

SIBELIUS HAD HIS SALARY RAISED

VERY little news of Sibelius was available during the war years, mainly because the great composer was isolated in Finland. But out of his recent 80th birthday celebrations has come the information that the Finnish Government staged a concert of his work in Helsinki's largest hall. And, to Sibelius's home, a neat wooden hut above Lake Tuusulan, journeyed many visitors.

Among them, states *News Review*, were two Government officials, who brought news that his State pension had been increased from £300 to £500, and presented him with an illuminated address signed by 18 leading Russian composers. The Finnish Government also issued a commemorative stamp.

The BBC shared in the celebrations. A Sibelius birthday concert packed the Albert Hall. Conducted by Basic Cameron, a personal friend of the composer, the BBC Symphony Orchestra played the third and fifth symphonies and the symphonic poem *Tapiola*, regarded in some quarters as Sibelius's greatest work.

To-day Jean Julius Christian Sibelius

is himself a minor symphony in black and white. His suits are either funereal or glistening white; his big fleshy face is deathly pale; his head is hairless and smooth as polished ivory, and his physical resemblance to Winston Churchill is accentuated by his fat cigars.

Though of peasant stock Sibelius has always been comfortably off. He studied at Helsinki, Berlin and Vienna. The first World War brought him gloom; his compositions were pitched in the minor key. His reputation outside his native Finland grows but slowly. Italy and Germany



JEAN SIBELIUS
He lost his manuscripts

still barely acknowledge his existence; France is decidedly cool. America is more enthusiastic, but England has taken him to its soul.

"I Think Music"

When the Russo-Finnish war broke out in 1940, Sibelius received innumerable offers of hospitality from all over the world. He refused them all. World War II affected him little, but in 1944 the manuscripts of all his compositions were destroyed when his Leipzig publisher's office was bombed.

Critics have long been divided on the subject of his orchestration, but Sibelius argues: "It makes me impatient when people talk of orchestration. I don't think orchestration. I think music. I hear my music always in terms of certain musical sonorities." Beethoven he adores; Grieg and Tchaikovski he loves. But he has never liked Wagner. His main current task is the completion of his eighth symphony, but he has worked on it so long that it has become almost mythical. Two movements are believed to be completed, but he will not talk about them.

Current affairs, prophetic utterances about the shape of things to come, browsing among his collection of books in five languages, and music are his main pursuits.

Mountbatten is a Radio Expert

[T will probably be news to a good many of our readers that Lord Louis Mountbatten, besides being distinguished in so many other spheres, is also a leading figure in the world of radio-engineering.

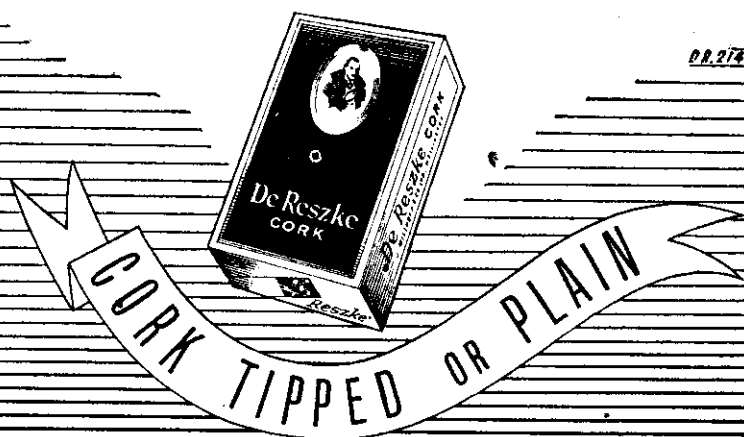
According to an article in the "Sunday Dispatch," Mountbatten began specialising in wireless in 1924 and went to the Naval Signal School. For the next nine years he served as a wireless officer, becoming Senior Instructor of the Signal School, Portsmouth, and eventually Fleet Wireless Officer of the Mediterranean Fleet.


Very early Mountbatten formed the habit of committing his conclusions to writing. Manuals, pamphlets and books were the result. His friends began by treating this propensity as a joke. But it soon became apparent that the young man with the relish for getting down to it was producing a series of first-class works on a variety of subjects.

No sooner had he started on his specialist career than he wrote the first "Manual of Wireless Telegraphy" for non-specialist officers. When he became Senior Instructor at the Signal School he wrote the first technical text-book on naval radio transmitting and receiving sets, which has been kept up to date and is still the standard work on this subject.

At the present time Mountbatten is President of the Institute of Radio Engineers (British) as well as an Associate Member of the Institution of Electrical Engineers.

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