 1928, William S. Paley became president of United Broadcasters while Major White remained as president of CPBS. A year of dividing his time between cigars and microphones convinced Paley that he must make a choice between the two—and in January, 1929, he merged

Columbia Phonographic Broadcasting with United Broadcasters, called the result Columbia Broadcasting System, and became president.

From the day he took over the reins of CBS, Paley has been driven by an unquenchable ambition to overtake and exceed NBC as the nation's greatest network. While he hasn't achieved this end from a physical property or program standpoint, he has passed NBC in time sales, the core of broadcasting.

Paley is a tall, dark young man with a penchant for double-breasted suits. Most of the executives about CBS look as if they might have stepped out of an *Esquire* fashion plate and the sartorial splendor of the organization goes a long way toward atoning for NBC's more lavish quarters. Paley is a nervous, direct person, hates to be alone and always takes a CBS vice-president along on drives about the city or in traveling to and from work. He works long hours in a large, airy and fastidiously decorated office. But because associates are almost invariably with him outside the office—and because their conversations invariably turn to surpassing NBC—his office hours are extended far beyond the time he spends behind his desk.

Understanding advertising, an astute businessman and a top-notch organizer, he has surrounded himself with young men. Vice-president Edward Klauber, formerly night city editor of the *New York Times*, is at fifty-two the oldest of the lot. Paul W. Keston, forty-two, is vice-president in charge of sales promotion—and one of the most capable sales executives in the country.

When Paley took over CBS in 1929, the network consisted of 47 stations. In 1927, Congress had finally acted to remedy the chaotic condition in broadcasting with enactment of a Federal Radio Commission with full authority to act—in the technical field—as to both licensing stations and policing the ether. As FRC engineers dug into the problem of channels and allocation of frequencies, it became obvious that as broadcasters dropped from the picture, their places would not be filled quickly. Neither would new licenses be granted readily. The truth of the matter was that there were more broadcasters than there were available channels.

If Paley were to expand his network to NBC proportions under these conditions, he would need the finest technical advice and

guidance. Paley looked over the membership of the Federal Radio Commission, found their brightest commissioner—Sam Picard, who had started his radio career with a University of the Air program over Dr. Brinkley's KFKB back in broadcasting's infancy—and added him to the list of brilliant young vice-presidents in his entourage.

After that, when a CBS affiliate appeared in Washington seeking greater power, longer broadcasting hours or other technical improvements, it received CBS' fullest support and advice. By 1930, CBS had 69 stations in its network. Today, CBS has 121 affiliated stations and owns 8 stations. NBC, with two networks, has 221 outlets today and owns 10 stations. Interesting, too, are the comparative earnings of the two rival networks. NBC, from its founding in 1926 through the year 1938 had earned \$22,319,833. CBS, starting a year later, had earned, by the end of 1938, \$22,522,471.

Both NBC and CBS set up artists' bureaus to handle and manage talent appearing on the air. But Columbia has an especial ace in the hole in the talent field in its Columbia Concerts Corporation. Arthur Judson, the concert manager who played a large part in the formation of United Broadcasters, was still a large stockholder in CBS when Paley took over, and Columbia Concerts Corporation was the result of a merger of seven large booking agencies under Judson's experienced hand. Since its formation in 1931, this corporation has actually sold more talent to NBC than to CBS! Little wonder, for it has a virtual corner on the best voices and instrumentalists in the country.

The third national network in point of size, date of birth and programming is the Mutual Broadcasting System, organized largely along the lines of an association of broadcasters in a loosely knit and highly flexible group of some 160 stations. Unlike the other networks, it neither owns nor operates stations, but is owned by several large stations. At WXYZ, in Detroit (home of the Lone Ranger), Trendle executives will tell you that Mutual came into existence to give network outlet to the Lone Ranger after unsatisfactory attempts to work out an arrangement with CBS and NBC.

That the highly profitable Lone Ranger show should inspire the formation of a network is less likely than that the four powerful independent broadcasters who organized MBS felt the need for an outlet for the expensive shows they were producing, the large talent staffs they maintained. MBS was formed on September 29, 1934, with the Chicago *Tribune's* WGN, The Kunsky-Trendle Broadcasting Corporation's WXYZ, in Detroit; the Bamberger Broadcasting Service's WOR, in Newark; and Crosley's WLW, in Cincinnati, entering into an agreement for obtaining network contracts from advertisers for programs to be broadcast simultaneously over these four stations—and any others which might become affiliated later—on a share-the-expense basis.

These stations were the only ones to carry Mutual broadcasts during its first year of operation, and, in September, 1935, WXYZ left that network to accept affiliation with NBC. In 1940, WLW followed WXYZ's lead. But in 1936, Mutual began to seek additional outlets for its programs and soon added two regional networks—Colonial's thirteen stations in New England, Don Lee's ten stations in California. Since that time, Mutual has gradually built its network.

However, MBS was a vastly different type of organization from either NBC or CBS. Affiliated stations were loosely tied to it and could refuse or accept MBS shows as they pleased. Actually, Mutual has no production department and the programs which go out over its network are built by one or another of its member stations. WOR and WGN contribute the greatest number of these programs. Many Mutual stations are also affiliated with other networks—NBC or CBS—but because of the exclusivity clauses in CBS and NBC contracts, MBS shows over such stations are frequently relegated to a second place in importance.

Different, too, is Mutual's manner of collection. Its two remaining member stations—WGN and WOR—pay the network a commission of 3½ per cent of business obtained through that channel; affiliates pay 15 per cent. Mutual's earnings, because of the freedom allowed stations in using or refusing to use MBS shows, are correspondingly small. In 1935, the network's earnings were \$1,108,827 against a CBS figure of more than sixteen million dollars and an NBC figure of twenty-six and a half millions.

In 1940, with more stations than CBS listed as outlets, MBS time sales were only \$3,600,161.

There are many radio stations scattered across the country which are owned by rugged individualists who feel that their first duty is toward the community in which they broadcast. Such broadcasters, striving for better programs and bigger shows, have long felt that co-operative effort in building high-cost entertainment shows and broadcasts of state and national importance was the key to better programming. But they felt, also, that affiliation with CBS or NBC—with their stations' best listening time optioned to the network—was not the answer.

They found partial answer in regional networks—usually associations of independently owned radio stations which, by a pooling of resources, could present better programs. Other regional networks developed differently, are largely owned by a single corporation or individual.

Among the more important regional networks are the California Radio System, once operated as a partnership of the Hearst interests and the McClatchey newspapers. Hearst has since withdrawn. The Yankee and Colonial networks, operating in New England, are owned by John Shepard III, a large department store owner, and his brother, Robert Shepard. The Don Lee Broadcasting System, serving California, is owned by Don Lee, Inc., an automobile sales firm which first entered radio to utilize its advertising potentialities in selling cars. The Texas State network, brain child of Elliott Roosevelt, is one of the newest regional nets.

Following his divorce from Elizabeth Donner Roosevelt—and his resignation from the sales staff of Fokker Aircraft when his name was mentioned as a "lobbyist" during a Congressional investigation into the air-mail affair—Elliott Roosevelt settled down on a large ranch near Fort Worth, Texas, with his second wife, the former Ruth Googins, to the business of raising cattle. It didn't take. Ambitious, he wanted to enter a business he could grow with, and radio seemed to provide an answer.

Together with his wife, he bought three small stations in Texas and, a good salesman, soon put them on a sound financial footing and became a power in Texas broadcasting circles. Soon, Elliott

was heading a group of Texas independents under the corporate name of the Texas State network.

One of the important things about the formation of the Mutual Broadcasting System was its failure to incorporate in its affiliation contracts of early days, binding time-option clauses and exclusivity features. Where NBC and CBS contracts were, in many cases, unacceptable to a large percentage of the independent broadcasters of the country, Mutual—with no hampering provisos and whereases—afforded these individualists the opportunity to enjoy the blessings of a national network's programming potentialities with few of its damning features. Don Lee, the Colonial, the Pacific networks were soon affiliated with Mutual. So was the Texas State network.

Because MBS picks up programs built by its affiliated stations, MBS was soon airing Elliott Roosevelt's commentaries. No rubber stamp, Elliott's voice was heard far above the other voices crying "Texas beef is the best beef in the world" when his father, the President, sought to promote good will in this hemisphere by buying Argentine beef. As a broadcaster, Elliott, too, was a leader in speaking his mind against the "censorship of fear" exerted by the FCC over broadcasting. He became embroiled in a spectacular cat-and-dog fight with Father Coughlin. His name loomed larger and larger upon the broadcasting horizon.

As Mutual grew, as it became more and more competitive with the older established networks, Mutual's contracts grew more stringent, more demanding upon affiliated stations. Regional networks, too, were beginning to outgrow the independence which marked their early formation. By the time 1939 was half over, regional contracts with their affiliates began to take on many of the same features which marked contracts offered by NBC and CBS. With Mutual, it was an effort to hold what it had. New affiliates were difficult to secure. The air channels were crowded and, already, NBC and CBS—by virtue of their earlier establishment—had stations with the most favorable power, wave length and listening areas bound under contracts, usually for a five-year period.

In the face of this situation, Roosevelt and a group of associates moved to establish a new national network to be called the Trans-Continental Broadcasting System. Many months of prepara-

tion and groundwork went into the building of the new organization; an opening date—New York, 1940—was set for the network's inaugural broadcast. A few weeks before the new year, announcement was made that TBS had been dropped.

What TBS' backers discovered at great expense and labor was that open competition in broadcasting network shows existed only in a limited way. The best outlets were already under long-term contracts to existing networks and because there was so little room for new transmitters, the exclusivity contracts of the three national networks already in operation made network broadcasting a tough field to break into.

What TBS discovered in 1939, the FCC had begun to suspect in March, 1938, when it authorized an investigation "to determine what special regulations applicable to radio stations engaged in chain or other broadcasting are required in the public interest, convenience and necessity."

Three years later, in May 1941, the FCC issued its report on chain broadcasting—a report that fell like a bomb upon the world of broadcasting.

The FCC revealed that almost half the (1-A) clear-channel stations licensed to operate in the United States were licensed to CBS and NBC. The total net time sales for the entire broadcasting industry in 1938 was \$100,892,259, and NBC and CBS accounted for more than 50 per cent of the time sales of the entire industry through their affiliates or owned stations. Of their total network time sales—\$44,313,778—NBC and CBS retained 73 per cent and paid to their 253 affiliated stations only 27 per cent.

On the face of such figures alone, the FCC felt that it had unearthed a substantial piece of evidence that the networks employed contracts which were in restraint of trade and which, definitely, were not to the advantage of affiliated stations.

Looking at the standard contracts offered affiliated stations by NBC and CBS, the commission found that they ran for a usual period of five years; that, after 1936, both networks demanded exclusivity clauses which prevented affiliates from taking network broadcasts from any other network; that the networks demanded the best broadcasting hours of the affiliated station through elabo-

rate time-option clauses; that affiliated stations may not reject network commercial shows.

The Commission was also worried about the ownership by NBC of two networks, the Red and the Blue. The FCC in recent years has jealously guarded its issuance of licenses to broadcasters so that no single broadcaster is permitted to operate two powerful stations in the same listening area. To permit such ownership, the FCC feels, would be to grant too much influence over the mental processes of a community to a single individual.

The commission further claimed, in supporting its monopoly charges against NBC, that the network employed the unprofitable Blue network to utilize facilities which, except for such ownership, might be used in competition with the profitable Red network. Cramped ether facilities prevented licensing of additional outlets in those areas and NBC, by controlling dual outlets, was thus engaged in stifling competition.

The commission also took occasion in this report to wrinkle its forehead in a stern frown upon the artists' bureaus operated by the networks. An artist striving for appearances on CBS, for example, would obviously have a better opportunity to achieve his ambition if he were managed also by CBS. The networks, in their dual capacity as buyer and seller of talent, were providing a competition to individual talent agents which such individuals were unable to meet. Artists, too, frequently suffered under network-owned management. In a "package show," where the network built the entire program and furnished broadcasting facilities as well, broadcasting time is a fixed factor. Its costs do not vary. But in bargaining for the sale of the show as a package, network salesmen have one price factor which is not fixed—talent costs. And rather than lose a sale of time when differences arise between advertiser and network, it is easily conceivable that the network might take a lower price for its talent in order to make the larger sale.

Upshot of the protracted FCC investigation into chain broadcasting was a series of orders which threatened to alter vitally the whole pattern of broadcasting in the United States. First, licenses were not to be granted (or renewed) to stations having exclusivity clauses in contracts with networks. This in itself was a revolu-

tionary departure from past practices. The effect of such a decree is to make every station a free agent. Affiliated with NBC, it might accept a CBS or Mutual program. Where, before, competition between the networks had been solely for outlets—affiliated stations—now competition would become an hour-to-hour battle to obtain the best outlets for each program. Regardless of its affiliation contracts, any station might broadcast, in a single evening, programs from all three networks, and the bargaining position of the individual stations would be greatly enhanced, its income from network broadcasts multiplied many times.

Another order refused licenses to stations which contracted to affiliate with networks beyond a one-year period; others banned stations from entering into network contracts which barred the rejection of programs reasonably believed by the station management to be unsatisfactory or unsuitable or which barred the substitution of programs considered by the management to be of outstanding local or national importance for network programs. Still another order acted to prevent the networks from influencing rates on local stations for other than network time.

Two most important orders, however, referred to control of more than one transmitter by any broadcaster in a single listening area. The first of these refused license to networks for standard broadcast stations for areas where that network already owned and operated a standard station. The second order was a direct slap at NBC. It provided that "no license shall be issued to a standard broadcast station affiliated with a network organization which maintains more than one network operated for the same area or at the same times."

These orders were to take effect within ninety days from May 2, 1941, date of their entry on the FCC docket!

At first, the networks challenged the FCC's jurisdiction in the matters with which they had taken action. The networks—except in the cases of the few stations which they operated—were solely engaged in program building, entertainment and education. The commission, in answer, said that its orders were directed against the individual stations, that they were designed to enable

those stations—affiliated or nonaffiliated with networks—better to serve the public interest.

But the battle lines drawn by the FCC—in which two of its members dissented—were broad ones involving basic principles of government, business and broadcasting; they were not to be settled in bickering technicalities.

Most network officials recognized the justice of the artist-bureau complaints and CBS almost immediately announced plans for sale of its artist bureau to William Morris, a large private talent agency. A similar sale was considered by NBC. But to cut affiliated stations loose from the networks, so that every network program might find itself transmitted over a different group of stations, would cut away the very foundation of network broadcasting. Paley and Niles Trammell, now president of NBC, filed through their attorneys long briefs which pointed out the great contributions networks had made to broadcasting. Programs built at huge expense and presenting the finest available talent had been made accessible to all sections of the country, they pointed out, without cost to the listener under the present system. With the uncertainty of the proposed arrangements, with the inability to see farther ahead than a few hours in planning programs and outlets, such programs would become a thing of the past.

When Chairman Fly, of the FCC, attended the National Association of Broadcasters convention in St. Louis in the early summer, the convention degenerated into a cat-and-dog fight. Fly stoutly maintained that the FCC orders would better the industry, make it healthier for the warm competition it would afford when networks must compete on a basis of the individual program for outlets.

Mark Ethridge, a former president of the NAB and general manager of the Louisville *Courier-Journal and Times*, spoke for the broadcasters.

Broadcasters feel that the Commission does not have a sufficient regard for the economic and competitive factors. The feeling is perhaps a little stronger than that; it might be said as representative of opinion that the Commission, in its diligence to serve the public interest, sometimes does it a disservice. For instance, the Commission has expounded

a theory that its duty is to provide the greatest and the best possible coverage by radio and that it is not concerned with the economics of the situation.

Here, Ethridge cited the example of Los Angeles where, because of the FCC's refusal to hear existing stations in applications filed by new licensees, eighteen stations are operating in a city which is economically unable to support them by advertising from which support of radio must come.

Broadcasters refuted the monopoly charges with the fact that there is competition under the present system of broadcasting—a station may change from one network to another, and many do, upon expiration of its contract—and such competition keeps network officials busy selling and reselling managers of outlets upon that network's service. To develop an hour-to-hour competition for programs, however, would take away from the industry all semblance of stability, drive advertisers—who could never be certain of just which stations they were buying when dealing with a network—into other media, the newspapers, magazines, etc.

Both NBC and CBS notified the commission of their intention to appeal from these orders, to take the matter into the United States Supreme Court for a showdown. Meanwhile, NBC—virtually ordered to dissolve or sell its Blue network—had a problem peculiarly its own.

NBC pointed to the fact that both its networks were highly competitive. A different sales force served the Blue network from that which drummed up the highly profitable Red network business. "If all four national networks belonged to NBC," Trammell asserted, "there would still be as much competition as there is today." And that the competition between CBS and NBC is both real and furious, not even the FCC could deny.

As the bitter battle between broadcasters and FCC developed, delaying orders were entered on the docket until, in the fall of 1941, both sides were ready to present their cases in court. Then, suddenly, the FCC announced that its order for the sale of the Blue network was indefinitely postponed. The commission did not wish to be put in the position of forcing a quick sale of so valuable a property, a sale in which NBC might be forced to take

a terrific loss on a gigantic investment. But, it pointed out that this delay was not to be taken as an indication that the commission had reversed its position regarding the single ownership of two networks.

In the matter of network contracts, the courts will soon have the opportunity to pass upon an FCC ruling which might easily spell the end of network broadcasting as we know it today. Wholesale entertainment of the type provided American listeners by the networks, acting as middlemen between advertiser and broadcast station for the ultimate benefit of the listener, will be impossible in the uncertain flux and flow of such a system as the FCC proposes. Shorter affiliation contracts may be in order. A more equitable distribution of network receipts among affiliated stations is surely indicated. Other minor reforms will not harm the networks to any great degree and, at the same time, make the position of the affiliated station a happier one.

But that the facts will uphold a case of monopoly against the networks as a whole is hardly tenable in the light of their everyday operations. The networks are keenly competitive in three distinct fields—for advertisers, for radio station affiliates, and for the listener. The FCC has considered, principally, only the second of these fields—the radio stations—and even there the five-year contracts are staggered and constantly expiring, and results in competition being put upon more than a fly-by-night basis.

The competition for advertisers—whose contract terms usually run thirteen or twenty-six weeks—is even more strenuous while the efforts of the competing networks to win listeners is an hour-to-hour, fast and furious business. Out of this three-phased competition has grown the American system of broadcasting, a system which brings rich listening gifts, without cost, to the public. It is true that the industry is today unable to support additional networks, that MBS has difficulty in adding powerful stations to its list of affiliates in the light of NBC's and CBS' prior start in the field. But this is a limitation prescribed first by nature (which limits the number of broadcasting stations which can successfully operate in a given area) and secondly by the economics of private and free broadcasting based upon commercial sponsorship of broadcast programs.

Unless the government is ready to take over broadcasting as a governmental function and support the industry through taxes or other appropriation, the FCC must consider the economic factors involved in building and transmitting radio programs along with other factors. The writer holds no brief for single ownership of two networks serving the same areas at the same times. The inherent possibilities of such ownership are obviously dangerous, although examination of NBC reveals a healthy stewardship of a public trust. But the voiding of contracts which serve only to stabilize an industry which has suffered more from instability and insecurity than from any other ailments in its short history can be neither in the public interest nor in the interest of broadcasters who, unless they serve the public interest, usually find themselves out of business at the hands of a public which no longer listens to their broadcasts.

EARLY MEDICINE MEN OF RADIO

RADIO WAS STILL AN INFANT IN THE FALL OF 1923, BUT already the rompers fit more snugly; and the youngster had learned to stand up, holding onto the arms of chairs and tables, and take a step or two. Frenchmen, that fall, were hailing the "most important moment since the signing of the Armistice in 1918"—Germany's abandonment of its passive resistance to Belgian and French occupation of the rich Ruhr Valley, thus ending an eighty-day strike in that industrial area and marking what many believed was Germany's final admission of defeat. In Munich, Adolf Hitler, an unsuccessful house painter, planned his beer hall *putsch*. In Missouri, the St. Louis *Star's* Harry Brundige was making his bid for the Pulitzer reportorial award with an exposé of diploma mills in Missouri which, for a sum, turned out so-called "men of medicine" to prey upon the lame, the halt, the ignorant.

In New York, the world's greatest newspapers were muted by a pressmen's strike and only by the concerted effort of all rival newsmen was a thin little co-operative sheet put upon the street. New York's pioneer radio station, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company's WEAf, saw no opportunity for itself in the failure of the press. News broadcasts—except for special events such as the Harding election in 1920, which had inaugurated broadcasting to a wide-eyed and unbelieving world—were practically unknown. Fifteen years later, at Munich, where Adolf Hitler now grumblingly sipped beer, radio was fully to awake to its vital role in the world of news.

Paul Whiteman was the "King of Jazz," and by 1923, had made several radio broadcasts. But one broadcast—scheduled to

be heard that fall over WCAP, in Washington, D. C.—was not heard because starlings perching on that station's antenna caused ear-splitting interference and brought a deluge of phoned complaints from irate listeners. Biggest figures in radio of 1923 were the Happiness Boys—Ernie Hare and Billie Jones—who had almost deserted the recording companies for the ether waves. Significantly, in the light of present-day salaries, Hare and Jones were almost the only radio artists in 1923 who were paid for their broadcasts. Also, significantly, the record manufacturers to whom they were under contract bitterly protested their radio appearances over WJZ, Newark, New Jersey. Recording executives felt that radio meant sudden death for records and phonographs unless the best talent were signed, sealed and, by monopoly, kept off the air.

General James G. Harbord, then president of RCA, was interviewed by the ship reporters who met him upon his return from abroad that fall. He predicted that an international network would soon bring the far places of the world close to us. Newspapers called him a visionary. Networks, commercially, were three years away although, in many station laboratories, the network idea had been tested and found workable. On a small scale, the network hookup—connecting two or more stations by long-distance telephone so that both could transmit the same program simultaneously—was actually in use. Ten months before, on January 4th, 1923, Nathan Glanz had played a saxophone solo in the studios of WEAJ which was transmitted, simultaneously, over WNAC, in Boston. And only two months before, the first regular service between stations had been inaugurated.

Colonel Edward H. R. Green, son of the fabulous Hetty, made science his hobby. He kept a standing order with Westinghouse to send him the latest electrical equipment they produced. One day, the expressman unloaded a number of large crates at the Colonel's South Dartmouth (Mass.) estate. Green called Westinghouse long distance, learned that they had sent him a radio transmitter.

"But what am I going to do with it?" the Colonel asked.

"Set it up and broadcast—records, speeches and things," they told him.

The Colonel was assigned the call letters WMAF for his new station, but the problem of finding entertaining programs for broadcast soon became bothersome. While visiting in the home of a neighbor, Harry B. Thayer, then president of A.T. & T., he learned that Mr. Thayer, unable to hear WEAF well at that distance, had arranged to receive the programs over a special telephone line. Colonel Green had an inspiration. He asked for a similar hookup, but instead of a piped line solely for his own entertainment, he wanted to rebroadcast the WEAF programs. The request was granted; the regular service, result of circumstance rather than planning, started.

Great strides in both transmitters and receiving sets had been made in the three years of broadcasting, and visionaries predicted all sorts of miraculous things for an industry which was miraculous enough without gilding the lily. They said it would cure the deaf; banish wars; make all the nations of the world members of one big, happy family. Some were even talking of sending photographs through the air, and at Wilbur Wright field, Fairfield, Ohio, Captain W. H. Murphy, United States Army Air Corps, was experimenting with what he called a "radio beam" which, he said, would permit airplanes to fly blind along a given route and even land by means of radio.

But the owners and the operators of radio stations were like the hunters who had the lion by the tail. It was big game but they didn't know what to do with it. At WEAF, for example, executives admitted that four questions worried those who were pouring dollars into the development of radio: Does the public want broadcasting? What sort of program does the public want? Who is going to give the public these programs? And, most important, who is going to pay for them?

A few advertisers did make a token investment in 1922 and 1923, and it is fairly well established that the first company to pay for use of radio for advertising was the Queensboro Corporation. The station was WEAF. E. R. Squibb and Sons, Shur-On Optical Co., Tidewater and American Express were others to use radio at about the same time. The pattern of all these early programs was cut of the same dull cloth. They were ten-minute programs consisting of dry talks by company officers; and the re-

sultant sales records must have deeply depressed those who felt that the ether waves would someday provide a great medium of selling. Only one commercial sponsor was willing to spend enough money on its program to make it worth the listening time of an audience.

Those who remember the first battery-powered tube receiving sets will remember, also, the Eveready Hour, radio's first important commercial show, sponsored by the National Carbon Company. The direct sales objective of the program was to sell to radio set users the dry-cell Eveready batteries then necessary for power, and its slogan was, "The air is full of things you should not miss!"

This, of course, was far from the true state of broadcasting, and company executives, motivated by the same necessity which prompted radio set manufacturers to establish most of the early radio stations; i.e., the need for something to listen to if radio sets and batteries were to be sold, untied the purse strings and instructed its advertising agency to build a worth-while show. Among those who appeared on these early Eveready shows were John Drew, Julia Marlowe, George Gershwin, Moran and Mack, Weber and Fields, the Flonzaley String Quartet, Irvin S. Cobb. There was no established pattern; the men behind this program did a pioneering job, and one of them, Douglas Coulter, is still pioneering with CBS' experimental dramatic group, "The Columbia Workshop," upon which Orson Welles made his first important radio debut.

For his commentary on the results of the Coolidge-Davis election the following year on an Eveready program, National Carbon Company paid Will Rogers the then unheard of sum of a thousand dollars. And that fee was almost lost when the inimitable Will, insisting that the studio be cleared for his radio broadcast, suffered a new and strange malady—"mike fright." Before the cold, unresponsive metal, he found himself, for once, speechless, and even the hurriedly gathered studio audience didn't quite put him at his ease. Others—Elsie Janis, David Wark Griffith, the veteran Eddie Cantor—suffered the same affliction upon their first radio appearances.

But while the high-salaried executives at Westinghouse and

American Telephone and Telegraph Company were suffering their secret doubts as to the commercial future of radio, one shrewd individual saw in the infant industry advertising potentialities to which most businessmen were blind. That man was Dr. John Romulus Brinkley, destined to stick large thorns in both the American Medical Association and the not-yet-born Federal Communications Commission.

Personable, goateed and affecting diamonds—then comparatively small, but in a few years to reach the size of a dime—Dr. Brinkley was enjoying his first taste of fame beyond the bounds of Kansas. In Kansas, where he had set up his hospital in the rundown town of Milford, he was already a prominent figure. The notoriety of his rejuvenation operation (in which he transplanted goat glands into human bodies) had already marked him.

Dr. Brinkley was a man of superlatives. He drove a sixteen-cylinder Cadillac, later bought his own cabin plane and hired his own pilot. Typically, one history would not have been enough for the man. He has two, one written in the annals of the American Medical Association; in the columns of the press; and in the records of the FCC, by those who opposed him. And one written by a hired writer and offered for sale over his radio station, called, "The Life of a Man." The factual disagreements between the two versions appear at almost every turn of a page.

A brief view of Kansas' "Goat-Gland Doctor," as he presented himself to a nation just beginning to accustom itself to his name in 1923, had him born in Beta, North Carolina, in 1885. He says that his father was a mountain doctor; his mother, a worker for the Methodist Church. He began his education at Tuckasigall, N. C., and, according to an application he filed to practice medicine in California that fall, he continued it at the Milton Academy, Baltimore, Md. His medical education began in 1908 at the Bennett Medical School, in Chicago, but a lack of funds halted this schooling in 1911. It was not until 1915 that he received a medical diploma—and that diploma was issued by the Eclectic Medical University, of Kansas City, Missouri. In 1919, he received a second, honorary diploma from this same school—traveling at that time under the name, "Kansas City College of Medicine and Surgery"—for services he performed as a teacher and member of its faculty.

This was the man America knew in the fall of 1923. During the summer of 1923, stories of the Brinkley operation had caught the eye—and the imagination—of able publisher Harry Chandler, of the Los Angeles *Times*. Intrigued, Chandler invited Brinkley to come to California and operate upon an aging editor on his staff. "If the operation is a success," the publisher laid down his challenge, "I'll make you the most famous surgeon in America. If it's a failure, I'll damn you with the same gusto." The aging editor, at least, must have been satisfied with the results because the Los Angeles *Times* set about making Brinkley and his "goat-gland" operation a household word.

Dr. Brinkley had received his first medical license in Arkansas. By reciprocal agreements between Arkansas and other states, the license to practice medicine was thus extended to more than a dozen states. California was not among these, but as a courtesy to Chandler, the state granted him a thirty-day permit. At the same time, Dr. Brinkley made formal application for a permanent license to practice in California.

Chandler was then building KHJ, for the *Times*, and Brinkley, visiting the station, learning how it operated and finding that Americans in larger and larger numbers were beginning to buy receivers, decided that radio was for him. It offered him an opportunity to streamline old methods.

For generations, Kansas had known the medicine men. They first came in gaudy red wagons with negro banjoists, minstrel men and feather-bedecked Indian chiefs. Rolling into the busiest street of a territorial town, they would make as much noise as possible and, when a crowd had collected, sell their miraculous cure-alls to the gullible, the slow of speech, the slow of thought. These were Brinkley's models. Only, where his predecessors reached one prospect, he—by radio—would reach thousands.

Returning to Milford, he started work upon his radio station. He said that it was being erected to amuse and enlighten his convalescent patients; and with the station well under way and the call letters, KFKB, assigned to it, Brinkley and his wife set off on a motor trip through Canada and the East. His stay in California had netted him \$40,000. His first, crude transmitter—by the most liberal estimates—could not have cost more than \$25,000.

And then, the first great tempest burst about his ears. Brundige's investigation of the Missouri diploma mills had shocked the nation; and organized medicine, anxious to wipe out the dark blot which threatened to undermine public confidence in its legitimate representatives, had joined Brundige in his exposé. A prime offender in the matter of issuing fake diplomas was the Eclectic Medical University, alias the Kansas City College of Medicine and Surgery. The two medical degrees which Dr. Brinkley held were from these two institutions. Caught in the dragnet of the investigation, Brinkley hurried home to Milford and to the microphone of his newly completed radio station. There, over the transmitter set up to amuse convalescent patients, he poured out his story to the world. He told how he had started as a telegraph operator in North Carolina, became a traveling relief agent for the Southern Railway in 1902. A year later, he went to work in New York for the Western Union Telegraph Company; became traveling auditor for the Central Railroad of New Jersey; yard agent for the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western. Working at night, he enrolled at Bennett, later practiced for six months in North Carolina and returned to New York and Chicago for post-graduate work. In 1914, he became plant surgeon for Swift and Company, in Kansas City, where he was afforded "an unparalleled opportunity for studying the diseases of animals, especially of the glandular parts of animals." In 1917, he volunteered for medical service in the army.

"Due to the scarcity of Army doctors during those hectic days of 1917," he told his radio audience, "it became necessary to do the work ordinarily required of ten men, being on duty twenty-four hours out of the day."

This was the burden of KFKB's earliest broadcasts to its listeners, but not the whole burden, as we shall see. But with his enemies already beginning to write a different biography, Brinkley was finding KFKB a vital mouthpiece for his own defense.

The Brinkley application to practice medicine in California had been rejected by the State Medical Board after the American Medical Association made public certain facts behind Dr. Brinkley's career. The A.M.A. revealed that Brinkley did not graduate from Bennett and that his application for a California license

listed him as attending Milton Academy, in Baltimore, during a period when one of his advertising pamphlets had him working for the Western Union Company. In that same application, he submitted a sworn statement that he was attending the National Academy of Arts and Sciences in St. Louis from September, 1911, to June, 1913. The certificate submitted with the application was signed by "Dean" W. P. Sachs. But a study of the institution's records failed to indicate Brinkley as a student during this period, and when Sachs, in turn, was bared as a diploma-mill operator, he admitted that the Brinkley certificate, dated June, 1913, was issued in 1918, without examination and for a cash consideration.

Swift and Company's records showed Brinkley employed as "physician and clerk" from January, 1913, to February, the same year. His active army service was of about the same length, the War Department revealed. Sent to Fort Bliss, El Paso, Texas, as assistant to the surgeon of the 64th Infantry on June 9, 1917, he was transferred to Base Hospital No. 2 at Fort Bliss the next day upon his own statement that he was physically unfit for service. On August 14—after only thirty-one days of active service—he was relieved of duty and sent home.

It was during the period following his discharge that he established the small hospital at Milford and performed what he later advertised as the "first goat-gland operation in the world."

During these earlier months of KFKB (initials which Brinkley has variously asserted stood for "Kansas First, Kansas Best," and "Kansas Folks Know Best") Dr. Brinkley, at frequent intervals throughout the broadcasting day, told his own story of his career. But he never forgot that his radio station had been set up to draw to his hospital and operating room in Milford patients from the aged and eternally hopeful. In this, he was enormously successful.

There were no commercially sponsored programs transmitted from KFKB at this time. His verbal—and usually ad lib and unprepared—defense, given in a fiery and sometimes bitterly vitriolic manner, took better than 50 per cent of the broadcast time. The remainder of the time on the air was consumed by music, played by local orchestras, and an appeal to the aged and infirm to come to Milford and undergo the rejuvenation operation. Both in de-

fending himself against A.M.A. charges and in pointing out the benefits of his operation, Brinkley bitterly assailed organized medicine as "a monopoly against the public interest."

But when he went on the air as a medicine man seeking business, his manner was sedate, dignified, almost ministerial.

I have here a letter from a farmer [Dr. Brinkley would say], a tiller of the soil who has given himself without stint, with his simple generosity that the great cities may live. . . . This sufferer requires an immediate operation. I suggest to him that he go to the Brinkley Hospital in Milford, Kansas, for an examination. Yet, I want this man to be confident, to be satisfied. Unless he has explicit faith in Brinkley, let him go to his own doctor or to any good hospital. . . .

If you have any doubts as to the appeal of his message to men who had lost their vigor, look first at his message and then at his enormous income during these years of broadcasting and operating.

"A man is as old as his glands," Dr. Brinkley would tell his audience—perhaps as large as that of any other radio station of the middle twenties. "I believe the sex glands are the master glands of the body. I believe the basis of all energy is sex energy. The first evidence of decline comes to people in decline of the sex desire or ambition. After that comes loss of energy, ambition, nervousness, insomnia, organic disfunctions of many sorts."

Here is an old trick of the medicine man: to include in the list of symptoms for which his medicine is an antidote such a wide and universal assortment of ailments that at least one of them has been suffered by the prospective customer. Who hasn't suffered from one or more of the above ailments?

Now I've found that when these folks are restored to normal sexual strength [he continued] they have an entirely different view of life. It becomes sweet to them again; they want to live and enjoy living.

Let me give you other examples. Contrast the castrated animal of any species with the natural male or female. Note the difference between the stallion and the gelding. [Here again, Dr. Brinkley shows a consummate understanding of his rural audience from which most of his patients were gained, speaking to them in language they understand best.] The stallion stands erect, neck arched, mane flowing, champing

the bit, stamping the ground, seeking the female, while the gelding stands around half asleep, going into action only when goaded, cowardly, listless, with no interest in anything.

And this is the clincher!

Take man himself, castrate him, and he begins to revert to the feminine. His voice cracks, his beard disappears, his hips round and his breasts enlarge. He loses his pep and pugnacity simply because he has been deprived of his sex and energy glands.

Surely these homely examples demonstrate the vast importance of the sex gland. And the Compound Operation provides a new artery and a new nerve to the depleted sex glands. . . . I believe it impossible of total failure, and of the thousands of our patients, I believe everyone received real and lasting benefit to a greater or less degree.

From day to day, the phraseology of the Brinkley appeal would vary, but the message was always the same. Who wants to be old and sexless when a way to youth and energy lies so close at hand?

Men, some as old as eighty, rushed from all parts of the United States to Milford. William Battenfield, of Gilbert, Ark., later testified that, during these early months of KFKB's history, he shipped an average of forty goats a week to the hospital. Each goat represented an operation at the advertised price of \$750 in advance—or a gross return of \$30,000 per week.

Thus, at a period when managers of most of the nation's radio stations were buying red ink to make ledger entries, Brinkley's station was serving as the magnet for a new type of gold rush. Milford had changed little in size or appearance since the Civil War. But Brinkley's radio made it boom. Brinkley erected a \$25,000 Methodist Church in memory of his mother. He built a larger hospital, at a cost of \$100,000, and a large apartment building to house his staff. The Post Office Department found it necessary to build a new post office to handle the radio-inspired mail and to dispatch the follow-up letters scores of girls from the hospital office sent out to radio-gained prospects in the best go-getter fashion. Sewerage and electric lights in Milford were extended and Brinkley became the town's patron saint. As for Brink-

ley—he bought larger diamonds, automobiles and airplanes for himself and family.

Then, early in the year 1924, the crude little transmitter which sent Brinkley's word out through the ether waves caught fire and burned. Plans were drawn up immediately for a new and more powerful station to be erected at a cost of \$65,000. Then, with money pouring in from his surgical activities, the Brinkleys took a long trip to the Orient and on around the world.

Already an inkling of the stringent regulation in the offing for radio had been given broadcasters when the Communications Commission, forerunner of the FCC, banned the bitter and profane attacks upon chain stores by Colonel W. K. Henderson, from his radio station in Shreveport. And already members of the American Medical Association were speaking of taking the case of Brinkley and KFKB before that body to seek the revocation of his broadcasting license.

Shrewdly, Brinkley, upon his return, moved to block such efforts. By 1925, most of the nation's stations had gone upon a commercial basis and were devoting much of their time to broadcasting programs sponsored by advertisers. Still Brinkley carried little of commercial broadcasts—excepting his own—when the new KFKB went on the air. One of the first strictly educational programs went out from there. Sam Picard, a student at Manhattan State College, in Kansas, had an idea for a University of the Air which would broadcast lectures by professors on Manhattan's faculty. He enlisted the aid of President Jardine, of the college, who, in turn, persuaded Brinkley to air the program. Jardine was to become Secretary of Agriculture under Coolidge. So, when the Communications Commission looked at the programs of KFKB, it found that the percentage of programs—there were other similar broadcasts ranging from book reviews to travelogues—transmitted in the public interest at KFKB compared favorably with those of other stations. The matter of medical ethics on his programs was not gone into.

But during these two years, the American Medical Association had not been idle. By 1925, many of the states in which Brinkley had reciprocal licenses to practice had revoked those licenses.

And now, the state of California—which had rejected Brinkley's

application for a medical license—moved to indict him on charges of conspiracy to violate the state medical laws, succeeded in securing the indictment, but never succeeded in extraditing Brinkley from Milford to Los Angeles to stand trial. As pressure from his adversaries grew, Brinkley again went abroad, this time to Italy and to the Royal University of Pavia, where, upon presentation of his American credentials and some small amount of classwork, he was awarded a degree from that ancient university. At the same time, he was also licensed to practice medicine by the London Medical Board on the strength of his American diplomas and licenses.

The year 1927 was an important one for Brinkley, Milford and KFKB. In that year, Brinkley made application for an increased power for his station. A thousand-watt already, he now asked—and received—a license to operate under 5,000 watts. Oddly, a similar application for power increase from WDAF, owned by the *Kansas City Star*, was rejected. The increased power permitted Brinkley to reach an even wider audience than before over the Middle West, and as his station increased in power—and importance—he laid down a set of principles for it which were published and broadcast by a man who appreciated that eventually he would find himself locked in battle with an FRC which was—though newly formed—already extending its powers and its watchfulness over air which belonged to all the people.

“The station (KFKB) shall never become an advertising or a selling medium,” he proclaimed and, if you ignore the salesmanship exerted on behalf of his own hospital and, later, pharmaceutical association, this tenet was followed. Outside of a few spot commercial announcements for local merchants, KFKB carried little advertising. “KFKB shall be kept clean so that none shall be offended. The programs shall be of such a nature as to be welcomed in every home.” And, “No records shall be played. Records are cheap, but full time talent is far more valuable than its great initial outlay.”

During the period from 1927 to 1930, according to testimony later given before the FCC, KFKB had around 25 staff artists on its roster for which it paid approximately \$5,000 per month. This talent consisted of singers—cowboys, yodelers and crooners—

a cowboy orchestra, a regular 12-piece orchestra (for which the station paid "approximately \$50 per week") and three announcers. It was on the air 15½ hours daily. But the fact that KFKB polled the largest number of listener votes in a poll conducted by *Radio Digest* in 1930 was due not so much to these paid entertainers as to Dr. Brinkley's Medical Question Box program, started in 1929.

In 1923 Brinkley began a series of lectures to expectant and new mothers. When the response proved great, Dr. Brinkley expanded the program six years later to include any medical problems which might arise. In short, listeners were invited to write in, tell Brinkley the symptoms of their illnesses and, over the air, he would tell them what to do to cure these ailments.

Dr. Brinkley, through his radio Medical Question Box, was giving America wholesale medicine in 1929 boom fashion—and as successfully as he had sold such a large segment of the "over-fifty" population his goat-gland operation. His organization consisted of more than 1,500 pharmacists—members of the Brinkley Pharmaceutical Association—scattered widespread across the United States. When a listener would write in and describe an ailment, Dr. Brinkley, during a broadcast, would prescribe for that listener. I give you an actual transcript of this program for April 1, 1930.

You are listening to Doctor Brinkley speaking from his office over station KFKB. We must dig into our question business this morning. The first question is from Somewhere in Missouri. (Questioners often used pseudonyms). She says she enjoys our talks. She states her case briefly, which I appreciate. She had an operation, with her appendix, ovary and tubes removed a couple of years ago; she is very nervous and has dizzy spells. She says the salt solution and constipation and liver medicine has already benefited her. In reply to your question No. 1, I am more or less of the opinion that while the symptoms are to a great extent those of a premature menopause, I think they are not, but yet they are due to the fact that you have a very small amount of ovarian substance remaining. In my practice in such cases as this I have for many years used Prescription No. 61 for women. I think you should, as well as Special Prescription No. 50, and I think if you would go on a vegetable diet, a salt-free diet, for a while and use

Prescriptions No. 64, 50 and 61, you would be surprised at the benefit you would obtain. In regard to your Question No. 2, I don't know. None of us know. Anything I say is simply an opinion, and you will have to wait and see. . . .

SUNFLOWER STATE, from Dresden, Kans. Probably he has gallstones. No, I don't mean that, I mean kidney stones. My advice to you is to put him on Prescription No. 80 and 50 for men, also 64. I think that he will be a whole lot better. Also drink a lot of water.

Physicians of the A.M.A. were later to point out that Dr. Brinkley was suffering from a genuine doubt because the two prescriptions given in this case were (1) for kidney stones and (2) for gallstones. On the same broadcast, Dr. Brinkley gave this prescription to a woman who complained of her inability to have children.

For three months take Doctor Brinkley's treatment for childless homes. Of course doctors say it is vulgar for me to tell you about this, but we are taking a chance and we don't think it is obscene down here. If I can help some father and mother that do not have children in their home, to bring a little darling into their home, just one, through my suggestions, I will take all the cussings and a lot more than I have already taken from my ethical friends. If this lady will take Nos. 50 and 61 and that good old standby of mine, No. 67, for about three months, and see if there isn't a great big change taking place. Don't have an operation.

A much discussed Brinkley prescription was given to an Olathe (Kans.) woman whose difficulty lay not in childlessness, but in overfruitfulness. By way of the radio, Dr. Brinkley advised her:

"I suggest that you have your husband sterilized and then you will be safe from having more children providing you don't get out in anybody else's cow pasture and get in with some other bull."

It's easy to understand why such a spicy program—quite aside from its appeal to those genuinely concerned about their health—should enjoy a vast listening audience. And KFKB was fast becoming the most listened-to station in the Middle West.

The income for KFKB during the months of February, March

and April, 1930—as reported to the FCC by station auditors—is significantly broken down into these divisions:

Payment received from the Brinkley Pharmaceutical Association (On a pay-basis of so much per prescription filled by member druggists)	\$27,856.40
Payment from the Brinkley Hospital for programs advertising the goat-gland operation	6,500.00
Income from all other sources	3,544.93
	<hr/>
Total	\$37,901.33

Disbursements for the same period amounted to \$33,483.67. Throughout Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri and Oklahoma, physicians—and particularly those practicing in small towns and rural areas—helplessly watched their patients drift away. When farm hands became ill, they no longer called the local doctor, they wrote to Brinkley's radio station. Also, other radio stations in the area—whose source of income had been augmented by patent medicine accounts—began to find these budgets sadly curtailed, when patent medicine sales took a serious drop. Many of these competing stations were owned by newspapers and to the already raised voice of the embattled A.M.A. was added the bitter, condemnatory voice of the press. Particularly was the voice of the *Kansas City Star* raised in indignant protest against the "nefarious" activities of the "Milford Messiah."

The American Medical Association, under guidance of Dr. Morris Fishbein, continued to fight. Facts connected with Brinkley's medical education were placed before the medical boards of the various states in which he was still permitted to practice, before the faculty of the University of Pavia, the London Medical Board. Quickly, Brinkley's diplomas and licenses began to melt away under the onslaught.

Brinkley fought back wrathfully via his radio station. He called the American Medical Association a "meat cutters' union," and referred to Dr. Fishbein as "Fishy." His was a sardonic and, fortunately, rare sense of humor. Both in his authorized biography and on broadcasts, he gleefully recounted his first goat-gland operations and told how—before he had learned the best type of

goat to use in his operations—he had successfully rejuvenated a pair of patients from California only to find that, after a few days, they exuded the peculiar and distinctive goat odor from their persons!

Later, while running for governor of Kansas, he encountered the bitter pen of William Allen White. Undismayed, Brinkley expressed a crated goat to America's best known and beloved country editor. The foul-smelling animal, in his crate, occupied a corner of the small editorial office through the better part of a warm summer day until one of the reporters found a boy who was willing to accept it as a gift.

The Kansas City *Star*, aware of the close supervision being given broadcasts by the FRC, concentrated its attacks upon Brinkley in the columns of its newspaper, ignoring him on its radio station. *Star* editors put their ace reporter, A. B. MacDonald, on the Brinkley case. Early in 1930, MacDonald wrote, in an interview with Brinkley published in the *Star*:

. . . I began mentally to weigh his (Brinkley's) diamonds; to see which was the biggest, the one in his necktie, the one set in a ring of platinum on a finger of his right hand or the one on his left hand. They glittered as he moved, and my decision was that the one in his tie, as large as a hazel nut, had it over the other two. . . .

Diamonds, travel, a yacht for summer cruises, a cabin plane with a full-time pilot—all these cost money. To find where it came from in 1930 one had only to tune in radio station KFKB. In between the broadcast answers to his critics, the cowboy band, the yodelers, Brinkley issued his clarion call to the aged.

And now about wives, [Brinkley would say.] Don't get the impression that women are icebergs and are content with impotent husbands. I know of more families where the devil is to pay in fusses and temperamental splees all due to the husband not being able to function properly. Many and many times, wives come to me and say, "Doctor, my husband is no good. . . ."

Now this operation, which I call "Compound Operation," consists of adding a new artery and nerve to the patient's own sex glands . . . which act as a charger. . . . My batting average is high. That is what

counts. Well, what is my average? Oh, about 90 to 95 per cent! How's that?

But already in the spring of 1930, the Federal Radio Commission was being flooded with complaints—result of those campaigns waged by the A.M.A. and the Kansas City *Star*—against Brinkley's air activities. On May 21, 1930, the FRC summoned Brinkley to appear before it and show cause why his license to operate KFKB should not be revoked. Guiding dictum of the commission in issuing licenses is that stations be operated "in the public interest, necessity and convenience."

Three charges had been brought against KFKB. First, that it had deviated from its assigned wave length; second, that Brinkley was broadcasting obscene and indecent matters over the radio; and, finally, that his answers to patients in the Medical Question Box program were contrary to the public interest.

Testifying on behalf of Brinkley at the hearing were a number of his satisfied patients who said they had traveled to Washington at their own expense to defend their benefactor. On the other side of the table, Dr. Hugh H. Young, of Johns Hopkins University and Hospital, expressed his opinion that the practice of prescribing wholesale and by radio was highly dangerous.

"Personally," he said, "I would never be willing to send out prescriptions or to make a diagnosis on any such information as that (contained in the letters from lay listeners) without examination and without a study of the case other than the opinion of a person who knew no medicine himself or herself. I would think that such a practice carried out by broadcasting would be of the greatest possible danger."

The hearing continued for three days with attention centered only upon the last of the three charges—that the Medical Question Box was "not in the public interest." Brinkley's staff was called one by one, and medical and technical authorities gathered by the FRC testified in rebuttal. Significant was the presence of Dr. E. S. Edgerton, Wichita, Kans., president of the Kansas State Medical Society. Later, upon invitation of the Commission,

Dr. Edgerton took the stand, testified against Brinkley. Brinkley was represented by his counsel, refused to testify himself.

At the end of three days, the commission voted three to two not to renew Dr. Brinkley's license to broadcast in the United States. In addition to the testimony of medical experts that the Medical Question Box was dangerous and decidedly not in the public interest, the commission considered also the treaty signed at the International Radiotelegraph Convention of 1927 which prohibited licensees from making point-to-point broadcasts and decided "that is of itself abuse of KFKB's license to broadcast sufficient to warrant refusal to renew that license." For answers to the questions sent in were broadcast directly to the individual questioner and constituted a broadcast message to that writer.

It is ironical that the man who, perhaps, more than any other, foresaw the great potentialities of radio as an advertising medium should now be ignominiously silenced by what the FRC termed his misuse of radio. And because the Brinkley power, of late, had been builded so entirely upon radio, the blow was a devastating one. Immediately, Brinkley filed an appeal from the commission's verdict in the Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia, and posted bond which permitted him to continue his broadcasts from KFKB until the court passed upon his appeal.

But still another blow was on the way. At about the time Brinkley was preparing his case for the FRC hearing on renewal of his license application, Dr. Morris Fishbein, editor of the A.M.A.'s *Journal*, had written a damning article about Brinkley and his activities. Now Brinkley filed suit against Dr. Fishbein, asking \$600,000 damages for libel and defamation of character. He followed the suit with a full-page advertisement in a number of newspapers under the headline of, "I Defy The American Medical Association!" In this advertisement, he asserted that none of his doctors could belong to the A.M.A. because "in our institution we devote our efforts to curing our patients and not to covering up mistakes of malpracticing members of your association." He issued a ringing challenge to the A.M.A. to come out into the open.

Nine days later, the A.M.A. did come out into the open. It filed formal charges with the Kansas State Medical Board, in Topeka, asking the revocation of Brinkley's license in that—the

only—state where he still held a license. Specifically, the A.M.A. charged that he had given false information as to his educational background; that he had pleaded guilty to selling liquor and maintaining a public nuisance; that he had been put under bond to keep the peace after threatening to shoot one Jesse Wilson; that he had been indicted in California; that his compound goat-gland operation cannot be performed in the manner described by him and that it is a fraud and deception upon the public; that the doctor becomes drunk and calls his patients "old fools" for coming to him in the hope that their diseases can be cured; that a number of his patients have died in the hospital after his operation; and that his radio-advertising practices were unethical.

The hearing before the State Medical Board opened on July 15, 1930, after Brinkley's attorneys had vainly gone before the Kansas Supreme Court in an effort to halt this "crucifixion" before a "prejudiced board." Again, testimony, affidavits, bitter recrimination and vitriolic cross-examination. But the dramatic high light of the proceedings was provided by Brinkley. While members of the A.M.A. were stoutly maintaining that the operation could not be performed in the manner in which Dr. Brinkley advertised, Brinkley, through the press and the radio, challenged the board to come to his hospital at Milford and witness such an operation. It was impossible for the board to refuse. On September 15, 1930, before the State Medical Board, a large group of newspapermen and members of the medical faculty of the University of Kansas, Dr. Brinkley performed his compound operation on two patients. One member of the board later told this writer that, while it was very doubtful that the goat-gland operation would prove of the least benefit to the recipient, the operation itself was as skillful and deft a demonstration of surgery as he had ever witnessed. It should have been; Brinkley had performed it thousands of times.

The board went back to Topeka, back into executive session in the Hotel Kansan where the earlier hearings had been held, and revoked the license of John Romulus Brinkley.

For a man of less hardy spirit, these two blows—falling almost simultaneously—would have been sufficient. But whatever

other charges one cares to bring against Brinkley, cowardice is not among them. And where before, only a comparatively few people gave second thought to the activities of Brinkley, now he had become truly a national figure. In Kansas, he was more than that. There, Dr. Brinkley had become a martyr. And Brinkley, with his finger as closely upon the public pulse as ever it had been upon the pulse of a patient, sensed the new possibilities of the situation.

First, in order to keep the funds rolling into his treasury, he placed properly accredited and licensed surgeons in his sanatorium at Milford to carry on his work. And again a new—yet old—pattern was beginning to take form in the fertile brain of the promoter-physician.

Old as mankind is the practice of border raiding; so, if the United States would not permit Brinkley to broadcast to Americans from within her bounds—and he had no illusions about the verdict the District of Columbia appeals court would hand down in the case of KFKB's license—then he would broadcast to Americans from without her bounds.

This was possible because of the strained ether-relations of the United States and Mexico. In early days, each nation had a sovereign right to control its own air waves and broadcasts. Soon, however, neighbor nations learned that unless these rights were abridged by treaty, stations of one nation broadcasting along the same channels as stations of another near-by nation would cause interference and make listening impossible. In 1924, Canada and the United States had agreed by treaty to divide and share certain channels so that interference would be eliminated. Mexico was the third great country of the Western Hemisphere to come into the broadcasting picture—but her entry was late in the twenties, when the best radio channels had been taken already by Canada and the United States. Broadcasting in 1930 was big business, and operators of important stations in Canada and the United States refused to share their valuable channels. So, treaty agreements with Mexico reached a conference-table stage but went no farther.

Moving rapidly while his adversaries were congratulating themselves upon a job well done, Brinkley went down to Mexico City,

signed a twenty-year agreement with the Mexican Government for a permit to build a transmitter at Villa Acuna, just across the Rio Grande from the Texas town of Del Rio. Here he started construction of what was, at that time, the most powerful transmitter in the world—XER. With his 5,000-watt KFKB, Dr. Brinkley was reaching but a small part of the United States. With the 100,000-watt XER, he would be able to blanket the entire United States and Canada.

And with construction well under way, he hurried back to Milford for a daring surprise stroke. He announced himself as candidate for governor of Kansas on an independent ticket. It was already too late to have his name printed upon the ballot, but he conducted a whirlwind campaign, flying from county to county and town to town in his plane. KFKB, still operating until the courts had passed upon his appeal, was also opened wide to Brinkley's political orations, and he used the radio mercilessly in his campaign to educate his followers to write in his name correctly upon the ballot. He sought at the polls vindication "as a man persecuted like Christ and St. Luke." He promised free textbooks, low taxes and a lake for every Kansas county. He spoke to 8,000 cheering followers in a cow pasture at Wichita. At Kansas City, he drew a crowd twice as large as Vice-President Charles Curtis attracted.

As a candidate for the governorship, Brinkley attracted the Methodist vote and that of the Ku Klux Klan by virtue of his large church benefactions at Milford. His role of martyr drew him thousands of other votes, to which radio added countless more thousands. He also received the wide support of the Kansas discontents, who, more than in any other state, have supported the Populists, Carrie Nations and other strange phenomena of the socio-political order. The *New York Times* editorialized:

In Kansas politics forty years ago, the political uprising that threatened went under the name of Populism. It grew from the grass roots and acquired its leadership as it grew larger. The only difference today is that it goes under the name of Brinkleyism and has been cultivated among the grass roots. The conditions causing the people to be dissatisfied are very much the same—high taxes, low

prices for agricultural products and a belief that the party leadership has deteriorated.

Long before election day, old-line Democrats and Republicans began to realize that the goat-gland man they had laughingly considered a babe in the political woods might well become the next governor of Kansas. They hurriedly sent out instructions to the various election boards that, unless the ballot on which Brinkley's name was written in had the name correctly and flawlessly spelled; unless it bore the full and complete designation, "John R. Brinkley" (under which he had registered), the ballots were to be thrown out.

Day after election, conservative Kansans breathed a deep sigh of relief. The official vote showed Harry Woodring, Democrat and later to serve as Secretary of War under Roosevelt, had been elected with a vote of 216,000; Frank Hauke, Republican, was second, with 214,000 votes; and Brinkley was third with 183,000 votes. The most biased old-line party leaders in Kansas today will admit that, if all the ballots intended for Brinkley, but thrown out for technical reasons, had been counted, Brinkley would have been governor of Kansas in 1930. And that with a write-in vote for a name not on the ballot!

In February, 1930, the courts upheld the FRC's action in failing to renew Brinkley's license to broadcast from KFKB, and Brinkley sold the station to the Farmers and Bankers Life Insurance Company, of Wichita, for the sum of \$90,000.

The glories of the Brinkley operation (in which he no longer used goat glands but had substituted a chemical formula in combination with surgery) poured in alike upon the ears of Canadian trappers and tropical banana planters from his transmitter in Mexico, now. Often, too, in these broadcasts, the exiled Milford Messiah dropped hints to worry the Kansas politicians.

My dear, dear friends, my patients, my many supplicants. Your letters—hundreds of them since yesterday—lie here before me, touching testimonials of your pain, your grief, the wretchedness which is visited upon the innocent. I can reply now to a few—just a few. Others I shall answer by mail. But oh, my friends, you must remember that your letters asking my advice in your physical suffer-

ings must be accompanied by two dollars, which barely covers the cost of postage, stenographic hire, office rent and so forth. I am your friend, but not even the greatest Baron of Wall Street—Wall Street, where the untold millions of money are—could withstand the ruinous cost of helping you unless this small fee accompanies your letter.

. . . My dear friends, I wish that I were near to you tonight—in my home in Milford, Kansas—but I am down here speaking from my new radio broadcasting station at Villa Acuna . . . *But I shall be back with you again, my dear, dear friends.* . . .

And in 1932, Dr. Brinkley was back, again a candidate for the office of governor of the state of Kansas. This time, without a radio station at his command, he used a motorcade headed by his sixteen-cylinder Cadillac in which he, his wife and Johnny Boy, his son, rode. A big loud-speaker platform truck, with equipment capable of throwing a speaker's voice a half mile, followed with cowboy singers and entertainers from XER.

Again the Goat-Gland Doctor frightened the pants off old-line politicians, polling 243,038 votes this time, while Alf M. Landon, later to be Republican standard bearer in the Presidential race of 1936, was elected with a vote of 275,100. Unusual fact about this election was that Brinkley had carried more counties than either of his opponents, and he used this fact in protesting that he had been robbed of votes in the heavy population centers.

When Brinkley went back to Villa Acuna, there was no longer even the semblance of an effort to maintain a broadcasting station "in the public interest." Koran's fortune-telling scheme; the sale of stock in a gold mine; oil burner sales announcements; even standard patent medicine advertisements shared time with his new prostate-gland lectures and his old rejuvenation come-ons. XER was following, more and more, the lines of least resistance.

In the wake of Brinkley came a whole raft of radio racketeers—phrenologists and fortunetellers, yogis and mentalists, character readers and false-faced religionists with a single purpose—to milk the gullible of greenbacks. California, particularly, suffered from

the plague of these get-rich-quick quacks until the FRC put its foot firmly down upon such broadcasts. The commission was aided in this by a watchful Post Office Department, averse to having its facilities used for fraudulent purposes. When these programs could no longer find voice over American stations, their sponsors, too, drifted southward to Mexico, which rapidly became the mecca for every type of broadcaster kicked off the American air.

On March 29, 1941, radio stations of the Western Hemisphere underwent what broadcasters termed its "moving day." Of 833 commercial stations in the United States, 755 could no longer be found at their old addresses. In short, the channels over which these stations had been broadcasting—some since 1920—had been changed. Reason for the change was Mexico's final ratification late in 1940 of the Treaty of Havana, drawn up and signed in 1937 by Cuba, Canada and the United States. This meant a wholesale reallocation of wave lengths for American stations; and it was a death blow for those powerful stations which, for a decade, had dotted the southern bank of the Rio Grande and harried American broadcasters by transmitting along the same channels American stations were legally licensed to use. Like other parasites, the border raiders lived upon food already digested by their victims. They could not earn their bread unless they were permitted to broadcast their come-ons into the ether waves over the United States. And like other parasites, they died when that privilege was taken away from them.

In February, 1941, on his own petition to the Federal District Court of San Antonio, Texas, John Romulus Brinkley was adjudged a bankrupt. In the testimony given at his hearing, he admitted that he had operated upon 15,000 patients between 1933 and 1938—not nearly peak years—and received for most of these operations a fee of \$750 each. He listed his liabilities at \$1,625,565; assets at \$221,065, of which much was in personal property—automobiles, a yacht, an outdated cabin plane.

SEEDS OF AMERICAN FASCISM

IF THE STORY OF BRINKLEY HAD ENDED WITH HIS BANISHMENT to Mexico and subsequent oblivion, his niche in broadcasting annals would be a minor one. But while Brinkley had faded from the radio scene, the pattern of broadcasting he formulated in those early years of commercial radio was destined to play an important—almost a vital—part in our national life.

For there were inheritors to take on the Brinkley mantle and, beside them, the Goat-Gland Doctor from Milford seems a piker. Make no mistake, Father Charles E. Coughlin and the late Huey Long were playing a dangerous game and they played for keeps. The Fascist revolt they headed in the early months of 1935 might have been disastrous to the American way of life had not fate, in the form of an assassin's bullet, intervened.

There have been two periods in recent American history when the seeds of Fascism have been scattered widely across the land to fall upon fallow ground. The first of these periods coincides with the last two years of the Hoover Administration when a government unwilling or unable to act watched despair grow up like wild weeds in city streets and across the agricultural countryside alike. Fortunately, the very first essential of a successful Fascist revolt in that period was missing. There was no demagogue of sufficient stature and voice to lead a revolt, and when the Democratic Convention met in Chicago in the heat of the summer and nominated Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt, of New York, for the Presidency, the seeds of Fascism lay barren and fruitless beneath his eloquence and the promise he held out of a New Deal for the forgotten man.

The second period when a Fascist revolt might have flared into

the open in the United States came two years later, when the original impetus and lift of the New Deal had run its course and a period of reaction, called "Recession" by Mr. Roosevelt, had set in. By a wise use of the media of information—radio and press—during the early months of his first term, the President had restored confidence and allied the various factions of the country in a brave struggle upward out of a depression which had clung on tenaciously for four long years. "All that we have to fear," he assured America in his dulcet baritone voice and Groton English, "is fear." America's response is already history. Confident that the New Deal would bring about a more equitable distribution of economic power, Americans voted Mr. Roosevelt more power than any peacetime President had ever had.

Yet, in 1934, the unemployment rolls were growing; the Supreme Court had dealt severe body blows to the President's program by declaring keystone measures of the New Deal unconstitutional; and Big Business—which had feared for its very existence in 1932 and supported the New Deal as its sole means of salvation—had now turned against it in full fury.

By 1934, Big Business had adjusted itself to the depression and was actually making money out of it. In 1934, dividends were 50 per cent above the 1926 level. *But*, pay rolls in 1934 were 40 per cent below the 1926 level. As a result, the middle classes and labor demanded action in relieving a situation which, so far as they were concerned, was almost as dire as in 1932. In this crisis, Mr. Roosevelt faltered.

Just as in 1932, the stage for revolt was set, but this time there was an important difference. Now there was not one demagogue capable of leading such a revolt (and by revolt, I do not necessarily mean a physical revolt) but two. To add to the peril of the situation, the two—Huey Long, now a United States Senator, and Father Coughlin—had joined forces to this end.

The road to Fascism in America was marked by thousands of Huey Long "Share-the-Wealth" clubs, sprung up overnight across the country. So, the road to Fascism in Germany had been marked by the promises of Hitler to right the wrongs done Germany by the Versailles Treaty. The Coughlin panaceas were of the same visionary pattern. A sign of the times—and a red light of

danger—was the fact that either Long or Coughlin, in that period, was being heard regularly in *eight out of every ten homes in the United States with a family income under \$4,000 per year!*

At a banquet given him by *Redbook* magazine in 1935, General Hugh S. Johnson said:

You can laugh at Huey Long— You can snort at Father Coughlin, but this country was never under a greater menace. . . .

Added to the fol-de-rol of Senator Long, there comes burring over the air the dripping brogue of the Irish-Canadian priest . . . musical, blatant bunk from the very rostrum of religion, it goes straight home to simple souls weary in distress. We can neither revere nor respect what appears to be a priest in Holy Orders entering our homes . . . in the name of Jesus Christ, demanding that we ditch the President for Huey Long. . . .

On the Sunday before, Coughlin had definitely allied himself with the Long movement, saying that the Long program offered more for the "plain folk" of America than that of the President.

Between the team of Huey Long and the priest [Johnson continued], we have the whole bag of crazy and crafty tricks . . . possessed by Peter, the Hermit, Napoleon Bonaparte, Sitting Bull, William Hohenzollern, Hitler, Lenin . . . boiled down to two with the radio and the newsreel to make them effective. If you don't think Long and Coughlin are dangerous, you don't know the temper of the country in this distress!

Far from accomplishing its purpose of spiking the Coughlin-Long guns by pointing out their Fascist dangers, the Johnson damnation served only to focus the national spotlight more strongly upon the demagogic pair. They were important national figures before, but Johnson's broadcast served as a formal induction into that status.

Next day, Long answered on the floor of the Senate Chamber. The galleries were jam-packed, as they always were when Long was expected to speak. He struck at Johnson through Baruch, Johnson's boss during World War days, calling Johnson a man of "voluble loyalties."

But his real attack was leveled at the Roosevelt Administration, and it was made that night over a coast-to-coast network placed at his disposal by two of the large networks. Broadcasting executives recognized showmanship when they saw it, and this three-cornered battle between the country's outstanding masters of invective out-shaded any studio spectacle they might concoct. Even before the Johnson attack, Senator Long had been averaging three nationwide broadcasts every two weeks on facilities furnished him without charge, while most members of the Senate would have been grateful for one hour per year free.

"So it has been," he told the estimated more than twenty million pairs of ears tuned to his voice, "that while millions have starved and gone naked; so it has been that while babies have cried and died for lack of milk . . . the Roosevelt Administration has sailed merrily along plowing under and destroying the things to eat and wear. . . ."

It had been conceded that Long would be a candidate for the Democratic nomination for the Presidency in 1936. Now he gave a clue to the rabble-rousing type of campaign he would wage.

He called upon the people to wage a class war; to seize the great fortunes and divide them among the populace. "Let's make the fight! Let's make the politician keep his promise or else vote into office somebody who will keep the promise that in this land of abundance, none shall have too much and none shall have too little!"

At the time that General Johnson was blasting away, Father Coughlin, ill of a cold in Royal Oak, was sleeping comfortably. But the next day, rising from his sickbed and without waiting for his regular Sunday broadcast, the priest made his answer, too. He disposed of Johnson with a few scathing phrases.

". . . A cracked gramophone record squawking out messages of its master's voice. . . . The first great casualty of the New Deal experiment."

But, like Long, he leveled the big guns of his attack on Bernard Baruch.

"Bernard Manasseh Baruch," he said, "is another Manasseh like the prince of that name who sawed the body of the Prophet Isaiah in twain." He made much of the fact that Baruch had managed

to keep his middle name a deep secret from the public until now. As a matter of record, Baruch's middle name is Mannes. Facts have never bothered Father Coughlin. Then he ended his broadcast with the first indication of racial prejudice ever to creep into a Coughlin broadcast. "I shall fight to my dying day to hand America back to Americans!"

The dangers inherent in our free system of broadcasting are simply the dangers inherent in the principle of free speech—but multiplied many times by the immeasurable reach of radio. Nor have these dangers been better exemplified than in the hydra-headed assault upon freedom and democratic principles by the Coughlin-Long combine. Both Coughlin and Long were products of radio, Coughlin solely so and Long to a large extent. Without radio, it is unlikely that Coughlin's voice would ever have been heard and heeded beyond the confines of his minor parish. Huey Long was different. He possessed natural qualities of leadership and a bluff, earthy manner of stump speaking few figures in public life have been able to equal. A Louisiana political leader, close to Long's bitter enemy, Lieutenant Governor Dr. Paul N. Cyr, once told the writer and other newsmen and magazine writers:

"Huey Long is the best political radio speaker in America, better even than President Roosevelt. Give him time on the air and a week to campaign in each state, and he'll sweep the country. He is the most persuasive man living."

Long, himself, gave radio full credit for its part in his successes. "The blankety-blank newspapers," he growled to me once during an interview, "used to have things their own way once. But no more. Radio's changed that." And in 1926, before he had learned this lesson, he went down to a one-sided defeat in his race for the governorship because the press opposed him. In 1928, with radio to carry his silver-lined campaign pledges into every home, he won in a walk; and one of his first acts as governor of Louisiana was to instruct the legislature to pass a 2 per cent tax on newspaper advertising by way of punishment.

Americans complacently feel that Fascism is something that can grow only in foreign soil . . . or in Louisiana, where Long frequently asserted (with excellent reason) that "I am the consti-

tution here!" In 1933, few realized how serious a situation was developing at breakneck speed, and today, there is even less understanding of how perilously close we walked at that time to the peoples of Germany and Italy in our choice. Raymond Gram Swing, a most conservative observer, writing in the *Nation*, in the summer of 1935, had this to say:

A few months ago, Huey Long was a myth to most Americans, but by Spring he was one of the most-mentioned men in the country. This has been distinctly "his" year. Everything broke for him. It saw the inexplicable collapse of the New Deal, the mysterious failure in leadership at the White House, the breakdown of the huge Democratic majority in the Senate. Had Roosevelt maintained the pace of his first two years, Huey Long would have remained clamoring on the outside for entrance to the national stage. But when Huey pushed against the Roosevelt defenses, they yielded. The Senate became his personal arena. He had mastered its tricks, and he could fight with every conceivable parliamentary device. . . . The Senate majority began going to pieces; it was Long who contrived many of the intrigues which shattered it. Suddenly, without premonition, the man was a power. He could stretch out his elbows, fill his lungs; no one silenced him or could silence him. He was leader of the opposition to the President in the upper house.

Concurrently, he received invitations to broadcast over the nation's hook-ups. . . . He was news, he was entitled to the air. And at the microphone, he began acquainting the whole nation with his curiously effective radio presence. . . .

By the summer of 1935, Long had developed into a man to watch. His "Share-the-Wealth" clubs, organized with the avowed intention of "making every man a king" and giving each citizen a minimum income of \$5,000 a year, had sprung up in more than 8,000 cities, towns and villages with club memberships ranging from three to 2,000 members for a total membership of close to 20,000,000. Add to these the 16,000,000 followers of Father Coughlin, thrown into the Long camp the March before, and you understand that what happened in Louisiana might well have been but a dress rehearsal of things to come for the nation.

The Coughlin-Long movement, brought definitely out into the open by the Johnson radio attack, gained momentum throughout the summer of 1935 with the Thunderer of Royal Oak (also known to those in his home parish of Royal Oak, Michigan, as the "Mad Monk of the Shrine of the Silver Dollar") pounding away at growing radio audiences. His position was further fortified by the establishment of his ironically named *Social Justice* magazine. Long spent the summer touring the country and building more and better political fences through personal appearances. He spoke, during that summer, four times over large radio hookups and more than thirty times over local stations in various cities. Then, late in August, he returned to Baton Rouge—his own little Berchtesgaden, surrounded on three sides by Democracy and, on the fourth, appropriately, by the turbulent Mexican Gulf.

On September 8, I interviewed Long as he lay, in blue pajamas, on a downy bed in a luxurious suite of a Baton Rouge hotel. He assured me that "the President was a back number" and that the next election would find a new horseman in the saddle. I spent more than an hour with him while bodyguards lurked outside the door, and, during moments of silence, peeked in suspiciously despite the fact that they had searched me carefully before permitting me to enter. Two members of the state legislature also came to the room during that hour, received instructions, nodded and departed.

Two days later, I was walking within two blocks of the capitol when a noise as of a car backfiring split the quiet. Suddenly everyone started running and the whisper, "The Kingfish has been killed!" spread like wildfire through the streets. I rushed to the capitol, tall tower by the Mississippi which will always seem to me a personal monument to Huey Long; and from its terrace, now jammed with people, I could see the shanty-boats, with their penniless occupants, moored almost within stone's throw of its entrance. Later, I talked with some of them, and they were like mourners for a departed God or, more important, like men who have lost a new-found world.

By the time I had elbowed my way through the throng, Long had been removed, but the body of his hapless assassin—Dr.

Carl A. Weiss—lay in the corridor still, covered with a piece of tarpaulin. State troopers moved busily about, and the bloodstains, still unwashed, marked the spot where Huey had fallen. And as I stood there staring at this spot, I had the awesome, unshakable feeling that the hand of God had been in that corridor this day; that I had missed by minutes the terrible and violent death which had come for a man who, but for the hand of the assassin . . . or God . . . might have become the first dictator of America. . . .

Huey Long made his entrance into the realm of politics as a lad of fourteen, in 1907, at the time he was running the *Southern Sentinel*, a weekly newspaper in Winnfield, Louisiana. For the sum of five dollars on the line, he undertook to manage the campaign of a fellow townsman for the job of tick inspector for the parish. One of the speeches Huey wrote for his candidate is still considered the last word in that sort of thing down in those parts, and many feel that he never succeeded in improving upon it in later years. The last paragraph contained this pledge:

"If I'm elected, I will inspect every last cow, male and female, for ticks. Them that's got 'em will git rid of 'em, and them that ain't got none won't get none!"

Long became a brilliant political speaker, and radio multiplied his powers a thousandfold. In 1926, without radio, he ran a poor race for the governorship; but by 1928, he had studied and mastered radio as a political weapon. He would start his talks with an effective, audience-building entree.

Hello, folks, this is Huey Long speaking. And I have some important things to tell you. Before I begin, I want you to do me a favor. I'm going to talk along four or five minutes just to keep things going. While I'm doing it, I want you to go to the telephone and call up five of your friends and tell them Huey Long is on the air.

Later, he used the same technique in his national broadcasts, and because radio audiences had come to look for the unexpected and the bizarre in any Long broadcast after his election to the Senate, the device was even more important in the national arena

than in Louisiana. Radio listeners recognized in him a remarkable broadcaster. His style was simple, direct and his language was the vernacular of the uneducated man. He quoted Scripture as no northern political orator has quoted it for a generation. Religious listeners were impressed and Huey Long pleased the plain people more than any other who came bearing, if not gifts, then the gilded promise of gifts.

Those in the North who were not lured by his promises were misled into dismissing him as a clown. They had no true understanding of his talents and of his almost unbeatable mass appeal. Politicians of Arkansas, however, were under no such misapprehension. When Mrs. Hattie Caraway entered the primary to succeed her late husband in the United States Senate, she was generally expected to run last among the five candidates. Huey took his sound-van into Arkansas on Mrs. Caraway's behalf, spent six days covering a small part of the state and made two radio appeals. Mrs. Caraway won by a majority over the combined opposition—and an analysis of the vote showed that the districts where Huey appeared or talked by radio gave her a landslide; other districts practically ignored her.

Father Coughlin was, dependent upon your viewpoint, more or less fortunate than the ill-fated Huey. Where Huey met both his political and physical end in one sudden volley from a hidden revolver, Father Coughlin has died, politically, twice since then.

The first occasion was the defeat of his substitute-for-Long candidate in the 1936 Presidential election. Committed to an against-Roosevelt movement, the priest plopped for Farm-Laborite William Lemke so hard and in such positive tones that the outcome of the election and the burial of the said Mr. Lemke, Coughlin label and all, under the avalanche of Roosevelt votes, marked the Royal Oak prophet for oblivion. Coughlin was effective as a collaborator of the Kingfish; he wasn't big enough to stand on his own two feet. Huey was a doer; Coughlin was simply a talker. And Lemke wasn't either.

The second occasion when Coughlin became one with those for whom the bell tolls was the National Association of Broadcasters convention, three years later, in Atlantic City.

The convention, in an effort to stave off Federal censorship of radio by instituting self-regulatory measures, adopted a code, one clause of which prohibited members from broadcasting over their radio stations political and economic talks by speakers wearing an ecclesiastical false face. In short, no longer could Father Coughlin come into American homes through the facilities of the leading broadcasting stations of the land "in the name of Jesus Christ and wearing what appeared to be Holy Orders" to disseminate his philosophy of hate and intolerance, plagiarized in so many instances from the utterances of the Nazi propaganda minister, Paul Goebbels. The result was a greatly curtailed Coughlin network—in fact a network so negligible in its effectiveness that the priest was forced to an antic more ridiculous than any ever dreamed up by Huey in his heyday.

Prominently posted on the wall of the waiting room at WJR, Detroit's "Good Will" station, is a beautifully framed code of ethics which reads, in part, as follows:

. . . We recognize that the radio audience includes persons of all ages and all types of political, social and religious belief. Therefore, we will endeavor to prevent the broadcasting of any matter which would commonly be regarded as offensive . . . and exert every effort that no dishonest, fraudulent or dangerous person may gain access to the radio public. . . .

Father Coughlin's Sunday talks originated from WJR and there, on February 4, 1940, originated as weird a piece of radio broadcasting as ever went out over the air waves (not excepting Orson Welles's "Mars" episode, which was a purely unintentional pandemonium raiser). That night, as Coughlin followers were gathered about their radios in anticipation of the weekly talk, Franklin Mitchell, Coughlin announcer, exhorted them to "call all your friends by telephone and tell them to listen to this program!" A musical interlude followed. Then the announcer stepped back to the microphone.

And now for the first significant announcement: I am instructed to say, "Father Coughlin will not address you today. No person will ad-

dress you today over this microphone. I am not authorized to give any explanation."

More music followed and then this announcement:

I am instructed to say, "Pay no heed to idle rumors which will be circulated this week. Be assured Father Coughlin knows what he is doing. He knows why neither he nor any other person is speaking over this microphone today. Probably events transpiring this week will enlighten you."

But no events transpiring that week—or since—have cast light upon the intriguing and mysterious performance. When the week had passed, Father Coughlin returned to the microphone to give an innocuous talk on the annual report of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. He made no mention of the mysterious proceedings of the week before. The next Sunday, he spoke on the meaning of Lent. Still no mention. The only event transpiring which might have had a bearing upon the case was the announcement of the United States Department of Justice that it planned to investigate the Coughlin activities. Rumors flew back and forth, the most persistent being that he had planned a violent attack upon the Justice Department and had been muzzled. Other rumors were that the Catholic Church had so censored his talk that he had refused to give it, as well as that the network had refused to permit the talk he planned to make that night.

All of these reports are false. Investigating them I went to Detroit for a talk with the priest. I called first at WJR, where I talked with Assistant General Manager Owen F. Uridge in the absence of General Manager Leo Fitzpatrick.

I learned from Mr. Uridge that Father Coughlin had submitted his script two days before the broadcast—as was his custom—and that Mr. Fitzpatrick's secretary had read and approved it. Later, on Sunday morning, Father Coughlin had called for the return of the script. "The announcements made on that program," Mr. Uridge said, "were handed direct to the announcer by Father Coughlin." Thus, Mr. Uridge's statements finally set aside any possibility that Father Coughlin's planned talk had been censored off the air either by WJR or the network carrying it. They

also show that Father Coughlin was in Detroit on February 4 a few hours before the broadcast.

No one at the station would comment on the canceled talk beyond indicating that there was nothing of a harmful or argumentative nature in it. So, I crossed the street to visit with a Mr. Gibson of Aircasters, Inc., the agency which handles the Coughlin broadcasts.

"You understand," Mr. Gibson made it perfectly clear, "that we have nothing to do with Father Coughlin. We just handle his account like we do any others." But I finally managed to persuade Gibson to call Miss Rhodes, Father Coughlin's secretary, to arrange an appointment for me with the priest.

I went to the Shrine of the Little Flower, fifteen miles out in Royal Oak. Under the tower of the shrine—and after considerable searching—I found the offices of the Social Justice Publishing Company. Father Coughlin has often asserted, in defending himself against use of his clerical position in politics, that the publishing company has no connection with the shrine. There were no signs directing pilgrims to these basement offices. As a matter of fact, pilgrims would probably have had as difficult a time finding them as I had. The outer office is a heavily barred, fortress-like room, and a girl, busy sealing hundreds of newly mimeographed letters, paused long enough to ask me what I wanted. I explained that I had an appointment with Miss Rhodes and wanted to see Father Coughlin. The girl talked into the phone, finally said: "She says to tell you that Father Coughlin is out of the city." So I walked over to the little house which, unlike the *Social Justice* offices, is clearly and unmistakably marked, "Souvenirs." Inside on a table were things to sell—countless little anti-Semitic pamphlets under labels like, "Am I an Anti-Semite?" by Father Coughlin; "The Real Rulers in Russia," and latest copies of *Social Justice* magazine bearing a large picture of Abraham Lincoln and a paragraph from John Reeves's biography of the Rothschilds, horribly misquoted and twisted in the *Social Justice* version to prove that the Jewish Rothschilds had caused the Civil War.

The old, white-haired keeper of the souvenir shop didn't know where Father Coughlin was, didn't know anything about his

business. Finally, his curiosity bursting all bounds, he asked me "Who you representing?" I told him. "I don't know nothing," he repeated doggedly. I'll say this for Father Coughlin's employees; they're discreet. Perhaps they have to be discreet to stay on at the shrine.

I called at the Chancellery, and to church officials there, explained what I was seeking and gave a detailed recital of the morning's occurrences. "You'll understand, then," they smiled, "why the Chancellery issues no statements about Father Coughlin." I asked whether the Church had censored any parts of the Coughlin talk which didn't come off. Very pointedly they admitted that a Church board of review does pass on the Coughlin talks, BUT only for matters which concern the Church.

Two of the three possible sources of censorship had now been eliminated beyond the shadow of a doubt. Only one other body could possibly have interfered with the broadcast, the Federal Communications Commission.

In reply to a telegram George B. Coleman, assistant counsel for the commission, replied, "I have no hesitancy in speaking for the Commission when I say that no Federal intervention has occurred."

That left only one other possibility—Father Coughlin, himself. Father Coughlin, by his every word and act, admits ambition. Once his ambition was to be known as the maker—and intimate friend—of Presidents. In 1932, no louder voice was raised on behalf of Roosevelt than that of Coughlin. His talks following the election were filled with "what I said to the President and what the President said to me." He fancied himself a Richelieu or a Savonarola. Then something happened. The same voice that shouted, "Roosevelt or Ruin!" was now shouting "Scab President!" and referring to the President as "that great betrayer and liar, Franklin Doublecross Roosevelt."

In the Roosevelt breach, differences over monetary policy were a primary cause of difficulty. Father Coughlin took to the air.

"The restoration of silver to its proper value is a Christian concern," Father Coughlin thundered. "I send you a call for the mobilization of all Christianity against the God of Gold." This exhortation was followed by the government's amazing revelation

that Father Coughlin was the holder, through his secretary, of more silver than any other person in Michigan—five hundred thousand ounces. It was at this period, too, that he was urging the expulsion of the “moneylenders from the temple” and condemning Wall Street. It was then revealed that the priest was playing the stock market and his defense—that he was simply investing money—was identical with the defense of those he condemned.

Father Coughlin’s ambition to be a maker of Presidents was undimmed by his first sad experience, and the next time he tried, it was by climbing on the already ascending band wagon of Huey Long, only to have the wagon shot out from under him by Long’s death. Still unsatiated, he decided to climb on no more band wagons, but to make his own choice of a man to rule the nation. In 1936, he chose his own candidate, William Lemke, who was so unmistakably labeled with the Coughlin trade-mark that there could be no renunciation in case of a victory. In the bitter heat of the campaign, Father Coughlin made a promise. “If I cannot swing 9,000,000 votes to Mr. Lemke, I’ll stop broadcasting educational talks on economics and politics.” Mr. Lemke polled exactly 891,858 votes and Father Coughlin, cornered for the moment, made his farewell broadcast:

“I am withdrawing from all radio activity in the best interests of all the people. I am doing this without offering one word of alibi, thus proving that my word is better than my bond.”

Those who had followed Father Coughlin’s broadcasts closely could not fail to discern in them the seeds of a perfect Fascist demagogue, even to the racial intolerance. And when he returned to the air a few months later, it was no longer in the role of a king-maker, but as an advocate of a new era for America.

The Father Coughlin who returned to the microphone in 1937 made no bones about his love for Fascism and Nazism, nor did he attempt to conceal his contempt for democracy. On November 6, 1937, he contemptuously denounced the “magic of numbers.” Speaking of the French Revolution, he said, “A new king was set upon the throne of Notre Dame in Paris—the king symbolizing the magic of numbers; the king which said, ‘Mankind is king and the majority shall prevail.’ ” This magic of numbers—we call

it democracy—he blamed for having kept religion out of government, disdaining to recognize that freedom of worship and the separation of church and state is a cardinal American principle. In the same vein, his *Social Justice* magazine declaimed, "Democracy! A mockery that mouths the word and obstructs every effort on the part of an honest people to establish a government for the welfare of the people."

Nor did Coughlin long leave his listeners in doubt as to what he proposed as an alternative to our present form of government. Flatly he came out with a proposal that we scrap our Congress, abolish our representative form of government and set up in its place a Fascist creation he labeled the "Corporate State." His talk of March 13, 1938, dealt exclusively with this "Corporate State," expounded fourteen points as its essentials. The fourteen points were but condensations of the twenty-five point Nazi program outlined by Dr. Frederic I. Schuman in "The Nazi Dictatorship."

Following his solemn promise to forsake broadcasting, the priest's militant return to the air marked more than an attack upon the American Government; it marked the employment by the priest of every Nazi technique in effecting his purposes. At his enemies, he shouted "Jew" and "Communist!" He revived the long-discredited "Protocols of Zion," papers purporting to show a Jewish conspiracy for world domination which, time after time, have been proved forged. Later, under pressure, he admitted that the papers might not be authentic, but they were factual. In the face of all this, Father Coughlin's paper, *Social Justice*, carried this amazing statement: "The only source of truth is Father Coughlin!" That is a position even the Pope doesn't take in the Roman Catholic Church.

If the rise to powerful and influential stature of men like Long and Coughlin is an argument against free broadcasting, then the reaction of the American public to the Royal Oak priest—now entirely stripped of pretense and baring his true colors for all to see—is an argument on behalf of free broadcasting. Where once Father Coughlin had boasted sixteen million followers, his listening audience had dwindled to less than two million. Other events now moved with a tragic swiftness for the Richelieu of 1932. Seventeen Christian Fronters, arrested in New York City on con-

spiracy charges, were linked to the priest. Coughlin at first denied any connection with them, later recanted and espoused their cause.

And then, on February 4, came the mysterious broadcast in which he left—intentionally—the impression that he was being censored; that sinister forces were putting the muzzle on his talks. Why?

The one conclusion which is logical and inevitable is that the mystery and melodrama which shrouded the Coughlin broadcast of that day was the pitiful, planned and deliberate attempt on the part of a frustrated and ambitious man to regain by trickery the audience he had lost by his lust for power, an audience which is as essential to the egocentric appetite of the man as the bread he eats.

If there is any other reason, only God and Father Coughlin know it. And Father Coughlin isn't talking.

THERE WERE GIANTS—

IN THE FORTRESS OF THE LORD WHICH IS ZION (AND WHICH lies in northern Illinois, halfway between the Sodom of Chicago and the Gomorrah of Milwaukee) there is revolt. You can read it in the eyes of old-timers as they walk dazedly along the streets, eyeing youths with cigarettes between their lips or the new drugstore where love-story magazines, chewing gum and other corrupting influences are openly displayed. But mostly you can see it in the laughing eyes of the younger generation—girls with bobbed hair and silk-stockinged legs showing brazenly beneath short skirts; boys who openly sip Coca-Colas at public fountains. There is no longer a fear of damnation and sudden death. And no longer do signs on the streets of the Lord's stronghold warn: "Traitors, Buttinskies, Unbelievers: The fires of hell burn everlastingly!"

Something has happened in Zion. I sensed it as I walked down its sleepy little streets—Bethlehem and Bethesda and Lebanon. Revolt had come from the air into which Zionists raised their imploring hands; revolt was borne on the ether waves by radio, an instrument which Zion's founder probably would have banished along with the theater and the drugstore and the physician, if such banishment were possible. Revolution is born of knowledge, and to Zion the radio had brought knowledge. It is a fascinating story. It is, too, the story of an early broadcasting giant who built one of the nation's most powerful broadcasting stations—to preach that the world was flat!

In 1900, John Alexander Dowie, sainted founder of the Church of Zion, officially the Christian Catholic Church, led his faithful followers to a 6,500 acre tract fifty miles north of Chicago. A stranger band of pioneers I defy you to find anywhere. They were

cripples and invalids of every description who, under the prayers of Dowie, had thrown away their crutches and laughed at the medical men.

These were the builders of Zion, men and women grateful to the Lord for the cures He had effected; and they reared a great tabernacle which they called Shiloh, in His name. Dowie had dreamed of "one city, one faith, one people, one industry." Zion was the city, faith healing was the faith, cured cripples were the people. There was not one industry, but many which the Church sponsored and nurtured and controlled—a bakery, a candy factory, a printing plant, a lace factory, a department store—all known as the Zion Industries, Inc. And because faith in Him was the greatest healer, no doctors or druggists were allowed to practice in the city limits.

As General Overseer of the Lord's work in Zion, Dowie's powers were complete and dictatorial. But he kept his iron fist well concealed beneath a glove of geniality and warmth that held his followers. His successor, and current General Overseer, Wilbur Glenn Voliva, is less fortunate in his personality.

To those who disagreed with him, he thundered the threat of a burning hell-fire from the pulpit, not hesitating to use names in his denunciations. The verbal strong arm was all right. But when dissenters insisted upon dissenting despite anything Voliva said, he resorted to the physical strong arm. His police force administered—by night, mostly, and sometimes by the light of day when there was a legal leg to stand upon—brutal beatings to those who dared to disagree.

There is probably no more eloquent statement of city policy anywhere than is contained on a signboard he caused to be erected near the depot:

"Zion is under the control of Wilbur Glenn Voliva. Outside factories not allowed here and no other families wanted."

It was in 1923 that the General Overseer, finding seditious ideas being circulated about Zion and suspecting the radio inasmuch as outside newspapers were not allowed, decided to fight fire with fire. By 1924, WBCD—erected at a cost of \$140,000 and one of the most widely heard stations in the country—was completed by the Church of Zion. Programs were strictly of a re-

ligious nature: sermons, Bible studies, sacred music and the wizard's persistent predictions that the world would come to an end on such and such a date, as well as his persistent maintenance that the earth was flat. Once he took a trip around the world to prove his theory; never once saw evidence of curvature.

The Overseer warned parents against the devastating effect of listening to programs other than those of WBCD: warned them to keep a close watch upon the type of program their children tuned in. Hot music, drama, comedy were taboo on Zion loud-speakers. "Don't listen to the devil," Voliva warned.

The first physical sign of a widespread revolt in Zion was a direct result of radio broadcasting of Sunday baseball games. It came in the fight of the youth of Zion, backed by an adult sympathy also evoked by radio, for the privilege of playing baseball, and a test case, carried to the state Supreme Court, resulted in a declaration that the city ordinance banning baseball was unconstitutional.

Early on the morning of April 2, 1937, Zion was awakened by the shrill screeching of the fire siren. Shiloh Tabernacle, where the radio station was housed, was ablaze. Three hours later, the building was razed. Later a young man confessed to the crime of sprinkling kerosene and starting the fire. His was a grievance, he said, against Voliva for mistreatment of his family. Later still, the youth recanted, was tried and acquitted.

Now, the Zion station was no longer on the air. Zionists learned what was happening "outside." They call Chicago and Milwaukee "outside." Events followed rapidly, one upon the heels of the other. Voliva's policemen arrested a youth for smoking, and the state Supreme Court set him free. Ladies bobbed hair, donned silk stockings. Ball games were played openly as Voliva sulked in his twenty-three room apartment in the Zion home and watched his flock slip away from him by hundred lots. Three physicians ventured to move into the faith-healing stronghold without suffering physical violence; a drugstore followed.

Then, as a climactic finale to the whole amazing revolt, three boys who had once been condemned from the pulpit by Voliva as shining examples of scarlet sin gained control of the city government in the 1939 election. Mayor Richard Hire had sinned

only in withdrawing from the Church of Zion. But Chief of Police Alvin Ruesch and his brother, Martin, now supervisor of police, had both been badly beaten and tossed in jail for . . . smoking.

The revolt has touched in strange places. The church, itself, has not been unaffected. Today, the only place in Zion where you can see popular motion pictures is in the Church of Zion. And in Shiloh Park, church teams play a regular schedule of softball, and you may witness the strange spectacle of girl players wearing abbreviated shorts manufactured in the lace factory the sainted Dowie built at Zion.

Voliva was not a peculiar figure in broadcasting's early days. Noncommercial broadcasting appealed almost solely to men with a hobby, a hate or a personal viewpoint to foist down the ears of listeners who felt that the very miracle of words, transmitted through the air, was sufficient reason for staying up all hours of the night to listen. Who doesn't remember the "Listen, World," with which Colonel Henderson, from Shreveport, egotistically ushered in his profane attacks upon the chain stores? Dr. Brinkley's Medical Question Box was always a good, spicy half hour's listening. In fact, some vivid personality invariably identified almost every pioneer station for the growing army of listeners of the mid-twenties. George Hay, the Solemn Ol' Judge, was the reason folk tuned in WSM, in Nashville. Out in Chicago, an announcer, Jerry Sullivan, was slaying listeners with his peculiar pronunciation of "Chicago," which was something between a sneer and a sneeze. Lincoln, Nebraska, had "Gloomy Gus"; "The Little Colonel" was carrying on from Atlanta.

The early days also boasted a ghost that talked. This was out in Los Angeles where a crank station operator played records over the air until they grew monotonous. Then he would imitate Garbo and John Gilbert. Sometimes, he would broadcast his phone number, invite calls; when people would comply he'd insult them over the phone. A favorite Hollywood party sport was calling the number and parrying answers with the quick wit of the chap. People knew where his studio was located but he always kept the doors locked. No law—except that of economics—barred him from broadcasting. But that law finally got him down and de-

prived movie celebrities of a broadcaster who was an early favorite.

One of the startling—in his literal rise and fall—radio performers to hold a mike was The Great DeWese, hired by a Chicago station to leap from a soaring plane with a portable transmitter and, descending to earth via parachute, describe his sensations for the listening audience. DeWese was a barnstorming stunt man with little knowledge of broadcasting, but he faithfully promised to talk into the mike on his way down. With this sacred promise, the broadcasters felt free to publicize the stunt—and hardly a prospective listener in the great Midwest failed to tune in for the sensational broadcast.

Because DeWese was using a portable transmitter—really a miniature broadcasting station—a license to operate it had been obtained, and the broadcaster had impressed upon the stunt man the necessity for beginning his broadcast with a station identification, which happened to be some complicated experimental combination of letters and figures, like W2XF. To be even more certain that DeWese didn't forget the identification, he called the stunt man's attention to the penalties prescribed by law for such failure.

As the plane took off and soared high in the heavens, an announcer described each move to an interested audience, subtly built suspense. Then, DeWese—a tiny speck against the deep blue of the heavens—was hurtling downward. Like a puff of dust, the 'chute opened, checked the swift descent into a lazy white bubble floating against the blue. The announcer said, "He's coming. Now we'll hear from the Great DeWese—first man ever to broadcast from a parachute!"

But there was no word from DeWese, no slightest sound. Slowly the parachute drifted down, settling at last to earth. The announcer apologized to the audience, explained that technical difficulties had interfered. Then, fit to be tied, he rushed over to where the barnstormer was untangling himself from the mesh of ropes.

"What happened?"

DeWese calmly extricated himself and stood up.

"I forgot them letters you told me to say," answered the Great

DeWese. "And I ain't going to do no jail stretch for a lousy fifty bucks."

DeWese for all his sad record as a broadcaster, inaugurated the stunt broadcasting that was to become such a fad in the twenties, a fad from which grew the man-on-the-street broadcasts, the stratosphere balloon programs, eventually the world news roundups.

It is not odd, however, that the giants who really dominated the early world of broadcasting should be, largely, the announcers. In the first place, the announcers were the only performers about the studios who were paid for their services and made a full-time job of broadcasting. In the second place, the early announcers of radio were a versatile lot, hired not only to announce but to entertain audibly in some other fashion—as singers, pianists, patter artists.

Dean of American announcers is Milton Cross, perhaps the best announcer radio has yet developed. Today, Cross handles some of the biggest NBC shows, and his name on a new program is the hallmark of that program's worth.

"Wake up, America! Time to stump the experts. . . ." You've heard him say that week after week. You've also heard him say, "This is Milton Cross speaking to you from Box 44 at the Metropolitan Opera House."

It is on musical broadcasts that Cross is really at his best. His voice takes on a tinge of reverence, almost of awe, as he solemnly introduces the Saturday opera broadcasts. One feels that each moment he spends in Box 44 on the rim of the Golden Horseshoe is one of complete satisfaction; his pride in the opera and the artists is almost paternal.

Cross has a right to feel paternal. He's the second oldest broadcaster in the business. A native New Yorker, he was studying at the Institute of Musical Art to become a school music supervisor at the same time he developed a fine tenor voice when a friend persuaded him to try out for a singing job with WJZ—then a cubby-hole in the Westinghouse plant near Newark.

Radio was a self-deprecatory infant in those days and the manager of the station was so delighted to have a real musician show an interest in broadcasting that he hired Cross on the spot. He did song recitals for several months and when the station felt

that it had grown sufficiently to support two announcers, he became the second one. Announcing was soon his paramount work, and he was one of the first to recognize what a fine career could be made of it. By 1929, his smooth diction and the vast background of technical knowledge which entered into each minute introduction or announcement he made caused the American Academy of Arts and Letters to award him its gold medal as radio's finest announcer.

Big—he is over six feet tall—and husky, his gold-rimmed glasses encircle a pair of kindly, laughing eyes. He conducts one of the best children's programs on the air—"Cross Country on a Bus"—but talking about music over the microphone is his greatest pleasure. He still sings for his own enjoyment, accompanied by his wife, who used to be organist at a large New York church.

Unlike most present-day announcers, he prepares his own musical scripts through long hours of research in the library and through close acquaintanceship with many of the greatest names in music. Among those announcers he "broke in" to the business—and they are almost endless, for NBC always points the finger at Cross in explaining what it seeks from newly hired announcers—was Ted Husing, another giant of radio's antediluvian age.

Ted—his real name is Edward B.—Husing is also a native New Yorker, born over a saloon in the Bronx. The son of a migratory club steward who traveled about New York State, Ted's earlier years may largely account for his wanderlust. Later, Husing, *père*, settled down in New York City long enough for his son to get kicked out of both Stuyvesant and Commerce high schools, then to go on a freight-train barnstorming trip that took him into the wheat-harvesting circles of Kansas, Nebraska and Illinois and, when the United States declared war on Germany, into the United States Army where he was assigned to intelligence work.

After the war, the youth—he had gotten into the army with a phony name, Hastings, and a phony birth certificate which upped his age two years—tried his hand at real estate, eventually answered an advertisement for a radio announcer in the *New York Times*, again using a phony college degree to qualify, a degree then being one of the essentials of such a task. The blind ad led to WJZ

and a job. Incidentally, Husing was probably one of the first announcers hired to just announce. He couldn't sing, and he boasted no other entertaining qualities than the gift of talk.

At WJZ, he joined an announcing staff which included Milton Cross, Norman Brokenshire and John B. Daniel. Brokenshire was a great favorite on commercial programs. From the stiff introductions which marked announcers' work in those days, he had evolved something new—the intimate conversational type of introduction and sales talk, and listeners loved it. John B. Daniel, a really brilliant announcer, was well educated, polished, with a wide range of ready knowledge. He drew the most difficult assignments at WJZ, handled them all, excepting sports, in his stride. A career which might have been comparable to that of Cross came to a tragic conclusion in 1927 when Daniel died of appendicitis.

But the biggest thing in early broadcasting happened to be sports. Major Andrew White, giving listeners a blow-by-blow description of the Dempsey-Carpentier brawl from Boyle's Thirty Acres differs but little from a modern Clem McCarthy describing the Louis-Nova battle. Sports-casting had no crawling or creeping stages. It jumped down from the obstetrical table, kicked its heels in the air and started out to do a job. Sports broadcasting was a chore to which broadcasting was ideally adapted.

It is not strange, then, that the early announcers who won the widest popularity were those who specialized in sports. Sports gave the young Husing his big break. On Thanksgiving Day, 1924, Husing attended a game, as Major White's assistant, which meant telling the Major what he, Husing, happened to see that the Major missed. The experience made up Husing's mind. And although it took him five years to make the grade—until he joined the newly organized Columbia Broadcasting System in 1929—if it is largely as a sports announcer that Ted Husing is known by the public. Meanwhile, at WJZ he handled some of NBC's biggest broadcasts, the President's speeches, the World Court debate, in addition to commercial assignments.

During the interval when Husing was getting his broadcasting feet, another announcer, with sports-casting as his springboard, had leaped from the obscurity of an unknown concert singer to

national fame. Graham MacNamee is still a favorite with listeners and with the newsreel for which he does commentaries.

MacNamee's story is typical of broadcasting's early days. He was hired as a singer when he strolled into WEAF early in 1922 to see for himself what broadcasting was all about. He was doing jury duty in the old Post Office Building and during a recess happened to pass the A. T. & T. building on Broadway which housed WEAF. Going up in the elevator, he got into conversation with a man who turned out to be assistant manager of the station and, before MacNamee left, he had been hired to sing.

Like Milton Cross, he was soon impressed into announcing as a side line, and soon the side line was the main line. The World Series of 1925, between the New York Giants and the Washington Senators, skyrocketed the St. Paul youth to a renown of which he had never dared dream. An exciting series—in which Washington was participating in a World Series for the first time and Walter Johnson, idol of every baseball lover, got his long-sought chance at baseball immortality—was coupled with MacNamee's enthusiastic word pictures. His descriptions, as some critics remark, may not have been too accurate in the heat of the moment, but they did convey excitement.

In fact, excitement was his stock in trade. He never went before the microphone cold, but did anything—from physical exercise to arguing with an assistant—to get himself excited before going on the air. No matter how dull an event, listeners knew that, if they tuned in an NBC station, they would have color and warmth from MacNamee. Today, listeners are more exacting. They got that way after several heavyweight battles in which, according to the announcers, the loser had won. The jolt of learning that the judges had given the decision to the winner was too much for tense nerves and heavy bettors; the broadcasters and fight promoters got together and insisted that sports-casters stick closer to the truth.

One day early in the twenties, WEAF decided to take its microphones into Carnegie Hall and air the concerts of the Philharmonic Orchestra. The Philharmonic Society welcomed the idea; so did the Philharmonic's director, Breslau-born, gentle,

missionary-minded Walter Damrosch. But Dr. Damrosch felt that just the broadcast of a symphonic concert to the masses, untrained to hearing such music, was not taking full advantage of an opportunity. He'd like to explain the meaning of the different movements, point out, before the orchestra played them, why certain selections were considered great music.

"Suppose," Dr. Damrosch suggested—he was deeply interested in this new medium for bringing his beloved music to the masses and anxious that no little note of it be lost—"that I run over the score first on the piano, explaining as I play the significance of it?"

That seemed an excellent idea to WEAJ officials who saw that such talks would not only add to, but would lengthen the broadcast. In those days, filling even the few hours that radio stations were on the air was a major matter.

Dr. Damrosch, seated at the piano, ran over the score, all the while chatting informally about the composer, his life, his works and the particular work he was playing. WEAJ officials were pleasantly surprised at the mail that poured in next morning from gratified listeners. Out of this simple broadcast grew NBC's Music Appreciation Hour, one of the oldest NBC programs and one of its best-known sustaining and educational shows. Dr. Damrosch still handles this broadcast, which is still largely the same as it was back in those early days except that, today, it is required listening for eight million children in public schools equipped for the reception of such programs and supplied with manuals by NBC.

By the end of the twenties, listeners were beginning to tune for programs, rather than distance, and among the favorites of those early days—1928 is an early date in broadcasting—were the Smith Brothers, a vocal duo advertising cough drops; the Silver-masked Tenor, who sang for a tire company; Roxy, the impresario who produced such sparkling radio broadcasts that he was able to build his own theater by selling shares in it to his radio listeners and his gang; the Gold Dust Twins; Harry Reser and his Cliquot Club Eskimos.

The Eskimos were one of radio's big—and early—commercial broadcasts, and the man who originated, wrote and produced it,

Raymond Knight, was one of the most brilliant figures in early broadcasting. Everyone remembers his hilarious "Kuku Hour." He concocted its puns—and there are few puns hitting the airways today which can top them—directed its actors and even acted himself. One of the difficulties NBC had with Knight arose from his versatility. He was hired as a continuity writer, but an inviolable NBC ruling barred script writers from doing their own production. Everyone knew that Ray could do a better job on his own scripts than anyone else, but a ruling was a ruling.

Suddenly some bright boy at the studio had an idea. Rather than employ Knight to write script, which would bar him from producing, they would hire him as a producer because the ruling said nothing about producers writing script. That's how broadcasting was born; it's where it is today because someone in the industry always can find some way to get around bans, rulings and the FCC. Broadcasters, on the whole, are a resourceful lot.

Jack Pearl, better known to early day listeners as Baron Munchausen, was another prime favorite with the fun-loving pioneer listeners and, on the Lucky Strike Hour, was among the first of the comedians to gain commercial sponsorship. Pearl set a precedent for other stage stars: Ed Wynn, who in 1932 headed up radio's first really big-time show, Texaco's Fire Chief broadcast, Eddie Cantor, George Jessel, the Duncan Sisters.

The Maxwell House Showboat, coming late in the twenties and modeled after the Kern-Ferber stage hit, was a pioneer of the big-time variety show. Set on a showboat in the Mississippi, it starred Charles Winninger, grand old character man of the screen and stage, as Captain Henry, and Lanny Ross, a youth with a rich, romantic tenor voice. Showboat was a grand setting for Ross' voice and after his first few broadcasts, his fan mail was as heavy as any in the business. On his own song program today, his fan following is terrific, his appeal to women ranks second to none.

Once, the coffee people got tired of the showboat idea and ordered the agency to alter the program. To drop a show without explanation and begin another was out of the question. To bring about a logical transition, the agency decided to stage a fire, have

the showboat burned and then take the troupe into the tent-show business.

Unfortunately, one of the soap manufacturers, presenting the Gibson Family, also decided to pep up its dramatic program by adding music and variety. They planned to do this by having the stage-struck Gibson youngsters go into the—you guessed it—tent-show business. The two decisions were reached simultaneously in the rival agencies.

When the agencies learned of each other's plans, a race to see who would get into the tent-show business first was on with the Gibsons winning. There was nothing for Maxwell to do but cancel its arson and let the showboat, like the river it traveled, go rolling along. A few years back, the showboat idea was dropped for the Hollywood Good News idea, worked out in conjunction with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studios.

Not a giant in his own right, but the great-granddaddy of several current broadcasting giants including Information Please, Take It or Leave It, and a whole raft of other quiz programs, is W. M. Hickey, president of a tire company in Hartford, Conn. Back in 1928, Mr. Hickey got the idea of adapting a currently popular parlor game to radio and started his "Ask Me Another" series on Hartford's WTIC.

Different from anything then on the air, this prehistoric quiz show featured Jack, the Tire Expert, who asked a question and waited seven seconds for the listeners to figure out an answer before giving the answer. Ask Me Another is still on the air from WTIC; it sometimes draws as many as a thousand letters a day in response to special offers. Ask Me Another not only has the distinction of being the oldest quiz program on the air, but is one of the oldest radio programs on the air.

Perhaps no early broadcaster achieved the following that bristling, red-mustached, ex-Briton Boake Carter boasted at the height of his career. Carter was one of the first commentators to achieve national radio renown—and he achieved it with a snarling voice and a chip on his shoulder. In a way, Carter belongs to the personal journalism age of Greeley, Dana and Pulitzer. In a strictly broadcasting sense, he belongs to the era of Brinkley,

Henderson, Baker and other strongly opinionated—to be charitable—broadcasters.

Carter first stuck his head up above the surface of broadcasting levels during the Lindbergh kidnaping case, when his criticism of the handling of the case caused listeners to begin to wonder if, perhaps, his criticisms weren't just in view of the failure of officials to break the case and the gaudy spectacle New Jersey officials were making of it.

Alert to an opportunity when it knocked the first time, Carter found other things to criticize. Neither the Army nor the Navy was being run properly and, besides, there was obviously a crying need for a separate air force. Soon Carter had managed to penetrate the usually thick skins of Washington politicians who, it was reported, were considering a move to deport him on the grounds that he lacked naturalization papers. Mr. Carter not only had naturalization papers, he waved them under official noses and asserted his naturalized right to speak as he pleased.

Carter was broadcasting under the sponsorship of Philco at the time of the Army-Navy run-in, but Carter's constant anti-labor stands in his broadcasts soon brought the picket line to stations airing his talks, the boycott to Philco products. Philco decided to discontinue its association with the fire-eating commentator, and General Foods picked him up. The labor trouble happened again. But this time, Carter went into a huddle with his sponsors and worked out an armed truce. Carter announced that he would suspend all comment on labor—adding significantly that he would thus let the labor group flounder in obscurity!

His troubles with the Roosevelt Administration were not so easily ironed out. Strongly anti-New Deal, his blasts succeeded in irking the brain trusters, inspiring countless protests to General Foods against his talks, and, finally, the dropping of Mr. Carter by General Foods. Other sponsors seemed as little anxious to be associated with the acidulous tongue of this radio Westbrook Pegler as General Foods or Philco. So Mr. Carter began a syndicated newspaper column which many Hearst papers use and finally, after several years away from the microphone, re-

turned last year to level his chief attacks against his native England.

Carter can air his bitterness; the sweetness and light boys try to keep theirs off the air. Back in 1921, for example, there was the case of Uncle Wip, whose chore on a pioneer Philadelphia station was to tuck the kiddies into their unseen trundle beds with a cheery tale designed to induce pleasant dreams and improve the behavior of the youngsters. The broadcast came under the head of good will, but one night Uncle Wip, an embittered man to start with, reached the breaking point. He did manage, however, to keep the sugar-coating on his words till signing-off time. Then, with a vicious flip, he closed the switch—so viciously that it bounced back open again.

"I'm a son of a b . . . ," he screamed to the empty studio—and unknowingly to a lot of unbelieving youngsters, "if this isn't a hell of a job for a he-man!"

Another classic tale of the early days is supposed to have occurred during an early prize-fight broadcast over KDKA. A local sports writer had been hired to broadcast the match. Unfortunately, the scribe had a financial interest in one of the preliminary fighters who wasn't doing so well. Loyally the scribe predicted that the youngster was a slow starter, would soon get out from under his wraps. In the middle of just such a prediction, the kid ran into a haymaker and went down cold.

"Jumping Jesus!" the scribe yelled into the mike, "that dirty b . . . knocked him out!"

Then, suddenly, the writer realized that he was talking to hundreds of unseen listeners, whose protests would mean the loss of his job. Turning his head away from the mike, he cried, "Gentlemen, gentlemen! Please restrain yourselves. This broadcast is going to thousands of listeners." Then turning back to the mike, he explained, "Sorry, ladies and gentlemen, but a fan got a little excited and yelled over my shoulder. It won't happen again."

As long as she lived, Madam Schumann-Heink was a favorite

performer on Christmas broadcasts. Something about this kindly, motherly woman who for fifty years had held the esteem and love of great audiences not alone by her magnificent voice, but by the wholesome and inspiring manner in which she lived, tied her intimately in with the spirit of the season which is particularly that of mothers everywhere. She became a Christmas legend in the broadcasting world.

Once, while making some records under the direction of Josef Pasternack—then music director for the Victor Recording Company and later music director of the "Carnation Contented Hour," and, himself, a pioneer in bringing good music to the airways—she turned to him and told him she had a last request to make. Madam Schumann-Heink was in excellent health, but Pasternack, as a musician, understood her strange request. When her time came, she told him, she wanted him to conduct the *Siegfried* funeral music over her bier.

Pasternack pointed out that she lived on a ranch in California and that it might not be easy to assemble an orchestra capable of playing such music on so short a notice.

"Vell, my poy, play it on a piano then," she laughed. "And suppose," Pasternack said, "there is no piano at hand." "Den, my poy, fistle it!"

It was many years afterward that they met again. The singer was about to embark on a screen career . . . and with the same enthusiasm and courage she always brought to new and difficult undertakings. She seemed very happy, and Pasternack was shocked to learn, a few days later, that death had taken her.

"Perhaps," the maestro said to Nelson Eddy, a mutual friend, "God wanted the immortals to enjoy her art." And he set about the task of fulfilling the diva's last request. But the American Legion planned a great memorial service. Pasternack had no way of convincing them of his obligation to the immortal soul of Schumann-Heink. Other arrangements had been made. But there was his promise—a solemn thing, given in good faith by one artist to another.

He went to the Nelson Eddy home where he was a house guest. There he waited by the piano until the hour set for the last

rites. Then, with only the mother of Nelson Eddy present, he played the funeral music from "Siegfried," just as he had promised.

Many of the early giants of broadcasting no longer walk the earth. Will Rogers, Joe Penner, Floyd Gibbons, Chic Sale. . . . And in the summer of 1940, Josef Pasternack dropped dead in a Chicago studio during the rehearsal of a *Carnation Contented Hour* program, perhaps—as the Eddys suggested—because God wanted a great conductor to accompany Schumann-Heink when she sang for the immortals.

FORUM FOR THE MASSES

THE BANKS HAD BEEN CLOSED FOR DAYS AND CITIZENS OF THIS richest nation on earth, unable to withdraw a penny of their savings, asked each other, "What will the government do?" Newspapers didn't know; the man on the street, with cash rapidly dwindling, knew that the passage of hours might find him hungry. The unemployed planned desperate measures. There was much loose talk of revolution, and in the large cities, police leaves were canceled.

Then, word came from Washington. On Sunday, March 12, 1933—eight days after his inauguration—the President would speak. Reassuringly, he called it a "fireside chat." America remembered the man's great warmth, revived its hopes that he would lead them out of depression. They turned on their radios and listened—sixty million hopeful, anxious Americans sat by their loud-speakers and listened. The White House announcer said, "Now, the President of the United States. . . ."

"I want to talk for a few minutes with the people of the United States about banking. . . ." In many ways, that first fireside chat of the President was a remarkable document. In simple language, the President explained the practices of banking, scored those few unscrupulous bankers who had gambled away other people's money, and explained his purposes in calling the national bank holiday. He ended with a plea for the confidence of the people.

After all, there is an element in the readjustment of our financial system more important than currency, more important than gold, and that is the confidence of the people.

Confidence and courage are the essentials of success in carrying out our plan. You people must have faith; you must not be stampeded by rumors or guesses. Let us unite in banishing fear. We have provided the machinery for restoring our financial system; it is up to you to support and make it work.

It is your problem no less than it is mine. Together we cannot fail!

For all practical purposes, that was the first broadcast from the White House. There had been other broadcasts originating there; even Calvin Coolidge had stood before the microphone and spoken to the people. But the people hadn't listened. The combination of a drab speaker and dull issues drove listeners to the livelier competition provided by "Amos 'n' Andy." Hoover didn't lack issues but his total disregard of the human equation in talking before the microphone, the almost slide-rule precision and monotony of his talks, proved no listener magnet. In fact, during the period between 1929 and 1932, Hoover made ninety-five radio appearances—only nine less than Roosevelt made from 1932 to 1936. Hardly a listener now will recall the subject of one such talk.

The warm, inspiring phrases of Roosevelt—"The Forgotten Man," "All that we have to fear is fear," "Together we shall not fail"—will long be remembered. More than any other individual, Mr. Roosevelt has a feel for audiences, a feel for the microphone which has made the vital core of the nation's activities not the formal reception rooms of the White House—the Blue, Red, Green and East rooms—but the Oval Room, which, oddly enough, doesn't have a fireside.

Radio was first used as a political weapon in 1924 when Coolidge and Davis went before the microphones to reach potentially large audiences. As a political weapon, radio had not yet come of age—which wasn't radio's fault as much as it was the fault of candidates who came to the microphone bearing no gifts of diction or persuasion, no spark of warmth. By 1928, however, broadcasting was ready to play a larger part. The "Sidewalks of New York" accent brought to the microphone by Al Smith, was

a first touch of color or glamour for political broadcasters. And radio played a large part in that campaign.

That campaign, utilizing radio on a widespread basis for the first time, brought one important fact to light. No longer could a candidate, speaking to the wheatgrowers of the Midwest, promise a high tariff and, later, reverse himself in the cotton and tobacco-growing, low tariff areas of the South. Words that a candidate spoke in Chicago were heard simultaneously in Memphis. Radio, eliminating distance, was serving to eliminate political false promises and ambiguity and to force upon candidates, if not truth, then at least partial consistency.

But it was the Groton English, the excellent diction, the confidence-inspiring campaign speeches of Roosevelt during the desperate summer and fall of 1932 that made radio really effective in political debate. For the first time, a man who understood the might of the microphone was using that instrument to speak intimately to the people. And the people listened.

In the far, left-hand corner of the egg-shaped basement room of the White House (which, in formal moments, is termed the Diplomatic Reception Room, in informal moments the Oval Room) is the curio-cluttered Presidential desk from which the fireside chats are broadcast. In the recessed doorways of the room stand the improvised announcers' booths—there were only two for that first chat, Mutual being formed a year later—which network technicians set up four hours before each Presidential broadcast. The room is decorated in cream with a maroon carpet, gold chairs, the portraits of other Presidents and their ladies on the walls. In the front of the room, when such a broadcast is to be made, is a battery of newsreel cameramen which will not go into action until after the broadcast when the President re-enacts those important excerpts you see upon screens throughout the world.

On the occasion of that first fireside chat, most of the original brain trusters were present—Ray Moley, Warburg, Hugh Johnson, names almost forgotten in their White House connections. Today, the Oval Room is apt to be filled with Hollywood stars, rural schoolteachers, biggies and nobodies.

Network technicians and announcers work smoothly to iron out details before the President's arrival. Carleton Smith (NBC), Bob Trout or John Charles Daly (CBS), and Walter Compton (MBS), the Presidential announcers, agree on the number of seconds for their simultaneous introductions. They already have a confidential copy of the speech—but following it in the President's many departures from script on momentary inspiration is a catch-as-catch-can business.

In earlier broadcasts, the President was always accompanied by Jimmy Roosevelt, a member of his secretariat. Jimmy used to prop a foot up on an empty chair and listen to his dad. One night he propped his foot on the lid of a box in which broadcasting equipment had been carried. In the middle of the speech, the lid came down with a resounding bang. The audience jumped, secret-service men rushed forward, Jimmy grinned sheepishly—and President Roosevelt went right on talking.

The President gets along fine with the broadcasters. He's a first-class performer and audience magnet; he seldom runs over his allotted time; and when the choice of time is left up to Mr. Roosevelt, networks know he will pick an hour when most stations are noncommercial so that rebates to the advertisers from the networks are held to a minimum.

Despite the President's gift for making complicated problems of government and economics understandable to the masses of listeners-in; despite the magnetism of his finely pitched radio voice, there were many who neither believed in his policies nor listened to his persuasive chats. The unfortunate thing then was that such opponents of the President's policies not only refused to listen to the President but they had no way of making their own views and policies known. Of course, they could buy time on the air; many stations would even give them time. But when the President spoke, millions listened. When Tom Jones, who didn't give a hoot about the New Deal, or Alf Landon—who was traveling in the same boat with Tom Jones—said their say, there were few to hear them out. There are few men who can compare with Roosevelt as a radio speaker—and Landon wasn't one of these.

One night in the spring of 1934, after George V. Denny, Jr.—then assistant director of the League for Political Education—and a friend had been listening to a fireside chat, the friend told Denny of a neighbor who refused to listen to anything Roosevelt had to say. Denny, upon consideration of that neighbor's attitude, together with the Fascist blasts against democratic processes and the growing belief among many Americans that democracy was a thing of the past, decided to convert this one man's intolerance into a bright sword unsheathed on behalf of a living democracy—the Town Meeting of the Air.

Denny, who serves as moderator for the Town Meeting, is a thirty-nine-year-old North Carolinian and today, president of New York's Town Hall, Inc. He is married, has three children, loves music, dancing, seldom loses his temper, even under the heckling anyone on Town Hall's platform invariably gets at the hands of the New York crowd participating in each broadcast. He wears silver-rimmed glasses over a pair of twinkling, alert eyes; has a high forehead which has grown even higher with a receding hairline, and is a sucker for all types of hair tonics. Even now, his first love is the stage and he just missed success as an actor, became a drama instructor as the next best thing, went into lecture booking later. Town Hall, Inc., incidentally, is the more popular title he bestowed upon the League for Political Education when he took over as president.

To Denny, would-be actor, the reasons for democracy's failure to function—as expressed in such acts of intolerance as refusal to hear the other side—stemmed first from a failure on the part of the nation's leaders, as a group, to dramatize their messages. In the second place, the spirit of fair play inherent in the American make-up was not being appealed to. What a marvelous medium, he thought, was radio for such a purpose. The very basis of the democracy upon which the various states had been originally founded was the town meeting in which each citizen might have his say. By radio, the entire nation might be converted into one gigantic town meeting in which all shades of political and economic thought could be expounded and kicked about.

One day, at a luncheon, Denny told of his idea for a town meeting via radio. Mrs. Richard C. Patterson, Jr., wife of a then-

vice-president of NBC, was present and urged him to take the plan to John Royal, program director at NBC. He did and Royal, ever alert to a vital radio idea, agreed to try six programs. NBC would furnish the network, the wire charges and pay the speakers' costs—they average a hundred dollars per appearance. Town Hall, in co-operation with NBC's educational department, would plan and supervise the programs. The first program went on the air on May 30, 1935. Denny acted as moderator. The first subject was, "Which Way America—Fascism, Communism, Socialism or Democracy?"

The broadcast originates in the auditorium of New York's Town Hall, where some fifteen hundred average Americans gather. Before the program goes on the air, the audience is warmed to the discussion by an hour of free-for-all debate on the issue by the audience, led usually by Arthur Bestor or Dr. Harry Overstreet. A neat arrangement of portable microphones permits people in all parts of the auditorium to take part in the discussion. The same system permits them to question the speakers during the question period following the debate. That the first broadcast—which went on the air without publicity—drew a response of three thousand letters, was due partially to the fact that Denny's handling of a ticklish chore is so precise and tasteful.

"Ask all the questions you want," he tells the audience at the opening of the question period, "but don't call names." The guests—from all walks and strata of life, of all nationalities and religious sects—question at will, and it's a sad day for the speaker who hedges in answering.

Mr. Denny has the idea that what happens to democracy in the future depends largely upon the 20 per cent of American voters who are affiliated with neither political party. They decide elections, they make the issues. So, Town Hall is aimed at this 20 per cent. Even more broadly, it is aimed at drawing away from the political parties the regular voter and enlargement of this undecided but decisive group of nonconformists. It seeks to do this by making people think about public affairs.

At the same time, the Town Meeting of the Air is the best answer broadcasters have been able to cook up to the arguments that radio is not free and that its stand on controversial discussion

is a milk-and-water half measure. Town Meeting is built solely on controversy. It boasts an audience far in excess of the collective editorial pages of the American press.

Ironically, one of the warmest discussions ever to find its way over Town Meeting—or any other—microphone was on the subject, "Do We Have a Free Press?" Frank E. Gannett, publisher of reactionary newspapers, defended the press; Harold L. Ickes continued his role as a press critic.

The American press is as free as it wishes to be [Ickes argued]. So far as government control is concerned, the American press is free . . . In fact, the American government annually pays an enormous subsidy to the press in the form of less-than-cost postage rates. . . .

Yet, while the American press is free as far as the government is concerned, it is nevertheless far from free. . . .

Mr. Ickes then listed three accusations which, he maintained, the people level against the press:

First it (the press) has financial affiliations or is subject to financial pressure which limits its freedom. Second, it is subject to the influence of advertisers, causing omission, distortion or improper slanting of news and affecting its editorial opinions. Third, it is unfair to certain groups of citizens, especially workmen, whose interests conflict with those of the newspaper or its financial backers or advertisers.

Mr. Ickes then became specific. Town Meeting folk love facts, and Ickes set out to show how Mr. Gannett's papers, in particular, were under such influence as he listed. He cited the Federal Trade Commission's investigation showing certain Gannett papers were largely financed by the International Paper and Power Company. He charged that such financing muzzled any free discussion by those papers of the power situation. He also pointed out the part Gannett's papers had played in opposing passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act, in 1933, when many of the large advertisers were against its enactment. For the third accusation, Mr. Ickes produced an article from a Gannett paper reporting a Town Meeting program a year before in which Gannett had engaged in debate with Edward O'Neill, of Illinois, a farm leader. The news-

paper had a column and a half of Gannett's remarks but not a single reference to O'Neill.

Mr. Gannett's replies were largely in generalities, although he did assert that the financial arrangements for his newspapers were made with the International Paper Company, not International Paper and Power Co.—a fact which Ickes, in rebuttal, denied. He dwelt upon the services of the press, accused Ickes of denouncing the press because the press had "defeated" the Roosevelt "court-packing" bill.

It was an Ickes night. No one ever captivated a Town Meeting audience with generalities, and the Secretary of the Interior came loaded with buckshot. Gannett seemed to have forgotten even his gun.

When the question period for the Gannett-Ickes debate opened, a man arose.

Why, Mr. Moderator, was your policy changed tonight to permit a personal attack on a speaker?

Mr. Denny: The policy wasn't changed. I want to make this perfectly clear: there is a difference between an attack made anonymously from the floor on an individual, and a speaker who is well-known saying his say from the platform. The man attacked is right here on the platform and can answer back.

Woman: (To Mr. Gannett) Do you think that distortion of the facts is the privilege of a free press, as manifested during the campaign for the Presidency in 1936?

Mr. Gannett: I don't think any real newspaperman distorts the facts deliberately. There may be a misunderstanding of the facts. I don't know what you refer to by the distortion of the facts in 1936. Freedom of the press is freedom to print. You can print your paper and I can print one. Thank God, we have that privilege in America.

Man: (To Ickes) Did you come here tonight to discuss a free press or to reap vengeance on a newspaperman who happens to disagree with you?

Before Ickes could answer, Mr. Denny spoke: "Now you see, that is the difference between an anonymous attack from a man you don't know and an attack by Mr. Ickes on Mr. Gannett—who is here to answer whatever Mr. Ickes has to say. That is a personal question.

Don't take advantage of the fair play you are granted here by asking questions like that."

Woman: (After an exchange between Ickes and Gannett) Couldn't we have peace in the family? Mr. Ickes and Mr. Gannett, both, couldn't we have peace in the family?

Mr. Ickes: If the lady wants peace, I wonder why she came here.

Mr. Gannett: Yes, we could have peace in the family if we all approved of Mr. Ickes' New Deal papers.

This is democracy in action. Over Town Meeting's microphones have broadcast the nation's leaders in many fields—Earl Browder, Communist candidate for President; Senator Taft, Senator Wheeler, John T. Flynn, Wendell Willkie, Mrs. Roosevelt, Major George Fielding Eliot, Edward Tomlinson, Dorothy Thompson, Max Lerner, Oswald Garrison Villard. Norman Thomas, Socialist leader, long used to the give-and-take repartee of Union Square, is a particular favorite of Town Hall crowds, a master at silencing hecklers with a few well-chosen words.

Across the country, listening groups—gathering in CCC camps, in YMCA's, in schools, colleges, private homes—use the Town Meeting program as a jumping off place for their own discussions. They have learned that hearing such a program in the company of kindred—or opposite—souls adds spice to the listening, leads to far-into-the-night discussions once Town Meeting has left the air. For such groups, Town Hall has prepared guidebooks available at little cost to direct and give meaning to such group listening. Denny likes to think that, with a rising Crosley rating for Town Hall, democracy, too, moves toward an effective and efficient revival.

One effect of the rising Crosley rating is certain—offers to sponsor Town Meeting grow more and more frequent and larger and larger. To all such offers, Chairman Denny has thus far turned a cold ear. "I haven't yet found one I could be sure of," he explains. On one score alone does Town Meeting fall down. The speeches of speakers are usually so well prepared that, in contrast with the spontaneous question period, they often seem flat and rehearsed.

The lack of spontaneity which so frequently marks speeches

on Town Meeting in no way troubles CBS' "The People's Platform," conducted by onetime newspaperman, educator and CBS educational adviser, Lyman Bryson. Bryson uses a quiet, but novel, device. Four guests—seldom are they well-known figures, but, for the most part, men and women picked not at random but from the masses—are invited to dinner at the CBS studio. Under the centerpiece of flowers, a microphone is concealed and, after dinner, Bryson leads his guests into conversation along the subject chosen for that particular evening. The guests never know when the microphone is switched into action or when it is off. The result is a spontaneous, informal round table which the former Nebraska newsman and Columbia University instructor skillfully steers along.

The People's Platform has the sometimes irritating quality of starting in the middle of a subject and leaving off without arriving anywhere.

I think the greatest compliment this program ever received [Dr. Bryson once said] was from a woman who wrote, "I've heard every program you ever put on the air and not one of them was worth listening to."

That kind of exasperation makes a person do one of two things: dial out the program or tell his friends that such and such was said and they should have heard it too. The purpose of the program is to provoke thought on the part of listeners, and the general philosophy of the program is that if you want to get people to do some real thinking, it's best accomplished by approaching them in a light manner. If they feel they have some great decision to make, more often than not, they stop thinking altogether and just worry.

In selecting guests, there are certain set formulas evolved by practice and experience. In a general way, the program attempts to present people who speak for Americans in general and who represent real public opinion. During the neutrality debates, the show was taken to Washington and the four Senators most active in that debate—Swellenbach, Danaher, Nye and Thomas—were the guests. The following week, back in New York, the program had a locksmith, a union organizer, a farmer and a press photographer as guests and continued the debate of the week before.

But more specifically, guests are chosen to fill in the following pattern: one big name, because affiliated stations feel that there is no use picking up such a sustaining show unless there is someone important on it; another guest must know a great deal about the particular subject, but not necessarily be a big-shot or leader in the field; there must be a woman and there must be one who represents the average man or woman in the street.

Guests are given the subject for discussion in advance, but no formal preparation or rehearsal is held. A recording is made of each program and a check of the number of words spoken by each guest is made. This is in order to answer complaints from listeners who are highly partisan. An anti-Socialist might write in and complain that Norman Thomas had been permitted to speak 60 per cent of the time. Bryson can then reply, "Thomas talked only 13 per cent of the time and he used 12.6 per cent of the words."

Before the invitation to dinner and after-dinner conversation is actually extended, Bryson puts prospective guests to a telephone test by asking them all sorts of irritating questions, checking their reactions and clarity of thought.

C. A. Siepmann, formerly connected with the British Broadcasting Company and now a lecturer at Harvard, once said that the only original idea in broadcasting he had run across since coming to this country was the idea of inviting guests to dinner and keeping them for discussion.

Chef for the program is Louis Heuberger, and he devotes as much time to the culinary aspects of the broadcasts as Bryson devotes to the selection of guests and topics. He has found that the type of meal which produces the best conversation is a light one—few courses, but cooked to perfection. Steak appears most often on Louis' menus—steak *maire d'hôtel*, *filet mignon*, steak with sauce *Bordelaise* and sauce *Bernaise*. Roast beef, turkey, baked ham are all too heavy for broadcast fare, and when they are served at all, it is in cold weather. Fish, too, is seldom used. Novelist Kathleen Norris, a connoisseur of food, had Louis worried, and he was very much pleased and relieved when she came to the kitchen after the broadcast to get his recipe for sauce *Bernaise*.

The only serious blunder committed by Louis in preparing a meal for "People's Platform" guests was on the occasion of André Giraud's visit. Giraud, better known as Pertinax, is a noted French journalist, and Louis went to great pains to prepare a dinner of cold *vichysoisse*, smoked beef tongue *à la Roumaine* and *crêpes suzettes*. But Pertinax—an ardent advocate of the Free French Movement and bitter enemy of the Pétain-Laval group—refused the *vichysoisse!*

Louis has also found that most guests like their steak rare—and in close to two hundred broadcasts, not one has asked for milk.

The People's Platform method of discussion brings together people of different views to discuss a controversial subject, and although it lacks the advantage of an audience (which is the most vital part of Town Meeting's appeal) it has the advantage of a quick give-and-take with excitement and flying fur. More recently, individual station owners—obviously as a result of written complaint from listeners—have pressed for more domination of the after-dinner conversation by the chairman. The general feeling is that an unhampered discussion of international affairs and relations in particular may get onto dangerous ground.

Arthur Garfield Hayes, attorney for the Civil Liberties Union, deplors such a trend. Such an action, he insists, not only denies an individual the right to speak freely, but correlatively denies thousands of others the right to hear. "Such actions," he said, "have always indicated to me a lack of faith in democracy."

The code of the National Association of Broadcasters provides for freedom of discussion over radio stations by requiring broadcasters to afford similar facilities to both sides of a controversial question without pay for time. In a newspaper, two factions to a dispute may buy advertising space to present their respective sides of an argument. As David Lawrence once said, in radio "you can buy time for a series of programs to sell toothpaste but not to sell ideas." There is a significant difference, however, between radio and the press born of natural limitations. Anyone with the funds and the inclination may publish a newspaper, but radio channels are limited and it takes more than funds and inclination to start a broadcast station.

At a recent conference of broadcasters, one of the difficulties brought up for consideration was the large amount of time and trouble necessary to find opposition speakers for controversial broadcasts. A group—say a labor group—may ask a radio station for time on the air to discuss a certain problem. The radio station wishes to give that time but, under the code, is banned from so doing unless a program presenting opposite views is also broadcast. Frequently, the opposition doesn't want time and the station may be forced to refuse the first group time for lack of a spokesman for the opposition.

Certain minorities cannot get a hearing under any circumstances because public opinion is opposed to them. It would be difficult to conceive of an American broadcasting station giving time on the air to a Nazi spokesman. A few months back, the Communists were in much the same position. Government control would not give a different result; and laws which compel a station to take a program would be as much a denial of free speech as a law which denies the right of the station to broadcast certain types of programs. To a large extent, the freedom with which a radio station operates stems from the public itself—and is in direct proportion to the public's desire to hear or not to hear certain speakers. Listener education, rather than laws or codes, will prove the real answer to the matter of public discussion of controversial questions, and such makeshifts as NAB's code must be recognized as a purely temporary measure.

The oldest nationally broadcast radio forum is the "University of Chicago Round Table," beginning its Sunday forums in February, 1931, and continuing uninterruptedly since that time. It was first heard over NBC's WMAQ, in Chicago, and, two years later, became a network feature of NBC. Its methods and results as an educational broadcast were undoubtedly considered by both Denny and Bryson in building their groups, and the principal difference between them lies in the audience they seek. Town Meeting and The People's Platform are informal and aimed at the masses. The Round Table is built for intellectuals and its discussions are carried on gently by—for the most part—college professors.

THE PLACE

ere Town Meeting's discussion of the free-
ress was a heated, personal presentation of
rica's largest publishers and one of the na-
ful epithet, the Round Table's presentation
featured G. A. Borgese, professor of Italian
; Professor T. V. Smith, of Chicago's phi-
and later United States Congressman; and
owner and publisher of the Chicago Daily
the one practical note to the whole verbal

ed theory behind newspaper publishing came
f these learned gentlemen; few newspapers
ame; few factual instances were used. Much
devoted to the philosophic background—and
he Newspaper Guild as a pressure group on
was little the meat-eating masses could sink
r subjects the Round Table has taken from
"International Law—What Is It?" "Realism
" "An Annual Wage for Labor," "Have We

Table has moved closer to the common level
of many timely, popular subjects; by the
speakers; and through the use of less stuffy
the professors.

ms is MBS' "American Forum of the Air,"
Washington in co-operation with the Depart-

ment of Interior and features—generally—prominent government officials in various discussions. Scattered across the country are countless local forums heard over local stations and designed to meet local needs. Broadcasters, not overly anxious to assume the responsibility for the conduct of such programs, have turned more and more to local civic groups—Parent-Teachers Associations, Womens Clubs, Voters Leagues—in preparing topics and selecting speakers.

But it is in the listener groups that have sprung up during the past five years that radio is making its greatest contributions

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toward practical democratic processes. Frank Ernest Hill, of the American Association for Adult Education, said,

It seems reasonable to assume that there are in the United States at least 15,000 organized groups meeting together to hear radio programs, and their activities touch from 300,000 to 500,000 Americans. . . . These groups are born of the impulse to listen together . . . and they stimulate, they broaden, they give definite information which is pretty fully assimilated.

Long after broadcasts for which the groups have assembled are over, discussion—frequently heated—takes place. Radio becomes but a starting point from which a well-informed electorate is in process of building, stimulated by broadcast discussion programs which have become the heirs-apparent of the old-time political debate.

The two groups with the keenest appreciation of radio's possibilities in disseminating information among voting citizens are the Republican and Democratic national committees. Despite the fact that Presidential campaigns are perhaps the most controversial type of broadcast possible, the NAB code has been relaxed in the matter of internal politics so that broadcasters can charge for such time. As a result, the three networks alone collected more than two million dollars from the two major political parties during the Willkie-Roosevelt campaign.

Broadcasters—as well as Wilfred Johnstone and Wells Church, who handled radio activities of the Democrats and Republicans respectively—early realized that radio would be an important factor in the election and, in order to clear decks for a thoroughly impartial handling of such a gigantic and thoroughly partisan performance, held a meeting in a quiet New York hotel room to iron out important questions.

Representatives of the three networks agreed that, after the conventions, no spokesmen on forum or discussion broadcasts would be permitted to inject, consciously or unconsciously, plugs for one or another candidate into their remarks. Faking of audience applause by transcription or the hiring of studio hand-clappers was also taboo. Neither was a dramatized program—such as the

one which caused such a furor in 1936—to be accepted for broadcast. A CBS comedian had the word, “indispensable,” clipped from his script lest listeners connect it with *genus homo* and arrive at the much-mooted “indispensable man” phrase. During the week that Willkie served as target for a Chicago ill-wisher’s raw egg, another comic had the word, “egg,” cut from a perfectly harmless pun. Winchell’s sponsor wired curtly, “Positively no political comment Sunday night.”

Winchell, who would have been one with Paine and Henry and Jefferson in another day—and there are those who wish that the Broadway Sage had lived in that other day—wired back:

“I intend doing an editorial urging the people to unite no matter who the winner. If no can do, please let me know so I can get laryngitis.”

Behind closed network doors, all script was carefully read for political implication or favoritism, and the network censors became picayunishly old-ladyish. Shortly before Willkie went on the air with his conscription speech, a G.O.P. official phoned NBC to tell them that his talk would be short and to fill the remaining minutes with “music brisk and brassy” to sustain the patriotic note upon which he would end.

NBC considered the request carefully, finally substituted a Strauss waltz for fear the playing of a stirring march might be taken as an enthusiastic musical endorsement of the Republican nominee.

Neither Church nor Johnstone was in the market to purchase just any old hour the networks had to offer. They were operating on limited budgets at the outset and every dollar spent for broadcasting time had to do yeoman duty. Later—when party leaders decided that the campaign would be decided on radio, and after networks had agreed to allow thirty days’ credit from the date of broadcast—party purses were opened wide for time purchases. Then, political radio maestros made a discovery. The best time was already taken by large commercial shows. Substituting a political broadcast—unless it was plenty good—for such a show was not always smart broadcasting or politics. In 1938, Thomas Dewey, campaigning for governor of New York, had pre-empted time

normally filled by "Information Please"—and lost a healthy lot of votes in so doing. And Dewey's experience is far from unique.

An interesting fact to be dug out of the vital statistics attached to the last campaign was that on October 30, Roosevelt, speaking from Boston, enjoyed a Crosley rating of 38.7—or 38.7 of all radio sets in the nation were tuned to his address. Willkie, speaking from Madison Square Garden on the same night, had a listening rating of 30.6. The ratio between the two was almost the same as that reflected in the national balloting three days later!

One of the striking facts about all of the great forum broadcasts which have endured is that they have been free of commercial sponsorship. A sample of what commercial sponsorship might do for the public information programs now unsponsored is graphically afforded in the Ford Sunday Evening Hour. In fact, one of the remarkable things about this whole program, in view of William J. Cameron's constant presentation of one side of controversial subjects, is that it has not already become a live issue in the broadcasting industry.

Cameron—preacher, onetime editorial writer for the *Detroit News*, onetime editor of Henry Ford's Jew-baiting *Dearborn Independent*—is Henry Ford's spokesman. His background is vague, he dismisses all questions as to family with the phrase, "of Scotch descent," and doesn't disclose his age, middle name, birthplace or names of parents. The batch of libel suits which brought the *Dearborn Independent* to its grave never quite succeeded in ending Cameron's own dislike of Jews, and he has been president for some time of the Anglo-Saxon Federation.

The Ford Sunday Evening Hour is ostensibly a musical program, presents a fine symphony orchestra playing light classical—and preferably American—numbers, top-flight and top-price soloists. But insinuated into a program that all Americans might love are the propagandas of Cameron which are the propagandas of Ford. These propagandas are particularly insidious because they are cleverly perpetrated.

An analysis of the Cameron talks reveals a clear technique. He invariably praises the American way, then makes Ford's way syn-

onymous with the American way. He has pointed out that taxation of surpluses is not American. It is no accident that Ford, too, objects to surplus taxes. Of unemployment insurance, he said, "A new special plan now being offered us—a new political talking point—is called Unemployment Insurance. It was invented in countries where unemployment and poverty have been accepted as final conditions." Words which frequently appear in his talks are freedom, independence, initiative, invention, industry, truth, loyalty. Writers, government officials, labor leaders and others who do not approve Ford's policies are offspring of a decadent America, an America that has sadly retrogressed from the virtues that *McGuffey's Reader* instilled in Henry Ford.

At a time when the Ford factories were plagued by labor unrest and struggle with an administration which was both social and labor minded, Cameron used the radio to utter opinions highly controversial. Many listeners wrote in to demand that the other side be heard, an obviously impractical solution on commercial time.

That commercial sponsorship might deteriorate "America's Town Meeting of the Air" into a sponsor's program rather than a people's program is obvious to Denny, who has persistently refused commercial sponsorship with a fine disregard for dollars and an admirable adherence to his original purpose.

In fact, John T. Flynn—in a speech on Town Meeting's platform—availed himself of the freedom that unsponsored broadcast offered to say:

On Sunday evening the family is gathered in the living room when into their midst float the strains of music from a great symphony orchestra. In millions of homes people are listening. This goes on for half an hour. Then as the strains of some well-loved old song fade from the air and the family sits around, thoroughly softened up, there floats into the room and into the unguarded chambers of their minds the voice of the propagandist. For five or ten minutes the carefully planned infection flows. . . . It tells of the romantic saga of business, the great achievements, the massive wisdom, the matchless courage, the civilizing alchemy of the great business man as distinguished from the selfish and narrow ignorance and wickedness of the Government—

the great-souled business leader compared with the small-minded and vicious Senator.

There was no mistaking who—and what—Mr. Flynn was striking at.

Local forums, heard over local stations and discussing local and community problems, have not kept pace with the national forums in attracting listeners despite the fact that many local stations broadcast such programs. But the development of radio as a forum for airing controversial subjects before the people has coincided with the rise of intense national and international problems before which local affairs have seemed mild, uninteresting and everyday pieces of necessary business. But with the war over and interest again centered in the vital, near-at-hand things, we may reasonably expect some local forums to zoom in interest and listener attraction.

Supplementing each other, these two divisions of public discussion—national and local—will unquestionably make for a more alert and watchful citizenry, a closer link between voter and public official, and a resultant affinity, perhaps identity between campaign promise and after-election performance of public officials.

RADIO AND THE PRESS

BY DECEMBER, 1938, RADIO'S POSITION IN THE WORLD OF news—and propaganda—was recognized in almost every capital of a world busy playing power politics. In Europe, particularly, radio had assumed a vital role, for the luxury of newspaper subscriptions was one the majority of citizens could not afford. Radio's correspondents in Berlin, Rome, Budapest, Ankara, London were accorded every privilege of the working press in their efforts to gather and broadcast news.

Only in Washington did the members of radio's news corps operate under the disadvantage of an almost complete official nonrecognition. In the House and Senate, radio correspondents were barred from the press galleries; they had no admission to the press conferences held regularly by the President, cabinet members, senators and congressmen. In the Senate radio newsmen were forced to sit in the visitors' gallery from which they might view the broad posteriors of orating senators. They were refused permission to take notes. On one occasion, a Vice-President had bellowed his protest at sight of notebook and pencil in a commentator's hand.

In glorified contrast, the gentlemen of the press occupied a gallery of their own fronting the lawmakers. From it, every little aside, gesture, twinkle which gives meaning to a senator's talk was visible.

Just before Christmas, 1938, three men met in a hotel room in New York to map a campaign to change all this. Fulton Lewis, Jr., long-time Washington news correspondent recently turned radio commentator for the Mutual Broadcasting System, did most of the talking.

"All that I'm asking," Lewis told Fred Weber, general manager of MBS, and Ted Strickert, manager of WOR, "is to make a fight for our rights. I want the same press privileges for radio men that newsmen enjoy, and I think by putting the matter up to the right people, we can get them."

Neither Weber nor Strickert was too sanguine about the chances for success. Many others had made the attempt before, failing before the counterinfluence of the powerful Capitol press corps. But they agreed to lend Lewis every possible support.

Back in Washington, Lewis framed a polite application for admission to the Congressional press galleries and filed it with the standing committee of Washington correspondents—an elected body of reporters entrusted with the management of the press galleries. It was rejected on the ground that the Senate Rules Committee had so framed the laws governing the press that only representatives of daily newspapers could be admitted. This was an old gag of the standing committee—to pass the buck on to the senators. It had always worked.

The next step on Lewis' program was to write a letter to both the Senate and House rules committees telling them of his application and its rejection. He pointed out that he was performing the same vital services for which the press galleries were originally set up more than a hundred years ago. They had been initiated by public demand, lest the legislative activities of the representatives be carried out under a veil of secrecy. He concluded by insisting that Congressional rules be brought abreast of the progress which had been made in disseminating news and knowledge.

Senator Neeley, of West Virginia, chairman of the Senate Rules Committee, placed the matter before his group, and Senators Gillette, of Iowa, and Barbour, of New Jersey, were named to consider the matter. Lewis gathered some interesting information for them. In the first place, the unchanged original ruling authorized only one seat to each newspaper when, at the very moment, one large daily had fourteen staff members in the gallery, others five and six. Lewis noted that no provision had been made for the press associations—Associated Press, United Press, International

News, etc.—and he questioned their right to be there at all. All of which was extremely disconcerting to the now-embattled press.

When, at the conclusion of the hearing, Senator Gillette ordered a complete revision of the rules governing the press galleries with a view to according radio a more equitable place, news reporters went into action. They buttonholed friendly Senators in Capitol corridors, telephoned key men on Capitol Hill. Fruitlessly; for soon a bill passed both the Senate and House according equal privileges to press and radio. A week after its passage, the White House press conferences were opened to radio reporters; so were those of cabinet officers and other governmental department heads.

This breach of a century-long tradition is much more significant than it seems on the surface, for it marked—after a decade of bitter rivalry—the achievement of an at least official equality of radio with the press. Actually, it was a final recognition of the birth of the Fifth Estate.

Newspapers played an important role in the early development of radio. The importance of newspaper stations in the field of broadcasting has never been fully appreciated by the general public or the FCC. Newspapers were among the first broadcasters to sink large sums into the new industry, sums which permitted broadcasting to survive and eventually flourish. They did so with the sole idea of using such stations for promotional purposes. Newspapers were used to dealing with the public, and their stations—WJR, of the *Detroit News*; WGN, of the *Chicago Tribune*; WDAC, of the *Kansas City Star*; WHAS, of the *Louisville Courier*; WMAQ, of the *Chicago Daily News*, to name a few—were among the first to recognize that programming was as vital to broadcasting as transmission. Such stations, too, were among the first to inaugurate news broadcasting as a major broadcasting function.

The advertising potentialities of radio were then untouched, and large newspaper publishers felt that, so long as they controlled the gathering of news, the broadcasting of news bulletins over the air held no inherent danger for the press. This was a position taken, too, by the commercial press services; and International News Service and United Press not only undertook to

serve individual stations but authorized newspapers to provide without cost press service news to stations with which they might be affiliated. Publishers who went into radio broadcasting at this time felt that the flash radio bulletin might prove the means of eliminating costly extra editions, and, at the same time, they felt that the bulletins to be read over the air could be so piquantly phrased as to stimulate the purchase of regular editions of the newspaper in order to secure the complete news story.

This attitude on the part of many publishers was expressed in a letter written, much later, by J. V. Connolly, general manager of Hearst's King Features Syndicate, to Emile J. Gough, then in charge of Hearst's radio chain of ten newspaper-affiliated stations:

. . . Those Hearst papers which own stations have been able to protect themselves from the deflection of advertising appropriations from their papers into . . . broadcasting. *And also you have shown the radio editors how not to give a news report over the air that would make it unnecessary to buy a newspaper . . .*

This attitude, so openly expressed by Mr. Connolly, was by no means universal. In the first place, radio as an advertising medium was undeveloped in the early twenties, nor was the keen pinch of competition then felt. Most newspaper-owned stations were among the best-managed stations in the country because newspaper publishers felt that, to justify their investment, they must do a good job of winning listeners. On the whole, such a policy has been beneficial to the newspapers, for almost every survey made of the field reveals that broadcasting has stimulated newspaper circulation in the long run. In 1939, for example, the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* ran an extra edition on the election of Cardinal Pacelli as Pope. In 1922 the College of Cardinals had elected a pope, too, and without radio coverage, without the eye-witness accounts broadcast in 1939, the *Dispatch* sold 1,000 copies of its extra. In 1939, with radio "competition," that newspaper sold at least 400 per cent more copies than before. *Post-Dispatch* editors concluded that radio reports stimulate the appetite of newspaper readers and boost circulation.

By 1930, more than ninety radio stations were either operated by or affiliated with newspapers. But by 1930 a new form of com-

petition between the two media was beginning to be felt—competition for advertising. As the depression struck deeply into advertising budgets, newspaper publishers were wont to blame reduced advertising income upon radio competition. The broadcasters strove to counter this impression. Merlin H. Aylesworth, then president of NBC, said, "I have never been able to find evidence of any material diversion of funds from newspaper advertising to radio. The two forces—radio and the press—cooperate logically."

This was an opinion affirmed by Walter A. Strong, then publisher of the Chicago *Daily News* and owner of WMAQ (which has since been purchased by NBC). "I have always felt that the radio," said Mr. Strong, "was a very distinct corollary to the newspapers in that it is a method of communication to the masses." Meanwhile, the jointly owned newspapers and radio stations were striving to link the two media in 1930 by a coupled contract offering space in the paper and time on the air in a joint campaign, a movement which has since almost disappeared. Invariably, publishers who were also broadcasters felt the advertising losses of newspapers were not due to radio competition; that radio was creating a new advertising budget, and that the depression was solely to blame for newspaper budget curtailment.

Unfortunately, the publishers who owned radio stations were in the minority, and by the turn of the decade, a first-rate, cut-throat warfare between the two media was in the making. Since the advent of broadcasting, listeners had been dependent upon newspapers for their radio listings—programs to be heard on various stations at various hours during the day. After 1925, such listings carried the names of programs by sponsors; i.e., the *Eveready Hour*, the *Sieberling Singers*, etc. In 1927, the New York Publishers Association, representing the principal New York newspapers, moved to eliminate the names of sponsors from such listings. They held that such listings were free advertising for which the newspaper was not being paid. This program was followed for about two months, until the Scripps-Howard interests purchased the *Telegram*. The *Telegram* decided to continue listing the sponsor's name on the grounds that radio programs were news and the public was entitled to all information about them.

Other New York papers were then forced to drop their program of censored listings.

But when before 1930, news about radio and radio personalities had been given full publicity in the press as a matter of news, afterward most newspapers dropped not only such news items, but all program listings as well. In many cities, protests from readers who had come to look upon program listings as a newspaper service compelled newspapers to restore the bare listings, but other news, designed to increase interest in listening, was severely left alone.

As competition for the advertising dollar stiffened in the depression years of 1930-1932, competition in the field of news dissemination, too, began to grow bitter. Publishers began to put pressure upon the news services to discontinue their services to radio stations and networks. In March, 1933, this pressure had become so great that United Press and INS, the principal sources of radio news, discontinued service to radio stations.

The press of the nation was unwittingly forcing radio into the very position it most hoped to avoid—the position of a news-gathering, as well as a news-disseminating, medium. At CBS, Paul White, publicity chief, was pressed into service as news editor and he gathered a staff of some six hundred newsmen who served as correspondents. NBC did the same, making Abe Schechter its news editor. Competition was stiff, rough and ready. Suspicious—and rightly so—that the networks were lifting press association news from the daily press and putting it on the air, the news associations set listeners to catch news broadcasts and check on the news items. Charges of piracy flew back and forth. But by the end of a year, the networks' newly formed news agencies were beginning to function so smoothly that the press, fearful of the threat of this new competition, arranged a truce in the so-called Press-Radio Agreement. Under this arrangement, the press services agreed to furnish the networks summaries of news in the late morning and late afternoon for five-minute broadcasts which, they felt, would be of minimum competition with the press. CBS insisted for a while upon maintaining its own news staff, but a threat to boycott all CBS news and listings in the nation's press caused it to capitulate.

The Associated Press, which is a nonprofit association of member papers rather than a commercial organization, had consistently refused to serve radio. Agitation of a few member publishers who also owned radio stations had caused the issue to be raised on several occasions. The overwhelming anti-radio feeling among most publishers had served to defeat such moves, however. It is an interesting fact that editors of Hearst papers which held AP franchises, by instruction, were the most militantly opposed to AP's serving radio. A logical conclusion—and one into which the FCC looked in its newspaper-ownership inquiry in the fall of 1941—was that these instructions were given so that INS, doing a large business with radio stations, would not suffer from the competition of able AP.

But if the press services and publishers hoped to stop radio's news activities with this sop thrown to a growing business, they had no idea of radio's sticking qualities. In the first place, the Press-Radio Agreement was entered into with the networks alone. Independent stations were still left out in the cold; and to answer their demand for news several strictly radio press services sprang into being. Press Radio, Inc., formed in 1934, was a radio news service headed by James W. Barrett, former city editor of the New York *World*. Transradio Press was another. Neither did the networks wholly abandon the news-gathering organizations they had set up, and the press—realizing that now radio was definitely competitive in the world of news—resigned itself to such competition. The Press-Radio Agreement was not renewed the following year. But in 1935, United Press and INS not only resumed service to the networks, but actively solicited the business of individual stations.

In reality, there is but little conflict between newspaper and radio in a news sense, although a full realization of this by all the parties concerned did not actually come until Munich. The newspaper is a lasting and complete record of the day's news events; it may be read at leisure; the reader may skip this or that item in which he is not interested. Radio has the ability to report to a large public an event as it actually occurs. The immediacy of radio is its distinguishing feature, and the day is probably not far off when specialized news stations, under FM broadcasting,

may fill the day with news broadcasts which are on the air simultaneously with the event's occurrence. The only conflict with the newspaper lies in the news summaries which duplicate a service rendered by the press. More and more, such straight broadcasts of news items, in the opinion of radio's most astute newsmen, will come to play a smaller part in radio news coverage as radio develops along the lines for which it is so ideally adapted—the transmission of current reality.

This difference in inherent destinies of the two information media has led to the development in radio of newsmen of a quite different caliber from those to be found in the press world. A good reporter is a man who is able to ferret out newsworthy facts and write them in a straightforward style. The type of correspondent radio must have scattered across the face of the globe is a man who has all the qualities of a reporter and who, in addition, is able to speak clearly into a microphone and serve as a stage manager for the passing show. A little knowledge of radio engineering on the side is an advantage.

Those who used to hear Edward Murrow (CBS) from London each afternoon during the first two years of the war have no real idea of the task which lay upon his shoulders. Leaving aside the fact that Murrow acted as European editor of CBS and considering only his task as London correspondent of the network, an examination of his duties reveals that his actual broadcasts were the smallest part of his job. When England declared war on Germany, American listeners heard Neville Chamberlain read that declaration of war. They heard it because Murrow had arranged it, provided the facilities, cleared the American air, stage-managed the whole business. The same was true of Churchill's speeches, later, of the King's, of the trans-Atlantic radio conversations between young English refugees in America and their parents in England.

All of these events were news—but unlike that same news as reported in the press, this was news which Americans heard as it occurred. News thus presented has climax, suspense; it is news which vitiates the time-honored newspaper lead which, in a single sentence, preferably, tells the whole story. The reporter is never ahead of his audience; neither are those who are making the news.

This is radio's real province—and though the surface of such news reporting, except in the field of sports, is as yet unscratched, it is such broadcasting that will make radio, as a news medium, great.

To demonstrate the painstaking and infinite efforts a top-notch radio correspondent must exert in bringing a fifteen-minute broadcast of a purely feature piece of reporting to the air, consider CBS' memorable "London After Dark," broadcast on August 24, 1940. The idea of describing a great city under a blackout, perhaps under an air raid, first occurred to CBS newschief, Paul White, late in July, and he ordered Murrow to set to work on it. For three weeks, while cables and instructions flew back and forth across the ocean, Murrow worked with the British Broadcasting Company in lining up nine observers and spotting them, with mobile transmitting units, across the great city. The show was set for August 24th, and Hitler co-operated by sending his bombers over that night.

Americans first heard Murrow. "This is Trafalgar Square. The noise you hear at the moment is an air raid siren." Then he described the slow-moving traffic, the searchlights which stabbed at the London sky, the shelter beneath St. Martin's in the Fields. The program moved on from there to the kitchen of the Savoy Hotel. Thence, the program moved to an antiaircraft battery, an air raid precautions station, to London's big dance hall, Hammersmith's, where Eric Sevareid reported,

There are 1500 people in here at the moment; it's fifteen minutes before midnight and that's the war-time closing hour for Saturday night. There was an air-raid alarm, as you know, fifteen minutes ago. The orchestra leader simply announced they'd go on playing as the crowd wanted to stay, and I expect not more than a half dozen people have left. . . .

From Hammersmith's, the program jumped to Piccadilly Circus where Vincent Sheean spoke of the silent streets in the night; to Euston Station, where trainmen were interviewed, and then to J. B. Priestley.

I'm sitting at an open window in Whitehall [Priestley started]. Just

opposite me is the tall, pale, rather ghostly shape of the Cenotaph commemorating a million dead. . . .

What this radio broadcast did was to lift away a wall of each home in which a radio listener sat and, beyond that space, transpose for the listener a great city over which bombers hovered, a great city where "the lamps had gone out," temporarily, as Priestley pointed out. But the horrible immediacy, the suspense, almost the waiting for a bomb to fall is a news quality which only radio can bring. And radio's best correspondents are men who possess—as much as their news sense—the gift of organization, of stage management, men who are literally maestros with mikes.

Of this same type of reporting by broadcast was the eyewitness account of the funeral of the "Altmark" victims in Norway, reported by Miss Breckenridge who flew to Norway for the broadcast. Even more graphic was the account of the scuttling of the "Graf Spee" in Montevideo Harbor by John Bowen, who, walking along the quay with a portable mike as the wounded pocket battleship moved out into the harbor presumably to do battle with the waiting British cruisers, suddenly asked NBC (over his monitoring connection) to give him the air. The "Graf Spee" was exploding!

But of all such broadcasts, perhaps none was as historic as that which originated from a clearing in Compiègne Forest, forty-five miles from Paris, on June 22, 1940.

In the late afternoon, William L. Shirer and William C. Kerker, of CBS and NBC respectively, stood in the forest of elms and cypresses, their eyes fixed through the dusty window of an old *wagon-lit* on a group of French and German army officers seated about a green-topped table. The dust which their eyes sought to penetrate had been accumulating on the windows of the museum piece for twenty-two years as it stood in the courtyard of the *Invalides*. The day before, it had been moved up from Paris on orders of Hitler, himself. History was about to be reversed.

Then, almost as night was falling, the meeting broke up, the officers left the train. Kerker and Shirer rushed forward, learned that the armistice between Germany and France had been signed in the very coach where a former armistice ending World War I

had been signed before. Rushing back to their microphones, they gave this startling news to the world with the gist of the agreement.

Two hours and fifteen minutes after American listeners knew of the truce, the German radio and press were informing French and German citizens of the momentous event. I mention it here because it was not only an excellent example of on-the-spot reporting of which radio is capable, but it was a clean-cut scoop for radio correspondents. The day before, an erroneous tip that news of the armistice would first be released to the press at the *Wilhelmstrasse* had sent all other correspondents speeding back to Berlin. Shirer and Kerker decided to stay on where the actual negotiations were taking place, assigning subordinates to cover the Berlin angle. Their judgment was justified in the news scoop they obtained.

But even in local coverage, the on-the-spot type of broadcast is highly practical, wholly effective. Many local stations already place microphones in the traffic courts of their cities, play a large part in holding down traffic violations by the publicity they give such offenders. The presence of the microphone in more important court cases is not an improbable offspring of the future. The microphone is not now allowed on the floor of the House or Senate, but a real demonstration by listeners that such a ready spotlight on the activities of its lawmakers would be welcome might lead to such privilege. President Roosevelt welcomes the microphone to the White House on every occasion when he has a speech to deliver which he feels is sufficiently important to warrant broadcast.

Radio has not been averse to hiring ace newsmen when such men have the qualifications required by radio. On an August day in 1939, Paul White called former New York *Times* editorial writer Elmer Davis at his Mystic, Conn., home and asked him to pinch-hit for H. V. Kaltenborn, then in Europe. The bottom had dropped completely out of the war-fraught clouds hanging over Europe and CBS had been caught shorthanded.

"Sorry," was Davis' reply, "but I'm finishing a serial for the *Saturday Evening Post*. It's already overdue."

"But Elmer," White pleaded, "Germany is about to attack

Poland. This isn't a time for fiction. Come on down and get in the thick of a real plot."

Davis agreed to help White out until H. V. returned. He has been on CBS ever since. Davis' experience with radio has been such an excellent example of the evolution through which news broadcasting has passed that it bears repeating here. Six years before, over New York's WABC, he had had a fling at radio, reporting national election returns, but his accent, his unexcitable manner of speaking, drew complaint from listeners used to the smooth-talking gentlemen who read reports written for them by hardheaded, newsworthy and underpaid individuals. That reception—as well as the *Post* serial—contributed to his doubt about radio.

But something had happened to radio audiences in the intervening years. Listeners, in the press of world-shaking events, had come to care more for what a man had to say than the tones in which he said it. Davis, with an Oxford mind and a seedy, Indiana twang, was somehow reassuring in the tumbling world affairs that poured in thousands of words through the loud-speaker. His integrity has never been questioned, his news broadcasts are strictly, even sternly, impartial, and he has the gift of condensing into the five minutes allotted him nightly much more news than many broadcasters cram into fifteen minutes. He is typically American, his importance being that he not only speaks to Americans in the language they understand; he speaks for Americans, without hysteria or highfalutin phrases.

The nearest approach to editorializing on the air is in broadcasts of the commentator, a peculiar radio creation born of the physical limitations of broadcasting. In broadcasting news, there can be no front page, no placing of emphasis by position of a story on the printed page. Radio has no columns. Items are read, one after the other, and whatever emphasis placed is placed only by tone of voice.

But one story *is* more important than another, and radio editors early recognized that editorial comment on the news would be necessary to overcome this deficiency. Kaltenborn was among the earliest of these commentators. As an associate editor of the *Herald-Tribune*, he was heard for awhile over WEAf in a

"behind-the-news" analysis of the day's events. Certain favorable references to Russia and Communism caused WEAJ to ban Kaltenborn's broadcasts, and the *Herald-Tribune* arranged to broadcast his talks over another New York station. Lowell Thomas and Edwin C. Hill are two other pioneers of radio commentary who are still widely listened to by great network audiences.

Edwin C. Hill is one of the great newspapermen of all time. The New York *Sun* considers him the finest reporter it ever had. CBS listeners to his "Human Side of the News" broadcasts find them a well-rounded picture of the personalities who make news, for since his first assignment—the funeral of President Benjamin Harrison back in 1901—he has known the world's great. His office walls are lined with autographed pictures—Mussolini, Theodore Roosevelt, J. D. Rockefeller, Al Smith, Woodrow Wilson, Warren Harding, Charles Evans Hughes, William Howard Taft, Tom Mix. When he speaks of names in the news, he speaks with a familiarity and intimacy which only Edwin C. Hill could bring to a microphone.

Lowell Thomas, on the other hand, deals with news not so much from the viewpoint of people as of events and action. Action and adventure have been the keynotes of his life from that day when, fresh from Princeton University, where he served as an English instructor, he rushed his bride up the gangplank of a transport in 1917 for a honeymoon on the Western Front. The Creel Committee had appointed him to write success stories about American troops, but quickly tiring of this, he quit his post, went with his bride to the Holy Land where Allenby was already knocking at the gates of Jerusalem. Allenby hated journalists, but a young British intelligence officer—John Buchan, later Lord Tweedsmuir, of Canada—smuggled Thomas into Palestine, arranged a meeting with both Allenby and T. E. Lawrence. It was Thomas' biography of the latter that catapulted Thomas to fame.

After the war, the Thomases continued their honeymoon across the East, to the Arctic, back to Europe. In 1930, they landed again in New York. It was to be a brief stay before a trek to the wind-swept plateaus of Tibet. But one day, the *Literary Digest* induced him to pinch-hit for their fast-talking commentator, Floyd Gib-

bons. Thomas has been on the air regularly since that time—five days a week every week of the year for more than ten years.

MBS' Raymond Gram Swing, NBC's John Kennedy and John W. Vandercook are other important names in this category, and on networks and local stations—particularly newspaper-owned stations—many prominent newspaper writers have been pressed into service in similar capacities. Pearson and Allen, authors of "The Washington Merry-Go-Round" column, do a radio stint now; the late Heywood Broun was one of the earliest radio editorialists—and always in hot water because of his liberal views.

The important difference between the newspaper columnist or editorial writer and the radio commentator lies in the fact that radio operates under a censorship.* Newspaper columnists—as witness Westbrook Pegler or General Hugh Johnson (who also had a fling at broadcasting)—thrive upon controversy. Radio commentators must strictly avoid controversial questions or, dealing with them, must be careful to devote the same amount of time, the same consideration to both sides of the question. Newspapers have often charged that radio is, therefore, not a free agent; and one of the objections raised against newspaper ownership of radio stations in the newspaper industry itself is that the Federal Government, through its control of broadcasting, can reach and exert an influence upon radio-owning newspapers which, except for their investment in broadcasting, would be free of government control.

Radio executives, on the other hand, point out that radio gives listeners a much fairer picture of world and national events than newspapers which may be subjected to a publisher's whims and prejudices. As a shining example of what they mean, these radio men point to the Chicago *Tribune* and its personal and vindictive journalism. Ownership of WGN in no way lessened the *Tribune's* bitter and personal attacks upon the administration, attacks which were reprinted in Nazi Germany where Colonel McCormick became a sort of hero.

Greatest opposition to newspaper ownership of radio stations, however, comes from outside both newspaper and radio circles. The FCC is opposed to such ownership on its general policy of

* See Chapter XIII.

restricting monopoly—the same policy which led it to order NBC to sell or dissolve one of its two networks. Morris Ernst, of the Civil Liberties Union (which also opposes newspaper ownership of transmitters), perhaps best expressed this opposition viewpoint when he told the FCC that the Union opposed “control by a few of the market places of thought and ideas.”

At the moment, both radio and the press seem to recognize that, while there is a competition for both advertising and news, such conflict is healthy and all that each group asks is to be left strictly alone by the Federal Government. In 1929, newspaper advertising expenditures reached a peak of \$800,000,000 from which it dropped, by 1933, to \$500,000,000. Radio, meanwhile, had doubled its 1929 volume of \$40,000,000, and the publishers were quick to conclude that radio was responsible for the newspaper drop. Time and consideration, however, have led most of these publishers to conclude that the depression, rather than radio, caused this curtailment, especially in view of the fact that radio's gross time sales in 1939 of \$170,000,000 fell far short of making up the difference between the \$535,000,000 newspaper volume of 1939 and the previous peak in 1929.

Competition in news gathering, too, has grown less bitter since Munich, when radio proved a real asset to newsmen seeking to get their stories back to America over jammed wires. The years have demonstrated that radio broadcasting has had no ill effects upon newspaper circulation. In 1929, 1,944 daily newspapers had a combined circulation of 39,425,615. In 1939, 1,888 daily newspapers (more than a hundred papers had ceased publication during this period) enjoyed a circulation of 39,670,682.

But the real reason for the lessening of bitterness in the competition of news gathering is a better understanding on the part of the press of radio's eventual aims in news broadcasting. These—to bring a living moment home to radio listeners—in no way conflict with newspapers. It is a fact that people who witness an accident are the first to buy newspapers reporting that accident. So, radio's bringing of an actual moment from history into the home should serve only to stimulate newspaper sales. But because broadcasting is still a new business, the progress is perhaps slower than listeners feel it should be.

Many, including the broadcasters, felt that when war came, intrepid newsmen armed with a microphone and a steel helmet would follow the shock troops, airing a shell-by-shell account of battles. Broadcasters look back a bit sheepishly at those early war days when the air was filled with such a confusing mass of communiqués. It seems almost silly now that an announcer on one of New York's smaller stations had to signal the control man for the air and then shout, "We interrupt the war news to bring you the winner of the fourth race at Narragansett." Commercial sponsors saw their shows butchered mercilessly for each new piece of news from abroad.

This verbal excess was one from which newspapers, with their regular editions and printing schedules, were spared. Radio, too, soon learned to temper its enthusiasm for war news—they could not have withstood the former pace with its huge rebates to advertisers and long survived—and out of the chaos came a self-adopted, nonofficial code governing war broadcasts. Stations agreed to avoid horror, suspense and undue excitement in the handling of news bulletins and to clearly label as such, fact, as reported by American correspondents, official communiqués, rumor and matter taken from the foreign press.

News commentators, too, came in for their share of attention. They were confined to explaining fact, rumor and propaganda which were available. They were never allowed to editorialize.

In one branch of broadcasting, however, lies a dire threat to the press of the world—a threat which cannot be laughed away by publishers nor denied by radio broadcasters. This is in the field of facsimile broadcasting. Facsimile broadcasting, by means of which an entire printed newspaper, illustrations and all, can be transmitted through the air into the facsimile receiver-equipped home is not only a fact, but a well-developed instrument. Many of the newspaper stations have materially aided in financing facsimile experiments on the sound ground that nothing they can do will prevent its development if there is a public demand for it while, by getting in on the ground floor, they might have much to do with its direction.

When United Press began selling its services to radio stations in 1935, WHO, in Des Moines, sought to buy United Press news.

The U. P. franchise for that territory, however, was held by the Des Moines *Register-Tribune*. A contractual value of \$58,543.65 had been placed upon this franchise or, in the event that U. P. should violate its agreement, that sum would be immediately payable to the *Register-Tribune*. Gardiner Cowles, the *Register's* publisher, agreed however to permit WHO to use United Press news and a wire was run to the newsroom of the radio station.

Later, WHO began development of facsimile broadcasting whereupon Cowles informed United Press at once that if news were furnished WHO for facsimile broadcast, he would look upon such service as a violation of contract and demand payment of the contractual sum agreed upon. United Press has refused to service WHO's facsimile broadcasts.

Of even more importance to the radio news field will be the early inauguration of frequency modulation (F-M) broadcasting. Under F-M broadcasting, stations will be limited in their range. F-M transmitters, like television transmitters, can send signals only to the horizon; and with so many local stations, emphasis on the news may well be localized. The strength of these stations, in the field of news, will depend largely upon the development of strong local news staffs; and that newspapers will play an important part in the development is evidenced by the fact that close to 50 per cent of applications on file in Washington for F-M licenses have been placed by newspapers. John Shepherd, III, owner of the Yankee network and one of the principal developers of F-M, has warned the FCC that its attitude toward newspaper ownership of radio stations is all that is holding back F-M's development. "Large sums of money are necessary to pioneer this new type of broadcast," he told the commission, "and newspapers are ready to invest large sums in its development if the commission will give them the green light."

Here again, a vital decision must be taken. The commission must decide whether further participation in broadcasting by newspapers will amount to a monopoly of "the market places of thought" or will simply serve to expedite adoption of a system of broadcasting far superior, technically, to that now in use.

Television is still another factor which must be taken into con-

sideration in any serious contemplation of press-radio relations in the future. Television, in combination with sound, is truly capable of making current history the property of the masses but, by its very nature, is noncompetitive with the press. Television can transmit an event so long as that event is taking place, no longer. For sober second contemplation, the public will still be dependent upon newspapers.

In the field of advertising, however, television does promise severe competition for the printed journals. The one factor which has compelled department stores to depend so largely upon the press is its ability to reproduce illustrations of style merchandise. What will happen to such advertising expenditures, however, when department stores go in for televised style shows, furniture displays, etc.? And what effect will such curtailment of newspaper advertising have upon the news staffs and news coverage of the press? And upon radio? In the light of predictions made about broadcasting in the early twenties, it would take a rash prophet, indeed, to essay an answer to these questions. But besides the problems they will pose for press-radio relations of the future, the present bickerings over newspaper ownership of radio stations will pale into an infinitesimal insignificance.*

* For a more detailed discussion of F-M, facsimile and television broadcasting, see Chapter XVI.

CRISIS

WHEN THE YOUNG MARCONI ARRIVED IN ENGLAND IN 1896 and demonstrated that he could send messages without wires, his friends looked into the future and saw a world in which the nations talked with one another. "There will be no more wars," they said, "when each nation comes to understand the other's problems." So, September, 1938, found a world where nations talked without wires, but a world harassed by the most serious problem since Sarajevo. Radio listeners will long remember the twenty days leading to Munich. Those intimately associated with radio—and particularly those in the news departments of the great networks—will never forget them. For during that period, radio—as a news medium—came of age.

Technically, the industry had long been ready to perform the job which the Czech crisis precipitated. In the spring of 1938, the Columbia Broadcasting System, in order to give listeners a better and more intimate picture of the Austrian *Anschluss*, had set up what it called its "European Roundup." Representatives of CBS, as well as newspapermen, stationed in important European capitals, were thus permitted to talk directly with the American listening audience and give on-the-spot interpretations of world-shaking events as they were happening by short-wave radio.

In 1936, the National Broadcasting Company staged a vivid demonstration of its technical facilities for handling news wherever and whenever it happened. As a unique feature of NBC's tenth anniversary week, that network staged a four-cornered radio conversation across the world—from air to land and sea. M. Robert Jardelie, French Minister of Communications, accompanied by Fred Bate, NBC's British representative, spoke to Amer-

ican listeners from the American air liner NC-16030, en route from Buffalo to Washington. From the NC-16005, also en route from Buffalo to Washington, Maurice Rambert, president of the International Broadcasting Union, accompanied by Max Jordan, NBC's Central European representative and its ace newsman, also spoke to American listeners. Answering these two distinguished guests on his network, David Sarnoff, president of the Radio Corporation of America, extended a welcome on behalf of American listeners. Ensued then a conversation in which these three talked with Senatore Guglielmo Marconi, traveling on his yacht, "Elettra," in waters off Genoa, Italy, while America and Europe eavesdropped.

To understand how such long-distance broadcasts are effected, let's spend a few minutes on technical matters. Stations operating on the ordinary broadcasting band (or frequency) can be heard well for comparatively short distances. Even the large, clear-channel stations (there are less than twenty-five in the United States) are regularly heard for distances of less than three hundred miles. Short-wave broadcasts, on the other hand, girdle the globe with the greatest of ease. An amateur operator friend of the writer, living in Omaha, Nebraska, talks regularly with other amateurs (or "hams") in China and New Zealand, Brazil and Alaska.

The compensating factor in the differences of range found between short wave and the normal broadcasting band lies in the quality of reception. Frequencies employed by the commercial broadcast station (or the ordinary broadcasting band) provide the most accurate reproduction of sound with a minimum of fading and static. Short-wave broadcasts, on the other hand, are far from perfect in the matter of accuracy, control and atmospheric interference.

As a consequence, broadcast stations interested in broadcasting to the masses—as is the case with all commercial stations—use the ordinary broadcast band and manufacturers of radio sets have concentrated on building receivers capable of receiving broadcasts on the ordinary broadcast frequencies.

The intense interest which Hitler's conquest of Austria aroused in the European scene, however, and the growth of propaganda broadcasts as a segment of modern warfare convinced manufac-

turers that short-wave bands, in addition to the ordinary broadcast band, on receiving sets was an improvement which would pay for itself in increased sales. Consequently, the past three years have seen more and more radio models capable of receiving short-wave broadcasts.

But the great networks, dealing in news, were unable to wait for the public to purchase such sets and, to circumvent the fact that they were able to bring broadcasts from Europe by short wave but that few listeners owned receiving sets capable of picking up such broadcasts, the networks called in their technicians and perfected a system known as the "rebroadcast."

Under the rebroadcast, a program may be sent from Europe—or anywhere else—by short-wave transmission. This is picked up or received by a key transformer station in America; the short waves are instantaneously transformed to waves of ordinary frequency and broadcast so that users of ordinary receiving sets may tune them in.

On the sending end, two types of transmitters may be employed by the newsman in the field. Both are mobile, but one may be connected with the powerful short-wave transmitter by telephone line if the distance to such a line is not too great, while the other is a portable short-wave transmitter complete in itself. NBC, for example, has a transmitter of the latter type installed in a top hat which is used for covering New York's Easter Parade and other events where it is advantageous to have a newscaster mingle with a crowd. Usually, where such a transmitter is used, its broadcasts are to a near-by station which, with much greater power, is capable of transmitting it longer distances.

As radio approached the end of its second decade, broadcasters were still feeling their way cautiously, experimentally in the matter of news coverage, but in the already seething caldron of European events and with the many technical refinements engineers had introduced, the great networks had developed one sound ruling for news coverage: When things happen, be there ready to broadcast.

So, in 1936, radio newsmen, with portable transmitters, had stood among the crowds keeping vigil outside Buckingham Palace to learn of the condition of King George V. When death came for

the beloved monarch who had guided his people safely through World War I, NBC was first on the air with the tragic news. By this time, "first on the air" meant that the first word of the King's death to reach the American public was contained in this NBC broadcast. The proclamation declaring Britain's beloved Prince of Wales the new king was heard, direct from the lips of the King's heralds, on Friary Court Balcony, St. James Palace, by any American who happened to be near a loud-speaker.

Later, when Edward chose "the woman I love" above the seat of the mighty, his abdication was an epochal event not only in its historical significance and deeply touching nuances, but also because it was the first time that any king, anywhere, had used radio to explain his action. Nor will radio listeners soon forget his grave, his simple and dignified words, beginning with the phrase, "At long last. . . ." In a voice low and tremulous with feeling, he gave his decision to perhaps the largest listening audience ever to hear a single program.

That year, radio had felt its way, too, amidst shellfire and rattle of machine guns in on-the-spot descriptions of battles being fought between Fascist and Loyalist forces in Spain's Civil War. Radio correspondents had followed the mechanized forces of Mussolini in their quick conquest of Ethiopia; and from Addis Ababa, the voice of another monarch about to give up his throne—unwillingly this time—came to America on magic waves when the Emperor Haile Selassie spoke his sad farewell to his empire while, again, Americans eavesdropped.

In such events as these, newsrooms of the large networks were being molded and tempered and formed. Men like Abe Schechter, NBC's special events chief, and Paul White, of CBS, had built up their organizations until they covered the world as completely as the city staffs of large daily newspapers covered their own cities. These skilled observers, winnowed through a long trial-and-error process, sat close to their teletype machines on the morning of September 12, 1938, for confidential reports from network correspondents abroad indicated that *der Tag* was close at hand.

On the surface, and to the average American listener, the stream of American life flowed smoothly enough. The day before, Sunday, farm belt experts in Topeka, Kansas, talking on the program,

"The Farmer Takes the Mike," had freely predicted that there would be no war this year because crops in drought-stricken Germany and Italy were poor. From the same program, Americans learned that a bumper wheat crop harvested here threatened to send wheat prices down to a new low. From Geneva, Switzerland, CBS brought an address by Clark M. Eichelberger, president of the League of Nations Association, who interpreted League policies on the eve of an opening session.

American children vainly awaited the folk and fairy tale in song usually sung for them by Irene Wicker, the Singing Lady. For only that morning, Miss Wicker had boarded the French liner "Normandie," en route to—of all places—Prague, in Czechoslovakia, to find new folk tales to sing to her adoring juvenile audience. In a special broadcast from Helsinki, Finland, CBS brought listeners here a preview of the 1940 Olympics on which Paavo Nurmi, noted Finnish runner, made great predictions for the competition which never came off because Russo-Finnish hostilities intervened.

On the Tuesday night before, America had thrilled to a new type of program—"Information Please." The idea of the program was to stump a board of experts consisting of John Kieran, sports writer; F. P. Adams, conductor of the famous Conning Tower column; Oscar Levant, wisecracking musical genius. Learned Clifton Fadiman, literary critic of the *New Yorker* magazine, presided as master of ceremonies. The board—or their guest experts—strove to answer all questions submitted by listeners or pay a cash penalty. Among the program's first guests were Paul de Kruif, scientist-writer; Stuart Chase, economist and author; Marc Connelly, playwright; and John Gunther, journalist and international observer. More than sixty thousand listeners sent in questions for the "Information Please" experts to answer that first week.

But under the surface, dire events were already in the making. On the afternoon of September 12, at two-fifteen, announcers on the various networks interrupted the regularly scheduled programs to announce that the world-awaited talk on Germany's foreign policy to be delivered to the Nazi Congress at Nuremberg by Adolf Hitler was now to be broadcast.

Then, before a fervent assemblage of his followers, Adolf

Hitler began, in his guttural, half-hysterical style, an address which was to launch the world upon twenty nerve-racking days, days in which the stream of events flowed from one climax on to another with such rapidity that even the winged words of radio had difficulty in keeping pace. For several months, Hitler's demands upon the Czechs for special rights and privileges for the Sudeten German minority had been growing. Now, at Nuremberg, in terms which were unmistakable, the Chancellor was to tell the world his latest demands and leave no question of the fact that the full weight of the growing German military machine stood squarely behind each spoken word.

During these twenty days, in more than a thousand broadcasts from important world centers by more than two hundred newsmen, radio followed wherever the finger of history pointed. American listeners heard Adolf Hitler, Neville Chamberlain, Édouard Daladier, Benito Mussolini, Eduard Beneš. Across the troubled lands of Europe journeyed men with microphones—by train, plane, automobile, horse cart. Americans, for the first time, realized how close were London and Prague, Paris and Berlin. They could hear a man breathe in Rome and a paper rustle in Munich. They heard, during these twenty days, broadcasts from Geneva, Nuremberg, Trieste, Stratford-on-Avon, Warsaw, Budapest, Clydebank and Castel Gondolfo. From minute to minute, as the world waited for the armies of Europe to move, American listeners heard—and understood—the development of the growing crisis.

Particularly in this crisis did radio prove its value as a public service, and particularly did the great networks prove their status as public servants. For up until Munich, there had been only an apathetic interest in world affairs on the part of the American listening public and commercial sponsors for European broadcasts were unheard of. The full expense of such broadcasts before Munich and during these tense twenty days was borne by the broadcasters—and the expense was terrific. According to Schechter, of NBC, the technical costs alone on the average European broadcast from a standard radio station (that is, without long line charges necessary when the broadcast point is remote from a broadcasting station) are fifteen dollars per minute. During these

twenty days, CBS, NBC, and MBS devoted more than one hundred hours to such broadcasts at a total technical cost of more than ninety thousand dollars.

Add to this cost the tremendous item of salaries. Regular correspondents for the networks receive salaries on a par with those of newspaper correspondents abroad, ranging roughly from five thousand dollars to ten thousand dollars per year. Newspapermen were paid from twenty-five dollars to one hundred and fifty dollars per broadcast. In addition, the expenses attendant upon handling such a gigantic piece of news coverage—travel, telephone, telegraph, hotel, food, tips, bribes—must be considered. These, by the most conservative estimate (no actual figures are available) would easily double the technical costs.

But the greatest cost to the networks and broadcasters lay in refunds to advertisers. During times of crisis, broadcasters have never hesitated to cut in upon commercial programs to bring important bulletins to listeners. During the Munich crisis, there was hardly a program during the night or day which was not interrupted for the dissemination of important news. For each minute thus consumed by the station in the public interest, refunds to the advertiser who originally bought that time must be made by the broadcasters. CBS, for example, refunds \$400,000 per year to advertisers for amputating five minutes from the tail end of nightly programs to present Elmer Davis or \$1,100 every five minutes. At this rate, the total cost in refunds for covering the Munich crisis amounted to \$1,320,000 although, in this case, the same rate cannot be used because many interruptions came during the cheaper, daylight hours and to sustaining programs.

After Munich, the networks had little trouble selling news programs to sponsors, but at the moment it is fairly well established that the networks and their associated stations undertook the tremendous task of placing the troubled world in a showcase for its listeners without any idea that, someday, their huge investment would pay big dividends. Broadcasters could not know until after the crisis had passed that the interest they had aroused in international affairs would continue at a pitch to justify commercial sponsorship.

But broadcasters were reckoning without Hitler's flair for the

dramatic and mystic, a flair which was to focus the eyes of the world upon his Chancellery in the *Wilhelmstrasse*. Adolf Hitler, in succeeding months, was to make the affairs of the world as vital to the merchant in Podunk as his own town ordinances.

Amidst the unrestrained shouting, the ear-splitting din of "Heil, Hitler's," the Chancellor stepped to the microphone at Nuremberg and sent words fraught with impending peril out through the ether waves to the waiting world.

Today in the National Socialist *Reich*, we find ourselves faced with a disgrace which we should have taken cognizance of years ago. Insofar as it is a matter of the common attitude of the Democratic countries toward Germany, we are not discouraged. Why should we have expected better? Let me say quite frankly that I much prefer to receive favors from one who cannot rob me than to be robbed by one who flatters me while doing so; but, thank God, we are in a position now to prevent Germany's being plundered or raped. The state which existed before us was blackmailed for fifteen years; yet it is considered an honor to be a Democratic state. For us, it is intolerable at this moment to think of a large part of our people exposed to the Democratic hordes who threaten us. I refer to Czechoslovakia! (SHOUTS)

. . . While the majority of the nationalities in that state are oppressed, there is, further, in that country a population of three and one-half million Germans. . . . These Germans, too, are God's creatures and the Almighty did not create them to be delivered unto a foreign power they detest. Nor did he create the seven and one-half million Czechs to hold these Germans under surveillance and act as their guardians; still less for the Czechs to torture and outrage them. Conditions in that country, as everyone knows, are intolerable.

. . . I do not intend to watch with endless patience the continued oppression of our German brothers in Czechoslovakia. . . . This cannot go on. This is no battle of words, but a struggle for justice, for a right that has been violated. The Germans demand a right of self-determination enjoyed by every other people, not mere words. Mr. Beneš has no gifts to bestow upon these Germans. *If the Democracies should cling to the belief that they must . . . defend this oppression of the German people, grave consequences will follow!*

. . . You have the right to be able to carry your German heads

raised once more in pride. We all have the duty never to bow them again to a foreign will!

Goebbels: Adolf Hitler, our *Fuehrer*!

Crowd: *Sieg Heil! Sieg Heil!*

It was four o'clock in the afternoon when Hitler finished speaking. At 4:05 P.M., a news commentator in CBS' New York studios took the air. His name was H. V. Kaltenborn, and while radio listeners up until now were familiar with his voice, perhaps with his name (Kaltenborn made his first radio broadcast in 1922 and has been on the air off and on ever since), this tall, dignified master-linguist and ad lib artist was seizing in his two big hands a priceless moment. During the next twenty days, he refused to leave the studio, cat-napping on hard lounges there, having his meals brought into him, munching at cold sandwiches, sipping black coffee while he studied teletype messages, cables and talked by long-distance telephone across the ocean to CBS newsmen in Europe and Asia. When the twenty days were finished and the peace of Munich had descended upon a still half-trusting world, Kaltenborn's name was a household word throughout America.

Now, grasping the contents of Hitler's spoken words, with only five minutes in which to translate them from German and digest them, Kaltenborn went on the air.

Adolf Hitler has spoken, [he told an America which had not yet had time to study and understand the meaning of the address], and the world has listened, because it feared that the speech might mean war. And it may mean war, but not immediate war. Certainly if there is one thing clear in what Hitler has said . . . it is that there is no immediate intention of forcing a crisis. There was nothing in his speech tantamount to an immediate ultimatum. There was in it—and through it—a very definite declaration that Germany would no longer tolerate the oppression, as he called it, of the Sudeten Germans in Czechoslovakia . . . Czechoslovakia would have to reach an agreement with the Sudeten Germans or the Germans would see that a settlement was reached.

In substance, then, the speech was very belligerent. It was a forceful speech, a relatively threatening speech hurling defiance at all the world. A speech that emphasizes Germany's growing military might, but not

a speech that creates an immediate crisis; not a speech that carries us into a situation where Europe need have a continuance of that particular type of jitters which has affected it during the past week. . . .

Other networks offered similar analyses following the Nuremberg address, but no other analyst of that period possessed the quick clarity, the easy, fluent manner of Kaltenborn in making complicated declarations—declarations perhaps purposely couched in vague and uncertain terms for the war of nerves Hitler was fighting—simple and understandable to the mass of listeners.

Kaltenborn is a proud man—and proud of it. H. V. in his name stands for Hans Von, and to the question, "Are you related to anyone of any importance in any field?" asked by the CBS publicity department, he answered:

My uncle was German Minister of War. My family is one of the oldest titled families in Germany (von Kaltenborn-Stachen) and is listed in the *Almanach de Gotes*. In Germany, I am addressed as Baron. As a boy, my father was a page at court. Later was an officer in a crack Guard's regiment.

Mr. Kaltenborn never hesitates to tell you how good he is, and he finds many ways in which to do it. For example, in that questionnaire, from which CBS press agents write stories for the newspapers and fan magazines, he wrote: "I have never been a professional entertainer although many people find me entertaining." He keenly enjoys his success, and his wife, the former Baroness Olga von Nordenflycht, is perhaps his warmest admirer. After the Orson Welles "Mars" broadcast, which caused a near-panic, she remarked, "No wonder there was a scare—Hans wasn't there to interpret the facts!"

But Kaltenborn is a diplomat, and even when he brags, he does it in such a way as not to offend or irritate his audience or guests. He is very patient and never in doubt about what he wants or how he will get it. At home, he is the head man, and the family—Mrs. Kaltenborn, Olga Anais, twenty-eight, and Rolf, twenty-four—revolves about him. His desires and his needs come first. Other matters are arranged to fit in with his schedule.

Born in Milwaukee, where his father had entered the building business after migrating from Germany, Kaltenborn was educated

in public schools, left them at the age of sixteen to join the army and be off to Cuba for the war with Spain. He was underage and underweight, but his facile tongue took him past the recruiting officers. After the war, he entered newspaper work and later became associate editor of the Brooklyn *Eagle*.

Finding the work of an editor too tame for his spirit and too confining for the wanderlust that boiled in his blood, he resigned his post and took a job as foreign correspondent for the same paper. He made his first radio broadcast in 1922 over WJZ, Newark, and made periodic broadcasts through the twenties. In 1932, he began to devote more and more time to this new medium and, in 1933, was under contract to CBS as a staff observer and commentator.

Most sensational of his broadcasts—until Munich—was from the uncertain safety of a haystack between the fire of Loyalist and Fascist bullets during the Spanish Civil War over a portable transmitter he carried upon his shoulder. He was the first American journalist to be granted an interview with Mussolini.

His interview with Hitler was not so pleasant. Hitler, according to Kaltenborn, likes to rave and rant, giving his interviewer never a chance to put in a question. To anyone who knows Kaltenborn's pleasure in dominating a conversation, it is very easy to understand how unpleasant such an interview would be.

This wide and versatile background, plus his thorough knowledge of languages, accounts in a great measure for Kaltenborn's success during the interminable series of crises leading to Munich. But even more important to the excellent job of interpreting complicated political and economic events and translating them into common terms done by Kaltenborn was the close contact maintained with trained observers abroad. The cabled reports of all the great news services poured across his desk from the troubled world centers as rapidly as they were received; and hourly, he was in touch by telephone with CBS correspondents abroad. These were the same brilliant reporters who had been serving radio for several years, a few abroad and others on the home news front.

But there was this important difference; where, before, it had been common radio reportorial practice simply to broadcast eyewitness reports of events as they happened, now the reporter re-

layed his facts to the network's nerve center in New York where the commentator fitted them into the general picture. Kaltenborn, for example, receiving such reports from London, Paris, Moscow, Berlin was in a better position to evaluate them in their relation to other happenings than the isolated reporter in any one of these cities who had no knowledge of what was happening elsewhere. It was a new way of presenting the news, a way which went beyond the simple presentation to include interpretation. The value of such a system depends entirely upon the caliber of the commentator. In the Munich crisis, there was no question of its value.

There were other differences in radio newscasting which became apparent during these twenty days. In the past radio newsmen were not always too capable. But at Munich, a serious, capable, hard-working and resourceful type of radio reporter put in his appearance. Actually, he had been on the job for several years, but it took an event of this caliber to bring him to public attention. William L. Shirer, Max Jordan, Ed Murrow, Fred Bate are men whose work is comparable to the best correspondence newspapers have to offer.

But interpretation was but a part of the whole presentation which included, during these twenty days, the actual statements and speeches of the statesmen involved—Hitler, Chamberlain, Laval, Daladier, Mussolini, Beneš—direct from their own lips; the observations of American-trained newsmen present in the foreign capitals where the various events were occurring; and comment of trained observers in these various capitals as to the underlying meaning and possibilities of the events reported by the newsmen.

The one really new feature of radio's handling of the Munich crisis was organization. Radio was doing nothing that it had not already done, both technically and editorially; but the sudden press of events, sprawling across the face of Europe; the need for speed and speed and more speed in competing with the long-established press; and the avid interest of the public in the twisting turn of events crystallized a loosely tied and haphazard organization into a tightly knit, smooth-meshing whole. A man in an office in New York figuratively pushed buttons which opened magic keys in

the farthest corners of the earth and brought the American listener the most complete picture of the road to war, in all its sordid and heartless reality, that had ever been presented to any people.

On the evening of September 12, radio's newsmen, speaking from foreign capitals, reported to the American public on reactions of the various peoples concerned. CBS' Ed Murrow, speaking from London, said:

There is little indication that Herr Hitler's speech this evening has decreased tension here. However, once again the British have demonstrated their ability to fly into a great calm at a time of crisis. . . . Feeling is widespread that the British Government will urge Czechoslovakia to do everything short of dismembering the country to prevent war.

In Berlin, commentators unanimously pointed out that the German in the street awaited the speech of their Chancellor with as many fears as did the rest of the world. From Prague, Iowa-born William L. Shirer, who had witnessed the Austrian *Anschluss*, told his listeners that President Beneš had listened to the address in the palace, the cabinet members in their private homes and that demonstrations by the Sudeten Germans had been mild, with no arrests, nobody hurt. John T. Whittaker, crack member of the Chicago *Daily News* foreign staff, gave the reaction of the French from Paris.

When Frenchmen heard what Hitler said about Czechoslovakia's alleged brutality to the Sudeten German minority and about the alleged conspiracy of the Democracies against Germany, they smiled. What interests Frenchmen is that, though it was a menacing and provocative speech, it was not precise. . . .

But on September 13, events moved rapidly as if to counter these opinions. The Czech Government declared martial law in five Sudeten German towns. Fourteen minutes after the communiqué had been handed to American newsmen, American radio listeners knew of it. In London, Prime Minister Chamberlain called his cabinet to No. 10 Downing Street for a conference. The Sudeten German party delivered an ultimatum to the Czech Gov-

ernment at 7:30 P.M. and twenty-six minutes after the document was delivered, Americans knew of it. The ultimatum demanded that martial law be lifted within six hours.

Late on the afternoon of September 14, with war seemingly minutes away and actual fighting going on in Czechoslovakia, the world was informed in a radio news flash that Prime Minister Chamberlain would fly to Germany next day for a personal interview with Adolf Hitler in a final effort to ward off a European war. Again radio was reporting—and first—a première performance. For the first time in history, the head of a great government would plead personally with another government's leader in a war crisis!

Just before entering the plane, Mr. Chamberlain gave a farewell message to the British people which, as was becoming habit now, was heard also on American radio.

I am going to see the German Chancellor [he explained] because the situation seems to me one in which discussions between him and me may have a useful consequence and the Fuehrer's reply to my suggestion encourages me to hope that my visit to him will not be without results.

Meanwhile, tension remained unabated in Prague. American listeners heard that Chamberlain's premeditated flight was received with a feeling of apprehension and a fear that Czechoslovakia would be called upon to make some new and drastic concession. More troops and tanks were sent into the Sudetenland to suppress the so-called rebellion. At Eger, Konrad Henlein, Sudeten German party leader, reiterated his demands in a proclamation which ended with the words, "We want to go home to the *Reich*."

For the first time, Europe was close to America—minutes away. And America was relearning its geography at the loud-speaker (and through "crisis" maps provided by the networks upon request), studying again the history which, a few years back, seemed unimportant and remote. For the echoes of medieval history were still reverberating in the ether waves, and the yellowed pages of dusty tomes on high library shelves came vividly alive in all these broadcasts. The roots of what was happening now had been planted long years ago.

And then, as the affairs of the world reached a most crucial point, something happened to radio. Short-wave transmission, never as perfect or as certain as the ordinary frequencies, can be utterly inaudible when atmospheric conditions are not favorable. Between September 15 and September 30, frequent electric storms over the Atlantic caused such interference that broadcasts did not come through and radio's news departments were forced to rely upon the same overcrowded cables and telephone lines as the newspapers for their news dispatches. This meant that radio, if the storms continued, would be only a short time ahead of the newspapers—the time it took newspapers to set type and print, to be exact.

In this situation, Jack Hartley, of the NBC news staff, ingeniously arranged a circuit for that network which completely confused its opposition for several days and resulted in NBC's scoring several notable beats. He had broadcasts sent to Capetown, South Africa; relayed from there to Buenos Aires, across the South Atlantic; and from Buenos Aires to New York, all by short-wave transmission. Broadcasts traveled three times as far as usual, but arrived only a few seconds later than if they had been sent directly from London or Berlin or Prague to New York.

Reports from Berchtesgaden, where Chamberlain and Hitler were meeting, were meager, trimmed by the fine hand of the German censor. Speculation and rumor—reported as such to listeners—took the place of fact. Then, dramatically, came the cold announcement that Chamberlain would return to London after only a few hours with Hitler. Experts guessed that Hitler's demands were more than Chamberlain could grant, a speculation that grew when a radio flash from Prague said that Konrad Henlein, en route to Germany to confer with Hitler, had been ordered arrested by the Czech Government on charges of treason.

A reporter for the British Broadcasting Company, who was heard by rebroadcast over American networks at noon, September 16, described the return of Chamberlain to the airport at Heston.

Glancing around the field out in front of the airdrome building, I see Lord Halifax standing there and the German Chargé d'Affaires,

Dr. Cross, and a crowd of people talking animatedly down below me . . . and at last the aircraft comes into sight. Now she is right to the southerly side and she is swinging round and she'll come across another full circle of the airdrome and land to the west. It's a tremendously dramatic moment!

Prime Minister Chamberlain, worn and tired and bearing the umbrella which had already become his peculiar mark, stepped down from the plane and spoke into a microphone.

I have come back again, rather quicker than I expected [he said in a weary voice]. Yesterday afternoon I had a long talk with Herr Hitler. It was a frank talk but a friendly one, and I feel satisfied now that each of us understands what is in the mind of the other. You won't, of course, expect me to discuss now what may be the results of that talk. . . . I am going to have another talk with Herr Hitler, only this time he has told me that it is his intention to come half-way to meet me. He wishes to spare an old man another such long journey.

History was being made within earshot of the loud-speaker, and loud-speakers had become standard equipment in almost every American home.

To bring through the air and across thousands of miles of ocean the sound of Europe tearing up her maps was not an easy one despite the facile way in which it seemed to be handled by those who listened in. In Prague, the lobby of the Ambassador Hotel, where diplomats and newsmen gathered, was an indescribable madhouse of rumor, tension and confusion. Radio reporters, with their engineers and technical aides close at hand and ready to go on the air at the drop of a hat—or an ultimatum—milled around, tried to get telephone calls through to the frontier, to Berlin, to the government offices in Prague, itself. One lone Czech switchboard girl bravely strove to keep track of a hundred placed calls.

The six-hour ultimatum given the Czech Government by Henlein had almost run its course. At about ten o'clock, one of the American correspondents managed to get a call through to his office in Berlin. Nothing was known there of the ultimatum. The German Government was issuing no news at all. A few minutes

later, word came through from the first of the correspondents who had rushed up to the Sudeten territory. He said that revolt had broken out there and that police and troops, with machine guns and hand grenades, were striving to keep order.

In this tense situation, an outstanding job of radio reporting was done by CBS' William L. Shirer, who had flown from his headquarters at Geneva to Prague. It was a foretaste of the brilliant and objective reporting this same corn-belt-reared newsman was to turn in from Berlin a year later when war actually came.

Shirer—and NBC's Max Jordan—are perhaps the best examples of the new type of newsman radio was presenting to the world during this first great dress parade for things to come. Hard-working, methodical, hard-hitting and mixing sweat with speed, Shirer knows diplomats and generals and prime ministers and cab drivers. Tireless, fearless, sometimes reckless, he is—in a way—the reincarnation of Richard Harding Davis, beau ideal of former newspaper days. Shirer would laugh at such a description. He prefers to think of himself as part of a great news-gathering machine. And he is a part of such a machine. That does not negate the fact that he is a man of hunches, of long shots and terrific gambles.

On September 10, on a hunch, he left sleepy, peaceful Geneva for Prague. During the next twenty days, he was to travel exactly 2,950 miles, average two hours sleep daily, mostly in his clothes, live largely on sandwiches, hot dogs and coffee. Because of the differences in time between Prague and New York, his broadcasts were scheduled during the night and reached America during the waking hours there. At 6 A.M., he talked with either New York or London by telephone, receiving his broadcasting schedule for the day. At seven or eight, news started coming in from the correspondents in Sudetenland and by nine, the various local government ministries could be contacted. Then he would spend several hours driving out into the Sudeten territory, some two hundred miles, to gather material for later broadcasts. In addition to doing from three to five broadcasts daily, he was constantly feeding news by cable and long-distance telephone to the news department in New York, where Kaltenborn waited.

The Henlein ultimatum to the Czech Government was de-

veloping the very sort of situation which Hitler had said would bring him to the aid of the Sudeten Germans, with violence and bloodshed already occurring. In a broadcast from Prague heard in America on the afternoon of September 18 (CBS had learned of NBC's circuit by way of Capetown and Buenos Aires by this time and had set up a similar circuit for itself) Shirer described his routine. It was almost midnight, Prague time.

I got on the telephone to Bill Morrell, of the London *Daily Express* with whom I had worked the night through in Vienna when the *anschluss* came. He was in Habensberg, a little town near Carlsbad. He was talking from a police station there, he said. On the corner a few feet away, he told me were the bodies of four Czech gendarmes and one German, covered with a sheet. There had been a five hour revolt. The Germans had shot dead all four gendarmes in the town, but reinforcements had come up and the Government had regained control.

And then I raced up the street to the Czech broadcasting house and tried to bellow a story through the microphones to you. Out on the street on Tuesday night, I must confess I felt a little ashamed. Whatever the atmosphere of hotel lobbies and newspaper offices was, the people in the street were almost maddening in their cold-blooded calm. They either refused to become excited or were incapable of excitement. They bought up the newspapers for the latest news but it didn't seem to affect them one way or another. They went on their way—to the beer hall, their favorite café or home to bed. There were no troops on the streets, no extra police at all, and by 1:00 a.m., the whole city's populace had gone to bed. Only the newspapermen, the diplomats and high government officials worked feverishly through that night. But make no mistake about it, the Czech people knew—and know now—what they're up against!

Now, all the American correspondents who have seen the fighting in the Sudetenland during the week agree on two things: First, that the fighting in each case was started by the Sudetens, who were well-armed, with German arms. Secondly, that the Czech police and troops, in the circumstances, acted with remarkable reserve. They used their arms only when fired at and they made very few arrests.

Matthew Houghton, of the Toronto *Star* has just come in. You've just come from the Sudeten country, I take it?

Houghton: Yes, just this minute. I was with Mr. Morrison and Vincent Sheean and we drove yesterday and today through the north-western Bohemian villages where Czechoslovakia may have to meet her destiny, and where men, women and children are living their lives on top of a volcano in intolerable suspense.

Shirer: A volcano?

Houghton: If ever I saw a volcano, it was today. We left the beautiful city of Carlsbad early today and drove down to the frontiers through the old historic towns where history is in the making again; through Eger and Asch where men have died this week and up in that narrow Czechoslovakian territory that runs like a sore thumb into Bavaria. There was enormous, ominous and preternatural calm in all those towns and villages. We'd drive down streets without seeing a living soul except soldiers and policemen.

Shirer: Did you see any fighting between Sudetens and gendarmes?

Houghton: None whatever. We saw at Eger the hotels and stations dented by bullets and the places where Czech policemen were killed. But the biggest thing we experienced was this ominous calm as they awaited the words of one man . . . And we saw refugee camps where hundreds of German Social Democrats had taken refuge against the wrath to come. . . .

On one score, all newsmen in Czechoslovakia were agreed: the Czechs were determined to fight to preserve their democracy and, if it became necessary, they would sell their freedom dearly. But the decision taken in Czechoslovakia to fight seemed already to have been voided in London where Chamberlain and Daladier were meeting. Even as the Henlein ultimatum reached its expiration hour, a joint communiqué of the British and French governments was flashed to the world from London.

"Britain and France have reached complete agreement with regard to a policy aimed at promoting a peaceful solution of the Czechoslovakian question."

The communiqué added that the two governments hoped that thereafter "it will be possible to consider a more general settlement of European peace."

For six days, American radio listeners had watched the crisis grow, were aware of all the fine nuances and shadings behind

the verbal barrages laid down in this war of nerves. Informed as perhaps no other people have ever been in such a time of crisis, they realized that the communiqué meant that the allies were prepared to sacrifice Czechoslovakia to save themselves, if Hitler did not demand too much.

Three more tense days of waiting followed. Negotiations upon which the decision—peace or war—hung, took place behind closed doors at the Hotel Dreeson, in Godesberg, where Chamberlain and Hitler held their second meeting. And again their meeting was brought into the sharp focus of the world's eye by radio.

During these days, CBS added a new wrinkle to radio news coverage when it put the two-way conversation (used as an anniversary stunt by NBC three years before) to practical use. Kaltenborn would talk from New York with correspondents in the various world capitals, ask questions, receive answers—and both ends of the conversation were heard instantaneously by American listeners. Radio fans heard from the lips of those on the ground the thoughts and reactions of people who, a short year later, were to be shedding their blood in a bitter war.

Radio men speak of this period as "The Munich Crisis." But in reality, it was a series of crises with one following another in rapid procession. Expiration of the Henlein ultimatum and the joint Franco-British communiqué brought one crisis to an end and laid the groundwork for the next which, even now, brewed and boiled behind locked doors at Godesberg.

Then, on the evening of September 23, listeners heard these quiet but dangerous words in an announcement from Godesberg.

"Mr. Chamberlain went to pay a farewell call on Adolf Hitler at ten o'clock tonight, which is 5:30 by New York time. So far, there is no word as to what transpired at this visit. A report throughout Europe is that negotiations between Chamberlain and Hitler are definitely ended."

The following day, Mr. Chamberlain returned to London. War seemed inevitable, hours away, and from Washington, President Roosevelt sent a direct message to Adolf Hitler and President Beneš, of Czechoslovakia, appealing for peaceful negotiation. The

President's message afforded NBC its first great scoop of this—until then—greatest news story.

NBC and other news agencies and networks had been informed by the State Department on the morning of September 26 that a statement giving the President's text would be issued later in the day. Canny Abe Schechter, knowing that it was against regulations to run a direct line into the State Department building, took other means of protecting his coverage. Two men were to attend the press conference, receive the text and run as fast as they could to designated spots. One spot was a telephone booth in the building where an NBC man, armed with a pocketful of nickels, was holding the line open to WRC, NBC's outlet station at the capital. The second spot was a taxi parked as close to the door nearest the conference room as possible.

When the man in the booth had received his copy, NBC cut into all its programs while the announcer said, "We now take you to Washington where we have the text of the message. . . ." Then, as the man in the booth read the text, carefully choosing his pauses, the announcer in the studio repeated it into the microphone. Despite the great care taken by the man in the booth, the first few minutes of the broadcast were slow and jerky, especially in view of the impatience with which listeners awaited the message. Five minutes later, however, the second man (he of the taxi) arrived at the studio with his copy of the text, the announcer started reading from it, and the public had the remainder of the broadcast in the usual polished NBC manner.

The important point, however, was the fact that Schechter's foresight permitted NBC to scoop the rest of the broadcasting world by a full fourteen minutes in giving the text of the President's message to the world.

Standing beneath a banner bearing the words, "The Sudeten Germans are not to be left in the lurch," Hitler, speaking in the *Sportpalast*, in Berlin, made a belligerent speech. In CBS' New York studios, Votya Beneš, brother of the President of Czechoslovakia, sat across a desk from H. V. Kaltenborn and discussed on the air the implications of the challenge Hitler had just thrown down. For Hitler's speech, from beginning to end, had been a ringing challenge and an ultimatum.

Queen Elizabeth, traveling from London to Clydebank, Scotland, to break a bottle of champagne across the bows of the new liner, "Queen Elizabeth," told the radio audience, "We proclaim our belief that by the grace of God and by man's patience and good-will, order may yet be brought out of confusion and peace out of turmoil. . . ."

On September 27, Kaltenborn informed listeners that Hitler had ordered full mobilization for the following day and that he stood ready to strike on October 1 unless Czechoslovakia acceded to his demands. In London, by the light of flares and automobile headlights, trenches were being dug in the parks. There was a tight, tired look about the eyes of Londoners, and gas masks were being issued by air raid precaution men.

Next morning, Mr. Chamberlain reported for the first time to Parliament on his negotiations with Hitler. A running account of his statement, as the words fell from his lips, was being transmitted to the American people by an observer from a vantage point in the House of Commons. And listeners may have noticed in the public speeches of diplomats during this period a quality which had never been contained in even the most important utterances of the past's great statesmen. With Chamberlain—as with Hitler, Mussolini and Beneš—was the certain knowledge that the words he spoke were being heard in all corners of the earth; and that men in high and low places, the peoples of the earth, were passing judgment upon him. His speech was a justification of his efforts, an attempt to show that he had sacrificed dignity in flying to Munich and again to Godesberg, but that no sacrifice was too great if peace could be preserved. It was a skillfully worded plea for the sympathy and support of a world he knew was hanging upon his every word.

Just as he reached the point in his address where he declared that, in spite of all he had been able to do, war seemed inevitable, Sir John Simon handed him a penciled note. Members of Parliament, newsmen, a world that was all but present in the vivid word pictures being painted for it, sensed the importance of the missive and waited breathlessly as he unfolded it and read.

It was an invitation from Hitler to attend a conference the following day in Munich at which representatives of England,

Germany, France and Italy would try, by peaceful negotiation, to avert war. Czechoslovakia, the nation most concerned in the negotiations, was significantly omitted from the list of conferring nations.

A scene unprecedented in British Parliamentary history followed. Never before was there such a tumult in the House of Commons. Amid cheers, shouts, crying and waving of papers, Chamberlain, tears streaming down his cheeks, sat down.

The same thorough coverage which had marked earlier developments in the crisis continued at Munich with the teamwork of on-the-spot reporters feeding news to commentators drilled in condensing, clarifying and interpreting it for the mass mind. And at Munich, NBC scored its second notable scoop of the twenty-day period.

Troops were already marching in *Unter den Linden* when Max Jordan, NBC's European news chief, received word of the Munich Conference from the German propaganda ministry. He immediately booked passage on a plane leaving Berlin and, an hour later, was before a microphone in the main station at Munich reporting the arrival of Mussolini for American listeners. Jordan did an all-time high piece of reportorial work in covering this conference from its every phase, even getting into the "Brown House," where the Big Four met, and doing a broadcast from an improvised studio under the roof of the building. During the day, he did fourteen broadcasts to America.

But all of these broadcasts were purely "local-color" descriptions of the four men whose conversations would decide the future of an agitated world. There was no news about what was really going on behind the closed conference doors.

Then, suddenly, word came that the conference was about to close and that a protocol had been signed by the four parties. Newsmen and radio men rushed to the hotels where the various delegations were staying to receive their press releases, American reporters going to the British delegation's headquarters. Prior to the breaking up of the conference, however, Jordan had spoken to Sir William Strang, of the British group, and arranged to receive whatever releases that group made. When word

that the conference had broken up and that the Italian delegation was already rushing from the building to catch its train reached the newsmen, they rushed for their waiting cars.

But on the way out, Jordan saw Sir William on the pavement, noticed that Sir Horace Wilson, with Strang, carried prepared releases. He asked for his copy and Strang, taking one from Wilson, handed it to him. Back up the stairs at breakneck speed raced Jordan, but in the improvised broadcasting room, a new difficulty confronted him. The German radio official in charge did not believe that he had an official text of the agreement at first and, later, when he was convinced, didn't like the idea of Jordan broadcasting it to America before the German text had been released to German listeners.

Tearfully, Jordan pleaded; then he became angry and a fist fight almost ensued. But Jordan's eloquence finally won out and, eight minutes after the release had been handed him, it was being heard by American listeners. The NBC broadcast was forty-six minutes ahead of all competition, and listeners tuned to NBC stations knew of the end of the free democracy which was Czechoslovakia before many of the correspondents who were present in Munich!

Statesmen throughout the world hastened to pay tribute to the power of radio. They said that radio, by keeping the world so fully informed, had forced the choice of negotiation upon leaders who, twenty years before, might well have chosen war. Friends of Marconi who had predicted that radio "would permit nations to talk with one another and understand each other's problems" were busy with their "I told you so's." Ex-Governor James M. Cox, of Ohio, perhaps expressed this thought as clearly as any other when he wrote:

The broadcasts from Europe and the American introductions and interpretations illustrate better than anything I know the fact of an entirely new world in which we are living. There would doubtless have been war ten days ago except for reactions which have come from behind the governments of Europe. If what we have now had been a part of things in 1914, I doubt very much that there would have been a world conflict. Today, however, everything is known and it is impossible for unprincipled agitators to deceive even their own public.

The palms which were being hung upon radio, as a medium of public information, after Munich were merited, and the developments of the months following Munich and leading to the outbreak of World War II amply bear out this statement. Americans were the best informed people in the world during those fateful twenty days. Americans knew every move that was made as it was made, enjoyed brilliant interpretations of these moves by students of government and economics and international affairs. But American radio is a competitive and free institution.

What happened abroad?

In England, during the crisis, a prominent magazine recommended that readers who wanted to know the truth about Czechoslovakia should tune to the short-wave broadcasts from American stations! When Winston Churchill wanted to talk about the crisis, the British Broadcasting Company refused to carry his speech, which was heard only in America. When Anthony Eden discussed the subject from London, an American network made his words heard all across America—but not one Englishman, unless tuned to an American station, could hear his voice.

How well the French radio acquainted its listeners with vital facts is best illustrated by an American exchange student at the Sorbonne who, leaving France at the height of the crisis and two days after almost complete mobilization had been ordered, had her first knowledge of the mobilization and the fact that France was on the verge of war after she boarded an American liner.

In Germany, listening to foreign broadcasts had long been a misdemeanor. Hitler's one-tube sets are designed to pick up local signals only, and German listeners heard Nazi party exhortations, tales of Germans being killed and maltreated in Sudetenland and emotional outbursts by Nazi bigwigs.

Free radio as we know it here in America might well be a means of welding all peoples into a world brotherhood which would make war a relic of the dark past. But government-controlled radio is not and probably never will be free. A radio system controlled by a political, a religious or an economic group for the furtherance of its own powers and ambitions can be more harmful and destructive to democratic processes than complete absence of radio. This is a fact Mr. Kaltenborn was to learn.

The twenty nerve-racking days just ended had evidenced the growth to mature stature of radio newscasting. The necessity of the moment had molded into a finely organized and supersensitive sounding board various processes which had been building over eighteen experimental years. And the most vivid personality to rise in this period—just as Sir Phillip Gibbs is remembered in newspaperdom for his dispatches of the first World War—was H. V. Kaltenborn. Kaltenborn, man of crisis, was the man of the hour.

In August, 1939, a new crisis arose over Danzig and the Polish Corridor, and again a war between Germany and a neighbor seemed inevitable. In order to do a better reportorial job than before, Kaltenborn went to Europe. But in the maelstrom that was Europe on the eve of World War II, Kaltenborn was lost. Only in Germany, where an efficient and world-wide espionage system is maintained, was he remembered. *Gestapo* officials met his plane in Berlin, refused to permit him to leave the airport and bundled him back onto the next outgoing plane. In Warsaw and Danzig he was just another crazy American radio man to officials already nursing severe diplomatic headaches. Mr. Kaltenborn returned to America to find other commentators sharing the place he once held so exclusively in the hearts of American listeners.

In a time of crisis, Kaltenborn's broadcasts from abroad had been sketchy, lacking in detail and information. But a great truth had come home to rest upon the broad shoulders of the man who had once written, "In Germany, I am addressed as Baron."

The humblest radio listener in the United States is better informed than the greatest radio commentator or newspaper editor abroad!

Two weeks after the peace of Munich, radio gave a laboratory demonstration of how heavy that peace hung over the heads of Americans who had followed it from beginning to end; and of how effective the new technique of news broadcasting had become. Orson Welles, youthful writer-producer-director of the Mercury Theater, presented his group in H. G. Wells' *The War of the Worlds*, on Sunday evening October 30.

Network officials (it was heard over CBS) had been frankly skeptical about the presentation. They thought the hackneyed idea of a war between men of Mars and earth men could never hold an audience, and inasmuch as the Mercury Theater was on at the same time that NBC was presenting the popular Charlie McCarthy, they felt that Welles might select a stronger vehicle. In a memo to Welles, an executive had written: ". . . 'Men from Mars' might drive all our listeners over to Charlie McCarthy. . . ."

But network officials reckoned without two important factors. In the first place, young Mr. Welles was nothing if not a realist, and if network officials had forgotten Munich, Mr. Welles had not. The second factor was the weird state of jitters the American public was undergoing as a result of the twenty days which saw this world's civilization totter on the brink of disaster, then slowly regain its balance.

In adapting *The War of the Worlds* for radio, Welles used the same technique radio had employed in covering Munich—news flashes, commentaries, eyewitness accounts. And to add to the realism, he had the invincible creatures from Mars attack the New Jersey town of Grover's Mills and spread out north and south from there until the whole eastern seaboard must seem to lie in their destructive path.

The result was devastating. Many American radio listeners have trained themselves to ignore opening and closing announcements of radio programs because they have come to know that these two spots usually contain the commercial announcements. So, many never heard the introduction to Welles' program explaining that it was a dramatization of a novel. Others, tuning in after the program had started, heard what seemed to them to be newscasts of a terrific invasion of America. Not in our time has misunderstanding on such a grand scale spread with such wildfire rapidity.

Patrolman John Morrison was on duty at the switchboard in the Bronx Police Headquarters when suddenly "all the lines became busy at the same time." Plugging in, Patrolman Morrison heard one shout in unison from all the calls—"They're bombing New Jersey!"

"How do you know?" the officer asked.

"I heard it on the radio," one woman told him. "Then I went to the roof and I could see the smoke from the bombs floating over toward New York. What shall I do?"

In Macon, Ga., a man hospitalized to recover from a surgical operation leaped from his bed, tore the stitches loose and collapsed. At Concrete, Wash., the power plant failed at the height of the broadcast. This was final proof for residents of the town, most of whom fled to the hills and would not return until posses had been sent for them. A Pittsburgh man entered his home in the middle of the broadcast to find his wife clutching a bottle of poison. "I'd rather die like this than that way!" A realistic touch in the broadcast was the declaration of martial law in New Jersey, and National Guardsmen, despite hearing that troops sent against the Martians were being burned to death like ants in a prairie fire, called New Jersey headquarters by the hundreds, asking where they should report for duty.

In thirty minutes, listeners from coast to coast were in panic, police stations were besieged, eastern telephone exchanges jammed. Highways in New Jersey were blocked for miles and miles by listeners fleeing the danger zone.

Next day, indignation shared the spotlight with amusement and—for many who permitted themselves to be duped by the program—abashed smiles as the press, Congress and the FCC swung into action.

"I'm very sorry," Welles said, "I had no idea. . . ." H. G. Wells, author of the novel from which it was adapted, told newspapermen that he did not give permission for such a use of his work. Columnist Heywood Broun wrote: ". . . I doubt that anything of the sort would have happened four or five months ago. The course of world history has affected national psychology. . . . After Munich . . . if many sane citizens believed that Mars had jumped us suddenly, they were not quite as silly as they seemed."

The New York *World-Telegram* took a deeper and more significant view of the occurrence in its editorial columns.

If so many people could be misled unintentionally when the pur-

pose was merely to entertain, what could designing politicians not do through control of broadcasting stations? The dictators of Europe use radio to make their people believe falsehoods. We want nothing like that here. Better have American radio remain free to make occasional blunders than start on a course that might, in time, deprive it of freedom to broadcast uncensored truth. . . .

THE SOAP OPERAS

IN 1940, ADVERTISERS SPENT \$83,113,801 ON NBC, CBS AND MBS for the purchase of time, alone, with \$10,000,000 added for talent, music and production costs. Worthy of note is the fact that Procter & Gamble Co. was the largest time-buyer on NBC, spending \$6,485,788 during the year, with Sterling Products, Inc., second with an expenditure of \$3,047,077. On CBS, Lever Bros. bought the most time—\$3,392,672 worth—with General Foods following with an expenditure of \$3,191,167. In short, the largest time-buyers on radio were concerns selling to housewives. Procter & Gamble and Lever Bros. are soap manufacturers. General Foods and Sterling Products are food manufacturers. By 1940, the technique of reaching the housewife's ear had been reduced to a formula. The formula was not always pretty but it was effective.

Sponsors of programs aimed at selling merchandise to housewives had discovered that adding listeners' teardrops to the dish-water was a big business. Daytime serials had become the biggest thing in radio, whether you considered them from a standpoint of broadcast time, expenditure of the advertising dollar, listening interest or effectiveness in selling what the sponsor had to offer.

The average network station, in 1940 and 1941, devoted five hours—in fifteen-minute programs—to daytime serials designed to entice women to buy household items. Add to that the two hours devoted to persuading kids to persuade their mothers to buy a certain type of cereal or bread because, with each box top or wrapper, the youngster would receive a badge making him a genuine Junior G-Man, or a mask identical with that worn by the Lone

Ranger, and you've cut quite a swathe in a day's broadcasting schedule of sixteen hours.

Those closely associated with broadcasting—and especially program directors of networks and individual stations—are not too pleased with such a state of affairs. Station WHO, in Des Moines, Ia., is one of the larger and more progressive stations which maintains a large artists' bureau and builds many fine local shows. Recently, its program director, Harold Fair, lamented the fact that daytime serials, coming over the networks, consumed so much of the station's time.

"I know that we can build better programs right here," he said, "but they won't sell merchandise as the soap operas do. And so we take soap operas and like them."

Daytime serials, like so many developments in radio, grew up without design or direction. The further one probes into the story of broadcasting, the more one finds the tail wagging the dog. Let's go back to the year 1925, when radio was beginning to get its feet solidly upon the ground.

There were no great networks, and local station managers used musical programs mostly because they were the easiest and cheapest programs to present. On some of the larger programs of this period, drama had been presented—vaudeville skits, for the most part, and, on only the biggest broadcasts where large budgets were available (as the *Eveready Hour* and the *Majestic Program*) did such stars as Elsie Janis and John Barrymore appear in scenes from great plays. Actors, writers, producers and directors demanded and received large salaries in the theater, in movies, in vaudeville. Radio, still unable to demand large fees from doubtful advertisers, could hardly hope to compete with these long-established and highly profitable media of entertainment.

In the spring of 1925, a man-and-wife vaudeville team, Marian and Jim Jordan, was playing a series of theater engagements about Chicago. Because their press agent felt that radio might enhance their drawing power at the box office, he persuaded them to appear in a series of skits over WENR, in Chicago. This program, known as "The Smith Family," and presenting the intimate and down-to-earth life of a witty couple in a continued sequence, was

the great-granddaddy of the soap operas. Ironically, "The Smith Family" never quite caught on with the public. But in May, 1941, the Crosley Survey—radio's standard measuring rod of listener interest—revealed that the most widely heard program of the month in America was "Fibber McGee and Mollie." And "Fibber McGee and Mollie" are Marian and Jim Jordan or—"The Smith Family!"

That same year, a couple of blackface comedians, Freeman Gosden and Charlie Correll, were also making their bid for fame in Chicago. Things hadn't gone too well during the year, and they had ended up as a harmony team over a Chicago radio station where, in lieu of pay, they were meted out generous allotments of chicken à la king at the hotel which operated the station. Then the Chicago *Tribune's* pioneering station, WGN, signed them to a contract as staff artists, and it was there that they created their first important blackface act. By the time the year 1926 had rolled around, "Sam 'n' Henry" were well known to Chicago listeners. By the end of 1926, they were prime favorites and their recordings sold profitably.

One personal appearance Correll and Gosden will never forget was that made on December 31, 1926, at the home of Samuel Insull. In Chicago, an invitation to appear at the New Year's party of Mrs. Insull was equivalent to a command performance in London. For Insull, in those days, was czar of a fabulously far-flung and wealthy public-utilities empire and a great patron of the arts. The boys were elated at the honor.

From a concealed loud-speaker, they were introduced by Mrs. Insull as "Radio's Newest Find," and they did a composite program of the best gags they had pulled during the year. Piling laugh upon laugh, they saved the biggest until last. Then they rushed into the room where the guests were seated to receive their ovation.

There, seated on thirty-five gold chairs, they found Tito Schipa, Rosa Raisa and thirty other operatic bigwigs present—Mrs. Insull was a great opera patron—none of whom understood ten words of English or even that much of blackface comedy. The only ovation was a cold ring of upraised eyebrows. It was Correll and Gosden's biggest flop.

Only five years later, Correll and Gosden could have bought and sold many times over what was left of the great Insull holdings when the pinch of the depression showed that Insull's was an empire builded upon a substance less substantial than sand.

In 1929, Gosden and Correll went over to WMAQ, NBC-owned Chicago station and, taking a cue from the technique developed by the Jordans in their "Smith Family," introduced the adventures of "Amos and Andy." Chicagoans who had been enthusiastic about "Sam 'n' Henry" were agog over "Amos and Andy." Two months later, Pepsodent bought the show and sent it over one of the earliest coast-to-coast network hookups.

High-powered promotion men set about building the show to a stature commensurate with its high-cost budget. It was announced as "the coming American show." Newspapers violently disagreed with that thesis on the morning after the show's national première. One paper carried an eight-column streamer reading, "Radio's greatest flop has arrived." A New York *Sun* critic devoted three-quarters of a column to her "disappointment over the much-heralded 'Amos and Andy' broadcast which started last night." Truth of the matter was that listeners hadn't yet been conditioned to radio serials in which the plot was continued from day to day. And just as Marian and Jim Jordan laid down the foundation upon which daytime serials were to be built, Correll and Gosden did the preliminary work of conditioning listeners across the nation to following a continued radio program.

Soon listeners everywhere—like the Chicagoans—were enthusiastically following—and aping—the adventures and expressions of Amos and Andy. And suddenly, serial dramas began to appear like sparrows wherever a transmitting antenna stood. By the turn of the decade, students of radio were comparing the era in which radio then stood with the motion picture era in which Pearl White and Ruth Roland serials were filmdom's biggest money-makers.

But one great difference existed. Motion pictures are planned for whole-family attendance, and serials could not long continue as principal screen fare. In radio, sponsors soon learned that, for different times of the day, different types of programs do the best selling job. At night, when the whole family is apt to be listening,

a general comedy-and-music broadcast, or dramatic show, or quiz program is likely to attract the greatest number of listeners. In the late afternoon and early evening, programs for children are a good bet. But in the mornings and early afternoons, housewives are the principal radio listeners. And surveys—both sales and listener surveys—monotonously demonstrated that the serial dramas are the most effective programs for housewives.

A survey made by H. M. Beville, Jr., research manager of NBC, showed that classical and semiclassical music, news broadcasts, and drama of the Arch Oboler-Helen Hayes-Orson Welles type holds the interest of radio listeners in the five-thousand-dollar-and-up-a-year families, but comedy and the daily serials are preferred dial fare of those in the two-thousand-dollar income bracket. The great leveler which makes daytime serials effective sales media in the high-salaried brackets as well as in the lower brackets is the fact that servants do much of the household buying in wealthier homes.

So, instead of flourishing for a year or so only to die off with a maturing art and the cultivation of a more choosy audience, radio serial dramas have remained the best means of selling household goods. One woman writer alone—Irna Phillips—writes more than two million words per year to supply an avid public with life in fifteen-minute batches. She is the author of three well-known shows—"Guiding Light," "Women in White," and "Road of Life"—shows which are fairly typical of the daytime listening diet.

"Guiding Light" is the story of a kindly cleric, Reverend Rutledge, who shows people how to live and, by his deep understanding, extricates his townfolk from the most difficult situations arising from matters of morals, ethics, love and hate. The morals, ethics, loves and hates are all of an accepted standard. The FCC sees to that. While Congress did not give the FCC the power of censorship it has used its licensing powers as an effective weapon of censorship. When Mae West appeared in a skit on Adam and Eve on the Chase and Sanborn Hour over a coast-to-coast hookup in 1939 and made double-edged remarks which offended the ears of the commissioners, network officials were

hauled upon the carpet, told that it must not happen again if they wished to have their member stations re-licensed.

Thus far, there is no record of a daytime serial script offending in such a manner, and the loves of the daytime heroines and heroes never go as far astray as the legitimate theater, or the modern novel permits.

"Women in White" is the never-ending story of a young surgeon who, while healing the ailing in body, himself suffers the torments of hell in his involvement in a hopeless love affair with a nurse. There are seven network serials being broadcast five days a week in which physicians appear as principal characters. And in "Road of Life," Miss Phillips has created a grand Irish mother, whose difficulties and problems in rearing her individualistic offspring and helping them out of their scrapes and woes are bared before the microphone.

Miss Phillips—slight, sharp-featured—receives an estimated three thousand dollars a week for guiding the lives of some sixty characters in her three serials. If that seems an outlandish salary, consider that her production—counted in novels—would amount to twenty-two a year!

Miss Phillips organizes her work on a scale commensurate with its gargantuan proportions. She goes to work each morning at eight in her three-room office suite. Darting back and forth across the workroom, Miss Phillips dictates the daily installments of her three shows to her secretary, Gertrude Prys. Miss Prys identifies each character by the change of inflection, most of the times knows what sound effects to insert without being told. Unlike the old lady who lived in a shoe, Irna Phillips manages a very large family, obviously does know what to do—and does it superbly well.

To get a quick idea of the many fields into which daytime serial writers have probed in search of possibilities and situations to bring a tear—or at least, a sympathetic tug at a heart-string—let us glance at a few of the current air shows.

In the romantic serial, "Against the Storm," a symbolic title, mists of distrust between lover and beloved arise (which is how the press agent for the show describes it). These mists affect the lives of lover and beloved direly, set daily scenes as blackly

tragic as any to which radio's daytime listeners have been subjected. This, like so many others, is a story filled with tears of joy or happiness—but always tears. Writers—as well as listeners—take their serials in deadly seriousness. Sandra Michel, author of "Against the Storm," wrote a three-page letter of bitter and tearful complaint to the editor of a radio magazine when a hapless caption writer spoke lightly of the program.

But all daytime serials are not cut of such depressing cloth. One of the earliest—and most successful—is "The Goldbergs." Here is a vivid and colorful story of an ordinary Jewish family in New York—and an excellent example of how gripping the close-at-hand things can be made when treated in a masterly fashion. Its appeal is much the same as that of the highly successful stage play, "Abie's Irish Rose."

In an early broadcast of this serial, these lines of dialogue appeared.

For you, papa, two and two must always make four. Such logic you have. [The voice was scolding—gentle, but nevertheless, scolding.]

Yes, Mollie, and for you, one and one can make four. Yes? Such arithmetic you have!

If you're the type interested in the formula behind any success story (and in radio, you can bet there is a formula), and if you happen to be looking now for the formula which has permitted "The Goldbergs" to endure on radio for more than a dozen years, you will find it in those two lines of dialogue. There is Mollie—warmly, lovably human and illogical—striving to make her illogical dreams come true against all laws of reason; and papa, sternly honest and logical, a creature of this world. Add Sammy, Rosie and Uncle David, with their problems and worries and loves, and you have a family circle which, stripped of its Jewish dialect and exterior, might be any American family.

That is the nearest approach to a formula which can be applied to this serial. Boiled down, it is simply a matter of doing a show which will have a wide human appeal.

If it seems strange to you that a poor Jewish family from the ghetto of New York should become the symbol of family life to so many people of all sects and races throughout the country, it is

because you haven't met Gertrude Berg, their originator. Gertrude is Mollie.

"I have two families," she confessed to this writer—"my radio family and my own family. In different ways, of course, it's hard to say which is the closer to me."

There is no question but that she lives out each heartbreaking or humorous experience her brain children undergo in the course of a broadcast. The Bergs—there is husband Louis Berg, a sugar technician; Cherney, eighteen-year-old son; Harriet, fourteen-year-old daughter; and Gertrude—live in a ten-room duplex apartment in Central Park West these days. There, in a neat little study away from the usual noises of a healthy household, "The Goldbergs" is written. Mrs. Berg is a stickler for detail and her scripts are first set down as short narratives and later chopped into individual broadcasts and put into dialogue form. She works early in the morning, before her own family is up. This is not so much to avoid the family as it is an effort to spend more time with them, for from their conversations and affairs, she gleans much of her material.

Mrs. Berg is a "conversation-snitcher." When anyone says something that strikes her as having dialogue possibilities, she jots it down. Once she got up and left a dinner party the Bergs were giving for friends and when, after an hour, her husband went to look for her, he found her working over a typewriter on an idea she had just gotten. In her enthusiasm, she had forgotten her real family for "The Goldbergs."

At forty-three, Mrs. Berg is much too heavy for her height. She'll tell you vaguely that she weighs 150 pounds, but a figure close to 200 would be more nearly correct. "I've tried dieting," she said, "but watching my calories makes me nervous. So . . ."

She met Louis Berg, a young chemist at Columbia University, in 1918, and the following year they were married and left New York for New Orleans where he had a job with a large sugar refinery. During this period, she wrote poems and essays for her own amusement and without any thought of turning this talent to a profitable use. But in 1924, when fire destroyed the sugar refinery and left her husband without a job, they returned to New York and to hard times.

Radio was a young and awkward art then. But this young mother and wife saw—with her insatiable taste for the warm things of life—what so many of the program builders of that early day failed to see: That people are most interested in the things close at hand, in the everyday problems of everyday people. So, armed with a series of scripts and with a letter of introduction from Herman Bernie, brother of the maestro, Ben, she went calling on program directors. It was Julian Seabach, then program director for CBS, who became interested in her work and who agreed to put on four trial broadcasts. After the first one, however, the series was canceled because she had one of her characters say, "Marriages are made in heaven," and because she had a reference to God in her dialogue. Executives feared she was a radical!

Late in 1928, she contacted Hyman Brown, who was specializing in dialect material by Milt Gross on radio, and read her scripts to him. Brown introduced her around the studios and a few weeks later, NBC put the show on as a sustaining feature. After two weeks on the air, it was bought by a sponsor.

In such portraits as those painted daily on "The Goldbergs," Mrs. Berg is helping to unite a people; helping to make the melting pot which is New York and America actually work. It is one of the few radio serials which—perhaps without thought or plan—serves a definite and important national purpose.

On the technical side, too, Mrs. Berg has made an important contribution to radio in her realistic technique of production. When the script calls for frying eggs, she fries eggs in a skillet—but really. Later, Irving Reis, Douglas Coulter and Orson Welles were to bring this technique effectively to the classic "Columbia Workshop."

Being a realist, Mrs. Berg understands how far the Bergs have traveled in these past twelve years. While "The Goldbergs"—for script purposes—still know financial uncertainty, the Bergs are comfortably protected against wolves at the door through annuities, insurance and government bonds. Recently, a newspaperman sent to interview Gertrude Berg, remarked that she seemed "a fugitive from the Bronx express." Which is perhaps

the way Gertrude Berg wants it to be for all her five-thousand-dollar-a-week income.

The approximate forty million dollars spent each year for the past three years in staging and broadcasting daytime serials would, in itself, indicate their importance as a segment of the whole radio picture when considered in relation to the total expenditures made by advertisers during these same years—approximately \$83,113,801 on the three major networks, with an additional \$40,000,000, approximately, spent for local programs. Expenditures for the soap operas amounted to almost 50 per cent of all network expenditures and a third of all radio expenditures in the United States!

But, as is the case with figures, the importance of daytime serials is not truly shown in these statistics. Dollars spent in buying daytime hours go much further than dollars spent at night—at least a third further—while other factors serve to further invalidate the testimony of figures in estimating the importance and effect of this phenomenon of radio. Artists heard on the big nighttime programs—Jack Benny, Fred Allen, Bob Hope, Eddie Cantor—draw huge salaries, demand enormous production costs and endless rehearsals at rehearsal wage scales set by AFRA. These costs are in addition to the increased cost of evening time on radio.

Voices heard on the daytime serials, on the other hand, are usually unknown in the theater or to the screen. In fact, a whole new field for the dramatically ambitious—and especially the dramatically ambitious who lack the beauty necessary for screen or stage success—has been opened up here. And for the most part, salaries are in proportion. Few players appearing in daytime serials receive more than two hundred dollars per week, most receive much less. Payment is based upon appearances and writers, stuck in the middle of a dilemma, often write around situations and characters until they can find a way out. When this happens, the unfortunate actresses or actors involved may not appear before the microphone for many days. Writing around characters is also a device used to give characters in serial dramas their vacation periods without calling in substitutes or under-

studies. Only a few of the top-notch serial stars—as Myrt and Marge, Jim and Marian Jordan, Edward G. Robinson (Big Town), of the screen or Jean Hersholt (Dr. Christian), also of the screen—receive salaries which run above a thousand dollars per week.

The youngsters, using radio as a steppingstone to screen or the legitimate theater, comprise the rank and file of serial casts. But it has become, too, a graveyard of the famous where stars of yesterday find a last drop of theatrical consolation in the play, no matter how dull or unimportant.

While radio has given—or at least brought into range of the public eye—a great many liberal writers and producers, men like Arch Obeler, Orson Welles, Irving Reis, and given new voice and wider range to the works of such men as William Saroyan and Archibald MacLeish, not one really great or liberal voice has been uncovered by the daytime serials. Perhaps it is too much to expect that a writer could turn out masterful pieces five times a week, week in and week out. But perhaps, too, it is because the approach to daytime serial production is that of Big Business. One sponsor has often had as many as seven serials running at once. One advertising agency, alone, prepared and wrote eighteen serials simultaneously.

Which brings us to one of the oddest outfits in this business of selling soap-chips to housewives through serial dramas—the advertising agency of Blackert-Sample-Hummert, Inc. This company is the Number One buyer of radio time, the Number One producer of radio material.

The deep-rooted dream of almost every girl who enrolls in a business college is to land a swell job, marry the boss and settle down to rear a family amid luxurious surroundings. With Anne Hummert, the formula varied but little. In fact, her career might well have furnished plot material for one of the daytime serials she was later to produce. She landed a swell job with the advertising agency of Blackert-Sample-Hummert, married her boss and then settled down to the business of rearing radio serials in car-load lots.

From the Greenwich, Conn., workshop where the Hummerts

labor have come such successful radio shows as "Mr. Keene, Tracer of Lost Persons"; "David Harum"; "John's Other Wife"; "Stella Dallas"; "Lorenzo Jones"; "Just Plain Bill"; "Romance of Helen Trent"; "Alias Jimmy Valentine"; "Second Husband"; as well as "Manhattan Merry-Go-Round"; "Waltz Time"; "American Album of Familiar Music" and a wide and varied flock of others.

To keep the complicated and tragedy-laden lives of all these characters running simultaneously and without collisions, mix-ups and fatalities is not unlike playing God. The Hummerts take it all in their stride and still find time for leisure activities.

To begin at the beginning: back in 1930, Anne Ashenhurst, not long out of Goucher College but long enough to have worked on newspapers in Baltimore, Chicago and Paris, became Frank Hummert's secretary. Hummert was then copy chief of the agency and his radio shows already a popular radio feature.

The job of being a secretary lasted only a few days. Anne had the same feeling for homey characters and down-to-earth shows that Hummert had been capitalizing upon; and she soon was working on script. By 1935, they were both vice-presidents in the agency, Frank drawing a salary of \$117,000 per year and Anne a modest \$21,000. That same year, the office collaboration which had ripened into love wound up in marriage and a newer, fuller era of radio production.

With so many shows on the air at once, the Hummerts do not try to do the writing. Instead, they devote their time to planning their shows, developing plots and characters and general themes and leave the writing to a battery of dialogue writers. Once, when the Hummerts were on a jaunt to Europe, a script writer had one of the characters in a show lose a leg through amputation. It was like having an operation performed on one of their children, and when the Hummerts returned, they were furious. From that day on, they have exercised the closest watch on their script and read every line before it is aired. This, in itself, is no small job.

Hummert shows employ during a week more than five hundred writers, actors, directors and announcers. In 1939, sponsors of

Hummert-produced shows spent ten millions of dollars for the purchase of time alone.

Up until the early months of 1939, the Hummerts were engaged in a bitter feud—which almost reached a strike stage—with the AFRA (The American Federation of Radio Artists, an AFL affiliate) over the matter of salaries paid. By hiring dialogue writers rather than creative writers, the Hummerts save thousands of wage dollars. Most serial writers in radio command salaries of from \$200 to \$400 a week. Exceptions—as Mollie Berg—run higher. The Hummerts paid \$25 a week to writers who added dialogue to the continuity they provided. Similarly, the Hummerts felt that the characters and situations they created were sufficient to hold public interest in themselves and, upon that belief, hired few important radio actors. From the theater, Helen Mencken appeared in one of their shows as a notable exception. Every Hummert script at this period bore the credit line: "Authors: Frank and Anne Hummert."

But early in 1939, in the face of a rising tide of resentment in the industry, the Hummerts adjusted their general wage scale and gave dialogue credit to those who wrote it.

Like a team of jugglers, the Hummerts kept eighteen radio serials in—or, if you prefer—on the air. Because Frank cannot stand interference or interruption, they spend only two days a week in their New York offices. Most of their work is done in their large, French-colonial home in Greenwich. There are tennis courts—tennis is Frank's favorite recreation—and stables. Mrs. Hummert rides daily. They keep three cars, but they walk whenever they can. After hours—they work a full fourteen hours each day—they never talk shop.

Anne's day is scheduled minute by minute. She works at her desk in a large room decorated in blue and cream and furnished in French period furniture. Fresh flowers are in the vases and a cheery blue rug covers the floor. Here are born many of the characters who sell soap and face creams and aspirin to the housewives of America and England (at least before the war and, to a lesser degree, even now). For their shows are anglicized (policemen become bobbies, etc.) and rebroadcast by transcription in London. Her work is constantly interrupted by the radio. She

listens to all programs she supervises by means of a direct telephone line from the studio to her home. At one o'clock, she rides horseback and at one forty-five, she lunches. The rest of her program varies from day to day.

Frank Hummert is a tall, spare fellow in his early fifties with shrewd eyes, a soft voice and an affable manner. This despite the fact he often tongue-lashes his aides and is almost a recluse whom even his associates seldom see. He is self-conscious, dislikes working with women, and insists that his writers stay within the limits he has set up for them.

"We write successful stories about unsuccessful people," he says. "This means that our characters are simply unsuccessful in the material things of life, but highly successful spiritually. Our characters are everyday people and our stories can be understood on Park Avenue and on the prairies."

That the Hummerts' characters are human and do exert a wide appeal is shown by the fact that 75,000,000 letters are received from fans each year. Fan mail is the rod by which Hummert measures the success of his shows.

Once, when a box top and a dime were to be sent in for a certain gadget offered on one of their programs, 900,000 dimes poured in in a week. Records like this have kept Hummert shows on the air for long periods, some as long as eight years, without a change of sponsor. Hummert shows have also been one of the most telling arguments for daytime serials as a selling medium.

The Hummerts' income is said to be prodigious, undoubtedly higher than that of any other radio writers. But they live simply in the main and find a strange pleasure in work, which, after a fashion, is their own dramatic formula. Live simply, work hard and you will be rewarded. It doesn't matter that plain Bill's reward is spiritual while that of the Hummerts is material. . . . The important thing is . . . the formula.

Daytime serials have gone into most phases of American life in which dramatic possibilities inhere. One serial deals with an orphanage; another with a woman member of Congress; another with a widowed mother seeking a place in the business world. The only definite requirement of a serial is that it be deeply

touching, that each sequel end with a suspenseful situation, that it sell products. The field, adequately done and with accurate research, might afford a good picture of American life. It doesn't. Serial writers have learned that tragic, heart-stirring events are more gripping than the joyful ones, and a day's listening to the soap operas gives one the distorted view that all is far from well with America and that happiness is an unknown blessing. But even in tragedy, the soap operas have uncovered no Theodore Dreiser. There is no flaming protest against social conditions which give rise to situations they depict, and it is doubtful if such a protest would find a commercial sponsor—or a daytime listening audience to tune it in.

Yet, sponsors have imposed no taboos upon writers of the daytime serials. Writers have taboos self-imposed, in an effort to avoid censorship. Immorality, adultery, lawbreaking—except in cases where the culprit is captured and punished—do not find their way into these serials. Insinuations, perhaps, of immorality or adultery may be used if carefully handled, but nothing more. Radio writers—as well as the National Association of Broadcasters—realize that the quickest way to bring down upon the industry a Federal censorship is to invite it through lewd or risqué broadcasts.

Only once in a great while does a daytime serial grow to such stature that it is able to lift itself out of the daytime class by its own bootstraps and into an important night spot. Carlton Morse's "One Man's Family," heard on the NBC network, is one of these few.

How many times have you said to yourself, after listening to a broadcast of "One Man's Family"—"The man who wrote that show must have some family! How else could he have gained the material which so touches the heart of America with its simple forthrightness and honesty of emotion and experience."

As a matter of record, Carlton Morse has no family, and, on occasion, has even made cutting remarks about the irritating traits of children. Idea for the show came to him in his rereading of Galsworthy's *Forsyte Saga*, whose influence is readily seen in his script. His original idea—to which he has

clung with a tenacity resembling religion—was to present not just a picture of an average American family, but to use the family, with its various members, to interpret particular phases of American life and problems.

Often, [he admits], I am guided by the happenings in the private lives of the cast, but, [and he says this proudly]—I also have found that members of the cast frequently use situations in "One Man's Family" as patterns for their own lives. For example, Hazel (Bernice Berwin in real life) had a baby in the script. It wasn't long after that that she had a baby in real life.

It is peculiar commentary upon the utter sincerity of the man and his firm belief in the importance of the show that he should feel an actress' action in giving birth to a baby in real life should follow upon and be the result of the mimic birth of a baby in a show he had written.

He, himself, is of Pennsylvania Dutch parentage, the oldest of a family of six children, and he spent his early years on a large ranch in Oregon. There, far removed from neighbors and outside social influence, the family learned to depend upon itself for amusement and help. The family ties which grew up as a consequence were much stronger than those of the average city dweller. Under the stolid Dutch exterior of Morse and his easygoing, almost sloppy dress, lies an unexpressed desire to emulate the suave men-about-town he finds all about him in Hollywood where his show originates. He was so impressed by a scene in the picture "The Thin Man," in which William Powell saunters up to the bar and says, "Give me a flock of Martinis" that he waited two years to emulate the scene. It was at a hotel in Santa Barbara where he and Mrs. Morse had gone for Easter sunrise services at five-thirty in the morning that he astonished a sleeping bartender, Mrs. Morse and—I am certain—himself, by picking up the phone and ordering twelve Tom Collins'. The bartender gasped and the gasp so pleased Morse that, a half hour later, he phoned again: "Send up twelve more Tom Collins'."

If current difficulties are ironed out, "One Man's Family" may become a movie. But Morse insists that he have full say

about the story and dialogue, the selection of the cast and—most important—that the characters use the actual voices (by dubbing in) of his radio characters so as not to dispel illusions built up by radio listeners. The movie studio feels that he is being cranky and a prima donna but he feels that he is keeping faith with his listeners.

Some of the speeches—especially those written for Father Barbour, a stuffy old goat and an old coot, besides (which Morse blandly and with secret relish admits)—approach the classic. One of the unforgettable broadcasts, not only of this series, but of broadcasting in general, was Father Barbour's advice to his son, Jack, contained in the letter which follows:

My dear son:

I hope this letter will reach you on the first day of your college experience, for that day marks your step upon the threshold of your manhood. I am more proud of you than it is possible for me to convey; proud of your splendid record to date; proud that by your own accomplishments you are able to enroll in the college which has been your choice since you were seven years old. I wish every father might have the same feeling of confidence in his son that I hold for you this minute; the confidence that your record so far is an indication of nobler and more honorable accomplishments to follow.

There are a number of things of which I wish to write at this time. I do not do this with any thought of admonishing you, but rather as a counselor of older and more mature judgment.

Respect and revere those fine men who compose the faculty. Extend to them the splendid cooperation you have given each of your teachers in the past. Learn to distinguish between the fundamentals of their subjects and the teacher's personal opinions about them. College experience should develop your analytical ability. Therefore, accept and reject, but avoid becoming opinionated and argumentative. Above all things do not develop the attitude that college training marks the end of learning.

Be democratic. Avoid snobs—rich or poor ones—and do not be snobbish yourself. The classification of a man is not his possessions or lack of them but his character. Leadership is never possible truly to a man who has no sympathetic understanding of his fellows.

Be generous but not foolish. Remember that there is an adage that the best charity is to help one to be free from the need of charity.

Do not be a prude or a prig.

Avoid excess in all things. Enter freely into the social life that is offered you but prove your mental strength by refusing any temptation of overindulgence. As you are well aware, I leave to your own judgment whether you use tobacco or liquor. I would prefer in any event that you indulge in neither during your formative years.

I hope your social life will give you contact with many of the fine men and women in the student body. Your own natural friendliness and modesty will bring you the right companionship. Treat every woman with the utmost respect and courtesy—that is the hallmark of a gentleman. Accord to each woman the same respect you would ask for your sisters.

And remember this: Do not be swallowed by the stream or become influenced by mass or mob psychology. When you do, you surrender your capacity for clear thinking. Stand on the side-lines and study the stream. Keep your perspective. Think for yourself.

I hope you will preserve this letter and occasionally read it. It is written only after careful consideration and thought. I write it because of the great love I have for you, and out of the great hope that I have in you. May all that we do—each of us—tend to strengthen the tie that binds us together.

Your Father.

Amazing things happen to—as well as on—the daytime serials. When "Betty and Bob" was moved from Chicago to New York for broadcast purposes, fans were amazed when the "Betty" and "Bob" to whom they had become accustomed had been dropped from the cast and new principals substituted. In "Mary Marlin," the author sent Joe, Mary's husband, on a diplomatic mission to Russia. Joe completely disappeared in the vast wastes of the Soviet steppes until fans, angered by the fact that Mary was falling in love with another, demanded by mail that Joe be found and brought back. Many fans become so engrossed in the broadcast characters that, in writing to actors, they use their radio names. And usually, the letters are delivered. Perhaps the most amazing episode in the amazing world of soap operas came

in March, 1940, when "Those We Love," a widely followed serial, abruptly left the air in the midst of an exciting and wholly unsolved interlude. There was an avalanche of protesting fan mail and telegrams. Serial fans take their shows seriously and without salt. There was much ado about the listener's rights in a serial, and some few fans even protested to the FCC. A few months later, "Those We Love," as suddenly as it had been dropped, returned to the airways and to those who loved it. Nonchalantly, as if it had been only yesterday instead of a few months elapsing between episodes, it picked up the thread of the story which is still being unraveled in fifteen-minute sections for listeners.

When television replaces radio—as it will and perhaps sooner than we expect—the greatest changes in broadcast procedure will be, perhaps, in the field of the soap operas—if they survive at all. They are produced and, for the most part, performed with the same mechanical precision that marks any other big business. Usually two or three microphones are used, and the performers stand coldly about these, read their lines from script mimeographed on rustle-proof paper with the utmost lack of emotion. It is odd to hear an actress bewailing the loss of a loved one over a microphone with a lump of chewing gum in her mouth. Yet, one of the most beloved serial stars chews strenuously while not at the mike, shoves the gum to the back of her mouth when speaking her lines. Others sit comfortably in studio chairs while, according to the script, they are undergoing the most excruciatingly painful operations. Only one faculty of the serial star is brought into play—the voice—and radio serial followers are advised to stay away from the studios if they would keep their illusions. Players are usually handed their next day's script at the conclusion of the broadcast, read it through with the director-producer for timing and interpretation, and rehearse the following morning an hour or so before broadcast.

And sometimes, the tragedy which so persistently pursues the harassed characters of these daytime shows fails to recognize where broadcasts end and life begins. It was so with the perennially popular "Myrt and Marge." Here was a great mother-and-daughter vaudeville team which, in the pinch of financial reverses in

1931, turned to radio. Theirs was one of the sprightlier, less tear-dimmed serials to hit the air waves.

On February 14, "Marge" (who was, in real life, Mrs. Peter Fick, wife of the Olympic swimming star, and daughter of "Myrt," Mrs. Myrtle Vail Damerel) did her broadcast as usual and left immediately for a hospital at Englewood, N. J. Next day, eighteen minutes after giving birth to a son, death came for the woman who had brought so much laughter and joy into the lives of others.

On February 16, listeners noted the cast change . . . for Myrt is continuing the broadcast, not because she needs the money now, but because she feels that is the way Marge would have wanted it.

During the fall of 1941, a new trend in nighttime programming was noted by listeners. But for daytime fans, it was an old story. The daytime serial—more expensively gowned and lavishly groomed—now emerged as a lady of the evening. Several of these new, continued evening shows were built around family life.

Broadcasters advanced two reasons for the innovation. First, the fear of sponsors that war would seriously curtail advertising budgets had given birth to the new shows which were experiments in cheaper production. Second, they pointed to the popularity of "The Aldrich Family" and "One Man's Family" as a possible fountainhead from which the new shows had sprung. Sponsors, themselves, simply admitted that they were extending their use of a highly effective means of merchandising, the permanency of the extension depending entirely upon results.

OF BUSKINS AND BROADCASTS

BY 1925, SOPHISTICATION HAD BECOME THE SHINING armor of Americans whose fathers had honorably laid brick, broken the prairie soil and gandy-danced on newly built railroads. Where before only the children of a few enormously wealthy individuals had known the problem of whiling away idle time, once Americans had voted for Harding and perpetuation of the war's prosperity, the problem of polish and full-time entertainment was extended to the great middle classes. Fortunes were amassed in Wall Street; laborer's wages went skyward; American tourists became Europe's most profitable industry; bootleggers moved out of shanties and into uptown mansions; speak-easies—one Washington newspaperman counted forty within a stone's throw of the Capitol—dotted our cities.

Sinclair Lewis, depicting the contemporary American scene in sharply barbed words, was almost a fad. So was the bitterly critical American *Mercury*. We were a nation hell-bent for culture; and we read our critics because they smacked of culture. But the decade's real darlings were F. Scott Fitzgerald, Michael Arlen and Katherine Brush.

Reflecting the era, the American theater knew its most lush period. For the smart traveling set, Broadway was offering Katharine Cornell and Leslie Howard in Michael Arlen's "The Green Hat." Ina Claire was delighting the same clique in the equally British "Last of Mrs. Cheyney," and Basil Sidney, in mufti, was doing "Hamlet in Modern Dress."

Ziegfeld was at the height of his career, and Earl Carroll was filling the tabloids—and his theater—with a sensational bathtub party. "The Great God Brown," in which Eugene O'Neill em-

ployed for the first time a modernized use of Greek masks, drew enthusiastic throngs to the box office of the Greenwich Village Theater. Eva Le Gallienne was courageously opening her new repertory group with Ibsen's "The Master Builder."

The solitary unsophisticated note in the dramatic world of the middle twenties was sounded by radio. Broadcasting was still inexperienced enough to believe that dramatic material was its forte and that all it needed to do was to take its microphones into the theater and broadcast the Broadway hits. That belief is one of the best pieces of evidence that not even those closest to early radio had any clear conception of either its possibilities or its limitations.

In the *New York Times*, October 4, 1925, an article appeared under the headline, "Theatrical Producers Join with Radio." The article stated, in part: "One of the most important of the recent developments in the theatrical world that probably will result in the broadcasting of theatrical productions heretofore withheld from the microphone is announced by officials of WJZ following a series of conferences with Messrs. J. J. and Lee Shubert." The Shuberts had agreed to permit WJZ to place microphones between the footlights and transmit—as it was being played for its New York audience—"The Student Prince." Reactions of the radio audience (and of the box office) would determine future policy. Significantly, one broadcast of "The Student Prince" under such circumstances was enough to make both the Shuberts and broadcasters forget the whole idea.

Straight dramatic productions, transmitted from the theaters of New York, were no more successful. "Craig's Wife," enjoying a tremendously popular run at the Morosco Theater, with Charles Trowbridge and Chrystal Herne as stars, left radio audiences cold and, in many instances, frankly puzzled despite—or perhaps because of—the running commentary of the announcer who cut into the program frequently to explain the action taking place on the stage. In its first five years, radio had learned little about itself. When the stage first started borrowing from the church, the same was true. And it was true of motion pictures, borrowing from the stage.

The theater of 1925 was a flourishing combination of business and art, and it is not strange that radio—which felt itself, and

rightly, allied to the stage—should attempt to model its performances upon those of its more mature and prosperous relation. The error of broadcasters was that they not only modeled their efforts upon the legitimate theater; they carbon-copied it. Between 1925 and 1936, only one really effective piece of radio dramatization found its way to the airways. That, strangely enough, was the regular weekly "True Story Hour," sponsored by Bernarr MacFadden to advertise his *True Story* magazine. This program was effective because it recognized that radio drama—if it were to attract listeners and become a compelling medium of advertising—must evolve a technique of its own. The technique the MacFadden producers evolved was that of the story teller—a first person narrator who started the story, set the scene and, in a smooth transition, gave way to the dramatized sequences. This was the first important contribution made to radio drama. The second important contribution made by this purely commercial program was its insistence that its drama reflect current life, albeit a seamy side of life, and that it mirror situations familiar to listeners.

To the broadcaster, the sixteen years which elapsed between commencement of regularly scheduled broadcasting and the arrival of such figures as Orson Welles, Arch Oboler, and the Columbia Workshop group seems an eternity. It is really a short period compared to the two centuries required for the glorified church pageant to develop into the drama of Shakespeare's day and the more than twenty years necessary for the films to produce a "Cabinet of Dr. Caligari."

Easily the most sensational figure in radio drama is Orson Welles. Corwin's scripts are done with much more finesse and understanding of the art of writing. Oboler's chief contribution has been a bizarre, stream-of-consciousness type of dialogue which gives broadcasting a stark reality. Welles, for all his unbalanced off-stage antics, has brought to radio drama a fine sense of proportion.

Welles had worked in literature and the theater, and his sense of showmanship told him that, somewhere between the play and the short story was a form best suited to a medium where sound was the only dimension. Back in 1925, when broadcast stage plays had proven such miserable failures, Cosmo Hamilton, the British novelist, had almost arrived at the same conclusion. Speaking be-

fore the Press Club, of Jackson Heights, New York, the novelist had made a prediction.

"In the future, authors will have to adapt their stories for people to hear, not to read," he told the gathered writers. Then, speaking of his own novel, *Paradise*, which he was to read in a fifteen-minute condensation over the air the next night, he continued, "I am sure that this and other experiments will lead to the elimination of long novels . . . the author would be paid for each reading of his novel over the air, a second reading being equivalent to a second edition. . . ."

Those who heard Orson Welles' radio presentation of Daphne du Maurier's psychological novel, *Rebecca*, might think that the day of which Hamilton had spoken had arrived. For in no other medium—book or on the screen—did a fine piece of writing come so vividly alive. There were many factors which contributed to this, but the two principal ones were that *Rebecca* is the sort of tale which grips and is enjoyed in solitude; that is, in the home and away from the psychological lift of fellow auditors. And, Orson Welles.

"My name is Orson Welles . . . producer . . . writer . . . director . . . actor . . . boy wonder . . ."

I think that that is the way Orson Welles, in the manner of his first-person-singular radio programs, would begin a dramatization of his own life. Here is the man who dressed Julius Caesar in a blue business suit, rewrote Shakespeare (if you please!) and gave Broadway a modern treatise on Fascism which made money. Here is the man who, having completed his conquests of radio and the stage, turned on Hollywood and came out with a contract such as no other person has got there—a contract that permitted him to write, produce, direct and act in his own productions without supervision or say-so from higher-ups. "Citizen Kane," his first Hollywood film, is also recognized as the first original and artistic film to come out of the celluloid factories in years.

There are many striking features to the Welles personality and appearance. His voice is like the booming of a bass drum, in odd contrast to his laugh, which is like a youngster's giggle. The giggle more aptly fits his round, boyishly plump face. Very active for one so heavy, his rotund countenance is beginning to lose its

adolescence and take on the quality of a heavy-set Roman emperor. He loves the legend that has grown up around him, does everything in his power to add to it, including the growing of a neatly trimmed, spade beard which made him conspicuous even in Hollywood.

The Bureau of Vital Statistics at Kenosha, Wisconsin, is swamped with queries from newspapers and writers checking the Welles' birthdate—May 6, 1915. His reputation for veracity suffered somewhat as a result of his quite candid admission that he duped the Gate Theatre, in Dublin, into letting him perform on its stage by claiming he was star of the Theatre Guild. It does seem impossible that he should have traveled so far in so few years. What most people overlook is that Welles skipped childhood and all his life has been an actor on his own personal little stage.

In his third year, he made his actual stage debut with the Chicago Civic Opera Company when he was "loaned" to a soprano appearing in *Madame Butterfly* to play her illegitimate offspring. His next professional appearance was at the age of nine as an Easter bunny in a display window of Marshall Field's department store, also in Chicago.

When Orson was but six years old, his parents were divorced; for the two remaining years of her life, he lived with his mother. Upon her death, he went to live with his father, one of the oddest characters ever to come out of the Midwest.

Dick Welles was an inventor given to speculation, travel, and fun. He invented, among other things, an impractical automobile; a dishwasher that broke all the dishes; a picnic kit that sold in great quantities to the army during the first World War. Between inventions, he was a man of the world—in strictest literalness—and he and Orson cut a wide swathe across three continents, the father sampling the wines and women and song of London, Singapore, Paris, Jamaica and a lot of whistle-stops.

A friend, Dr. Maurice Bernstein, of Chicago, finally persuaded the elder Welles to enter Orson in the Todd School, at Woodstock, Illinois. There he spent most of his time working with the school's dramatic troupe, the Todd Players, directing, acting, producing and rewriting to suit his own taste. At the age of twelve,

he produced his own version of *Julius Caesar* which, with a few minor changes, served to establish him firmly on Broadway a few years later. He not only rewrote and produced it, but acted the parts of the soothsayer, Marc Antony and Cassius in relays, in addition to coaching from the wings.

Graduating from Todd in 1931, he made a walking tour of Scotland, finally ending up broke in Dublin. Undismayed, he went backstage at the Gate Theatre there, introduced himself as a member of the Theatre Guild's staff. On the strength of this whopper, he was handed the role of the Duke in "Jew Suss."

"That was an actor's dream," he still chuckles. "It had a seduction scene, a murder scene and deathbed scene." Nor is it difficult to picture the blustery and dramatic youngster storming through the part, making the most of it while the sentimental Irish applauded his performance. Other Irish engagements followed—with the Peacock Theatre and the famed Abbey Theatre. When he attempted to repeat his performance in London, however, he was refused a permit to work by the labor ministry.

Back in the United States, he managed, through Thornton Wilder, to meet Katharine Cornell and went on tour with her repertory theater as a supporting player. He slept until noon each day, roistered and fought in taverns at night, was publicly rebuked by Miss Cornell for wearing a false beard in a San Francisco restaurant one evening. Back in New York, he was hired for the lead in "Panic," by John Houseman, a young producer who liked his work. "Panic" lasted three nights.

It was about this time that Welles broke into radio work. His first twenty-dollar part was with the "March of Time," and he soon became a favorite performer with that group. His death of Sir Basil Zaharoff is recognized as one of the best things ever done by that excellent radio group. He was also the hideous and insidious laugh of "The Shadow" on that early radio chiller-killer.

One day, Houseman, then connected with the Federal Theater, came and asked Welles if he appreciated the wonderful era in which they were living. "It isn't often," he told Welles, "that two young men could find such a sugared angel as the Great White Father to bankroll their productions." With a private backer, one flop meant ruin, but with Uncle Sam footing the

bills, you could produce one flop after another and who cared? Welles, seeing the wisdom of his words, moved down into Harlem with him to produce a black *Macbeth* using Harlem WPAers.

The black *Macbeth* was a bell ringer, and other successes, as well as mediocre pieces of theater, followed. Then came "The Cradle Will Rock." This was a labor play-opera with a leftist twang which WPA authorities had tried to discourage but with which Welles had gone ahead despite whistlings in the wind. WPA didn't object to the leftist twang itself, but the Little Steel strikes were threatening and Washington had the jitters. Welles never knew what the jitters meant.

A scant half hour before curtain time, with the theater jammed, WPA—which had pussyfooted along and made no definite decision—now decided that the cradle wouldn't rock, and so ordered.

Infuriated—and fed upon the legends of the theater, the most cardinal of which is that the show must go on—Welles sat down at a telephone and started looking for another theater. It was almost nine o'clock before he located one. He loaded the cast—sans costumes, scenery and properties which belonged to Uncle Sam—and a piano into a truck and the audience followed this somewhat mad Pied Piper to the new theater in high glee.

There were two notable results of this affair, as eerie a piece of theater as New York has ever seen. First, Welles found himself no longer buried on the inside dramatic pages of newspapers, but a Page One figure. Second, the Mercury Theater had made its first presentation and a highly successful one at that. "The Cradle Will Rock" became a "must" show. It was only a short time later that his Mercury group became a regular Sunday night feature on CBS.

It was here that Welles made his most important contribution to radio drama. While the True Story Hour had actually used a narrator and the first person singular as a device for bringing radio drama intimately into the home, the caliber of material used on those broadcasts precluded any artistic triumphs for the show. Welles improved upon this technique, and a standing joke in radio is that he not only invented "First Person Singular," but he IS "First Person Singular." Welles loves to serve as narrator, and when his show was on the air, filled that part on almost every

occasion except when, as with *Jane Eyre*, a woman was required. The "Mars" broadcast was an excellent example of how realistically produced are the Welles radio dramas.

Orson Welles is easily the liveliest thing that has happened to the theater, the movies and radio in years. Into a decadent theater, staggering from the repeated attacks of movies and radio, he breathed a new and exhilarating breath of life. And it is not strange that this should be so, for the theater is his life. He is as much the actor off stage as on. He tries to dominate every gathering in which he finds himself and usually succeeds. Except in Hollywood, where he must keep daylight hours, he usually arises at noon. While still in New York and before his separation from his wife, he used to spend the afternoons playing with his small daughter, Christopher. One day, he made so many faces at her in fun that his jaws became stiff and he was unable to broadcast. That, of course, is out now that he and Mrs. Welles (the former Virginia Nicholson, daughter of a wealthy and socially impeccable Chicago family which always objected to their rather baroque son-in-law) are apart.

The Hollywood call was a foregone conclusion, and despite the disbelief and disdain of older heads in the movie colony—who cared neither for the Welles peculiarities nor the fact that, if Welles' ideas of production were successful, the cost of film making would be halved and many a fine head would fall as a result—the mark he has left upon Hollywood is every bit as indelible as it has been upon radio. In only one particular has Hollywood succeeded in getting its fangs into him, barring the ineffective mosquito bites of movie-lot gossipers like Jimmy Fidler. Welles loves to eat and drink. His favorite food is steak, his favorite drink, Scotch. He eats like an animal, sometimes two and three steaks at a sitting. But his movie contract calls for no steak, no potatoes, no fattening foods.

His one regret about leaving New York was that he would no longer be able to occupy his apartment on Fifty-seventh Street. It was designed, planned and decorated by him. There, he slept in a bed that belonged to Louis XVI. The living room was three stories high, resembling an exhibit room in a museum. Here, the

Boy Genius had room to stand up and breathe and be—if not himself—at least a hundred other selves.

That important radio drama came into being only late in the thirties with the arrival of Welles, Obeler, Corwin and others does not mean that radio, having had its wings roundly clipped in 1925, wasn't doing something about drama. Dropping the time consumed by daytime serials, approximately 20 per cent of broadcasting time during the intervening years was given over to broadcast drama, but it was of a cut-and-dried pattern. "First Nighter," a weekly show on which boy-meets-girl and boy-gets-girl fifty-two times a year is still a part of the broadcasting pattern. It was on "First Nighter" that Don Ameche, radio's first matinee idol, achieved recognition. There were—and are—many such shows on the air, and for light listening, they serve a good purpose. One of the earliest and most successful—as well as astounding—dramatic shows of this type to hit the air was Louella Parsons' "Hollywood Hotel."

Hollywood Hotel had one important effect on the broadcasting industry. Up until 1934, most of the large network shows were originated from either New York or Chicago; but the success of Miss Parsons' show—which jumped in its first year from a Crossley rating of thirty-ninth to tenth place in popularity—demonstrated that Hollywood drama and personalities had commercial possibilities. Today, Hollywood rates second only to New York as a production center. Not only the networks, but the large advertising agencies have sent their best producers west, and if the move has been a good one commercially, it has thus far spelled only trouble for the producer, transplanted from the workaday world of New York to filmdom's mecca. Capable, dependable radio men, who for years moved normally along a routine path in New York, suddenly began to spend more time in California sanatoriums and health resorts than in their offices; stomach ulcers, jitters, frayed nerves and thinning hair became a common complaint. And there were reasons.

Among the stars, Joan Crawford is a willing worker, but suffers from microphone jitters. So does Jean Arthur, and there's

nothing much a producer can do about it except hope for the best. Patsy Kelly, appearing on Phil Baker's Gulf Program, became so frightened by the prospect of the mike that she passed out cold a few minutes before time to go on the air. It was too late to re-write the show, and the producer started yelling for a substitute. None could be found and, in a dither, the producer had a heart attack and was removed to the hospital. Then Miss Kelly recovered and went through the show without a hitch. Dwight Cooke, one of the industry's leading producers, used to handle the Chase and Sanborn Hour. Mae West, appearing on the show, read her lines in the now-famous "Adam and Eve" playlet straight at rehearsal and saved her implications by intonation until the actual broadcast. The FCC slapped the wrists of the program, the public registered a stern protest and Cooke was a sadder and a wiser man.

The only great dramatic show airing from Hollywood which doesn't have star trouble is the Lux Radio Theater, under the production of Cecil B. DeMille. Stars are afraid to turn in a sloppy performance for such a big name in filmdom. Another show remarkably free from Hollywood hysterics is the Gulf Screen Guild Theater. This is another star-studded program using screen adaptations, but the stars who appear donate their salary checks for relief of their more unfortunate fellow actors. The show is too widely listened to by Hollywood's bigwigs for stars to chance poor performances.

But while Hollywood—and Hollywood figures—have come to take an ever-increasing part in radio drama, enlistment of talent from the theater has been meager. Most of the important stage stars have turned an emphatic thumbs down on broadcast drama, feeling, in many cases, that it has not yet reached a state of maturity worthy of their efforts.

One night in June, 1939, Arch Obeler—doing a series of experimental dramatic broadcasts for NBC—had just finished presentation of three one-act plays, "Steel," "Dark World" and "Humbug," when the telephone rang in the control room. It was for Obeler. A woman's voice, deep and throaty and intriguing, wanted to know "if I might have the privilege of appearing in one of Mr. Obeler's plays." The voice belonged to Alla Nazimova, whose

name is a byword wherever theaters exist. She had turned down offer after offer for radio appearances before, yet—here she was asking for the privilege of appearing in a radio drama, a sustaining show and without pay.

The distinguished actress explained that for the first time—as she listened to these three short plays—she had a feeling that radio was proving its claim to being an important and serious art; that Obeler has made an important start toward opening “that hidden door in radio which will let millions of listeners into a new and marvelous world which, hitherto, has been reserved for only those who live in the few large theatrical centers of the country.” For Mme. Nazimova’s radio debut, Obeler penned a play especially for her—“The Ivory Tower”—a warm and touching portrait of a conscientious schoolteacher in Nazi Germany. Mme. Nazimova has since appeared on several Obeler broadcasts, and she is even more convinced than before that Obeler is making radio drama an important social force in American life.

The Obeler contributions to radio drama are twofold. He was the first writer to successfully employ the stream-of-consciousness type of writing in radio dialogue, and he has brought to the air a type of imagery, almost fantasy, with which he clothes even the most realistic themes. Many, since the advent of Obeler, feel that fantasy is perhaps the field to which radio drama may best adapt itself. Obeler, himself, is not one of these.

Up until the spring of 1939, Obeler had distinguished himself chiefly as the writer and producer of NBC’s “Lights Out” series, a midnight snack of horror, murder and the grotesque served up for lovers of such fare as a sustaining feature.

One of the Obeler plays which everyone has heard—or should hear—is “The Ugliest Man in the World.” It is radio drama at its very best. When Obeler heard that the higher-ups were planning to develop an experimental drama program, he had that play recorded under his own supervision with particular attention to sound effects and portrayal. At the time, he was working in Chicago, but he took a train for New York, rented a portable phonograph on his way to Rockefeller Center, and barged right

into the office of Lewis H. Titterton, chief of NBC's script department.

Now, Titterton is a busy man. But the recording had gone only a few seconds when he took the phone off the hook to keep it from ringing and sat, fascinated, through the full half hour. From that day on, Obeler was given a free production hand and the results have been more than gratifying. Last year, the Obeler broadcasts went on a commercial basis for Procter and Gamble.

If you walk into an NBC studio in New York or Chicago or Hollywood (Obeler produces from all these centers dependent upon the stars he uses, and he has used Charles Laughton, Bette Davis, and Walter Huston to mention a few) you'd recognize Obeler. He believes in comfort, wears knit slacks and sweaters, bull-nosed shoes with thick crepe soles, sporty socks and thick-lensed glasses. He is small in stature, intent in manner, and wanders around in quick, jerky motions.

Obeler, who attended the University of Chicago, was married four years ago to a coed at the university, and they live now in an old brownstone house in New York (or, on the west coast, in their new home in Hollywood which has a stream running through it). He has a collection of toads, tortoises, frogs and snakes, and a grand library. Mrs. Obeler is young, warmly alive and her eyes sparkle as she gleefully describes their honeymoon through New England. Arch, at that time, was doing the "Lights Out" show, and he insisted upon stopping and visiting every haunted house on the east coast. Which would be a strange honeymoon for anyone but the Obelers. There is nothing conventional in their way of life. He writes with a dictaphone because it makes his dialogue more natural, and there are three dictaphones scattered about the house.

On a sustaining basis alone, Obeler earned more than twenty thousand dollars a year. When his program went commercial, his salary soared to three thousand dollars per week, which the Obelers are investing carefully. Like Welles, he not only writes his shows, but produces and directs them, too. In this respect, the radio differs radically from both the stage and screen, for the combination of writer-producer-director is a common one to radio. Also, Obeler's writings have a terrifically wide range, perhaps because all

radio writers are only a hop, skip and jump ahead of the microphone, which consumes words unmercifully. It was Obeler who wrote the now famous lines which caused Mae West's banishment from the air.

"It wasn't the lines," Obeler insists, "which were bawdy, but her manner of giving them." Then he quoted the lines.

I want something to happen, a little excitement—a little adventure. A girl's got to have a little fun once in a while. . . . There's no future under a fig tree.

A couple of months of peace and security and a woman's bored all the way down to the bottom of her marriage certificate. . . . If trouble means something that makes you catch your breath—if trouble means something that makes your blood race through your veins like seltzer water—Mmm, Adam, my man, give me trouble!

In striking contrast are lines taken from "Humbug," one of the one-act plays which enthralled Nazimova. The time is twenty thousand years in the future, the sole character a savant who explains in a laughter-punctuated monologue how an old man tried to sell him a spurious book about the world of 1939.

First, the book said, that—ha-ha, wait until you hear this—first the book said that the men of that day fought about the land! You don't understand what I mean? I mean the world—they fought each other, maimed each other, bled each other over who owned what piece of the world! Did you ever hear such nonsense? They knew how large the world was and how many men were in it, but instead of dividing it up fairly or all owning together as one, they fought each other. Yes, bloody wars for years and years! Did you ever hear such humbug?

. . . And a man walked that world for a little while and said, "For the glory of God—peace on earth!" and he spoke truth, and men listened and said, "We believe," and—ha-ha,—went out to murder with bright music playing—music, I tell you! Ho-ho! And then a little man arose who said, "For the glory of the state, war on earth!" and he spoke lies and men knew they were lies and he knew they knew—but again they went out to murder with the music playing! Ha-ha-ha-ha!

The savant of the future refused to be taken in by the old man

with the book. It was too ridiculous! And the play ended with the crashing opening chords of Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*.

Most radio writers and actors work under a cloak of anonymity, and only occasionally does an Orson Welles or an Arch Oboler or a Norman Corwin come along to rise above that cloak and make a name important. It is not that radio fails to recognize the importance of names and personalities. But invariably when names are prominently mentioned in radio drama, they come from other fields. Helen Hayes' theater, sponsored by Lipton's Tea, is an excellent example of a great radio dramatic show built around a great name enlisted from the theater. Miss Hayes, incidentally, is one of the few great stage figures who is an implicit believer in radio's potentialities as a medium for drama. And her theater was quick to become one of the brilliant—and better—radio offerings of 1940, her first season.

But the most important dramatic broadcast from an experimental standpoint has been a radio show not dominated by any one individual but the Columbia Workshop, where any writer, actor, producer or director with the creative spark might find voice. The Workshop was started as a now-and-then proposition in 1936 and, two years later, had become such an important training station for talent and testing ground for new techniques that it became a regular sustaining feature of the network. The prime importance of this group is that its efforts have been directed toward developing radio drama fashioned to the medium rather than the mere adaptation of plays and motion pictures.

Sound, for the Workshop producers and writers, is a special and unique medium of expression, and sound effects on their programs are a composition in their own right. Sound is used to promote thought and emotion and, used this way, may develop into an art quite apart from the field of music.

To the microphones of the Workshop have come plays from the pens of William Saroyan and Archibald MacLeish, whose *Fall of the City* is recognized by critics as one of the best things radio has done yet. Other plays heard on the series include Lord Dunsany's *The Use of Man*; Irving Reis' (Reis was one of the founders and guiding lights of the group) *Meridian 7-1212*; *A*

Drink of Water, by Wilbur Daniel Steele; a number of Ambrose Bierce's eerie short stories adapted to the microphone, and Dorothy Parker's *Apartment to Let*.

If the Workshop had made no contribution to dramatic art in broadcasting, its contributions in the field of sound effects would more than justify its existence. *The Fall of the City* was staged in a Los Angeles armory to effect the hollow, reverberating sound which conveys the feel of great space. In *Alice in Wonderland*, during the scene in which Alice fell down the rabbit hole, the hollow sound her voice would have in such a predicament was effected by placing a box over the actress' head. When a man was stabbed on "*The Ghost of Benjamin Sweet*," the sound of the dagger striking home was obtained by striking a knife into a watermelon. For a hospital scene, a microphone was actually placed against a man's heart and amplified many times.

But the Workshop's contributions to broadcasting go far beyond that. It was in the Workshop that young Orson Welles learned much of his technique for broadcasting, working with Reis and Robson and others who grew up with broadcasting. Here, too, Max Wylie, now CBS writing chief, Douglas Coulter and Davidson Taylor—all important names in radio production—found an opportunity to test ideas which have since become broadcasting tenets. And while Columbia Workshop is a co-operative affair in which all voices are heard and heeded, it, too, has developed dominating individualities at various stages of its growth. Currently, young Norman Corwin is its most important voice.

Corwin is essentially a poet, and his plays are written with a lyrical beauty few other radio writers have achieved. After high school, he entered newspaper work, eventually became radio director for Twentieth Century-Fox, in New York. At the same time, he was broadcasting a poetry series over New York's quality radio station, WQXR. Where other poetry shows had failed miserably, Corwin scored. W. B. Lewis, vice-president of the Columbia Broadcasting System, thought that if Corwin could make poetry palatable to the public, he might do as good a job in making education painless. He hired Corwin and put him to work with Gilbert Seldes on "Americans at Work" and "Living History."

At CBS, Corwin originated, wrote and produced "Words With-

out Music," but he didn't come into his own until his rhymed fantasy, "The Plot to Overthrow Christmas," was aired on Christmas day, 1938. Audience mail poured into the studio and Corwin was given a free hand to develop his dramatic offerings. During the summer of 1941, the Workshop facilities were turned over to him completely in a series known as "26 by Corwin," and, like Arch Oboler, he made his seemingly uncommercial offerings so popular with listeners that a commercial sponsor tapped him.

Perhaps the best—surely the most widely known—Corwin piece to date is "They Fly Through the Air With the Greatest of Ease," which was inspired by Vittorio Mussolini's relish at seeing men and horses in Ethiopia blown up by bombs he dropped. The play opens with the narrator setting an unforgettable scene. A part of this opening narration follows to show how far radio drama has progressed from the skit of the twenties.

Some bluster, brandishing big winds;
Some, at dawn, are like a streak of blood across where night met doom;
Some are all innocence, surprised to be playing morning to such a little earth.

You know what mornings are;
Their coming and their going is cosmic business
Yet common and casual and taken all for granted,
Having to do with milktrains,
And cock crows, and streetlamps going out,
And alarm clocks.

All right, so it is morning.
It is morning on a level field, still wet with dew;
A field once used for haying, flown over one time by birds going north
or birds going south to build homes;
A meadow mowed upon by men, buzzed in by bees, and lingered on
by lovers in the moonlight.

Here, where last year stood the windrows of the hay,
Is now such an aviary of birds as God had never dreamed of when He
made the skies.

Look close and you will see one now.
They are wheeling it out of the hangar,
Carefully . . .

Mr. Corwin believes that the golden age of radio drama lies in the distant future.

I believe that radio will someday develop a literature as great as that of the theater, [he insists], but I do not believe that we can look to established writers of this generation for outstanding work. Most of them know little of radio's requirements and literary possibilities. I suspect that the great things will come from those now unknown who will undertake to study and develop the still-primitive craft of microphone-drama wholly without condescension.

It is undoubtedly true that only a start toward great radio drama has been achieved; and the main obstacles which lie in the path are: (1) the feeling of inferiority with which writers in radio are afflicted as a result of their self-comparison with writers of the screen and the theater; and, (2), the fact that, with so few exceptions, radio writers are rewarded not so much on the basis of creative production, but on the basis of quantity production and hewing to the established line. Sponsors are unwilling to try the untested new and because, in American radio, sponsors foot the bills, writers without other means of support are forced to forget originality for the hackneyed.

But this is not the blind alley that it seems at first glance. Commercial sponsors are interested in the listening public that programs can show. The sponsor will buy an artistically conceived and produced program as quickly as he'll buy a boy-meets-girl show if the former has a listening audience. Welles and Obeler and Corwin have demonstrated this to be true. It is the broadcaster's duty, then, to maintain his sustaining broadcasts on a considerably higher level than the commercial programs he transmits. It is his continuing duty to step these sustaining shows up to even higher intellectual and artistic levels as commercial broadcasting takes on new depth and meaning and significance as it inevitably must under such a program.

THE WIZARDS OF FARCE

IN TIMES OF STRESS OR NATIONAL CRISIS, AMERICANS TURN IN increasing numbers to the lighter forms of entertainment for temporary relief from their problems. So, during the first World War, vaudeville knew its most flourishing era, with attendance up 25 per cent over normal times. Weighted with the leadership of a people at war, President Wilson was to be seen regularly in the presidential box at B. F. Keith's Theater, in Washington, and it was at his behest that the first vaudeville troupes went into the army camps of 1917 to entertain the soldiers.

It might have been expected that on that Thursday in 1929 when the American god of dollars turned its clay toes up to the daisies to precipitate panic such as we have never before seen, vaudeville would again find prosperity as a ready medium of forgetfulness. But in 1917 almost everyone had been making money; in 1930 almost no one was, and a converse reaction set in. In 1926, the recording industry had become the first casualty of a progressing radio industry.* At almost the same time impresarios of the two-a-day read the handwriting on the wall; for radio, drawing more and more upon the type of act formerly found only in vaudeville, was rapidly making the entertainment circuits an economically unsound proposition. Advent of the depression and the disappearance of spare change from American pockets, far from reviving variety, was like the final spade pat on vaudeville's grave. Variety houses across the land closed their doors, darkened the bright lights of their marquees while workmen moved in and almost overnight transformed them into movie palaces.

But vaudeville was to prove a lively corpse. Collapse of the

* Chapter XIV.

variety circuits proved only that people, hard-pressed for the necessities of life, could no longer afford the luxury of touring troupes. Laughter was still desired and radio could provide it cheaply.

It was not a peculiar development in the history of radio, then, that its greatest strides forward were made during the very depths of depression when other, older industries were closing their doors and turning their employees over to relief agencies. In fact, the development of radio in a period when other business failures were creating widespread unemployment is one of the logical and wholly normal aspects of the industry. Radio, by 1930, had taken two important steps toward meeting the public demands upon it for morale-building *divertissement*.

In the first place, manufacturers of receiving sets had made radio accessible to all. By the turn of the decade, factories were turning out the most efficient receivers at prices 40 per cent under the 1925 level. Even for those still unable to afford ownership of a radio set, listening was not out of the question. Loud-speakers blared out the baseball games from almost every corner cigar store; they were to be found in hotel lobbies, and, after the establishment of the National Emergency Relief Administration, radios became standard equipment in relief shelters and transient camps.

But making radio accessible to all was but the first step in radio's march. With the possible audience enhanced by millions, producers in the radio field were faced with the problem of broadcasting a type of program that would attract listeners. The matter of programming was further intensified by the growth of competition, for by now, radio was thoroughly commercial with three of five shows sponsored by outside concerns. Shrewdly, radio executives realized that laughter was the prime need of the moment, and vaudeville, like Lazarus, rose from its grave and laughed a long, contagious laugh. Names which had come to mean much in the world of variety—Edgar Bergen, Fred Allen, Jack Benny, Burns and Allen—began to mean much more in radio. Where before, Jack Benny—by strenuous trouping—might have played to two hundred thousand people in the course of a season, he now found himself playing to as many as ten million on a single Sun-

day evening. Major Bowes particularly captivated the public fancy during those early depression years with one of the oldest of vaudeville stunts, built upon the Cinderella motif—the amateur show.

The pioneer spirit so largely responsible for vaudeville's transition from the stage to the microphone was, oddly enough, neither a Keith nor a Sarnoff, but a youth with no deep-set roots in either vaudeville or radio. To the average radio listener, the name, Rudy Vallee, conjures up a band leader who socked a couple of photographers and a waiter, is molasses and honey to the women and anathema to men, who is always marrying or about to marry some actress or singer. Such an impression is due largely to Vallee's own poor ideas of press relations. When he was married to Fay Webb, for example, he summoned the press and introduced the bride, whose cheeks were covered with rouge and from whose eye-lashes mascara fairly oozed, as "just a homebody."

Actually, no accurate history of radio could rightly ignore the tremendous contributions of Mr. Vallee, who not only pioneered the radio variety show, but brought to radio such careful production, such fine showmanship and originality in both idea and presentation that he might well be considered radio's first important producer. Beside his production efforts, his crooning accomplishments pale into an infinitesimal insignificance.

Among the stars he led for the first time to a microphone were Beatrice Lillie, Ezra Stone, Edgar Bergen, Tommy Riggs, Carmen Miranda, Eddie Cantor, the Strouds, Milton Berle, Phil Baker, Olsen and Johnson. Ideas first presented on his broadcasts have led to independent radio shows when other producers developed them to the logical conclusion for which Rudy had no time. Notable among these are the universally popular "Aldrich Family" and "We the People." It is unfortunate that the greatest talent finder yet produced by radio has never been able to hold onto talent. Mr. Vallee is a hard man to work for. He bawls out players when their performances at rehearsal don't suit him. He is particularly hard on dramatic performers, perhaps because his own burning ambition is to be a great dramatic star.

He was born Hubert Prior Vallee in July, 1901, at Island Pond, Vermont. He's a typical down-East Yankee, cold, cantankerous and pernickety. At an early age, Rudy moved with his family to

Westbrook, Me., where his father owned a drugstore with a gasoline pump in front of it. One of Rudy's earliest jobs was handling the pump. Later, he took over the soda-jerking department inside.

He decided to play the saxophone after hearing a Rudy Wiedoeft recording, saved his money carefully until he was able to buy the instrument during his high school years. He had the saxophone long before he had enough money to hire a teacher, so he wrote to the famed Wiedoeft and asked for instructions by mail. Wiedoeft complied and Hubert, armed with Wiedoeft records and Wiedoeft letters, taught himself to play. It was during his high school years, too, that he adopted the name Rudy in honor of his patron.

He went to the University of Maine for a year in 1917 and then transferred to Yale where he formed his own band and played vaudeville in the summer, for school dances during the winter. Once he played on the same bill with Fred Allen, then doing a juggling-and-patter routine. Rudy memorized Allen's routine and astonished the wisecracker by impersonating him during his own routine, immediately following Allen's. A few years ago, Sheila Barrett asked Allen for permission to impersonate him and Allen advised her to "see Rudy Vallee. He owns my impersonation rights."

He made his first broadcast from London in 1926 while playing an engagement at the Savoy, and his popularity among the English soared to such heights that he returned to New York as something of a notable among the smarter, traveling set. He was booked into the Heigh-Ho Club where he organized the "Connecticut Yankees" band and made his first series of broadcasts over WABC, then a minor station, under the sponsorship of an installment jewelry establishment. He had written the song, "Vagabond Lover," and the words to "Deep Night," and his rendition of these two numbers over the air brought an immediate telephone response to the station. People wanted to know who the "soulful" singer was. The soulful singing was actually crooning—a process of singing through the nose, but slowly and with expression. Rudy Vallee had made his first original contribution to the art of broadcasting!

A year later, he opened the Villa Vallee, in New York, and

became the most popular band leader in America. On the very Thursday in 1929 when the stock market began to have palpitations of the heart, Rudy started his weekly, hour-long broadcast for Standard Brands under the title, "The Fleishmann Hour." Ten years later, to the night, he was to make his valedictory—a sentimental little speech—over the same microphone; but in the decade which intervened, he set as many precedents in the world of radio variety as Orson Welles has established in the world of radio drama. Ten years of continuous sponsorship by the same concern is in itself something of a precedent in a business as new and as variable as radio.

From the beginning, Vallee has been willing to leave the beaten paths in his search for divertissement, and shrewd radio producers, lacking the creative spark of Vallee, early learned to watch his broadcasts for ideas. On his second program for Standard Brands, he interviewed the Grand Duchess Marie, of Russia, following up on subsequent broadcasts with interviews with Max Baer, La Guardia, Heywood Broun and other notables outside the entertainment world. Soon, other programs were following suit and presenting such dignitaries, so Rudy turned to unknowns who had enjoyed some great experience or performed some feat of valor. In a few weeks, people were saying, "I was on the Vallee program," much as they would wear a Carnegie Medal. Years later, "We the People" was built into a popular network show along exactly the same lines.

Soon, too, listeners learned to watch the Vallee broadcasts for fresh talent. His talent scouts were busy searching out-of-the-way places for fresh voices and acts; they listened to local stations in all parts of the country, held countless auditions and hardly a top-notch variety network broadcast is heard today which hasn't at least one Vallee find in its cast. But his contributions were not to variety alone. He brought such stars of the theater as Helen Hayes, Ethel Barrymore, Eva Le Gallienne and Walter Huston to the microphone, not in scenes from Broadway plays (as was the radio custom) but in short dramas written especially for broadcast. And the effectiveness of such presentations, prepared for broadcast rather than a theater audience, had its full share in pointing a way for radio drama to follow. Vallee was one of the first figures

in radio to recognize that it was a new medium and that, while talent from allied entertainment fields might be used to advantage, such talent must be molded and adapted to the plane of sound.

When Vallee was at the height of his popularity with the public, he was largely disliked by those with whom he worked. There is no question but that Mr. Vallee believes in himself, even today when his popularity is but a fraction of its former stature. He'll argue over a ten-cent overcharge in a restaurant, then turn around and spend \$5,000 on his hobby—home movies. When a musician asked for a small raise back in 1935, Vallee told him he could quit if he didn't like his pay. At the same time, he was paying all the expenses of another musician who was in the hospital. On the road, he figured \$150 expenses per man per week—and that's not penny-pinching.

He has never made the money other, lesser figures in the world of radio variety have earned. His best year financially, netted him only \$200,000 from all sources—radio, records and motion pictures—and he has never approached Jack Benny's \$35,000 per week for a half-hour radio show. During the ten years he spent with Standard Brands, he had many opportunities to better his earning capacity with other sponsors and invariably turned them down. He is intensely loyal. During those ten years, too, he had many opportunities to convert into cash the talents of those he discovered and introduced to radio. He didn't. When he first introduced Alice Faye to the entertainment world, he put her under a personal management contract to himself. Later, when Alice went to Hollywood and received a good screen offer, he released her from her contract without argument. He has never tried to hold talent that didn't want to stay with him—and few of the discoveries he made cared to stay under the Vallee banner.

Perhaps the best insight into the Vallee character is obtained through a visit to his Maine lodge. The lodge consists of a main building and four bungalows capable of housing forty-five guests. Each guest room is named for a song he either wrote or made famous, and you're apt to find yourself sleeping in "Vagabond Lover" or "The Maine Stein Song." Whichever room you occupy, though, will have a set of rules.

The rules say: "Remember you are a guest." They also ask you

not to throw your clothes around carelessly or make undue demands upon the servants. Some other rules are:

"Please cap your toothpaste and shaving soap tubes."

"Don't make cigarette burns."

"At the table, take all you want, but don't take more than you want to eat."

In the bathroom, you'll find the one real extravagance in the Vallee make-up. The toilet tissue at the lodge is monogrammed "R. V."

On Thursday, September 28, 1939—exactly ten years after his first network broadcast—Rudy Vallee stepped to the microphone at the conclusion of his five hundred and eighteenth broadcast for Standard Brands and in the low, intimate tone he affects for radio told listeners that they had just heard the last Vallee broadcast under that sponsorship. His voice seemed old and tired. Vallee, himself, was tired and the sparkle and enthusiasm of other years had long been missing from his shows. He no longer seemed able to find talent and the creative spark which—plus his courage and workmanship—had meant so much to radio, had grown dim.

Rudy Vallee was not off the air long. A few months later, from Hollywood and for a different sponsor, he was presenting another new radio idea—episodes in American history told in comic opera fashion after the manner of Gilbert and Sullivan. They were not a great success and, dropped for the summer months, were not again continued. Currently he is sharing a half-hour comedy program with John Barrymore in which he gives full rein to his ambition for acting. Somehow, the writer cannot help hoping that Rudy will soon return to the business of production. Comics, crooners, and actors are a dime a dozen in radio. Courageous and creative producers are few and far between.

Variety shows on the major networks consume less than one tenth of the total broadcasting time, employ less than one eighth of the number of actors, announcers, engineers and writers employed in presenting daytime serials and yet, variety shows con-

sume almost a third of the total sum spent by advertisers on broadcasting. The seemingly disproportionate sum spent on farce and comedy is the more readily understood when we look at comparative salaries. Only a few of the Number One serial stars on the air earn more than \$300 a week for five fifteen-minute performances. A name like Jack Benny draws \$35,000 a week for one half-hour show on a Sunday evening. Fred Allen's check reads \$14,000. Major Bowes, no longer widely heard, receives \$16,000. Rental of radio time, too, runs much higher, for almost all of the large variety programs are broadcast at night when rates are highest—sometimes 30 per cent higher than daytime rates.

Public Entertainer Number One of the U. S. A. and its Number One salesman is Jack Benny. And that's an odd thing because Benny—who was born in Waukegan, Illinois and whose real name is Benjamin Kubelsky—is a fingernail biter and a worrier of the first water. Benny is funny only through the hardest work. He can't think as quickly on his feet as his friend and professional enemy, Fred Allen. There is nothing extemporaneous about his performances or lancelike about his wit. Without his writers, Jack Benny would be a dead pigeon. The whole Benny show is built much as an architect builds a house—with blueprints. There must be so many gags in so many minutes of broadcast and each gag must be properly placed. The Benny show, perhaps more than any other large variety show, is built strictly along vaudeville lines with Benny as the smart aleck who always gets it in the neck.

When a boy, Benny knew he wanted to be a musician. By the time the war broke out, he was a fair violinist and when he joined the navy, he was assigned to an entertainment unit. One day, Jack's unit was assigned to a fund-raising performance in downtown Chicago. Jack fiddled for pennies, but none fell. He stuck his violin under his arm and started talking. The crowd roared and the more they laughed, the more flustered Jack became. He had accomplished what few comedians are able to do. He had made himself seem a sucker to the crowd and the crowd loved it. That's a funny thing about crowds. They'll laugh at a sucker instead of feeling sorry for him. Jack didn't know it, but he had discovered Pagliacci's secret—pathos which can be so tragic it's funny.

After the war, Jack took up the business of vaudeville seriously, playing the fiddle less and less and talking more and more. It was a long, slow process of accumulating gags, eliminating those which didn't click, polishing up those that did. For six years, in whistle-stop towns, he used the same opening gag. He'd walk out on the stage and ask the orchestra leader how the show was.

"Fine up to now," the primed leader would reply.

"I'll fix that," was Jack's comeback, which doesn't sound very terrific in print but invariably brought down the house.

Soon, he was recognized as one of the ablest masters of ceremony in the business, result of long, hard trouping and work. Once, in Vancouver, British Columbia, he was playing with the Marx brothers, and they took him out to visit their friends, the Marks (no relation). He met the two Marks girls, Sadye and Babe, and when the Marks moved to Los Angeles, he began dating Babe. When she married another, he began dating Sadye, who had changed her name to Mary Livingstone. In 1927, they were married.

By 1930, vaudeville was on the way out but Benny—to whom vaudeville was everything—stayed on until there just wasn't any more vaudeville. He could still play the fiddle and he was busy trying to sell William Stein, of the Music Corporation of America, on the idea of setting up a band around him in the Ben Bernie style. In February, 1932, Ed Sullivan had Jack on his radio program as guest. The public response was fair, and he began to study radio technique and to alter his routine to fit it. In May, 1932, Canada Dry sponsored him in a program which was not too successful. Chevrolet and General Tires each gave him a turn on the air, but the plodding, hard-working Jack was not quite ready. But in 1934, when General Foods, makers of Jell-O hired him, Jack was ready, and the upsweep in Jell-O sales was one of the miracles of radio.

Benny knows that the public will always laugh at the cocky smart aleck who gets it in the neck, so he's the smart aleck. You are glad to see him get his dues, and yet, you feel sort of sorry for him. He might, but for the goodness of God, be you or me. It's more than just comedy. It's life transformed into ether waves which come at you every Sunday night.

His jokes are planted so expertly that even a child can grasp

them; his timing is perfect; his supporting cast is good, well-paid and happy. So are his writers. He employs a raft of them, headed by Bill Morrow and Ed Beloin, and he is the first radio comic to pay his writers a good wage. Perhaps the best insight into the hold Jack has upon radio listeners of the nation came during his trouble with Uncle Sam. He and his friend, George Burns, had become involved with a smuggler, one Albert N. Chaperau, who smuggled a few bracelets and a necklace into the country for Benny, some other trivia for Burns. This time, in real life, Benny was playing the smart aleck, striving to get something for nothing. And again, he got it in the neck. His listening public must have felt much the same toward his real life predicament as they did toward his broadcast episodes.

On the day before he was indicted, his Crossley rating was 37.4, which means simply that 37.4 per cent of all the radios in America were tuned to the Jell-O program. Two weeks after his arraignment—and Mr. Benny made no bones about his guilt but paid his fine like a little man and promised to sin no more—his Crossley had jumped to 40.1. This did not mean that the American public approved his actions. Rather, it meant simply that the American public liked his act.

But if Jack Benny's broadcasts are the results of careful blue-printing, those of his public enemy and private friend, Fred Allen, are anything but planned. Allen is a wry-faced fellow with the most apt and buoyant wit on the air. Jack Benny or Bob Hope might keep a corps of writers busy. Fred Allen isn't too certain of what he's going to say until it pops out, and his show is resultantly spontaneous.

Allen's real name is John F. Sullivan, but he changed it because people were always confusing him with the prize fighter—he says. He got into vaudeville when, as a clerk in the Boston Public Library, he tried his juggling act at an amateur night, flopped as a juggler but brought down the house with a gag. The master of ceremonies interrupted his pitiful exhibition before he had gotten fairly started. "How did you get to be a juggler?" he asked sarcastically, and Fred answered, "I took a correspondence course in

baggage-smashing." That simple line made him. The audience roared and the house manager fired the master of ceremonies and hired Allen. Since then, his gags have been repeated from one end of the country to the other. His program is built around a "Town Hall" sequence, in which a hick-town show is presented. Fred—tobacco-chewing dealer in bowls of wisdom sprinkled liberally with Tabasco and garnished with gall—is the epitome of the small-town wit. He is a sharper, more pungent and biting edition of Will Rogers. One Wednesday night, after an Allen broadcast, Owen D. Young elbowed his way through the throng at NBC to get near the comic.

"I've been listening to your program for years," Young beamed, "and I've been lucky enough to be in your audience the last three broadcasts."

"Well, Mr. Young," said Allen, chewing away at his tobacco like a baseball player, "I can understand why a person might want to see one of my programs once, just for curiosity's sake. But anyone who could sit through it three times should see a phrenologist!"

The Allens—he married Portland Hoffa who was named for Portland, Oregon, where she was born—live a quiet life in a mid-Manhattan apartment. Occasionally they go out to the fights. Mostly they just stay home, read or visit with Alton Cooke, their closest friend. The Jack Benny-Fred Allen radio feud is a fake, of course, and particularly boring because of its one-sidedness. Allen thinks Benny is the greatest interpreter of comedy in the business and Jack thinks Allen is the smartest man in the world. One night, before a barrage of Allen thrusts at a party they were both attending, Benny broke down and cried, "If my writers were here, you couldn't talk to me like that." Which sums up the difference between the two in a sentence.

Mrs. Allen, as a dumb country cluck on Fred's show, is rather typical of a situation to be found on most radio variety shows. Benny has Mary Livingstone, who plays dumb like a fox and talks baby talk. George Burns has Gracie Allen, whose simpering absurdities and misuse of language have become the trade-mark of their show. Bob Hope used to have a pair of feminine foils for the

rapid-fire gags which pepper his programs—Brenda and Cobina, a take-off on the debutante idea with Brenda and Cobina anything but debbie in their unrefined pursuit of the male, any male.

But the man who made the most money out of radio variety was the gruff, acidulous Major Bowes. At a time when entertainment marts of New York were flooded with talent out of jobs; when one of the most overcrowded divisions of WPA was its theatrical project, Major Bowes was attracting hundreds of stage-struck youngsters to the metropolitan area with the promise of fame and fortune. "Around she goes," the Major used to chant over the air, "and where she stops, nobody knows." He was talking of the wheel of fortune, and certainly it was not the Major's fault if he was unable to deliver on the gilded promises it held out. Travelers along the highways in 1934 and 1935 became accustomed to the signs hitchhikers wore on their backs: "En route to New York to appear on Major Bowes' program."

Amateur shows have always had a wide public appeal, and Major Bowes became the fairy godfather to many a one-night Cinderella. Only, unlike Cinderella, there was no prince in most cases. As a matter of fact, a huge percentage of the Bowes amateurs weren't even amateurs, but professionals out of work. They were paid ten dollars if they were good enough to get on a broadcast (a figure far under the AFRA minimum for radio talent and far under the amount expended by shows like "We the People" on its guests) and a few of them managed to get into a Bowes vaudeville unit for a few weeks of touring at salaries in the neighborhood of fifty dollars per week. But Bowes' amateurs sold coffee for Chase and Sanborn and, later, automobiles for Chrysler. They made Major Bowes one of the richest men in radio with an average yearly income from broadcasts and his vaudeville troupes of a million dollars. His collection of foods, wines, paintings, silver and books is rivaled only by that of Mr. Hearst, and Major Bowes has managed to hang onto his. He maintains four personal chefs and four complete cuisines. He has more honorary titles than Lindbergh. His home life must be in strange contrast to the amateur who after a brief moment in the glittering glory of the

radio spotlight finds himself back in the same drab job in the same dull town he had forsaken in his quest for fame.

A program like Major Bowes' Amateur Hour isn't the result of programming trends like the variety shows of Bob Hope, Jack Benny or Fred Allen. His Sunday morning program from the stage of the Capitol Theater, in New York City, had long been a favorite—and well-handled—program, and there has never been any question about Bowes' showmanship. The amateur show he started locally on WHN in 1934 evoked such tremendous response that NBC put it on the network. Its success, and Murray Hill 8-9933 (the number where votes on the amateurs are received by a battery of telephone operators) became the most famous telephone number in the world. The Major Bowes amateur hour was something that just happened. Attempts to duplicate it have inevitably failed. Charlie McCarthy is another such novelty act and rash imitators of radio's Pinocchio have learned, to their sorrow, that Charlie isn't quintuplets. The same holds true for the character of "Baby Snooks," created by Fanny Brice.

Other variety shows, however, have grown as a result of programming trends. What Rudy Vallee started on a large scale has been successfully duplicated in any number of programs—"Good News," "The Texaco Star Theater," "Uncle Walter's Doghouse," and "Plantation Party," to mention only a few. Typical of the current trend in radio is the "Americanism" trend which got off to a good start two years back with Kate Smith's introduction of "God Bless America" to radio audiences. How long this trend will last and to what lengths it will travel depends largely upon the course of the war and America's participation in it.

The present limit in the "Americanism" shows is "Millions for Defense," conducted by the United States Treasury Department as a spur to war bond sales. Starting in the summer of 1940, in less than a month, it had become the most popular feature on the air, and Thursdays and Fridays had become the best bond-selling days. For the AFRA minimum wage of \$35 each, the program presents such stars as Fred Allen, Jack

Benny, Bob Hope, Bette Davis, Tyrone Power, Claudette Colbert, with a theme song, "Any Bonds Today?" written by that indefatigable patriot, Irving Berlin. Time, music and players for the summer period of the broadcast were paid for by the Texas Oil Corporation, which spent some \$190,000 before autumn. Time on the NBC network during the 1940-1941 winter months was footed by the Bendix Aviation Corporation.

Both of these corporations receive their return in public good will—and officials of the company feel that such return is cheap at the price. So do the stars who appear. Charles Vanda, producer of the show for CBS, put it succinctly.

"Who wouldn't go on this show? Ten million people listened to it in the summer months alone. In one evening, at no cost and without having to dress or make up, the stars get a better audience than they could get in 10,000 personal appearances."

Another show sponsored as a good will measure is "Wheeling Steel Time." Wheeling, W. Va., is a sprawling, dirty little mill city of some sixty-thousand souls. Go into a locally owned store or barber shop today and ask the owner what he thinks of the Wheeling Steel Corporation and a wave of profanity will assail your ears. Wheeling folk feel that the corporation has been largely responsible for keeping other great industries from the city by buying up all the available land sites for miles around.

But the broadcast has been highly effective in building loyalty on the part of those employed by the company. For "Wheeling Steel Time," like the theater's "Pins and Needles," is strictly a company program. No one appears on it unless he or she either labors in the company's mills or is a member of the immediate family of such a toiler. Auditions—heard every month—bring out from thirty to forty new acts and the program itself compares favorably with the run of professional shows. Only one big name has come from "Wheeling Steel Time," to date. That is tiny, six-year-old Caroline Lee, one of the most promising of Hollywood's child stars.

Those employees lucky enough to survive the auditions and win a place on the air are paid the minimum AFRA wage scale in addition to their regular wages as mill hands or office workers,

but their greatest reward is the adulation of thousands of fellow workers who burn with ambition . . . and little else.

Not all of the high-salaried figures responsible for radio's variety broadcasts are known to the listening public. Behind every big broadcast are the laborers-in-the-dark, the writers who sweat up what a Benny or a Hope tosses off casually and in an offhand manner as his own, spontaneous gag. Don Quinn, who writes the Fibber McGee and Molly show, is perhaps the top hand in this category, earning \$3,750 per week. Fibber's own salary is hardly that much, which indicates how important these behind-the-scenes laborers really are to radio. Bill Morrow, chief gag writer for Jack Benny, earns \$750 a week but he is aided by Ed Beloin, who earns nearly as much. Beloin won his job with Benny when he submitted a script to Fred Allen who passed it along to Benny as a gag. Benny liked it, wired Beloin to come on to Hollywood and start work. Other, lesser writers also labor in the Benny behalf.

George Jessel's stuff is written by Sam Carlton, who has been with the comic since 1933 at salaries varying with the Jessel income, now at a new low. John P. Medbury, onetime newspaper columnist and gagman, is responsible for the Burns and Allen show at a salary of \$800 per week. Gag writers for radio stars are usually very serious fellows who go about their task in a grotesquely methodical manner. They have huge libraries of jokes and gags—Eugene Conrad, who writes Tommy Riggs' stuff, has a catalogued library of 750,000 jokes—and they listen assiduously to other shows for ideas and trends. Change comes to network variety only after it has been definitely tried and established over local stations by other, lesser names. Notable exception to this self-made rule is NBC's "Club Matinee."

In experimental drama, radio has its "Columbia Workshop" and "Arch Obeler's Plays." Both the Workshop directors and Obeler are given a free hand in developing new techniques and pioneering airway drama. In music, Raymond Scott's "Concert in Rhythm," affords that maestro the opportunity to experiment in futuristic musical forms. In comedy, NBC's "Club Matinee" is

the only big network show unafraid of the new comedy techniques.

Here is a zany piece of merriment, inauspiciously insinuated into your afternoon listening, which has become the most haphazard, the screwiest, the most anything-can-happen-affair to hit the air waves. There are no inhibitions on Club Matinee, and its only prohibitions are those set up by the FCC in the interests of decency and public welfare.

One day I was present in the studio when Garry Moore, master of ceremonies that day, learned that Johnnie Johnston, tenor soloist on the show, was ill. The easy way would have been to get a substitute tenor, give him Johnston's lines and let it go at that. But it was too good an opportunity for Moore.

He started by handing the announcer's script to Evelyn Lynne, tiny vocalist from Alabama. "You're the announcer today," he told her urbane, ignoring her protest that she was only a singer. To Durward Kirby, the announcer, he gave Johnston's lines. The lines in the script prepared for Miss Lynne were given to Rex Maupin, orchestra leader. The fact that Maupin already had lines assigned to him left Moore undismayed. "I'll take 'em myself," he said, and he did in a pattering double-talk that left a studio audience of three hundred people and a radio audience of many thousands gasping for air. All this switching, remember, was done just as the show was about to take the air. The result was something like an omelet, but a tasty one, and I came away with the feeling that I had just spent a quiet week end with the Marx brothers.

Club Matinee is NBC's testing ground where new talent can try their wings and give the public a chance to say Yea or Nay to their efforts. The result: Average age of performers on Club Matinee is nineteen years, and its roster of graduates to more important fields of radio is an important and growing one. Scripts were the sole responsibility of Moore and Sherman. Now Sherman has become its latest graduate, creating a new comedy show, "Hap Hazard," for a commercial sponsor.

Anything goes on the show and its most striking characteristic is the wealth of individuality which crops out. Four microphones are usually employed in airing it, and the first four people to

reach a microphone are the four who get in the first say. Result: A rush to the program of all NBC talent which feels itself out of the groove. Announcers who want to be actors; actors who want to be singers; singers who want to be announcers all beg for a Club Matinee assignment. Bill Short, for example, played the string bass in the staff orchestra, but when Moore learned that he hailed from Brooklyn and spoke a pure Brooklynese, he gave Short a break before the mike. Now, Bill is a star monologist on NBC's Chicago staff. Phil Shukin was another lad buried away in the saxophone section of Club Matinee's orchestra. Club Matinee revealed his natural tenor voice and after two solos on that program, he was added to the staff of vocalists.

Day after day, Club Matinee is broadcast as a sustaining program and, day after day, it does a grand job of discovering new talent, developing it, building new and different comedy which, sooner or later, finds its way onto the big commercial shows. It is one of the really farsighted programs thus far launched by a network to perpetuate comedy. It occupies a place in radio similar to the stock company in the theater, and with the death of vaudeville, from which the earlier recruits to radio farce were drawn, such programs are an essential and vital part of tomorrow's broadcasting.

“ . . . IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST ”

ON A SATURDAY EVENING IN OCTOBER, 1936, AS THE Roosevelt-Landon Presidential campaign was nearing its climax, radio listeners tuned to many CBS stations were treated to a thoroughly mystifying broadcast which, aptly enough, had been listed as “A Fireside Mystery Chat,” starring Senator Arthur Vandenberg. For the first two minutes of the broadcast, the tinkling of a studio piano was all that came over the air. Suddenly, the piano stopped and the biting tones of the Senator were heard. Next, an announcer interrupted to splutter something about records. Then, the big jolt. President Roosevelt’s unmistakable voice entered into debate with the Senator! For eighteen minutes, Senator Vandenberg shot questions at the President, the President answered, the Senator ridiculed the answers. In the midst of this amazing spectacle, there came another jarring interruption.

“Ladies and gentlemen,” an announcer’s voice cut in, “we shall be forced to terminate this broadcast.”

Telegrams and telephone calls began to deluge CBS officials. Republicans protested against the censorship of the broadcast of a United States Senator; Democrats protested against the unseemly spectacle of a United States Senator using records of the President’s past speeches in such a manner; but the bulk of the deluge was from listeners who were just plain mystified. CBS officials rushed explanatory bulletins on the air. There had been no censorship, they insisted, but Senator Vandenberg—in playing such transcriptions—had violated a CBS rule against the use of phonograph records!

What actually happened was this: H. Leslie Atlass, CBS vice-president, had learned of the Senator’s plan to stage such a debate

only ten minutes before broadcast time. He promptly ordered the program off the air. A few minutes later, reconsidering, he decided to let it go on, then upon further consideration, ordered it off again. If the audience was mystified, program directors of the affiliated CBS stations were even more at sea. Some canceled the program entirely, some broadcast half of it and some carried it in full. For Senator Vandenberg and the voice of Roosevelt carried on to the end. In fact, some of the best dialogue was at the end.

Vandenberg: The platform upon which you were elected said, “We advocate an immediate drastic reduction of governmental expenditures.” And what did you say?

Voice: That admirable document, the platform which you have adopted, is clear. I accept it 100 per cent.

Vandenberg: Instead of reducing expenditures 25 per cent, you have increased them 72 per cent. . . . And what did you say?

Voice: I accept it 100 per cent.

Vandenberg: We play with gold, we toy with silver, we revel in greenbacks. . . . Time forbids an inventory. I simply listen once more and finally for your sturdy words —

Voice: I accept it 100 per cent.

Legally, there is no censorship of radio. The Communications Act of 1934 specifically states that nothing in that act must be construed as giving the Federal Communications Commission the power of censorship. The only prohibitions specifically listed are against the broadcasting of lotteries or of “obscene, indecent or profane language.” BUT—the act provides that the FCC should consider, in awarding new licenses or renewing existing ones, the serving of the “public interest, convenience and necessity.” Under that vague bit of phraseology are hidden all the teeth necessary for the machinery of censorship.

The Mae West skit on a Chase and Sanborn show developed into a *cause célèbre* because of the popularity of Miss West at the moment and the wide audience commanded by that particular show, starring Charlie McCarthy. It is a good example of what broadcasters term the “Censorship of Fear.” After the broadcast, the various stations which carried the network show (and whose

managers had not seen the script beforehand) were warned by the FCC that their broadcast of that show would be taken into consideration in determining whether they had operated their stations in the public interest when their next application for renewal of license was before the commission.

The commission repeatedly insists that it does not have the power of censorship and refuses to lay down hard and fast rules to guide the broadcaster. But after a broadcast, the commission may, if it so feels, use the content of a previous broadcast to destroy that station by not renewing its license. If it does not have the power of censorship, it holds a much greater power—that of life and death—over the broadcaster's head.

In 1938, NBC-Blue network broadcaster Eugene O'Neill's Pulitzer prize-winning play, *Beyond the Horizon*, and such expressions as "Hell," "Damnation," and "For God's Sake," went out through the unsullied ether. Eighteen stations carried the broadcast, and one listener in the Minneapolis area wrote to the FCC in complaint. On September 27, 1938, the commission cited WTCN, of Minneapolis, to appear before it and give reasons why its license should be renewed in the face of a broadcast so obviously not in the public interest.

Various groups—including the American press—took up the cudgels on behalf of the offending station. Leonard Lyons, New York columnist, observed that "the FCC officials are not aware that another Federal agency—the Federal Theater—three times has presented the same play—uncensored—" When the commission met on October 4, the citation was dropped and the commission announced that it planned to establish once and for all a procedure that would be beyond reproach. No such utopian development has occurred in the three years since that announcement. Nearest approach to such a clarification has been the list of fourteen types of programs digested by the FCC's Complaints Committee "for the guidance of broadcasters."

1. Fortune telling in any form.
2. Astrology or other fake sciences.
3. Solicitation of funds.
4. False, fraudulent or misleading advertising.

5. Defamatory statements.
6. Failure to allow equal opportunity to discuss all sides of controversial issues.
7. Programs bordering on the obscene.
8. Programs offending religious or racial groups.
9. Taking sides (as broadcasters) on political, religious or racial matters.
10. Cliff-hanger (overstimulating) kid shows.
11. Booze glorification.
12. Interrupting concerts or music to insert advertising announcements.
13. Too much advertising in general.
14. Too many phonograph records.

Actually, only a few of the many hundred stations which are—or were—on the air have been wiped out of existence by an FCC refusal to renew licenses. But the threat is one which hangs heavily and constantly over the heads of every investor in broadcasting stations. When the first comprehensive Communications Act was enacted in 1927, the then Federal Radio Commission (superseded by the FCC in 1934) was empowered to license stations for a period up to three years. It preferred to issue licenses only for a period of six months, and broadcasters constantly fought for the full three-year license period. Financing was the first difficulty caused by the short-term licenses. Banks refused to invest money in a business which, after six months, might be out of business by government fiat. In the second place, it was difficult to plan the better and more expensive programs and to secure advantageous advertising contracts on such a short basis. As a result of this concerted move on the part of broadcasters, the FCC, early in 1940, lengthened the license period to a full year. Even this, broadcasters say, is a relatively short period of time when the huge investment of broadcasters is considered.

The FCC, on the other hand, argues that it does not maintain the short license period in an effort to exert a censorship. Yet, four radio stations have been refused license renewals by the FCC or its predecessors—and many others have been refused improvements in time, channels and power—because of program content.

Dr. Brinkley's station is a notable example of this. It was refused license renewal partly because of technical difficulties, partly on the basis of program content.

When Brinkley appealed his case to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, the court upheld the commission.

There has been no attempt, [the court ruled], on the part of the Commission to subject any part of the appellant's broadcasting matter to scrutiny *prior to its release* . . . (Italics are mine . . .) The Commission has merely exercised its undoubted right to take note of appellant's past conduct, which is not censorship.

Call it what you wish, this policy of reviewing programs which have already gone out over the air by the FCC and its predecessors at subsequent license hearings has thrown the fear of Uncle Sam into the breast of every station owner. Owners much prefer to have a government censor blue-pencil script beforehand. And from the standpoint of the listener, too, the present system has endless drawbacks. Not the least of these is that every station manager feels called upon to act as a censor in self-defense. A person may be a perfectly capable station manager and lack every qualification essential to judicious censorship.

In 1927, the late Congressman Victor Berger, of Milwaukee—one of the country's first Socialist mayors—was a principal speaker at the thirteenth anniversary banquet of the Jewish *Daily Forward*, in New York. The speech was scheduled for broadcast by WJZ and the NBC-Blue network. When in his address he charged that "capitalism had control over the American President," the engineer for WJZ removed the microphone from the table and carried it out of the room.

WHEC, in Rochester, N. Y., refused its facilities to ex-Senator James W. Wadsworth and Mrs. Charles Sabin, speaking for the repeal of prohibition. Mrs. Sabin remarked at the time, "This looks very much like the beginning of the end of free speech in this country." An NBC station in Los Angeles refused to permit William G. McAdoo to speak on the same subject unless his speech were first edited by NBC officials. Hudson Maxim was left talking into a dead mike when his remarks about prohibi-

tion displeased a station manager. New York's city-owned WNYC shut off the Hon. Carroll L. Beedy, of Maine, when he condemned the lurid journalism of the day during a convention of newspaper publishers and editors. In a bitter broadcast in 1930, Heywood Broun said that "the only mistake starving unemployed of this country have made is that they did not march on Washington and under the windows of Mr. Hoover in the White House display banners reading, 'We are Belgians!' . . ." Next day, sources close to the White House informed station officials they were "airing too many liberal views."

Today, all the networks maintain continuity acceptance departments which are simply censorship bodies. Songs heard on the radio have first been carefully "air-conditioned," all possible double entendre taken out, whole verses rewritten. Many of the instances of censorship which occur in the studio are due to beliefs and principles of station owners, but by far the greater percentage of censorship instances is due to this ever-present fear of offending the FCC. Many stations veer away from labor discussions and birth control; atheists and the smaller religious sects are never given time on the air.

Labor organizations have leveled stern criticism at individual stations. WLW, in Cincinnati, reported to have forbidden newscasters to mention a certain strike in which police brutality occurred, incurred the hostility of labor and drew a protest from the Civil Liberties Union. WCAU, in Philadelphia, was boycotted by CIO for its anti-labor broadcasts by Boake Carter. But labor's biggest complaints were lodged against the Federal Radio Commission in the late twenties over the body's refusal to assign effective wave lengths, grant power increases and more broadcasting time to WEVD (the call letters stand for Eugene V. Debs) in New York, and WCFL (Chicago Federation of Labor) in Chicago. Both stations were weak and WCFL's plight was further emphasized by the commission's decision that the interest of the people of Chicago would be better served by granting tremendous power and a cleared channel almost at the center of the broadcasting dial to a semi-moribund transmitter just acquired by the Insull utility interests!

WCFL has done much better since 1932 in the way of FCC grants.

Stations which have been wiped off the air in the public interest by the Federal Government include KTNT, Muscatine, Ia., owned by cancer-cure operator Norman Baker; Bob Shuler's Los Angeles station, over which the evangelist bitterly attacked leading political figures, corporations and certain religious sects; and KVEP, in Portland, Oregon. The case of KVEP is especially interesting.

Robert G. Duncan, "The Oregon Wildcat," rented KVEP's facilities to lambaste the chain stores, the lumber monopoly and high politicians who opposed his candidacy for public office. Respectable Washingtonians appealed to Washington for relief and got it. KVEP's license was not renewed.

Without holding a brief for Mr. Duncan, it does seem that the case of KVEP suggests a possibility that may often prove unfair to broadcasters. Under an FCC ruling, stations are forbidden to give or sell time to one political party or faction without giving or offering for sale an equal amount of time for the opposing party or faction. Furthermore, the station is not permitted to censor such talks. Thus, a station may receive the death sentence for permitting a political speaker, whom it can neither ban nor censor, to speak over its facilities! Communist candidate Browder ran into broadcasting difficulties frequently and WIRE, of Indianapolis, was cited by the FCC for refusing the Communist its facilities. CBS, on the other hand, made its facilities available to Comrade Browder against its better judgment—and was roundly condemned by the public for so doing.

Because of the vague, never clearly defined powers of the FCC in the field of censorship and because the radio industry is so dependent upon political forces in Washington for its very business existence, radio's handling of political events has always been a ticklish proposition.

Boake Carter is a bitter, vitriolic commentator and he angered Army and Navy officials by his criticism of their executive officers and the administration by lambasting its every move. At the height of his popularity, Carter was sponsored by General Foods. News-

paperman Paul Y. Anderson reported that Ambassador Joseph E. Davies, whose wife is a member of the General Foods board of directors, wanted to fire Carter but that Colby M. Chester, president of the company and an administration heckler, refused. Came August, 1938, and Carter's contract was not renewed. On his speaking tour, Carter told audiences that Washington had forced him off the air.

During 1936, the charges of political pressure upon radio stations by the administration reached a new high. It was equaled only by administration charges that the nation's press was being high-pressured by large Republican advertisers. Another of the curious things about broadcasting is that those who make it possible—the large commercial sponsors—are the same industrialists who, according to the administration, use their advertising expenditures to gain special concessions from the press. Yet, radio and the press—supported from the same till—have traveled widely divergent paths.

Radio stations give time to the President for important messages to the nation as a public service. They sell time to political parties for candidates' speeches. A Los Angeles station manager refused to carry President Roosevelt's fireside chats in 1936 because he classified them as political talks, designed to gain votes. Early in 1936, too, Chairman Fletcher of the Republican National Committee engaged in a tussle with the major networks over their broadcast of Roosevelt's message to Congress which, Republicans claimed, was but the opening gun in his campaign for re-election in November.

But the real battle was joined over the networks' refusal to carry as a sponsored and paid-for program of the Republican National Committee, a dramatic sketch, "Liberty at the Crossroads." Republicans charged that the networks were dominated by the administration. Later, a few independent stations—and Mutual's WGN, operated by the Roosevelt-hating Chicago *Tribune*—did accept the broadcast, which turned out to be no world-shaking artistic triumph.

Lenox Lohr, president of NBC, smacked the wrist of Republicans in his answer to their charges. "To accept such dramatic programs as you have offered," he told Republican radio chair-

man John Sabin, "would place the discussion of vital political and national issues on the basis of dramatic license rather than upon the basis of responsibly stated fact or opinion."

That radio is most thoroughly censored, however, is a fact which can't be shrugged away. The primary censorship of broadcasting stems from the Communications Act of 1934. This censorship is indirect, operating as a sort of honor system with teeth. The teeth are the commission's powers to mete out subsequent punishment. A secondary censorship is that self-imposed upon its members by the National Association of Broadcasters through a voluntarily adopted code not unlike that of the Motion Picture Producers and Theater Owners of America and its Hays office. A third source of censorship for radio is the station manager or program director who, fearful of the consequences of an irate FCC, watches all scripts with a zealous eye lest offense be given.

What broadcasters and the Government seem to have overlooked completely is the fact that every listener who isn't paralyzed and can turn a dial acts as a censor. The listener-censor is the most logical, unquestionably the most potent, and usually the sanest of all possible censors.

From a standpoint of real public interest and benefit, the positive reactions to the "public-interest" clause of the Communications Act far outweigh the negative ones.

The NBC symphony orchestra, heard each Saturday night in presentations of the world's great music, is a terrifically expensive aggregation of America's finest musicians. For these broadcasts—which have had a tremendous role in making great classical music the peculiar property of any man owning a radio set—NBC receives not one cent. It is a broadcast "in the public interest," undertaken weekly without commercial sponsorship by a group of radio stations which, in this way, repay the people of America for the use of their ether waves.

Arturo Toscanini, until recently its conductor, is known wherever radio sets are in existence as a musical perfectionist, a maestro with a fearful temper, an unflinching memory and the power to lash his musicians into frenzies of fine playing. For the services of this seventy-three-year-old musical genius, NBC dipped into

its own pocket to the tune of \$4,000 per broadcast plus the income tax payments due on that salary.

Residents of Riverdale, learning that Toscanini planned to move there after signing his NBC contract, were thrilled with one exception—the postman. The postman, too, had been thrilled to hear that a great conductor was moving on his route, but when he learned it was Toscanini, his face fell. "Toscanini is all right," he said, "but I'd hoped it would be Stokowski and Garbo."

Toscanini arose each morning at six, went to his piano where he played scores and sang in the orchestral parts he was unable to simulate on the piano. He woke up everybody else in the house. Everybody included Mrs. Toscanini; quite often his five-year-old granddaughter, Sonia, and her mother, Mrs. Vladimir Horowitz, wife of the noted pianist.

Toscanini would stop for breakfast and then work again until noon. On afternoons when he had no rehearsals, he would romp on the grounds with Sonia or go for long—and fast—automobile rides. In the evening, he tuned in the radio and listened for hours to all kinds and qualities of music.

On Thursdays—rehearsal day—and on Saturdays, when he broadcast, it was different. At ten-thirty in the morning, he arrived at the studio, went to his private dressing room. Donning a loosely fitting pair of trousers and a mohair jacket, he went to Studio 8-H and started rehearsals. They lasted until one o'clock with only one time out. He then returned to his Riverdale home.

At nine o'clock on Saturday evening, Al Walker, receptionist at NBC, used to call for him and the Toscaninis and Walker, driven by the Toscanini chauffeur, would return to the NBC studios. Toscanini went to his dressing room where he donned formal dress. Mrs. Toscanini went to the studio where guests were already beginning to arrive—people like the Will Hays, the Gene Tunneys, the Fredric Marches, United States senators and congressmen and diplomats. Because Toscanini, more than most conductors, conducts with his hands and face—never with his body—guests used to come early to get seats close to the front where they might see his sometimes pleased, sometimes furious expression. Perspiration poured from his forehead during these broadcasts, dripped from the end of his nose until, at intermis-

sion, he would have to change clothes completely. Two broadcasters had the official NBC okay to run over their allotted time without being cut off the air—President Roosevelt and Toscanini.

After the concert, the maestro went straight to his dressing room where Walker—he called Walker his shadow—awaited him. Walker would wipe the perspiration from his brow with a towel and untie his tie. When Toscanini was undressed to shirt and shorts, he sat down in an easy chair and drank a glass of champagne brought him from the Rainbow Room atop the RCA Building. NBC furnished the champagne, too. Afterwards, he dressed, joined Mrs. Toscanini for dinner at some New York restaurant and then returned again to the quiet of Riverdale.

CBS' comparable attraction is its weekly presentation of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. The Metropolitan auditions are also broadcast, and over the networks and on local stations, more good music is made available to average Americans than an Italian or Viennese millionaire could hear in years.

But perhaps the best example of what radio is accomplishing in its efforts to make great music the everyday companion of the American listener is afforded by the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts.

Back in the spring of 1940, that hallowed sanctuary of culture, diamond necklaces and double chins was fighting for existence. A million dollars was needed to keep the monstrous house from becoming the dark habitat of memories instead of the world's finest voices. In desperation, its directors turned to American radio listeners who, for several years, had been receiving opera broadcasts each Saturday afternoon.

The difficulty in which the opera company found itself was due to its peculiar organization. The opera house itself was owned by a group known as the Metropolitan Opera and Real Estate Company. Operas, on the other hand, are produced by the Metropolitan Opera Association which is a nonprofit corporation. Stockholders of the former company are the holders of swanky parterre boxes around the Golden Horseshoe which they accepted in lieu of cash rental payments on the opera house. This was all right in other days; then the stockholders were the patrons of art—and in

the days of diamond tiaras and Delmonico's, their donations to the opera were sufficient to keep it running.

Most of these early stockholders are dead today. Their stock has passed into the hands of estates, and these cold, legal entities care little for Bizet or Mozart. The Metropolitan Opera and Real Estate Company began to contemplate liquidation of its holdings and sale of the opera house. That, literally, would have set the opera out on the sidewalk.

The problem was put squarely up to the people, to the radio listeners in Sioux Falls and Oak Grove, in Omaha and Ogden. Could democracy support opera and did it want opera?

More than 150,000 contributions—many of them family contributions—were received. They amounted to almost a half million dollars. They were the small gifts of everyday listeners who had never sat in the Family Circle and peered down upon the great stage of the Met. What had really occurred—and radio was responsible—was a sort of revolution. Radio had given the opera, once the property of the elite, to the people; now the people were giving life to the opera, deserted by the elite.

At about the same time the daytime serials were beginning to take hold, a different type of late afternoon and early evening serial was finding its way to the airways. These were the kid shows; and in those early years, they were almost entirely of the blood-and-thunder variety. Invariably, these broadcasts were sponsored by advertisers who had something to sell for the household. The psychology was: Sell the kids and let the kids sell their parents. The device employed most effectively was the giveaway.

Cereals, dairy products, flashlights all used this type of program effectively. At the end of the show, the announcer would tell his audience that, with each box top or wrapper of a certain product sent in, the sender would receive a badge making him a full-fledged member of the So-and-so Club (linked to the program) or a mask or pocketknife, exact replicas of those used by the character in the serial. Here, again, the advertiser had uncovered an effective means of merchandising, and while kid shows, even at their commercial height, reached only a fractional part of the popularity enjoyed by daytime serials (in 1938,

less than five million dollars was spent on such programs), still they were an important part of radio and, unhampered by parents' and teachers' groups, might have become the second most important commercial segment of the broadcasting world.

Perhaps the most important commercial phases of these early—and for that matter, current—kids' broadcasts were divorced from radio. "Gang-Busters," for example, is a highly successful show of the type parents' groups have continually protested against. And while the "Gang-Busters" income from radio is tremendous—air time and talent run above ten thousand dollars per broadcast—the income from a vast and varied lot of by-products amounts to much more.

"Gang-Busters" is the brain child of Phillips H. Lord, who is perhaps best known to adult listeners as "Seth Parker," one of radio's most widely known characters, a moralizing New Englander and a pioneer in radio. Cases dramatized on the "Gang-Busters" shows come from actual police files; Col. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, of the New Jersey State Police and prominent in the Lindbergh baby kidnaping investigation, presides at the microphone; each show has a strong moral, that crime does not pay.

But young listeners seemed to think crime did pay. Frank Xavier Reller, chief probation officer of the St. Louis (Mo.) Juvenile Court, complained to the FCC that "Gang-Busters," far from being a deterrent to crime, inspired it among juveniles. Reller claims forty-six youths convicted of crimes in his bailiwick recently confessed they got their crime tips from "Gang-Busters."

Certainly crime paid Lord. Boys everywhere prize "Crime-Busters" belts, manufactured and sold through Hickok, Inc., with a royalty for the use of the name payable to Lord. There is also a toy machine gun, a comic book, neckties, sweatshirts, play suits, autos bearing the popular name, each paying royalties for such use. The same holds true of later programs, those approved by most parents' groups. Gene Autry earns more from the by-products sold under his name than he does from both radio and screen appearances added together. This is true, too, of "The Lone Ranger," which has been incorporated and markets a wide variety of "Lone Ranger" products, ranging from soap, molded in the

shape of the Ranger and Tonto, to the widely publicized masks which, at ten cents each, have sold more than a half million dozens.

At the very outset of radio, broadcasters realized that here was an ideal medium for reaching the young. But they didn't quite know how to go about it. So, they set up elaborate radio schools, talked of the time when children would sit at home and learn more—and in a more capable and effective manner—than they did at school. But these early broadcasters didn't know what every good teacher must know—kids love action.

When radio did awaken to what kids wanted, it awakened with a bang. If the script called for a scream, the producers put in a scream that gave the kids nightmares. If a man had to die in a script, he died so realistically that kid listeners were afraid of the dark for a week.

And because kids like murder and excitement, such programs proved good merchandising mediums. Why, then, have they practically vanished from the air? Why doesn't the advertiser, who uses daytime serials endlessly and without a qualm in selling his merchandise to housewives, employ these melodramatic kid shows which, in their way, are just as effective?

Advertisers who used such kid shows soon found themselves face to face with the phenomenon of having a growing, interested audience of youngsters—but youngsters with parents who threatened to stop purchasing such merchandise unless a higher grade of program were put on the air for children. The advertiser preferred, in most cases, to drop the whole idea. Today, children's programs are being developed at the expense of the networks and local stations purely as a public service. Incidentally, some very fine children's shows are finding their way to the airways as a result of this trend.

Perhaps the two outstanding kid shows remaining under commercial sponsorship are "The Lone Ranger" and "Gene Autry's Melody Ranch." Both are far from namby-pamby, both are action-full and alive with drama; yet, there is seldom anything in either script which would bring down the frowns of the United Parents Association, a leading factor in getting the objectionable broadcasts banned.

The United Parents Association has set up a group of recommendations for the guidance of broadcasters which proposes that programs for children employ good English; that there be suspense with a conclusion; that they stimulate the imagination; that they have a definite educational or entertainment value.

Radio came to America in a period when the good or the harm of fairy tales for children was still a moot question (as it remains today) and producers were torn between the two schools of thought. Opposed to the fairy tale had grown up a school of literature which believed that the best type of reading matter for children were pragmatic little tales about everyday, close-at-hand affairs of America. And it was this school which was to triumph—at least for the moment and with a few notable exceptions (as “Superman”)—in the new medium.

Parents, for the most part, want to shield their offspring from the life about them to an extent far greater than the average educator feels is proper for the child’s own well-being. There is a middle ground upon which parent and teacher might profitably meet and radio—thanks to the fact that it is not now hampered by commercial sponsorship in the matter of kid shows—is finding that middle ground. For you may persuade your youngster to listen to bedtime stories until you’re blue in the face, but when your back is turned, chances are he’ll tune in “Renfrew of the Mounted.” With the careful production being given such shows as “Renfrew of the Mounted” today, the youngster will be none the worse for listening. This fact has been recognized by the United Association of Mothers, of New York, which lists this indomitable Mountie among its good listening items.

It is in the field of education—both child and adult—that radio offers its greatest potentialities for good. The schoolteacher is able to reach only those pupils who enter the schoolroom. Radio enters almost every home. This does not mean that educational broadcasts reach all ears. Charlie McCarthy is heard by more people than listen to one hundred educational broadcasts, even in their improved, more palatable state. Compare the number of people who attend the movies with that attending adult education classes and the result is the same.

Almost all radio stations, as a public service, now broadcast

at least one daily program intended for in-school listening. CBS' "American School of the Air" makes available to the many radio-equipped classrooms of the nation lessons in literature, history, geography and science in stirring and dramatic dress. NBC offers its "Music Appreciation Hour," "Gallant American Women" (dramatic character sketches of famous women of history), and "Ideas That Came True." These programs are often planned and produced in co-operation with the United States Office of Education, the National Education Association, and the National Council of Teachers of English. The Smithsonian Institution is responsible for the program, "Americans at Work," which is a vivid vocational guide for high school students. All of these programs—and many others—are noncommercial, unsponsored and the contribution of broadcasting to the public interest.

But in the very fact that they are unsponsored and non-commercial lie certain disadvantages. Sustaining network programs are carried at the option of the local station, and while the networks offer many hours of broadcasting designed to make education painless and aid educators in their task, many of these programs are refused by local stations because they are non-income-producing. The amount of time available for local sale out of a broadcasting day by network-affiliated stations is limited by contractual agreement; and if the station is to show a profit—and satisfy its local advertisers—it cannot afford to carry too many sustaining network shows.

In the late twenties, more than a hundred radio stations devoted exclusively to the broadcasting of educational programs were in existence. They were owned by colleges and universities, but with the rising standards of broadcasting equipment, with tremendously increased costs, most of these stations were abandoned. Had they continued to operate, they might have become a vital part of radio's educational program. WHA, owned and operated by the University of Wisconsin, is an excellent example of how effective such an educational station can be. The "Wisconsin School of the Air" is heard daily by thousands of students in Wisconsin high schools, while its "College of the Air" reaches large numbers of adolescents and adults with no school affiliation.

Thus far we have considered education by radio within its narrow, pedagogical limits. There is no question as to the efficacy of radio's great forums—America's Town Meeting of the Air, the American Forum, the University of Chicago Round Table, etc.*—as a means of public enlightenment. The news broadcasts, the various broadcast speeches and civic discussions all contribute to the education of the American people. John W. Studebaker, United States commissioner of education, recognized this fact when he said,

It is worth any trouble it takes to rearrange and organize the high school or college schedule . . . to enable students to hear first hand the most important pronouncements being made by history-making leaders. The student who missed hearing Chamberlain or Hitler because he was forced by an inflexible school program to conjugate German verbs or learn a verse from Shakespeare was deprived of some real education.

It is possible that the greatest educational gifts radio has to bring us—regardless of age—may not be labeled education at all. A high school student will learn more geography, history and economics in one fifteen-minute roundup of European news than in hours of textbook study . . . or from educational broadcasts made compulsory by well-intending instructors.

Also under the head of broadcasting in the public interest come the religious broadcasts. At the outset, all religious programs were on a sustaining basis; but the demand of militant ministers for time on the air caused many stations to put all religious broadcasts on a commercial basis. Today, probably 25 per cent of all religious broadcasts are paid for either by churches or by commercial sponsors. In order to satisfy the various shades of religious thought, CBS has its regular, noncommercial "Church of the Air," where each Sunday afternoon, the minister of a different sect is invited to occupy the pulpit of the radio church.

NBC, for more than ten years now, has been broadcasting as a public service the Catholic Hour, conceived by and under the supervision of liberal Msgr. Fulton Sheen, who has probably

* See Chapter VII.

brought more Communists and liberals (including the late Heywood Broun) into the Catholic faith than any other Catholic clergyman. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick's vesper services are a regular NBC feature. Almost every local station, too, gives a goodly share of its sustaining time to religious broadcasts. In fact, religious broadcasts consume 5.15 per cent of all broadcasting time over American stations. But few sects which travel off the beaten path are successful in their efforts to reach the public through radio. Joseph F. Rutherford, of Jehovah's Witnesses, once had damage suits asking \$375,000 on file against Catholic and other clergymen who, he alleged, forced radio stations in Georgia, Ohio and Colorado to reject his paid broadcasts.

Among the unusual religious broadcasts of a local nature, that of E. Howard Cadle, over WLW, is a striking example. Reared in the back hills of southern Indiana, Mr. Cadle—an interdenominationalist—is radio preacher to one of the largest parishes in America. It stretches throughout the hills of the South where, by funds raised through his radio program, he has rebuilt and reopened more than five hundred abandoned mountain churches which, years ago, had been served by circuit riders. Today, a radio receiver on each pulpit again brings the word of God back to these tiny log chapels after so many years of silence.

There are many other trivia of broadcasting which fall under the shadow of this "public-interest" clause—the matter of equipment, of wave lengths and power, of monopoly*—but one of the most graphic illustrations of how the thing works out in practice was afforded by a recent "Hobby Lobby" broadcast. Hobby Lobby is a show on which people with unusual hobbies are interviewed. Whenever possible, they are permitted to do their stuff for the microphone and studio audience.

The hobby of Howard Klein, of Philadelphia, is hypnotism. Two years ago, Dave Elman booked him for Hobby Lobby. Learning that Klein was able to hypnotize people who were separated from him by a brick wall, Elman began to worry. Suppose he succeeded in hypnotizing the radio audience? Would that be broadcasting in the public interest? Mr. Elman was un-

* See Chapter III.

decided and—playing it safe—he canceled Klein's appearance. Klein sued, the suit dragged on until, in the fall of 1940, Elman agreed to let Klein appear on Hobby Lobby.

There was one proviso: Klein must not work his black magic upon the ether audience, but only upon volunteers from the studio audience while Elman told the radio listeners what went on.

They drew a curtain across the studio, put the fourteen volunteers from the studio audience on one side of the curtain, Klein and the microphone on the other. In a few minutes, all fourteen were completely under Klein's spell. He told one that a lemon was an apple and the hypnotized guest ate the lemon with gusto and *sans* grimace. Others waved their arms feverishly back and forth when he told them it was cold. They obeyed other commands, followed other instructions without question. All of which served to convince Mr. Elman that he was right in the first place. To permit Mr. Klein to use the radio for a demonstration in which millions of listeners might have been put to sleep by Klein's suggestion was definitely *not* in the "public interest."

OF MAESTROS AND MIKES

GO BACK A DOZEN YEARS AND YOU COULD COUNT THE well-known dance-band leaders of the country on the fingers of your hands and still have both thumbs to spare. Paul Whiteman, Coon-Sanders, Guy Lombardo, Paul Specht, Fred Waring and a few others dominated the popular dance-band market of the mid-twenties when the lifeblood of the industry flowed largely from the recording business. Today twirl the dials of your radio set after 10 P.M. and a score or more of important baton wielders will play in your living room.

If you're interested in the reason for the increase in dance-band maestros during the past decade, radio is as good as any. For this, broadcasters—and not the band leaders—are responsible. In the early days of broadcasting, band leaders were, for the most part, deaf to the pleas of station managers. Paul Whiteman had made a few broadcasts; so had Ben Bernie. Fred Waring, playing a University of Michigan dance date, was the first big band leader to broadcast, doing a program over pioneer station WWJ, Detroit, in the winter of 1921. But broadcasters were unable to pay for such broadcasts and, reception being what it was, the publicity value of microphone appearances was of a doubtful value.

A more important reason for the band leader's anti-radio feelings lay in the attitude of the recording industry. Victor and Columbia frowned upon the radio appearance of their stars and, in 1922, such manufacturers were in a position to make their frowns count. Americans that year bought 100,000,000 recordings. But as broadcasting began to catch on, as one big-name band after another succumbed to the lure of the microphone,

people began using their radios more than their phonographs, and by the time record manufacturers had really got around to inserting clauses into contracts prohibiting broadcasts by their artists, it was too late to do anything about it. The stock market crash in 1929 really oiled the skids down which the recording business was sliding and 1933 saw record sales hit their lowest ebb.

For the musician, the substitution of broadcasting for recordings was an excellent thing. Before, two large companies had dominated the dance-band field—Columbia and Victor—and the economics of the business was such that, with four or five good dance bands under contract to each, they were able to meet the public requirements. But with close to a thousand stations broadcasting on the air, the competition between stations and, later, between networks, meant that much more room had been created at the top of the dance-band business for ambitious youngsters with batons and an organization. In 1940, income of the dance-band business passed the \$110,000,000 mark.

How is a top-notch band leader made? The erratic Mr. Artie Shaw said, "Give me fifty thousand dollars, fourteen good musicians and a press agent and I'll make Joe Doakes, who doesn't know a C-scale from a snare drum, one of the most popular band-leaders in America."

Most band leaders violently disagree with Shaw who, they say, is a top-notch musician, one of the best clarinetists in the business, but—to be charitable—a bit of a screwball. Sammy Kaye, who should know something about band business, maintains that: "To survive, a bandleader must possess strength of purpose, strength of mind, and just strength. He must love the band business, love it enough to put up with backbreaking, brutal hops from town to town on one-night tours, love it enough to want to kiss every youngster who thinks enough of him to clamor for his autograph."

The one-night stands are, oddly enough, the bottom and the top of this business whose growth has been closely linked with that of broadcasting. The one-night stands are the jumping-off places for bands of tomorrow and the place where bands without "oomph" remain year after year. At the same time, the one-night

stands are where big-name bands earn the most money. They consist mostly of the pay-as-you-enter ballrooms; civic and club functions; college proms; private dates—debutante parties, weddings, charity dances sponsored by socialites. The one-night season usually begins in April, right after Lent, and runs through the summer. In the Deep South, it is at its height in midwinter.

Bands—from the smallest up—play one-nighters on a guarantee-percentage basis. Guarantees run from, in the case of the small, unknown bands, mere union wage scale plus traveling expenses to, in the case of the biggies, \$2,000 per night with 60 per cent of the gate receipts above the guaranteed figure.

Often, big-name bands will play hotel engagements which permit them to barely break even for months before the one-night season opens, *providing* the hotel has a direct wire for broadcasting over an important radio station. Radio appearances play a vital part in building an unknown aggregation with something on the tuba into name-band proportions. It also serves to zoom the asking price of a name band for one-night dates in the hinterlands where a band is known only by loud-speaker acquaintance.

Without a doubt, the hottest, all-around musical attraction in the country today is Kay Kyser's band, which has hung up all sorts of records across the one-night circuits in recent years. Kyser—who has made two motion pictures—attributes his success to radio. Playing at the Civic Auditorium in Pasadena, Calif., he grossed a house record of \$9,000 in paid admissions, adding it to the records he had hung up in Atlantic City, Milwaukee, Scranton and Providence. The Kyser band makes its short jumps in a bus and once, en route from Pittsburgh, where they had broadcast their Kollege of Musical Knowledge, to the University of Alabama for a prom date, they ran into a blizzard, were unable to get the bus over a two-mile hill. Backing the full two miles till they came to a crossroads store, they bought shovels and every manjack of a musician pitched in to throw dirt under the wheels until they were over the summit.

Tommy Dorsey has been a consistent money-maker in this field rather than a record breaker. When Tommy was struggling through the one-night stands with an unknown band on his way up, he arrived in Johnstown, Pa., in a blizzard to play a dance

hall date. The manager paid him a hundred dollars not to play, fearing that the blizzard would keep the customers away. A couple of years ago, Dorsey played the same ballroom and accepted a check for \$1,400 for a single night of music—and it was in a snowstorm! Glenn Miller, an old hand at music but a comparative newcomer to the ranks of baton wavers, is a current favorite with the collegiate set, while Hal Kemp, during his career as a band leader, played more than 400 college proms at 70 different colleges and universities. Benny Goodman, Horace Heidt, Bob Crosby, Glen Gray and Sammy Kaye—all radio-built maestros—are top-flighters who make money and break records on the one-night tours.

Modes of transportation for bands on a one-night tour vary with season, distance, weather and broadcasting commitments. The average jump is two hundred miles and the usual means of getting around is by bus with a truck to haul the instruments. For longer jumps, the train is used and, when the date is important enough, bands have even chartered planes.

For the unknown band touring the "sticks" on one-night appearances, conditions are different. Transportation is uncertain and cheap, and so are food and lodgings. If a band leader survives his one-night stage—they sometimes last for years—and still has a band intact, he may arrive at his "jumping-off" spot. It's usually a large ballroom with a direct wire to a radio station well known for its dance-band broadcasts. There are many such jumping-off places, but not nearly enough for the multitude of aspiring Benny Goodmans who turn up each year with a baton, a band and a prayer. WGN, in Chicago, sending its dance programs over Mutual, is a good station to be heard over. Good Chicago jumping-off spots are the Granada Café, where Guy Lombardo's music first found a wide listening audience through radio; the Aragon Ballroom, which aired and made Wayne King's waltzes a national enthusiasm; the Blackhawk Restaurant, which gave Kay Kyser and countless other band leaders their first break; and the Trianon Ballroom, where Dick Jurgens discovered the mike and fame simultaneously.

The Trianon and Aragon were built by Andrew Karzas, who turned from theater management to the dancing business in 1922

when the dance-band industry—spurred by radio—was beginning to grow up into its present far-flung proportions. They are both gigantic buildings, the former an alleged duplicate of Le Grand Trianon, in Marseilles; the latter, a replica of the ballroom del Aragon, in Madrid. Crowds of three and four thousand followers of the dance—and dance band—appear nightly at these two shrines of jazz which served as the jumping-off places for Anson Weeks, Jan Garber, Ted Weems, Freddie Martin as well as Jurgens and King.

Realizing the importance of radio in building bands—and attendance—Karzas was among the first radio station operators, running WMBB (World's Most Beautiful Ballrooms) for the sole purpose of airing dance music. Today the business of broadcasting dance bands from the Karzas establishments has been taken over by the regular broadcasting stations in the Windy City.

At the Trianon and Aragon, as at other such places, many of the thousands of jitterbugs who come night after night pay their admissions, not to dance—real devotees of the modern dance band and jive artists would no more think of cutting capers on the floor while a Benny Goodman was performing than the bejeweled dowagers who attend chamber music recitals would think of doing a schottische to the strains of the Hart House String Quartet—but to take up a position just before the bandstand where they listen raptly to each note and break out into violent applause at the conclusion of each number. Applause at the end of a number is grand radio stuff, and the best jumping-off places for a band are those patronized by such enthusiasts. In fact, one noted band leader was sued by a large group of New York youngsters who alleged, in their suit, that his manager had hired them to stand before the podium and applaud violently after each number for several weeks, then refused to pay off.

On the west coast, the Cocoanut Grove is a well-known starting point for bands, and it was here that Phil Harris, maestro for Jack Benny, got his break. Out of the Glen Island Casino, in Westchester, N. Y., came such noted bandsmen as Glen Gray, Tommy Dorsey, Larry Clinton and Ozzie Nelson. The management of these spots are, to a certain extent, gamblers. They are

willing—where radio stations and commercial sponsors are not—to give the unknown a chance; and as a feeder for commercial radio bands, they serve an important place in broadcasting. The band leader seldom gets more than one chance in such a spot; if he fails to get in the groove on his first short contract, he can either give up the whole business and go back to law or engineering or resign himself to a lifetime of one-night barnstorming with chances a thousand to one against his ever getting into the big time.

If he does click, there are radio engagements, theatrical engagements, long contracts at famous ballrooms and restaurants, motion pictures, recordings, and the high-salaried one-night stands. It means that the desires of his barnstorming youth can be achieved—polo ponies for Phil Harris, speedboats for Guy Lombardo, a country estate for Tommy Dorsey, airplanes for Wayne King.

Radio broadcasting has been marked at almost every turn by seeming contradictions. In 1933, radio was credited with destroying the recording industry. But in 1940, the recording industry was selling records in quantities approaching the one hundred million figure of 1922 and, in 1941, record manufacturers expect to pass that mark.

Behind the revival of recordings are several important factors. The acquisition by RCA of the Victor Company and its manufacture of radio receivers with phonographic combinations was one of the factors. CBS, which had once been purchased by the Columbia Phonograph Company, had, by 1938, acquired control of the old recording company, and both CBS and NBC artists—built up through countless appearances on the air—were now to be heard on records. Still another factor was the wearing off of radio's novelty—and the desire of band enthusiasts to be able to hear their idols without waiting until late evening hours when dance programs are broadcast.

But by far the most important factor is the nickelodeon or "jukebox." By 1939, almost every tavern or restaurant had a jukebox from which, for a nickel a side, flowed the music on records of the land's great dance bands. The term, jukebox, originated in

Gainesville, Fla., where automatic phonographs have been called "jook organs" since their inception. The "jooks" in that southern metropolis were the roadhouses flourishing outside the city limits where entertainment was supplied by phonograph.

But the jukeboxes were to play an even greater role in broadcasting. Almost as many recent name bands were made from unknown organizations by jukebox audiences as had been made, in the past, by appearances in noted jumping-off spots. Recording companies—and jukebox operators—were gamblers, too, willing to take a chance on an unknown band which seemed to have what it takes to satisfy jitterbug appetites.

One tremendous hit on a jukebox, most band leaders now agree, will do as much for a dance band as six solid months of broadcasting, and many of the great dance bands which have come to the front in recent years have done so on the basis of a jukebox hit. Hal Kemp won fame—and broadcasting contracts—with his "Got a Date with an Angel." Benny Goodman, King of Swing, was made by his jukebox hit, "Stomping at the Ritz." Tommy Dorsey's "Marie" brought him renown. Artie Shaw's peculiar genius was uncovered by his waxing of "Begin the Beguine." Orrin Tucker and Bonnie Baker jumped from obscurity into a money- and name-making contract at Chicago's Palmer House with their "Oh Johnny."

The relationship between the dance-band industry and broadcasting is largely a promotional one. By far the largest percentage of dance-band broadcasts are sustaining, without commercial sponsorship and for which the dance band is not paid by the broadcaster. But in the very broadcasting of such music, the radio station is making it possible for the band to earn much more money on its regular engagements. For wide public interest in dance bands and their leaders, generated largely by radio, has made name-bands first-line theatrical attractions as well as dance-date fillers.

With one group of top-name bands—Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey, Hal Kemp, Eddy Duchin, Wayne King, Guy Lombardo, Phil Spitalny, Ted Lewis, Sammy Kaye, Glen Gray and Paul Whiteman—salaries for theatrical appearances range from \$7,000

to \$8,500 per week. A second group—Kay Kyser, Orrin Tucker, Glenn Miller, Fred Waring, Horace Heidt—draw a \$12,500 guarantee with a percentage of the gross above the guarantee. Kyser has often walked out of a theater with \$18,000 for his week's work. Asking prices of various bands for appearances depend largely upon their radio importance and are in ratio to appearances on the air.

Individual band salaries for commercial radio programs—and there are many—range from \$1,000 to \$7,000 weekly. Among the earliest bands to make radio appearances commercially were Paul Whiteman (Old Gold), Fred Waring (Chesterfield), Ben Bernie (Blue Ribbon Malt) and B. A. Rolfe (Lucky Strike). Paul Whiteman has always had a fine musical organization and his introduction to broadcasting came at about the time he was playing jazz concerts in Carnegie Hall and, somewhat apologetically, denying that Gershwin's compositions ("Rhapsody in Blue" and "American in Paris") were jazz. Whiteman went in for straight musical broadcasts, no clowning. "If listeners want to hear variety," Whiteman used to say, "they can tune us out and variety in."

Waring and Bernie, on the other hand, maintained large staffs of entertainers in addition to a versatile lot of bandsmen who made their programs a cross between a variety show and a jazz concert.

Perhaps the most musicianly band leader of early or present time on the air is Duke Ellington, the negro composer of "Mood Indigo," whose stature as a modern American composer will loom larger as the passing years give him his proper place.

Today, in commercial broadcasting, Kay Kyser is the hottest thing in variety dance bands. The son of a North Carolina pharmacist, it was intended that James (which is what his mother calls him) should be a druggist, like his father, and he romped through high school in his native Rocky Mount, then went to the University of North Carolina where, instead of taking pharmacy, he turned to law.

Back home, every member of his family had been able to play some musical instrument—Kay undertook the clarinet—and the youth was dismayed to discover that there wasn't a dance band

on the campus of his chosen alma mater. He immediately set about remedying that. In fact, six of the fourteen members of his current band were members of that original group. They played their first professional engagement at Oxford, N. C., in the fall of 1926. There were six members of the band, they knew six numbers and they were paid sixty dollars.

"We weren't smart enough to mix the routine of the songs we knew," Kay recalled recently with a grin, "and about the third time around, the customers began to call the next tune for us."

One day in 1928, the band was rehearsing in Girard Hall when a couple sitting near the back of the auditorium walked up to the platform, cornered Kay and offered him a contract to play at their resort, Mentor Beach, near Cleveland. It was too good a contract to pass up, and the boys moved into the resort that spring, obliging instructors at the university making it possible by permitting them to jam a month's classwork into two weeks. A short while later, while filling a short contract at Chicago's Blackhawk Restaurant, he originated his musical quiz idea, brought out the "Kollege of Musical Knowledge," and really went to town on radio. He gathered a group of versatile—if clownish—music makers about him, hired Ginny Simms for a vocalist, and became one of the nation's outstanding band leaders.

Stories romantically connecting Kay with Ginny Simms became daily grist for the columnists' mills, and one day, Kay's sister opened a letter from him, started to read it to Mrs. Kyser. "Ginny says I must tell you first . . ."

Mrs. Kyser gasped. "He's gone and done it!"

"Done what?" sister Virginia asked.

"Married Ginny."

Virginia read on. "Ginny says I must tell you first that I just signed a contract with the American Tobacco Company (Lucky Strikes) . . ."

Kay lives in New York because of his work, but California is his favorite vacation spot and his recent activities in films have permitted him to combine business with pleasure. His hobbies are horseback riding, movies, roller coasters and reading. He is far from handsome, wears glasses because of an acute astigmatism,

pays about forty dollars for his suits. He has a negro servant who is something of a one-man show himself. If you call Mr. Kyser, this worthy—who comes from Rocky Mount—will answer, "Hello. This is Ulford Madison Clementine Cordell Biggsbee, chef, chauffeur, valet, secretary and chaperon to Mister James K. Kyser, better known as 'the man from the South.' What you-all want?"

The fine hand of showman J.K.K.K. is easily discernible in the antics of his servant. Kay has probably rehearsed him to answer damyankee telephone calls. He'd get as far as the first Ulford in North Carolina.

Glenn Miller, who recently stepped into Paul Whiteman's broadcasting shoes for Chesterfield, is far from the clowning Kyser in his style of broadcasting. For his appeal, Miller depends almost entirely upon the sweet strains of the melody his organization makes. Unlike Kyser, there is no clowning, no variety inserted into his program. But, by 1939, Glenn Miller—an unknown—was knocking at the door to the throne room of Benny Goodman. Already he had outstripped Artie Shaw at the box office when Miller followers paid \$56,000 in admissions at the Paramount Theater to a mere \$30,000 coughed up by followers of Artie Shaw playing the same week at the Strand!

While it seemed to the fans that Mr. Miller had been pulled out of some magician's black bag—he rose that suddenly—actually the process was a slow, laborious one. For twelve years, Glenn has been beating about big-time dance bands. He attended the University of Colorado, largely playing his way through with a trombone which his not-too-affluent parents—his father was a carpenter—rather hated to see him take up. Upon leaving Colorado, the gangly youth—whose principal asset was a way with the trombone—joined Ben Pollack's orchestra. In that day, Pollack had Gene Krupa, Benny Goodman and the brothers Dorsey in his band, which shows the sort of company Mr. Miller was capable of keeping.

Long-legged, bespectacled, unassuming but with a keen ear for swing in a day when most swing musicians played swing for fun, jazz for a living (Jack "Big-Gate" Teagarden, for example, played with Paul Whiteman for bread and butter, sneaked over to the

Roseland Dance Hall for jam sessions with Fletcher Henderson's swing band in the wee small hours), Miller was soon free-lancing in the big time. Bix Beiderbecke—the young man with a horn and patron saint of swing—hired him on hearing. The Dorseys, Red Nichols, others used him for recording dates.

But more important were the arrangements he worked out. Arrangements for a half-hour Paul Whiteman broadcast often cost more than a thousand dollars—and once used, they're as out-of-date as last year's Easter bonnet. Few people hearing such band leaders as Ben Pollack, Tommy Dorsey, André Kostelanetz take their organizations through tricky combinations of instruments had any idea that the quiet trombonist in the brass section had concocted them. In addition to his arranging, he is a good organizer. When British band leader Ray Noble came to America a few years ago, leaving his band behind, it was Miller who organized and managed a new outfit for Noble.

"Moonlight Serenade" was an exercise cooked up by Miller to practice his trombone. Other Miller numbers have been almost as successful. So, when he decided to go into the band-leading business on his own hook, he had all the ingredients necessary for success. He is a top-notch arranger, virtuoso and composer. Little was left to chance, and the Miller band—perhaps more than any other in the business—was really the product of sound organization and a full knowledge of what it takes to make music which, literally, would keep America on its toes.

Miller is married; his wife, Helen Burger, is an old college sweetheart. They live in a large suite in the Hotel Pennsylvania in New York, keep a Boston bull named "Pops Haggerty," who keeps Helen company when Glenn is on the road. She never accompanies him.

But where both Kyser and Miller travel along their varied paths with good management, good judgment, and as good taste as swing and variety permit, Artie Shaw has been the daring young man on the flying trapeze of this dance business. The least that can be said of this facile young maestro is that he is unorthodox. Others have said much more, their quotes running from an "Oh, but he's a genius!" to just a derogatory "Oh!"

For many years, Shaw labored to get somewhere in the dance-band business. He ran the gamut of one-night stands, one-armed lunchrooms and one-window hotel rooms until the really fine quality of his clarinet playing caught the ears of some big-name leaders. Finally, he clicked, had a berth in a band which paid him five hundred dollars per week and then—he threw it all up to write a book. Lafcadio Hearn was his idol, and when, after a year of work, he felt that his manuscript was such that Hearn would not have approved it, he tore it up and took a job digging ditches for the county.

When he re-entered the music world, it was as head of his own organization. There was something different about the Artie Shaw music. There would be! His band soared in popularity polls, perhaps no other maestro of modern times has had such a large—and such a wholly fanatic—following among the jitterbugs. Recordings brought him \$50,000 per year; radio tripled this figure and movie and radio appearances swelled both his bank roll and his popularity. Then the writing bug hit Mr. Shaw again. He did a piece for the *Saturday Evening Post* in which he lashed out severely at band leaders, the band "racket"—booking agents of the MCA caliber (Music Corporation of America)—and at the jitterbugs who made his career possible. To add weight to his words, the unpredictable gentleman of swing scattered his band to the four winds, threw away his contracts and went off to Mexico to be alone with his thoughts.

Mexico in the rainy season was no good for the black moods of the maestro, and after a few weeks he returned to Hollywood. His engagement to Betty Grable, the screen star, was rumored about Hollywood that winter. Rumor also linked the name of Judy Garland to that of Shaw. Then Miss Grable went East for a stage show. She was gone but a few days when Shaw astounded the movie colony by eloping with Lana Turner, a starlet supposedly engaged to Hollywood lawyer Greg Bautzer.

Hollywood predicted that marriage might bring more balance into Shaw's erratic life. There was no justification for such predictions, for Shaw had tried marriage twice before. Once, the marriage was annulled before it had time to take. The girl was only sixteen years old. The second Mrs. Shaw was a nurse who stuck it

out for two years before giving it up as a bad job. But it seemed that this time his marriage might click. He started gathering another band together to make recordings and a beverage manufacturer offered him a broadcasting contract.

A few months later, Lana announced that she was through—and nothing very much has been heard from Artie since in either music or magazines.

Almost as essential to broadcasting as to the band industry is the flow of new, popular songs from the piano-maulers of Tin Pan Alley. Song writers take various views of the effect of broadcasting upon their product and income. Where before, song publishers sought to popularize a number by having some stage celebrity—Eddie Cantor, Al Jolson, Sophie Tucker—use it on the stage and make recordings of it, today song publishers seek to have some big-name band introduce a new number to the listening world. Their ultimate aim is to have that song appear in the list of ten selected by popular vote for performance on Lucky Strike's Hit Parade each Saturday night.

Radio can make an overnight hit with almost any good tune it chooses to publicize; whether this is good or bad, song writers have yet to decide. Sheet-music sales, from which early song writers earned their large royalties, have materially decreased since the advent of broadcasting, and the life of a song is much shorter; but the fees paid by networks, bands and radio stations have more than made up for this loss of royalty. In fact, broadcasters paid more than four million dollars to ASCAP (American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers) in 1939—or two-thirds of the total income of that group of leading composers. In a way, ASCAP was able to write its own terms for the broadcasters. In its membership were song-writing names to conjure with—Irving Berlin, Hoagy Carmichael, Jerome Kern, and even the music of Victor Herbert was all ASCAP-controlled. Both Federal and State governments, by their legal actions and far-flung investigations, have demonstrated on more than one occasion that they suspect ASCAP of being a monopoly in restraint of trade. To the general public—and to ASCAP—refusal of the broadcasters to

continue to meet annually rising ASCAP demands for use of its copyrighted music seemed an impossibility.

But in December, 1940, when ASCAP offered the broadcasters new terms which meant doubling the four million dollar figure of 1939—the broadcasters said No. ASCAP thought radio couldn't get along without ASCAP. Aside from the dance programs, ASCAP tunes had other radio uses. For over a decade, listeners had heard "Amos and Andy" ushered in to the strains of "The Perfect Song." Kay Kyser's signature was a trombone performance of "Thinking of You," the first song his band ever played. Rudy Vallée's trade-mark, well-known to the listening customers, was "My Time Is Your Time." All of these are ASCAP tunes. "The Stars and Stripes Forever," "Trees," even "God Bless America" were ASCAP property. Of course, the broadcasters were bluffing; and ASCAP called the bluff.

But the broadcasters began to pour hundreds of thousands of dollars into a new musical publishing house—Broadcast Music, Inc., or BMI—which was the property of the broadcasters. ASCAP, from the day it was organized back in 1914 by Victor Herbert, John Philip Sousa and others, has grown rich not only in musical properties but in the dollars with which a war of this sort is fought. BMI, in spite of its youth, had—by January 1, 1941, when broadcasters refused to play any more ASCAP tunes—more than a million dollars invested in it.

The basic cause of the revolt was financial. ASCAP was saying in effect that broadcasting is dependent to a large degree upon ASCAP music, while the broadcasters, conversely, insisted that ASCAP was dependent to an even larger degree upon broadcasting.

By January 1, the battle was joined; listeners to dance bands over radio began to hear new numbers by formerly unknown writers. "There I Go," "We Could Make Such Beautiful Music," "Here in the Velvet Night" were among the early BMI hits. For many years, ASCAP had been largely a closed organization in which old, established writers—like Irving Berlin—got every break; newcomers were neither welcomed nor nourished. But with the establishment of BMI, every ambitious song writer in the country began to flood its offices with their songs at the rate of

a thousand a week. And the opening of the publishing gates to this great new reservoir of talent brought freshness and verve to melodies heard over radio. BMI further increased its library by addition of the songs catalogued by four large, non-ASCAP publishers and by such songs from the public domain as "Jeanie" which became—because of its frequent performance in early BMI days—something of a standing joke.

The bands were the hardest hit. Band arrangements are expensive, and broadcasting organizations with a library full of ASCAP tunes had to have expensive new arrangements made for BMI tunes. Fred Waring led a large group of band leaders in a concerted effort to bring about an agreement between broadcasters and ASCAP without avail.

ASCAP was formed, its mouthpieces proclaimed, to protect composers from the piratical use of their work; they accused the broadcasters of being greedy monopolists seeking to gain an even more dictatorial grip upon the musical entertainment world. Broadcasters accused ASCAP of being a self-perpetuating monopoly of a small inner circle. They pointed to ASCAP's practice of dividing proceeds of all published songs according to seniority, number of hits written, etc., rather than on the basis of earning power of each individual hit. They scored a system which would permit an Irving Berlin or a Hoagy Carmichael to draw a huge revenue in a year when they had not written a tune while some unknown—whose first hit may have made a fortune—drew only a few hundred dollars.

BMI, on the other hand, promised payment to each individual author on the basis of income earned by each song he produced. And to the public, the change from ASCAP to BMI songs seemed to make little difference. So long as the songs were melodious, so long as the bands which were their broadcasting favorites played them, it made precious little difference whether they carried an ASCAP or BMI label.

The greatest effect of the musical ban on ASCAP numbers over the radio was upon ASCAP, itself. Month after month, ASCAP composers saw income which had, in other years, been theirs go into the tills of other, newer comers to the song-writing field. In the spring, ASCAP offered to negotiate with the networks for

the abandonment of BMI and the renewal of ASCAP service on terms close to those proposed by the broadcasters. The broadcasters refused to liquidate BMI, and ASCAP succeeded in working out an arrangement with Mutual and a few independent stations for broadcast of its music. Before Christmas of 1941, however, ASCAP made new proposals to the broadcasters, and the Santa Claus who fills the stockings of ASCAP members brought them a half-measure of goodies. ASCAP tunes are returning to the airways—but in competition with BMI and on the same terms of payment exacted by that broadcaster-owned publishing house.

Even in the broadcasting of seemingly innocuous dance band programs, broadcasters must exert the same care that they bring to the most highly controversial type of broadcast. One morning quite a few years ago—before other, more pressing problems beset the Chinese Embassy in Washington—people in NBC's musical division were somewhat flustered to learn that the Chinese Ambassador to the United States was calling about a song.

Apologizing profusely for his intrusion, His Excellency explained that the song he had reference to was "Limehouse Blues"; there was a bad word in its lyric. His Excellency shuddered when he mentioned it. "Chinkies." It seemed that His Excellency's fellow Chinese grew very upset whenever they heard it.

That very afternoon, a memo went out from NBC in New York to all affiliated stations advising them that when "Limehouse Blues" was played, the word "chinkies" was to be changed to "Chinese." This was no isolated instance. The music division at NBC compiled a list of 290 songs which are *verboten* for one reason or another. Of these, 217 can't be vocalized at all, the other 73 can be sung only after dry cleaning.

A few years back, a London music hall tune, "Missus Lowsborough Goodby," was enjoying something of a vogue in this country. But one of the condemnations leveled against the noble woman in the ballad was that the singer had got ptomaine from her famous tinned salmon. Representatives of large salmon canners descended upon the broadcasters in force, and the estimable Mrs. Goodby was no longer heard on the air. In Irving Berlin's "These Foolish Things," the line, "Silk stockings thrown aside" was changed to "Gloves thrown aside." You can't be illicit with a

glove. "No wonder I get passionate," from "Bearded Lady," went through the laundry and came out, "The kiss that has a dash in it."

On the side of suggestiveness and the ugly rearing of sex's head, Noel Coward, Cole Porter and Larry Hart are the most frequent offenders. In fact, many verses of most of their song hits are not vocalized on the air. Songs with light reference to other nations are definitely out. You can sing "F.D.R. Jones" on the air if you don't imitate FDR's voice. You never heard, "When a King Gives Up Everything for Love" because of the King-Wally theme, and the "Lavender Cowboy," a rather plaintive and wholly inoffensive cowboy lament, was banned because of its title, suggestive of a cowboy a trifle on the unmanly side.

Next to musicians and repertoire, glamour is a stock in trade of the successful band, and even Paul Whiteman has succumbed to the public demand for lovely vocalists, adding Margot to his pay roll. Bonnie Baker is as well-known—perhaps better known—than Orrin Tucker, with whose band she sings. Ginny Simms, the Kay Kyser vocalist, recently left that band and has her own vocal program. Fred Waring has gone the farthest along this line with a large staff of feminine performers. Rosemary, Lola and Priscilla Lane got their start in the professional world as vocalists with the Waring group. The ultimate in such promotion, however, is Phil Spitalny's All-Girl Band, which is a particularly hot theater attraction.

Band preferences are different in various parts of the country, a factor which makes network broadcasting of dance music a difficult matter. New England is a hotbed of swing. Chicago and the Midwest vote for sweet music, and in the South, sweet music is also the preference of dancers although southerners unbend for an occasional swing band that can also give out with some good dance tunes. South Carolina is a notable exception to this. South Carolinians like their music raw and wild. The west coast is a mixture of swing and sweet enthusiasts, perhaps because the Pacific population derives from so many other sections.

Back about 1920, the style of music we know as "swing" was

beginning to make its appearance in the East. Its origin is frequently disputed, many claiming the sainted King Oliver—for whom Louis Armstrong was a trumpeter—was its great-granddaddy. By 1925, Fletcher Henderson was playing swing music—which is a sort of unrehearsed, each-instrument-to-its-own-variation-type of thing—for college proms and Young Communist balls. Sweet music was the thing, and bands like Leo Reisman's and Guy Lombardo's were the idols of the airways.

Broadcasting gave swing—which was almost a cult—to the masses, a contribution for which it is difficult to decide whether accolades or hisses are in order. Today, the tendency is toward swing in radio dance bands despite frequent predictions over the past five years that swing was on the way out. One of the amazing things in broadcasting is the survival of Guy Lombardo who, without variety and without swing, has maintained a place high in the broadcasting sun for longer than most band leaders.

What effect American entrance into the war will have upon dance bands and dance styles is unpredictable. Perhaps it will mean a return to sweet music, to the sentimental type of thing that came out of Tin Pan Alley during the last war. In England, the war has had but little effect upon bands. Neither has this war brought forth, thus far, any great marching songs or soldier ballads comparable to those of the last. Network restrictions upon performance of martial and blood-warming tunes during the period when we were striving to maintain a strict neutrality account in large measure for the sterility of our composers in this field. But once the green light is given by the government, our song writers and band leaders will go to work in earnest, music designed to rouse listeners to fighting pitch will flow in a steady stream from loud-speakers. For music more than any other media is particularly adapted to propaganda purposes. Music flows from the loud-speaker through the ears, by-passing the mind to reach the heart. Words may fail for a lack of logic, but a well-turned-out tune, properly played, has power to make killers of the most peaceful men. Remember "Over There"?

BARRAGE

WHEN GERMAN LEGIONS STRUCK INTO POLAND, THE world listened through seventy-five million loud-speakers scattered around the globe to the voices of belligerent broadcasters seeking to woo and to win the ear of the neutrals.

From the *Deutsche Rundfunk*, Goebbels' broadcasters turned from the bitter vituperation heaped upon the hapless heads of Poland's leaders to reports of easy victories. There was a twofold purpose to these broadcasts. First, they were designed to bring reassurance to citizens of the *Reich*, to bolster morale on the home front. Second, these same reports—transmitted in French and English by short wave—were designed to stay the hand of these nations, sworn to fight alongside Poland, by a play up of the invincibility of German arms.

The role assigned to radio in modern warfare is a two-sided role. On the actual war front, radio is used to break down enemy morale while, on the home front, it is employed to keep the spirits of the civilian population at a high level. It is significant that the most heroic sequence of the whole Polish campaign had to do with radio and a Pole who, like William Tell in Switzerland, must become a Slavic legend when the annals of this war are properly evaluated. Even as the heavy shells from German siege guns fell upon beleaguered Warsaw, Mayor Stefan Starzinski stood at the microphone of the city's broadcasting station. Radio Warsaw was a first objective of German bombers, but the mayor spent all of his waking hours in the broadcasting building urging his fellow citizens to fight against "the ruthless tyranny of the hun, to go about your business as if nothing were happening." And then, as the siege wore on, "Bury your dead, my

friends, and then return to your posts at once. If Warsaw is to be successfully defended—"this long after the remainder of Poland had succumbed, long after other more important leaders of that tragic state had fled to safer places—"every man, woman and child must do the tasks assigned to them!" Three times direct hits on the broadcasting building caused the station to go off the air, and three times the transmitter was repaired so that Mayor Starzinski might hurl his challenges at the German legions and fire the will of his people to heroic resistance despite hopeless conditions.

Starzinski reportedly faced a Nazi firing squad. Certainly it is a matter of record that the Hitler regime fears the winged propaganda of the air waves, the fearless opposition of such a spirit, as much as it fears the guns and the planes of its enemies.

One of the first acts of Hitler upon coming to power in 1933 was to take over control of the radio along with the press, the theater, the movies and the schools.

The one obstacle to complete monopoly was broadcasting from outside the *Reich*. The countries of Europe are close together, the transmissions of a station in France or Czechoslovakia might easily be picked up on German receivers. To overcome this, taxation was employed. Radio sets in Germany were taxed on the basis of power. The single-tube, state-manufactured receiver capable of receiving signals for only sixty or seventy miles was taxed \$9.85. The tax rate on more powerful sets grew progressively with each added tube. Even those able to pay the prohibitive taxes necessary to ownership of a more powerful receiver, found such ownership inadvisable; they became immediately suspect.

For the first two years of his Chancellorship, Hitler was highly successful in his propagandistic monopoly. But following the split between Hitler and Dr. Otto Strasser, difficulties arose. One day early in 1935, while sitting in the lobby of a Prague hotel, Dr. Strasser made the acquaintance of a young radio engineer named Formis. Formis had once been connected with the government broadcasting station at Stuttgart, was now in exile in Czechoslovakia. Knowing that Dr. Strasser, director of the outlawed anti-Hitler movement, the Black Front, was engaged in a propa-

ganda campaign against the Nazis, Formis made a suggestion. "Give me the money to build a transmitter, and I'll do more in an hour of broadcasting than you can do in a year with your leaflets towards ridding Germany of this monster."

Impressed, Strasser advanced the necessary funds and Formis went to work on his transmitter. For its site, he selected the Hotel Zahori on the outskirts of Prague, but a short distance from the German border. A secondary reason for the selection of the Zahori was that it was primarily a week-end resort, practically empty during the week. Both Formis and Strasser had had practical experience with the *Gestapo*, knew that the borders of another country were no bar to ruthless *Gestapo* action, and they were determined to take no chances. "Hitler must die that Germany might live. . . ." Six days a week, Formis sent his deadly anti-Nazi propaganda winging across the borders into near-by Germany on wave lengths and power easily received in the *Reich* on the one-tube sets. He gave detailed information about the horrors of the concentration camps—with which most Germans of that period were not acquainted—and of religious persecutions, with Strasser furnishing the facts.

Months passed, and Formis—ever alert to the physical danger in which he lived—became almost a recluse. He gave up all his friends; he seldom wrote letters. Occasionally he heard rumors that the *Gestapo* had at last identified his voice, that they had placed his sisters and brother in a concentration camp. Then, one day, he went into Prague to buy some parts for the transmitter. In the radio shop, a young Czech engaged him in conversation and the lonesome Formis joined him, another young man and a girl for a glass of beer. For the first time in months, the young exile laughed, danced, and enjoyed the company of others his own age. He even invited them out to the Hotel Zahori.

A few days later they arrived. In the deserted dining room of the hotel, they dined, smoked, drank. Afterward, the girl accompanied Formis to his room and, a few minutes later, a pistol shot rang out. The startled proprietor found Formis dying of a bullet wound near the heart, the girl assassin gone. Rushing back downstairs, he found the young men gone, too. Investigation re-

vealed that the car had disappeared rapidly across the German border.

Until the outbreak of the war, such underground broadcasting was a common occurrence in Germany with various groups—the Black Front, the Steel Helmets (a World War veterans' organization), many Socialists, Royalists and postwar German noblemen pooling their efforts in a movement known as "German Freedom Transmitters." The effectiveness of such broadcasts—invariably beginning with this startling understatement of painful truth: "You are now hearing, in spite of the Gestapo, the German Freedom Transmitter. . . ."—will not be fully known until the Nazis are out of power. But the feeling on the part of all listeners, knowing that the broadcaster might be the man upstairs, the fellow across the aisle on the tram, is easily imagined. Later, listeners were to share the feeling of danger to the broadcaster, for Hitler rulings at the beginning of 1936 imposed long prison sentences upon any caught listening to such broadcasts.

In the early days, such outlaw transmitters were hidden in old houses, in windmills, in out-of-the-way barns. But the *Gestapo*, learning to use radio direction finders in running down such broadcasters, soon made this type of transmitter impractical.

The stationary transmitter gave way to more mobile units. A unit weighing less than a pound and capable of transmitting fifty miles was soon perfected for restricted use. A man with such a transmitter in the side pocket of a car could call upon the workers in a factory district to strike and to sabotage the Nazi war preparations. But the most ingenious device of the German Freedom Transmitters was the relay system. Mobile units were installed in three separate automobiles which cruised the streets of Berlin. The unit in one car would be put into operation, a speaker bringing to Germans facts about the world outside. After ten minutes—when danger of interception by instrument-equipped *Gestapo* agents was imminent—this transmitter would shut down, another in the second car would take up the broadcast without missing a word, transmitting on the same wave length. Then the third cruising transmitter would spell the second. Such relay broadcast-

ing tactics left *Gestapo* agents gnashing their teeth in frustration, but there was little they could do against the broadcasters.

Government control of radio broadcasting, however, is not peculiar to Hitler alone. The British government control of radio prior to 1939 led to the deletion from radio programs of various propagandas unfavorable to the government. This very policy on the part of Britain was one of the vital reasons for Hitler's success. Most British subjects had little idea of the extent to which their own Tory government was collaborating with Hitler in the destruction of democracy in Spain, Austria and Czechoslovakia.

One of the saddest eras of American broadcasting is that of the Spanish Civil War when—even under our free system of broadcasting—few programs opposing Franco and his Fascist following were broadcast in the United States because of Catholic Church support for Franco's cause. Many programs were broadcast, on the other hand, in behalf of the Spanish Fascist general. The important difference between the suppression of news—or propaganda, if you will—in England and in the United States is that in England it was suppressed by governmental order; in the United States, it was suppressed by the ever-present fear of broadcasters that they might offend a large segment of their listening audience.

The idea that Hitler, alone, foresaw the possibilities of the short-wave broadcast as an instrument for winning wars on the foreign front, just as he employed it for winning the battle of National Socialism on the home front, is without foundation. Before 1935, most of the nations of Europe were rushing construction of short-wave transmitters for the very purpose for which they were later used—to trade propaganda blows with their neighbors in the new aerial warfare waged between 1935 and the present time.

Oddly, it was a small commercial station in the Duchy of Luxembourg which demonstrated to the great propagandists the inherent possibilities of broadcasting in reaching foreign populations. The *Compagnie Luxembourgeoise de Radiodiffusion* was organized to cash in on the nationally controlled broadcasting systems of England, France and Germany. Merchants of those three countries were not permitted to use the national radio for

advertising purposes, so the Luxembourg broadcasters accepted sponsored programs from these merchants to be transmitted across the borders into homes of England, France and Germany. Russia, seeing that such international broadcasting was capable of selling merchandise, turned to international broadcasting to sell the ideology of Communism—and to counter anticommunist propaganda, particularly in Germany.

The war of words preceded by several years the physical war which broke out in 1939. As early as 1926, a border crisis had been aggravated by broadcasts from Breslau to two hundred thousand Germans who had become citizens of the Polish state through the plebiscite in Upper Silesia. In 1930, the Soviet Union was broadcasting revolutionary propaganda through the air waves to Germany. In 1933, Dr. Habicht, National Socialist "Inspector" for Austria, used broadcasts from Munich to provoke the abortive Nazi *putsch* in Vienna. By 1937, the Italians were broadcasting in Arabic to rouse Middle East tribesmen against the British. The Nazis had preceded their *anschluss* with Austria by a bitter radio—and press—attack upon the hapless Austrians. German transmitters heaped abuse upon the Czechs before the partition of that state. A radio offensive coincided with the march upon Poland.

While the expansionist states used broadcasting as an implement of political aggression, the democracies of Europe used it defensively to preserve the *status quo*. At first, the French and British transmitters were used to address only their own citizenry in French and English respectively. Later, the French, in counter-offensive, began to transmit programs in Italian and German and it was not until the Munich crisis that Great Britain inaugurated its European service.

One of the curious things about these intercountry broadcasts was that, intended for the masses, they succeeded more often in reaching the "classes." Listeners to foreign broadcasts in the *Reich*, from all information brought out of Germany by observers, were mainly among upper class Germans. Similarly, the Englishmen who listened most faithfully to German broadcasts were among the higher income brackets.

When war did come, Europe's broadcasters were readied by

experience. America was bombarded with forty hours of programs a day by the belligerents. The *Deutschlandssender* sent out programs in ten different languages; the British Broadcasting Corporation used twenty-five tongues in its broadcasts. The pattern of these propaganda broadcasts—until the entrance of radio Moscow upon the scene—was of a common design. Music, skits, dramatization were used to put audiences at ease; then information which resembled the truth—but which was not, by far, the whole truth—was broadcast as news. The British Broadcasting Corporation was usually factually correct in its Overseas Service, often deliberately false in its broadcasts to the *Reich*. The effect of Royal Air Force raids on Germany was purposely magnified; German ships only damaged were, for German language broadcasts, sunk. German broadcasts to England were even more far afield but, on occasion, possessed of a sardonic humor. When a British scientist discovered that grass had nutritional values for the human body, German broadcasters told English listeners that food in the British Isles was so scarce as a result of the German blockade that Englishmen would have to eat grass!

To aged French generals, mistakenly believing that this war, like the last, would be decided in the volley of the seventy-fives, this flow of wordage must have seemed a silly sort of business. Interbelligerent broadcasting was a weird sort of barrage to be laid down by nations at war. But where are these aged French generals today?

From the beginning of the war, listening to foreign broadcasts had been made an offense punishable by death or imprisonment in the *Reich*. The British and French propagandists, on the other hand, obligingly permitted their newspapers to publish times when German stations might be heard, and it was not until after the tragic Battle for France was well under way that French transmitters began jamming the battery of German transmitters built along the Rhine and English newspapers set about the task of depopularizing listening to German broadcasts. The reasons were obvious. Three weeks before the end for France, German broadcasters were advising the ill-informed, panic-stricken Frenchmen:

Force your government to make peace or drive it out! . . . Hoist the white flag! Force the fleeing English to look after themselves. These cowards who have no word of honor don't deserve any better. Time presses. The existence of your nation is at stake . . .

But the Nazis used radio even more directly in their war effort. One of the first objectives for parachute troops during the campaign in the lowlands was the radio transmitters. Seizing these, they broadcast terrifying reports in native tongues—reports which caused citizens to pile out onto roads badly needed for the movement of military forces and supplies, jamming the highways and making Allied troop movements impossible. In the Mediterranean, Mussolini used a new type of torpedo boat, loaded with dynamite and controlled by remote radio control from a mother ship, in attacking—not too successfully—British convoys. Germans claimed a television bomber which, without a pilot, could be operated from miles away, a television receiver at the remote point being used to aim bombs. Radio engineers say this is entirely practical, highly probable, but no record of the actual use of such an instrument of war is found outside of German propaganda claims.

In countries at war, radio has another role in addition to serving as a medium for interbelligerent broadcasts. Almost every soldier in the German Army—by design—as well as German civilians heard the *Fuehrer's* prelude to the invasion of the Lowlands. "We are about to begin a battle for the life or death of the German nation," Hitler said warmly, passionately and in a manner to stir the deepest emotions of a German people trained for seven years to believe in the Aryan superman theory. "What happens in the next weeks will affect the German nation for a thousand years to come." Who can estimate the worth of such an emotional appeal to ardent, crusading soldiers of the *Reich* about to embark upon a great campaign?

In England, the speeches of Winston Churchill are eagerly awaited. Churchill's peculiar trick—perhaps born of a deep understanding of the character of his fellow Britishers—is to spur men on to greater effort by telling them a gloomy truth. His "blood, sweat and tears" address to the British Empire after the

collapse of France and when the cause of Britain seemed all but lost is a masterpiece of exhortation.

The BBC, in both its programs for local consumption and for the *Reich*, has employed broadcasters of a reputable nature. Leslie Howard, Gertrude Lawrence, Noel Coward and a host of stage celebrities have given liberally to the propaganda effort of the nation. So have England's writers; J. B. Priestley is a regular broadcaster and his description of the great London fire on that night when hordes of German bombers came over to drop their incendiaries is as good in its way as any of his written passages.

But Americans in London have been the most effective speakers in broadcasts to the *Reich*. Vincent Sheean on June 10, 1940, broadcast to Germans this message: "America will soon enter the war. Germany has made the same mistake as she committed in 1916. She has left America out of her calculations." Such broadcasts by Americans must have brought a cold shiver to the spines of German citizens who, time after time, had been assured by their leaders that the United States would not enter the war.

German broadcasters were a colorful, unscrupulous lot. Easily the most effective in the Goebbels' stable was American-born, English-reared William Joyce, whose precise, clipped Oxford accents promptly led British humorists to label him Lord Haw-Haw. He kidded the British war effort, took painfully accurate potshots at British colonial policy, naming names, places, dates. He belabored, again precisely and with accuracy born of personal knowledge, the slum conditions of the Empire. But most important, he told English listeners of events—ship sinkings, unsuccessful campaigns, casualties—almost as they occurred and long before the sluggish British Ministry of Information had gotten around to it.

Several months after Lord Haw-Haw's broadcasts had begun, a woman in Waldren, Sussex, identified him by his voice as her husband, William Joyce. Later, Joyce, who had taken the Germanized "Froehlich" as his name, confirmed the identification. From his wife, it was learned that Joyce was born of an Irish father and a Yorkshire mother in the United States. Taken to

England as a boy, he was educated at London University, joined Sir Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists in 1933, became director of propaganda for that organization a year later.

Fred Kaltenbach, son of a Waterloo, Ia., butcher, is another bright star of the German Broadcasting service. Kaltenbach is used particularly on broadcasts beamed at America, and he speaks in the homely style of a rural Midwesterner, one of his stunts being the reading of letters to "Harry" back in Iowa, in which conditions of the Nazi state are pictured as something to be envied. There is a certain native wit about his style, as when he referred to Churchill as "Lord of the Admiralty and past master of the waves." Or his comment on BBC's erroneous reports to the German people of U-Boat destruction. "Every German U-Boat sunk by the BBC," he said, "bears the number, K-9. Canine. Cat—it has nine lives!"

Kaltenbach went to Berlin in 1936 to study for his Ph.D., married a German girl—member of the staff of Goering's aviation magazine—and, in 1938, joined Goebbels' propaganda staff. In May, 1939, Nazis paid his way back to the United States to visit his sick father. In Waterloo, that town's Rotarians paid him a fee of \$25 to address them on Nazi Germany. He gave such a glowing account of life there, a leading Rotarian asked him why he didn't go back there and live. "I am," Fred told him, and a month later he did.

E. P. Ward (whose real name is Edward Leopold Delaney) is another German propaganda broadcaster to the United States. Delaney, born of a poor Irish family in southern Illinois, was a moderately successful actor and stage manager, a flop as a writer, but a wit who, Goebbels felt, could captivate American listeners. Typical of the sort of thing Delaney does on his Nazi broadcasts are: "Here—" speaking of Amsterdam after German conquest—"all is darker than the Republican mood after the November elections." Or, speaking of British reverses in Norway, "Charlie McCarthy's Bergen is the only one of that name not entirely encompassed by Germans." Speaking of himself, he said, "America is my natal land . . . but I'm not so blind that I can't see where we might learn something from others . . ."

Other Nazi broadcasters include Dr. Otto Koischwitz (usually

introduced simply as Okay) a onetime member of the faculty of Hunter College with an appeal ostensibly for the intellectual and Gertrude Hahn, possibly of German-American origin, who does a dramatic monologue in Brooklynesse in which she is supposed to be a telephone operator on a mythical Pittsburgh *Tribune*. When the Russian war started, Goebbels added Jane Anderson, introduced as a prominent Catholic, who crusades against the Bolsheviks and tells Catholics what the Nazis will do for them.

The Italian radio was notoriously dull until the summer of 1941. Then Americans tuned to "The American Hour of Music and Culture" began to catch the vitriolic, American voice—but Axis message—of red-bearded, Idaho-born poet, Ezra Pound. Pound derided the American press, told Americans that the truth was being kept from them. At almost the same time, Americans began to notice that Nazi broadcasters were beginning to appear on Italy's American Hour, that Ward and Koischwitz had moved over into Italy to bolster the flagging propaganda front there. Berlin was well able to spare them. The first week they were heard from Rome, Berlin broadcast an interview with Britain's beloved P. G. Wodehouse, caught up in the quick march of Nazis across France. To Britons, it was almost as if Lloyds had failed to pay off on a claim.

But the peak of interbelligerent broadcasting was passed in the summer of 1940, and listener-interest in short-wave transmissions from the enemy decreased rapidly as war in earnest began. Perhaps the passing of the peak was marked by Hitler's "appeal to reason" speech of July 19, in which he called upon Britain to make peace or pay in blood for its blind refusal. Broadcasters were turning more and more upon the neutrals, for—unless Britain were speedily vanquished—the economic background for carrying on the war would become of prime importance. Almost the last broadcast from Paris-Mondial had been an appeal to Americans for "airplanes, cannons, tanks." Content during the whole year of the phony war to air chamber music, dull French drama, pedantic talks, Paris broadcasters turned at last and in desperation to martial airs, terse reviews of the war front, a nightly American Legion program in which "American volunteers and journalists just back from the front can give

you their views." But it was too late. Already the Germans were knocking at the doors of Paris—and during a year when Americans might have been informed, made alert to the danger of French defeat and thus could have gone into effective production to prevent it, French broadcasters had given no hint of the true state of French affairs.

The English were even more dilatory in their broadcasting during these early months when every effort should have been made to use radio wisely in building opinion. British broadcasters set about persuading American and other neutral listeners that Franco-British victory was a certainty and that neutrals, therefore, might lend these allies every aid without fear of reprisal from Germany, a pragmatic approach which served only to anger most Americans. British broadcasting was, at the very least, dull, often stupid during this period. It took the Battle of Flanders to shake British broadcasters from their lethargy. And each crashing German success thereafter made British broadcasts more dramatic and compelling.

In broadcasting to the neutrals, as in the matter of arms, Germany was far in front of her adversaries. Seven years before Britain enlarged her North American Service and started "Britain Speaks," Nazi broadcasters had started their overseas service. When the war came, the *Deutsche Kurzwellensender* was prepared. South Africans were reminded of the Boer War; Irishmen were reminded of their historic grievances against the Empire; the North American Service dwelt upon the Revolution, the War of 1812, and current events were made to fairly bristle with Anglo-American friction. The British seizure of American mail became a radio headline. Canadian expansion of military aviation was pointed to as an attempt by Britain to dominate this hemisphere.

But by the time of the Norwegian and Danish invasions, German broadcasters understood that theirs had been a losing battle. They turned quickly toward the task of immobilizing the United States. In the winter of 1939-1940, Nazi broadcasters to America were speaking slightly of "plutocrats," "International Jews" and "the fairy-telling press." Before the election, the terms had become specific and Nazis were talking in bitter tones of the

"administration," the Attorney General, the Secretary of War and the President. They instructed German-Americans "to refuse to support any man for President or Congress who has expressed himself in favor of helping England."

By the fall of 1941, Germany had given up all hope of keeping America out of the European war, turned with the fullest measure of opprobrium upon American leaders. "Roosevelt," they shouted, "was a tool of the Jews, a liar, a lunatic." The crowning argument in the hysterical outbursts coming out of Berlin—of all places—at that time was that "Roosevelt (they often call him Rosenfeld) was supporting the British war effort so that both Britain and Germany might exhaust themselves in order that he might rule the world!"

On a morning in September, 1941, Paul Joseph Goebbels called neutral correspondents to his office in the *Wilhelmstrasse* to clarify many of the prohibitions which the propaganda ministry had been forced to impose upon them under the exigencies of war. Conversation at the press conference turned to restrictions imposed upon German citizens, too.

"Some Germans say they are strongminded enough to listen to British lies over the radio and not be harmed by them." There was no laughter in Goebbels' clear blue eyes, no smile played about his thick lips as when he had some great victory to report. "I reply this is not true. British lies get into the blood making listeners weak and tired of carrying on, thus showing that the poisons transmitted by the British Broadcasting Corporation are beginning to work."

But it was not the British broadcasters who were worrying the mouthpiece of the world's greatest liar. It was a new twist to the fine art of jamming which the ingenious Russians had brought to the business of broadcasting in war. In fact, it was the first original contribution of an enemy of Germany to the fine art of propaganda. All that week, broadcasts of the German long-wave station, the *Deutschlandssender*, had been interrupted by the laughing voice of a heckling Russian. Typical of these interruptions was the following, transcribed by an American short-wave listening post:

German news announcer: New German victories have been won . . .

Heckling Russian: In the grave.

Announcer: Fifteen Soviet planes were destroyed . . .

Heckler: And what about German losses?

Announcer: The Luftwaffe again attacked British airfields . . .

Heckler: Says you!

Announcer: This is the end of the news.

Heckler: Lies will be on the air again tomorrow.

Britons, elated at both the staying power of the Soviet armies and the new twist in broadcasting which must have infuriated Nazi officials, were quick to dub the voice *der snag*. Russian sources in London were divided as to its identity, one group believing it to be that of onetime Viennese journalist Ernst Fischer while a second group thought it recognized the fine hand of Foreign Vice-Commissar Lozovsky, who speaks a perfect German, in the goings on. Frantically Goebbels sought to halt the interruptions by jamming. The only trouble with jamming is that even the Nazi broadcasts are unintelligible. Next he tried using three announcers to give the news, each following the other and speaking rapidly so that the heckler would find no opening. This, too, proved unsatisfactory. German listeners next day reported the Nazi announcers spoke so rapidly they couldn't understand a word of it. Radio direction finders traced the broadcasts unmistakably to the powerful transmitter RWL, at Noginsk, thirty miles from Moscow, and Goering's airmen were assigned the task of wiping that transmitter out. In this, too, the Nazis seemed unsuccessful, for the winter of 1941 still found *der snag* very much on the job.

But for American broadcasters and public alike, the big question is what will happen to American broadcasting—now that war has come. Can America, alone, permit a free trade in propagandas on its ether waves when such free trade serves to divide opinion, create disunity and thwart the defense effort?

At the outset of the war in Europe, many Nazi and Fascist organizations were using American radio stations to broadcast their propagandas to the American people. Hear, for example, Ernest

Ten Eichen—then president of the *Deutsche-Amerikanische Einheitsfront*—speaking over WHIP, in Hammond, Ind., in May, 1940:

It is not enough that Americans of German extraction are made the victims of undeserved suspicion, defamation, oppression and persecution. It is not enough that they are made to suffer all kinds of mental and physical insult and abuse. It is not enough that they are deprived of their honor, social and economic welfare. *They are now to be made political criminals, free to be hunted, arrested, prosecuted, sentenced and imprisoned!*

A familiar theme, heard before in Austria, in Poland, in Czechoslovakia, is this persecution cry. And what is the effect of such appeals upon the large German-American population tuned to these broadcasts? And what is the effect of such programs as the "German-American Hour," heard for a long time over KRKD, in Los Angeles? There, Hermann S. Schwinn, who was later ordered deported, purchased the time, directed and produced the programs broadcast in German. Schwinn was the *Little Fuehrer* of the west coast Bund. Consul General Fritz Weidemann was the *Big Fuehrer*. Schwinn was arrested when it was learned that one of his duties was to smuggle from German liners to shore propaganda material and instructions from the propaganda ministry in Berlin. Much of this material found its way into his broadcasts, might still be finding its way into such broadcasts except for American listeners who understood German. They wrote in to the management of KRKD to protest against such broadcasts and the management, upon investigation, learned that Schwinn who furnished them with an English transcript of perfectly harmless broadcasts, actually transmitted talks of quite another character.

When General Pershing made a preparedness address to the nation, early in June, 1940, he was answered by Mr. Sprengling, senior professor of Oriental languages and literature at the University of Chicago, also speaking under the auspices of the *Einheitsfront*. Said Mr. Sprengling:

. . . I am proud of General Pershing who, as a good soldier at the

behest of his Commander-in-Chief, makes pro-French and anti-German propaganda speeches even though, as a proper soldier, he is not an authority on civilization and foreign affairs. . . . Once more, German-American citizens are being stabbed in the back from within and without this great, peace-loving country . . .

Free trade in propagandas—as in other merchandise—means an exchange—and if Fascist broadcasters were permitted to direct their darts at American listeners, American broadcasters, too, were free to send their broadcasts to others. By the end of 1940, the large networks had completed powerful short-wave transmitters with directive antennae capable of hurling the propaganda of democracy back into the teeth of those who assailed it. The President's speeches, talks by others of importance in America were beamed at the Fascist states and, more particularly, at the conquered and oppressed peoples of Europe. Purpose of the broadcasts, undertaken jointly by the broadcasters themselves and the government, was to keep alive in the breasts of these helpless millions the spark of hope, perhaps someday to blow that spark into the open flame of revolt. Boston's International Rádio University, WRUL, was particularly active, broadcasting in fourteen languages. It is said—no less a personage than Goebbels has verified it—that Yugoslavia's entry into the war was largely due to WRUL's broadcasts to the Yugoslavs. Such broadcasters have learned that news programs—to a continent which has its news sifted through the fine meshes of Herr Goebbels' ministry—are the most avidly listened-to programs. They have planned their broadcasting accordingly.

Another prime reason for the establishment of so many short-wave transmitters in the United States in recent months has been to counter the German short-wave broadcasts to South America. In the short time that NBC and CBS have been transmitting programs to South America, the German broadcasting service has been forced to take a back seat. South Americans—like other people—enjoy entertainment and news programs which present news, not garbled facts. With competitive broadcasting, they can choose their programs and it is not strange that they should choose the better produced, more entertaining American broad-

casts in preference to the dull, propaganda-ridden Nazi offerings.

There are many who feel that the time has come for an abandonment of the "free trade" system of broadcasting, that we should ban from the air talks tinged with anti-Semitism and Nazi ideology which, they feel, serve only to sabotage national unity in a period when national unity is essential. Not many broadcasters belong to this group. Broadcasters are as jealous of their rights as are American publishers. So, broadcasters were frankly worried when Colonel William Joseph (Wild Bill) Donovan was appointed co-ordinator of information for the United States Government in July, 1941. Already stirred up against the FCC (which broadcasters accuse of trying to control the industry with too heavy a hand), they viewed the formidable staff quickly gathered by Donovan with dismay. It seemed the beginning of a propaganda bureau and the first step toward controlled broadcasting.

To correct this impression, Donovan called the heads of six short-wave organizations to Washington in the fall of 1941.

Let's clear this thing up, [he told them forcefully]. My people are simply doing a job to help you broadcasters. We get daily records of the line Axis propaganda is taking. We check with officials here to correct Axis innuendo. We compile daily editorials from the press, useful to quote on the air when Goebbels is making the most of the *Chicago Tribune*. We propose to simply hand you our stuff to use as you see fit.

In two weeks' time, international broadcasters were making the most of Donovan's offer. His staff could—and would—save them a lot of work in checking stories, digging up material, chasing about government bureaus. How this bureau will operate in wartime, whether government control of broadcasting will follow the declaration of war is a matter which only the future can reveal. There are no precedents in an industry so young by which the future can be gauged.

Meanwhile, propaganda for democracy is being sent through the air with ever-increasing force. NBC's latest series for European and South American consumption is called "Hitler Betrayed by Himself." The program consists of quotations from Hitler's

speeches, read by one voice, followed by another voice recounting what actually happened. Most American short wavers feel that the blunt truth is the most effective antidote that can be cooked up for Goebbels' garbled mouthings. News reports are always given "straight" and without editorial comment or censorship.

Testimony that American short-wave broadcasts were making themselves felt on the propaganda fronts of Europe was afforded by recent repeated attempts of the German radio to vilify and discredit United States broadcasting stations for their European listeners.

THE WAVE OF THE FUTURE

DR. FRANK CONRAD INAUGURATED REGULARLY scheduled broadcasting on November 2, 1921, by transmitting results of the Harding-Cox election. Perhaps between ten and twenty thousand amateur wireless operators, plus the handful of friends of Westinghouse officials who had been provided with receivers, heard those returns. An overzealous publicist for Westinghouse, owner of experimental station KDKA, proclaimed it "Radio's first report to the nation." It was hardly that. Had the publicist termed it a "report on the state of the nation," he would have been closer to the facts. For the significant conclusion to be drawn from Harding's sweeping victory was that a wave of militant isolationism—and pacifism—had swept the nation.

In September, 1941, more than forty million pairs of ears were tuned to radio sets in the United States alone when President Roosevelt made his "shoot-on-sight" speech, and afterward, that speech, translated into fourteen languages, was sent by short wave to all parts of the earth.

In 1921, less than 5,000 researchers—many of them amateurs—were engaged in the business of radio. Perhaps another 7,000 professional wireless operators were at various stations. Today, more than 350,000 people are employed by radio—in the manufacture, servicing, distribution and installation of radio equipment, and in the broadcasting of radio programs. The 856 licensed broadcasting stations of the United States give employment to some 26,000 persons and pay them more than \$56,000,000 per year. The average monthly wage of the station employee is \$220—a figure of which the industry is proud, just as it is proud of its singular freedom from labor troubles and wage

disputes in an era when strikes and disturbances were common to most industries. Advertising supports American radio, in contrast to the tax-supported radio found abroad. Many investors in broadcasting at a period when its potentialities were unforeseen have watched radio's revenue from time sales alone grow from a mere \$4,820,000 in 1927 (first year such figures were available) to \$171,114,000 in 1939 (last complete figures available), which is exactly \$19,629,470 more than the gross receipts of magazines for advertising in the same year.

But the social importance of radio has more than kept step with the economic development of the industry. Advent of regular radio broadcasting brought to bear upon the American listener—and painlessly—social forces which have had tremendous effect upon our way of life. Never in the history of our nation has there been a more widespread knowledge of our government and its mode of operation, nor a more intimate acquaintanceship between the voter, who buys government with his taxes, and those charged with governing. In 1921, with less than 10,000 radio sets in use, 26,705,346 ballots were cast in the Presidential election. In 1928, when the Hoover-Smith campaign developed the political use of radio, there were 8,500,000 radio sets in use and the ballots cast rose to 36,879,440. The Roosevelt-Willkie campaign of 1940 saw 44,000,000 radio sets in use and an unprecedented national vote of 50,000,000.* Radio, through its public forums, political speeches, improved news coverage and general educational programs, has awakened the citizen's consciousness to obligations and duties under democracy by arousing his interest in government.

After years of trial and error, broadcasting is beginning to achieve perceptible results in the educational world, too. Dr. John W. Studebaker, United States commissioner of education, summed up radio's growth in these words: "Five years ago, educational radio was a term without a definition. Today, it is a going concern. In thousands of schools, homes, clubs, CCC camps, educational radio is adding to the meaning of life. Radio helps the eighth grade pupil see geography as an exciting adventure. It brings classics of music and literature to the busy

* Approximate.

housewife . . ." Radio has extended the reach of religion, too, beyond the pulpit and into every home where a radio receiver stands. News broadcasts have won listeners who never turned to the newspaper for information.

Radio has indeed stridden forward in seven-league boots during the twenty-one years which have passed since broadcasting to the public began, but that its greatest period of progress lies immediately ahead is indicated in three important developments brought out of research laboratories in recent months. Frequency modulation, facsimile, and television broadcasting will do for radio what the invention of the steam engine did for industry—bring about such revolutionary changes that the effects will be strongly felt outside the broadcasting industry and in our everyday social and economic life. All three of these offspring of broadcasting are developed today to a stage of refinement far beyond that of radio when regular broadcasting to the public was begun. That they are not already in wide use is due to economic reasons (rather than technical imperfections) and because of the inherent promise of chaos to come unless these developments are promoted and put into use with the most careful planning. And because of their promise of far-reaching social benefits, properly administered, we shall consider them one by one.

Least disturbing of the three developments, economically, is frequency modulation broadcasting, commonly known as FM. FM broadcasting, beyond making new channels available for visual broadcasts, is a refinement of present-day, or aural, broadcasting. The achievements of FM are unspectacular, but when universally adopted—as it must be within the next two or three years—it will clear up most of the troublesome problems of the present-day broadcasting industry. Static and interference are eliminated by FM. Further, those portions of the musical range which present-day broadcasting is unable to reproduce are made available, and all sound is so faithfully reproduced that reception loses the sound of "radio" and more nearly approaches reality. These improvements alone, although they entail a great expenditure in new equipment in both the home and at broadcasting stations, would justify the adoption of FM broadcasting by the industry.

But FM has a more important contribution to make to broadcasting. For many years, there has been a shortage of channel space—or wave lengths—and the attempt to fairly allocate the inadequate facilities available has been the bane of the FCC's engineering department. FM broadcasting will make more channels available and give to every community one or more channels in the air so that particular stations serving local needs can be set up and operated without interference. The social importance of this is perhaps best seen by likening the new type of local station which will grow up alongside already existing chain stations to the country weekly newspaper, a vital force in molding public opinion.

The new method of broadcasting was developed by Major Edwin H. Armstrong, professor of electrical engineering at Columbia University, and the FCC, in a report issued on May 20, 1940, concluded: "Frequency modulation is highly developed. It is ready to move forward on a broad scale and on a full commercial basis." With this go-ahead signal from the FCC, radio manufacturers have planned to add FM reception as a feature of most console sets produced during 1942, and many radio stations have already commenced FM broadcasting as a supplemental service to their regular broadcasts.

But while FM poses important problems for the broadcaster, it is basically but a refinement of present-day broadcasting which, in itself, will bring about no startling revolution in radio.

Facsimile, on the other hand, is a radical departure from aural broadcasting, will have but little effect upon broadcasting as an industry, but reaches outside of radio to threaten the existence of distantly allied industries. The economic potentialities for good—and for evil—in facsimile are now being carefully explored by both those in the broadcasting industry and the Federal Government.

The science of printing had its beginnings in China some time before the year 1440, but it wasn't until the development of the rotary press, about 1812, that the great newspapers began to spring up around the world to make news the property of the masses. The rotary press was a revolutionary development of the printing art and its social and economic effects are immeasurable.

Just as revolutionary—perhaps more so—is “facsimile” broadcasting. Facsimile means “exact copy,” and that is an excellent definition of this new broadcasting process. In a manner similar to that in which Wirephoto operates, facsimile will reproduce in any home, office or institution having a facsimile receiver a copy of any document, newspaper or magazine placed under its transmitter.

The transmission process involves the translation of sight waves into a sound signal which is broadcast, picked up by the receiver and retranslated into identical sight waves again. It differs from Wirephoto in that the paper used by the receiver in making its exact copy requires no chemical development but works on a carbon principle and entirely automatically. It differs from television in that television is able to reproduce an actual scene on the screen of its receiver so long as transmission occurs, while facsimile gives a graphic, permanent record which may be taken from the receiver and read at leisure.

Today, facsimile is capable of reproducing in every home possessing a receiver any magazine or newspaper article, any picture layout, or illustration. As early as 1938, the Crosley Radio Corporation offered a strictly facsimile set at \$79.50, while combination consoles are offered by many manufacturers at prices under \$200.

Facsimile has obvious advantages over the printed newspaper or magazine. In the matter of distribution, speed, immediacy, and cost to the consumer, facsimile—in open competition—might spell the doom of the printing industry. The printing industry must be distinguished here from the printing art, for, in order to transmit a page of copy, that copy must be set up in type and at least one impression of it made. The printing press and the complicated distribution systems now in use by magazines and newspapers would suffer—perhaps even disappear—in such competition, for history teaches that the best method inevitably forces its way into use and ultimately becomes standard. Facsimile, in its present stage of development, is, at the very least, a child prodigy with great promise for the future.

The principal problem with which researchers have been confronted in this field of broadcasting (and it is a part of broad-

casting) is the development of a satisfactory reception paper. In the past three years, chemists have made great strides toward development of a satisfactory paper and there is every reason to believe that with facsimile broadcasting in public use, a better reception paper will be developed. Printing, such as that used in the *Saturday Evening Post*, averages from 10 to 20 words per square inch. Facsimile will reproduce in your home today 24 square inches, or 480 words, of average magazine type per minute! This is considerably higher than average reading speed and almost ten times as fast as the printing telegraph or teletype will work—and no expensive connecting wires are necessary. Facsimile today is a faster, cheaper, more convenient way to receive a newspaper or a periodical than presently used methods, and tomorrow the quality of its reproduction will be at least as good as that of today's newspapers and approach that of the better periodicals.

If facsimile were put upon the market and as dramatically promoted as was radio in its early days, what would be its effect upon newspapers and magazines? That is a question which the immediate future is not apt to answer, for the promoters of facsimile have largely veered away from the idea of facsimile broadcasting for the home and toward the less upsetting idea of facsimile as an adjunct to the press and an independent business and educational service. Such a delay in the ultimate and inevitable conflict for public support between these forces will provide a period during which long-range planning may avoid the chaos of headlong collision. It is, too, additional evidence that radio has come to a level-headed adulthood.

Most of the experimenting which has brought facsimile to its present state of perfection has been made in the laboratories of radio stations in stern competition with strong newspapers. Some of the most effective facsimile developments have come out of WHO, in Des Moines, which finds competition not only in the Cowles-owned *Register* and *Tribune*, but in the Cowles-owned radio stations throughout Iowa. WHO executives felt at one time that an efficient facsimile system in their listening area would permit them to compete advantageously with the Cowles interests. But the frightening economic and social aspects of facsimile have caused even such stations to stay their hands.

Many newspaper-owned radio stations, on the other hand, have moved into the facsimile field for obvious reasons. Among these are WGN, the Chicago *Tribune's* station; W8XVC, of the Cincinnati *Times-Star* Co.; and W9XWT, owned by the Louisville *Times*.

Facsimile's principal role in the immediate future is likely to take the form of a news and market service for business and professional men. Permanent records, speedily transmitted from the great markets and trading centers, have always been vital to the conduct of trade; and facsimile can, for the moment, serve a good purpose in this limited role. It is also believed that—as a speedy and cheap means of getting news from the scene of activity to subscribing newspapers—it might become the good right hand of the working press. If such an arrangement is worked out on a far-flung basis, it is possible that facsimile might not become an instrument of use in the home for many years. But that it will become as common to the home as the radio receiver is as certain as the fact that economically—as well as politically—we are democratic. Facsimile can no more be suppressed in the long run than bathtubs and running water for, like the rotary press which it will supersede someday, facsimile makes news even more the property of the people.

But it is television which lays down the most immediate challenge to the broadcasting industry. Two years ago, people in the radio industry itself laughed at the idea of practical television except as the child of some distant future. They went to many laboratory demonstrations of visual broadcasting where ideal conditions prevailed, and they came away more than ever convinced that television was a long way from the average man's parlor. The pictures flickered and blurred and faded; and the small screens used demanded the utmost in concentrated attention. Then, almost overnight, television came out of the research laboratory. The writer has heard important executives of radio stations throughout the country bewail the advent of television as they would a Frankenstein monster turning upon its creator. In Hollywood, too, the writer has encountered fearful premonitions of economic collapse for the film industry in the face of advancing television.

Why this sudden fear of televised broadcasting? Let us look at the present state of television. There are twenty licensed television stations in the United States today, and the opening of new channels by FM broadcasting in the near future will make wave lengths available for many more in the next five years. Since April 30, 1939, NBC has been televising on a regular schedule from its experimental station, W₂XBS on top of the Empire State Building in New York, and it was closely followed by regularly scheduled broadcasts from CBS' W₂XAB, also in New York, and W₆XAO, Los Angeles transmitter of the Don Lee network. Television receivers are being offered by manufacturers at prices averaging \$200 per set, and the reception, usually on a screen 7½ x 10 inches, is as distinct and sharp as 16 mm. home motion pictures. Thus far, regular broadcasts have been confined to black-and-white transmission, but natural color television has been accomplished in the laboratory and is a definite potentiality when costs can be reduced from a current 25 per cent above black-and-white broadcasts to a more reasonable 10 or 15 per cent above.

When Dr. Conrad broadcast election returns twenty-one years ago, the press hailed his feat as a major miracle. When, on June 27, 1940, a spellbound audience of more than ten thousand people in and around New York City witnessed the nomination of a candidate for President at the Republican National Convention, more than a hundred miles away in Philadelphia, by television; heard the roll calls, the cheering, the speeches as a dark horse named Wendell Willkie swept the convention, news of the achievement was buried—if printed at all—on inside pages of the press.

Almost as many people heard and saw the nomination of Willkie by television as heard the returns in the Harding-Cox election twenty-one years ago by radio. Experts are agreed that the performance of television in this instance was far more perfect, technically, than aural broadcasting in Conrad's time.

But even so, the fears expressed by the motion picture industry for its future in the face of television's advances in the past two years are premature, as we shall see when we come to a consideration of television programming and its economic diffi-

culties. The fears expressed by broadcasters, too, are premature, although, oddly, television's most immediate threat (if you care to call it that) is to aural broadcasting. Actually, broadcasters who fear the competition of television are taking a short view of the situation. That television may—especially in the field of current events—replace aural broadcasting in the comparatively near future is an imminent possibility. But those broadcasters who have been working to further the science of television have taken a much longer range view of the development. They look upon present-day, aural broadcasting as but half of the ultimate service they hope to render; and broadcasting, for them, will not be complete until sight has been added to sound. Visual broadcasting is to be added to aural broadcasting. It is not to supplant it. And this picture of the completed art of broadcasting is already beginning to be filled in with more than ten thousand television receivers in use for the increasing number of televised programs now being broadcast.

The first effort to commercially introduce television to the public was made in the winter of 1939, when the Radio Manufacturers' Association proposed a set of technical standards for adoption by the FCC. Adoption of these standards (which meant adoption of standardized transmission systems and receivers), would have permitted manufacturers to start mass production of television receivers without fear that their huge expenditures for machinery and tools would be lost through a change in standards within a short period. After an intent study of television transmission and the standards proposed, the FCC, in a report issued on May 22, 1939, rejected the RMA's proposals.

It is highly probable, [that report read], that the technical quality of television produced in accordance with the proposed standards may be accepted by the public as a practical beginning . . . but it would be hazardous to both the best interests of the public and the industry to attempt by administrative fiat to freeze the art at this stage of its development.

The commission felt that to standardize television broadcasting so early in its development would arrest future development; that manufacturers and broadcasters of television, with huge invest-

ments in equipment designed to handle television of those early stages, would reject future steps and refinements which might endanger those investments, to the detriment of television as an art.

The FCC had left the door wide open for further experiment in the field of television, and to overcome the danger of an inertia which might bring television to a standstill if the rewards of commercial broadcasts were too long withheld, the FCC appointed a committee of its own members, headed by T. A. M. Craven, to go further into the matter. Six months later this committee made its recommendations.

First, it proposed that two types of licenses in television be granted, one for those stations primarily interested in technical research (as the two General Electric stations at Schenectady, N. Y., the Zenith station in Chicago and Philco's station in Philadelphia); and a second type of license for those stations interested in developing program technique (as CBS', NBC's, and the Don Lee network's stations). It proposed, too, that in view of the lack of available wave lengths under the current method of broadcasting, the various stations share time on the air, as was done in the early days of broadcasting and, in limited cases in crowded areas, today.

The commission refused to permit commercial sponsorship of television programs. "It appears obvious," they reported, "that before commercialization of television can become feasible, the service should be ready to sell some reasonable basis of circulation value to the sponsor." But by July 1, 1941, with 10,000 receivers in operation, television had reached such an advanced stage that the FCC felt it definitely had "circulation" to offer advertisers and, during that month, "Uncle Jim's Question Bee," Lowell Thomas' news program, "Truth or Consequences" and the Bulova Time Signals went under commercial sponsorship. The latter managed to be televised by showing the face of a clock with the correct time while musical chimes furnished sound.

The real test of television, however, lies not in the technical end of visual broadcasting, but in programming. And how rapidly television develops is not, as was the case with aural broadcasting when transmission of any signals through the air was enough to

arouse public curiosity to the point of purchasing radio receivers, dependent upon intriguing the masses with the mere idea of visual broadcasting. Television's progress is dependent upon television's ability to provide programs of such merit in competition with sound broadcasting and sound motion pictures as to attract the public eye and ear. In fact, it is the matter of programming which will prevent, in the immediate future, any real competition between television and motion pictures or aural broadcasting.

A good idea of the programming job television has done to date is afforded by the Don Lee station, in Los Angeles. Sustained broadcasting on a regular schedule was inaugurated with one of those inevitable spectacle shows on October 14, 1939. But when the opening festivities and speechmaking were over, the television cameras were moved into the Pan Pacific Auditorium for a telecast of the Los Angeles Auto Show. News and current events, televised as they happened, have proved the most popular type of program broadcast, as shown by general mail response, and television broadcasts of fashion shows from large downtown stores have drawn the most feminine mail. Next most popular type of program has been the interview with celebrities, and W6XAO has aired interviews with almost all prominent visitors to the city.

Quite popular, too, have been the dramatic productions offered by Max Reinhardt and his players, but these have suffered from comparison with the more naturally screened movie productions and stage shows to be seen in a city the size of Los Angeles. The matter of stage settings for televised drama is perhaps the most serious obstacle in the path of television. It is nothing for a motion picture company to spend \$25,000 in the mere scouting of suitable locations for films and as high as \$100,000 to construct sets in the studio. Such costs are entirely out of the question for a one-time broadcast, and not even the gifts and efforts of a Reinhardt have been able to overcome this deficiency in television broadcasts destined for the general public with its varying degrees of imaginativeness.

In the field of education the University of Southern California also presents a regular weekly program in which the heads

of various departments are interviewed and demonstrations in conjunction with the interviews are staged.

But in its most promising field, television has inevitably run into serious difficulty. Dramatic production has been found economically unsound up to the present by almost every experimental television station which has tried it. In the first place, television's roster of dramatic performers must be a huge one, for actors must, in television, be line-perfect in their rendering of script. No one performer could appear day after day in a serial. The physical and mental impossibility of giving letter-perfect readings and portrayals without use of script as a daily routine is at once apparent. A theatrical player can afford to spend many hours learning his lines because, if the play is a success, he is assured of giving those lines for months, perhaps years. In television, a play could be used once, twice at the most, and then discarded—and the salary players would have to demand for a one-time performance involving such memory work would be prohibitive.

The one sound method of circumventing this difficulty lies in sound motion pictures, for television is able to broadcast from sound film. But here television enters into competition with the movies and with the theater; and Hollywood is not likely to turn over its productions for use by a competing medium. Neither does it seem likely that the broadcasters will attempt to enter the film production field. Rather, some new method of adapting the rich field of the drama to television—and television's possibilities to the field of the dramatic—must be worked out. For drama offers television its most abundant material, and until a key is found, its use is barred by the painful situation in which the television producer finds himself—with the terrifically high production cost of films (about \$350,000 per A picture) and the one-night run of aural broadcasting.

It is not strange that the audience-participation shows—which have been radio's particular contribution to current entertainment—should prove a successful field for television divertissement. Audience participation, which has come to mean so much to commercial aural broadcasting in the past ten years, has roots deep in American traditions. It goes back to the old-fashioned spelling

bee at the little red schoolhouse; the amateur night at the burlesque show; the town meeting, the public forum, the village wise men settling world problems about the cracker barrel in the crossroads store. Audience participations are accentuated and their enjoyment multiplied by television. The face of a contestant trying to remember how to spell "Constantinople" is something to watch, and the National Broadcasting Company found its spelling bee one of the first features to gain commercial sponsorship.

Vaudeville and variety, while not evoking a great enthusiasm from television audiences to date, may also find an important new field in visual broadcasting, for American audiences have always enjoyed *divertissement* of the variety character. Television might be the means of reviving vaudeville, for if it is essayed at all on the air, it must be good. The greatest drawback to televised vaudeville thus far has been the mediocrity of its performers, but if a field is created for the use of such talent, it is not unreasonable to suppose that talent will train itself to take advantage of its opportunity.

But the greatest immediate field for television seems to lie in fact. Radio has been an important factor in whetting the American appetite for fact, and television—more than any other medium—promises to more fully and completely satisfy that appetite. In the first place, television—through its completed and now operating mobile transmitters—can make its audience bystanders at the great events of current history. And for those who still doubt that future, the weekly television schedule of a New York station provides food for thought. Owners of television sets in that area during the week of June 27, 1940, had only to flip a switch and they were present at a major league baseball game, a world's championship prize fight, an educational forum, the nomination of the Republican candidate for President, the arrival of a refugee ship from Europe. Even the straight presentation of news by a commentator takes on new meaning with the addition of maps, charts and photographs. The combination of sight and sound broadcasting offers educators their greatest opportunity for mass education since the founding of the public school.

NBC has plotted its programming of television broadcasts on

the basis of audience response, the network providing set owners with an easily marked card upon which their preferences might be noted. News and special events have, week after week, won the greatest following, as is indicated in the table below, compiled after eight months of regular television broadcasting. The division of time among NBC's television broadcasts, as shown in this table, has been governed directly by audience response.

<i>Type of Program</i>	<i>Per cent of total time which has been kept in direct ratio to au- dience response.</i>
Children's	0.7
Dancing	1.5
Drama	29.1
Education (talks, demonstrations, etc., largely from film)	17.0
Miscellaneous	2.9
Music	3.5
News, special events, sports (chiefly from outside studio and handled by portable transmitter)	33.4
Variety Shows	11.9

Because television is not the transmission of a photograph, but the instantaneous transmission of actuality, it is likely that for several years to come, outdoor events which can be picked up by a mobile camera and transmitter will be more important than studio programs. This is because it will take much experiment and trial before a television technique for the studio can approach actuality at a cost within television's reach. Understanding of the importance of developing such a technique, however, on the part of broadcasting executives is avoiding many of the errors which afflicted and retarded early aural broadcasting, when little attention was given to program content in the greater interest the miracle of broadcasting evoked. Some of the industry's most capable people have been assigned to the task of programming television. CBS has the noted journalist and author, Gilbert Seldes, in the post of television program director; NBC has competent and far-visioned Thomas H. Hutchinson in the same post, while

the Don Lee network's programming is under the critical eyes of Thomas Conrad Sawyer and Thomas Lee.

The physical defects of television are being eliminated one by one as regular broadcasting schedules go into effect. At the moment, the primary drawbacks to television from a technical standpoint are (1) that television can be broadcast effectively only to the horizon, or for a period of approximately forty-five miles. This would tend to make television highly profitable in thickly settled areas, an expensive medium in rural areas; and (2) television does not lend itself economically to chain (or network) broadcasting. The particular type of cable necessary to carry television from one station to another without distortion may be laid at a minimum cost of \$10,000 per mile. Alternative to this is the construction of relay stations which, too, are a costly proposition. A second—and cheaper as well as more logical—alternative would be to record programs on film for re-broadcast among member stations of a network. This would be practical and effective for studio programs, but in news coverage would have the same psychological effect upon listeners as the newsreel—an interesting document but lacking timeliness and immediacy.

This period in television's existence is earliest infancy, no more, and to compare it with the more mature arts—the theater, motion pictures, even broadcasting—can serve no useful purpose. But to consider the long-run trends of FM, facsimile and television; to consider what might be their influence on our social and economic processes, and to try to mold them to the best purposes for the largest number of people is extremely urgent at this plastic stage of their development. If science is to be man's servant, as much thought must be given to the social uses of inventions as to their technical development.

Our proclaimed goal is—and has always been—the democratic way of life, and radio's new inventions should herald an increasingly vital democracy in which each man, in his own parlor, will occupy a ringside seat at national affairs. These new developments of radio should serve to give him the broad and informed background necessary to an understanding of those affairs and

their after-currents and awaken within him a deep sense of civic responsibility.

It is the general opinion of authorities on population trends that life in the United States a few decades hence will be marked by great increases in leisure time, an increase in the average age of the population and a geographical decentralization of industry with a resultant decentralization of population. The National Resources Board predicts that between 1945 and 1960, there will be a great decline in the population of large cities with the people—spurred by cheap motorcars and super-highways—moving into suburban areas as far as sixty miles distant from their places of work. One may foresee in this a national population which again centers its interests in the home; a people of mature years with ample leisure time; a people living again in individual small houses which they own.

For such a people, television and facsimile hold a real promise. Visual broadcasting, in conjunction with sound transmission, could become their principal source of education, entertainment and enlightenment, linking them together in mind and spirit. The ultimate aim of all broadcasters working in this new medium should be the fuller development of the individual citizen.

If radio, visual and aural, is to fulfill this rich promise of its youth—to become an important aid in the building of a more vital democracy—a readjustment of government-radio relations is in order. There has been a trend of late toward full-fledged supervision of the industry in Washington. Such supervision, in Germany and Italy, has retarded broadcasting as an art and made the government-owned broadcasting systems little more than propaganda machines. In France and England government control resulted in broadcasting systems which were far inferior to ours both technically and in programming.

There is no argument with the thesis that the technical policing of the air and the licensing of stations should be a governmental function. That government should control the creative and editorial branches of broadcasting, however, is as untenable as that government should control the press. Had broadcasting been an established fact, or even a foreseeable possibility, at the time the Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution, it is a fair certainty

that an additional amendment would have assured its freedom from censorship, either outrightly or by overt means. Access to the air of all political, religious and racial groups has been not only a cardinal rule of broadcasting during its first two decades, but a rule so healthy for both the industry and the people it serves that it seems inordinately shortsighted to throw it overboard for a principle which, universally adopted abroad, has produced nothing to compare with American radio.

The broadcaster, who administers not only a great industry but a public trust, has obligations, too. The standards of fairness he has established in the past must be even more strictly applied to the greatly enhanced medium he will administer in the future; the tradition of service in the public interest must continue to weigh heavily upon his shoulders, nor must he permit the slightest shade of perversion or distortion to color his broadcasts. The advertiser has every right to ask his dollar's worth of advertising value in return for his use of radio—but nothing more. Coloring of news, educational and public enlightenment broadcasts to suit the political, religious or racial beliefs of large advertisers would at once negate radio's richest gifts. As in the case of the broadcaster, the advertiser's past record in broadcasting provides an excellent guide-map for the future.

Research scientists have worked long hours in the laboratory to make the seemingly impossible come true. Just as radio, in its first two decades, has multiplied by a thousandfold the meaning of the spoken word, so FM, facsimile and television will multiply by many times the meaning of broadcasting. These technicians have placed in our hands the wave of the future. It is up to us to make that wave the instrument of social progress and public good which is its inherent destiny.

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