

THOUSANDS ARE BORN EVERY MINUTE

(Written for "The Listener" by E.A.M.)

LAST Saturday I was resting on the chesterfield and the 13-year-old was bustling about her own affairs when a solemn and protentious voice interrupted a radio programme to announce that certain scientific experiments with radar, which were being carried on in several parts of the world, were being duplicated in New Zealand. In the course of experiments in other countries, the voice said, radar impulses had been sent to the moon and had actually returned to the point of departure. In New Zealand, however, results of a particularly startling nature had been achieved—no less, in fact, than the reception of sounds or signals actually originating from the moon itself!

In order to let the public share in the thrill of this astounding phenomenon, a special broadcast would be made of one of these experiments, and it was expected that the scientists concerned would be able to present to the people

results that would astound them and that would make history.

Now, being inquisitive by nature and conscientious by training—in other words, not wanting to miss anything, we made up our minds to be on the alert for further announcements. Even the 13-year-old was impressed, and anyone knows that 13 is the age of disillusionment.

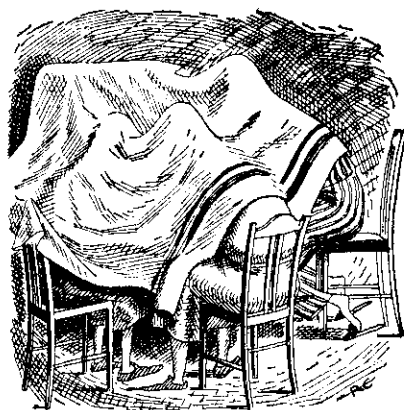
"Stand By, Please"

On Sunday a voice warned us to stand by for further announcements during the day. Results of great moment had been achieved, signals from the moon had definitely been received, and the public would be allowed to hear for themselves at a broadcast to be announced later. On Sunday evening I went to church. Arriving home late, after being detained, I found a note on the living-room table. "The radio test for radar," it said, "is going to be at five mins. to six, Monday morning. Daughter and I are getting up for it." Humph! I thought, I suppose that means me, too.

On Monday morning, if I remember aright, I was being chased by strange horned beings with pitchforks in their hands. They were closing in on me and all seemed to be lost when a loud insistent ringing woke me up. Ha, I thought, the message from the moon, but why on earth it has to be at five minutes to six, I don't know. The air felt chilly. It was still dark. I comforted myself with the thought that since the man of the house had promised to help a friend move that day we should have had to get up early anyway.

Music on the Air

The man of the house stirred, rose and a few minutes later I heard the kettle being filled. Heaven forbid, I thought, that anything should happen in New Zealand without a cup of tea at one's elbow. Not wishing to be left out of things I heaved myself out of bed, threw a dressing gown round me, and



"We stuck our heads under the blanket"

went into the living-room. The 13-year-old was already up. As she had developed a sniffy cold, her father had settled her on the chesterfield underneath an eiderdown.

We turned the radio on. There was music on the air. "It's five minutes to six," the man of the house announced, "They ought to be getting busy." I poured myself a cup of tea, sat down and waited.

(continued on next page)



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