

NEW NBS PRODUCTIONS

Casts Busy In The Studios

THE other day we heard about a very lucky young journalist.

He was lucky because he had found the answer to a reporter's prayer — an unending supply of material for articles. His technique was simple. All he did was call on an elderly friend, produce his pad, sharpen his pencil, and wait for it. The old man's life, experiences and recollections were all good copy, for he had travelled the world, visiting its queerest places, and collected in his wanderings a houseful of curiosities. It was of these the old man talked, and this, of course, was very satisfactory for the journalist.

Now this sounds almost too good to be true—and, in fact, it is. For this journalist and the old man he interviews are merely characters in an NBS play. The young man's name is Burton and the old chap is known as Mr. Hobbs, and they figure in *The Treasure House of Timothy Hobbs*, written for the radio by P. T. Hall, of Christchurch. Out of imaginary interviews between Burton and Hobbs, Mr. Hall has concocted a series of pleasant episodes—25 all told—each lasting from 12 to 15 minutes. They deal with some object Mr. Hobbs possesses and with experiences called to

mind by the antiquities in his small private museum.

For instance, to take a few of the titles, there are the stories of the Bell of Peking, the Wedgwood Plate, the Eye of the Basilisk, the Wandering Jew, and the Willow Pattern Plate. The cast playing in each story varies but the main characters remain throughout. Dates for broadcasting have not yet been fixed.

Play the Game, You Cads

As soon as one play is launched in its serial form at the studios another is prepared. Early next year the production department will start on H. F. Maltby's *The Rotters*.

Theatre-goers of little more than 20 years ago may remember the comedy of the righteous Yorkshireman, pillar of respectability and correctness, who hoped to qualify for the title of grand old man of his town. The NBS will revive the story of his return to a proper humility when he finds that one of his daughters has been expelled from school, another has been discovered democratically flirting with the chauffeur, a son has been caught in a police raid and, worst of all, that his wife was married once before and that his own former wife is on the doorstep, asking uncompromisingly for arrears in alimony.

Though *The Rotters* was played in New Zealand in 1919, its plot could be dated 1945. Bernard Beeby, Supervisor of Productions for the NBS, and Mrs. Beeby (whose stage name was Miriam Browne) played in this comedy with Alan Wilkie during a tour of New Zealand and Australia. Also in Wilkie's company were Heba Barlow, who had been with John Sheridan in his big English companies, and the late Henri Doré. Another member was Frederick Browne, who, according to Mr. Beeby, forsook the glamour of the stage for the prosaic task of patrolling the pavements, for when last heard of, Browne was a policeman in Brisbane.

Programme dates for both productions will be announced later.



"The Treasure House of Timothy Hobbs"

(continued from previous page)

Captain Kimmins stopped in the doorway.

"Right!" he said, "Let's have it here!"

I was dumbfounded. How does one really discover anything about a man who will stand in a busy passageway and wait for questions to be asked? But it was my turn to be exacting. So I said, with an attempt to be equally blunt:

"Tell me about films then. You were producing them?"

"Yes, I did some of Gracie Field's and all of George Formby's."

It was my turn to produce another question. I began to feel like the castaways of Disappointment Island, with only five matches left, and all of them rather dampened.

"What do you feel about Arthur Rank?"

"I know Rank. I admire him. I think his intentions for the film industry are the very best. He's out for the really good stuff." He suddenly stopped speaking. Another match had flared and gone out.

Lt. Stewart was waiting on the footpath a few feet away. A naval driver was watching from the car across the street, wondering what was going on. After a pause, I said:

"Your plans for the future? Will you be broadcasting or back in films?"

"I've no tie-up whatsoever with the BBC. I'm completely free of them. As a matter of fact I hope to write a few plays."

I felt it was up to me to decide that Captain Kimmins was in a hurry—which he was—and make a move towards the car. We took our leave. "If there's anything else you want to know," said Captain Kimmins, "just give me a ring at the hotel."

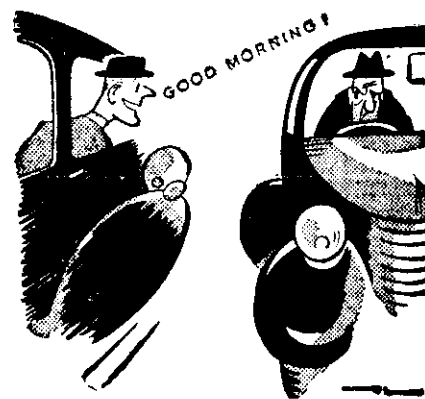
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