

answers by wagging her dark glasses at her questioner. Our memory reminds us also that about this time we remembered that flash-bulb, and the fidgety fingers of its owner. But we didn't risk a glance.

One of the women put a question about the women of Malaya. And we found ourselves regarding the right hand of Lady Mountbatten on the arm of her chair, tipping a pencil over and over, and sliding her fingers to the bottom, each time—this was a comforting thing to watch, because it's one of those little habits we happen to have ourselves; when . . .

Flash!

We jumped—as we don't remember jumping for a long time. The reporters across the room sniggered. Lord Louis thought it was funny too. By then it was all over. We were left with an impression of agreeable warmth down the left side of our face. And the photographer consoled us in a low whisper: "Sorry," he said, "I've been waiting for hours for that smile."

The conversation went on long enough for us to recover poise for one more question.

We explained that we were a radio paper, and asked: "Has radio made any difference to life in the Navy?"

"Indeed it has," said Lord Mountbatten, with something of a chuckle. "Before, you gave your own orders. Now, you do what you're told."

"Sorry," we said. "The question wasn't clear—radio in the recreational sense, not military communications."

The Last Words

"Oh, I see. Yes, it has made a tremendous difference. In 1932 I got loud-speakers put in all the mess decks, and the system was arranged so that ship broadcasts could be given, or programmes of gramophone records, or broadcasting could be picked up. I also started installing cinemas—I had specifications made out for portable ship's cinemas, and they were linked up with the other systems. And it was my practice always to give a daily broadcast to my own ship, tell them where we were, and so on."

The next note on our pad is a note of the last words we heard from the lips of Lord Louis Mountbatten, spoken to a member of his staff as he went out to the lift: "You see, I was going to talk off the record at the luncheon and then like a silly ass I went and said something entirely different there, and now I've got to think out what I'm going to say to-night . . ."

—A.A.

To Honour the Aged

WITH the idea of arousing interest in the welfare of old people a committee is at work in Auckland arranging meetings and addresses for the week between Sunday, April 21 and Sunday, April 28 to be known as "Honouring Age Week." The committee was convened by the Mayoress, Mrs. J. A. C. Allum; it has the support and approval of the City Council.

The first item in the week's programme will be a broadcast address by Archbishop Averill from 1YA at 2.15 p.m. on Sunday, April 21. During the week 12B will take part in the proceedings and on Sunday, April 28, there will be a broadcast address by his Worship the Mayor, Mr. J. A. C. Allum, from the Town Hall.

Feminine Angle

THINGS ONE REMEMBERED

IF you get a kick out of celebrities, Press conferences are pretty exciting. To sit for an hour and listen to Lord and Lady Louis Mountbatten, privileged by virtue of a reporter's notebook to stare as much as you like, is a very enjoyable way of passing the time. To write about it afterwards is not as easy. You feel that there should be some big, clear, vivid impression, but there isn't: just a lot of little things you've noticed. Some of them—that Lord Louis is almost incredibly tall, that he has thick, black hair without even a fleck of grey in it, and an unlined face—are obvious from photographs. Some, such as the fact that his hands are as well moulded and strong-looking as his face, and that when he sits he really relaxes—almost lies—in the chair, aren't.

Looks Well in Uniform

Lady Mountbatten is one of the few women I have seen who looks really well in an essentially unbecoming uniform. She's small, though perhaps she only looks small beside her husband, her features are attractive rather than conventionally beautiful, and she gives the impression of tremendous but controlled vivacity. She arrived a little late, apologised, wished the days and nights were longer, said she'd just been told she'd "got to make a speech at this St. John's thing," shook hands with everybody, sat down, took off her hat, adjusted her hair, said "Everybody please smoke if you want to" and lit a cigarette—practically all in one breath. She didn't seem to relax at all. She chain-smoked from a plain unembossed silver cigarette case, and used a lighter. She played with a pencil and wrote frequently on an inadequate piece of paper. Once when she borrowed our pad to write a note to the aide we got the full and exclusive benefit of four smiles—one when she asked us for it, one when we gave it to her, one when she gave it back, and one when she gave us the note to pass on.

She wore no jewellery but a plain silver wrist-watch and a diamond ring.

Story Nobody Got

Lady Mountbatten left most of the talking to her husband, and what she did say, her tribute to the Red Cross, or to St. John's, her statement that the children of Britain were better cared for during the war than ever before, her recommendation of the film *Burma Victory* and the way she winced when somebody mentioned *Objective Burma* will all have been faithfully recorded long before this goes to press.

Just as she was leaving, somebody asked her if she was interested in our deep-sea fishing and she said:

"I'll leave that to my husband. He's never caught a swordfish. I have." But she had to hurry away, so that is a story nobody got.

—S.P.McL.

"STRANGE STORIES, BUT TRUE,"

is the title of a new series of tales by Ebor and Ariel from 2YA in the Children's Hour at 5.0 p.m. on Mondays. They deal with people and events. For instance, the first was about Joseph Grimaldi, the "king of clowns," and of the perilous excursions of Charles Blondin who, many times, crossed the gorge below Niagara Falls on a tight-rope.

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