

★ Shadwell leaves the BBC ★

AFTER ten years as director of the BBC's Variety Orchestra Charles Shadwell has decided to make use of his reputation. Announcing that he would try his luck on the halls, he said: "I have not quarrelled with the BBC. But since I have been in so many programmes I have had a vast number of letters from listeners, and so many offers of music-hall engagements that I have decided to take a chance. . . . Frankly, the offers have been too attractive to turn down."

Their attractiveness is one aspect of a BBC dilemma. Broadcasting broadens a reputation and sometimes makes it. But

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boxes along one wall. Nice for the guards, we thought, seeing the outer end of the stack with its neat Red Cross lettering, "INVALID FOOD PARCELS," as we marched out to work. It won't take them long to get in on that . . . And we felt a bit sorry for Wilfie, who would have to look on and watch them scoff it in the small hours.

(To be concluded)

the BBC cannot pay correspondingly high fees, says *News Review*. Shadwell's commercial value was obviously greater outside the corporation than inside it. No matter how good he was he could not receive more than a fixed salary from the BBC. Exactly how many times that could be multiplied on the halls is Shadwell's secret.

He suggested another reason for his departure: "For years I have worked in the orchestra pit; now, for a change, I am going on the other side of the footlights." He would hardly suffer as much good-natured abuse on that side. Conductors have always been the butt of comedians' jokes. Shadwell has had more than his share. At every one of Itma's performances, Tommy Handley has introduced him in a different way. Shadwell took the chaffing in good part, knowing its publicity value. Some listeners did not. Each fresh comment—on his thinness or baldness—brought one or two letters, protesting, inquiring, sympathising.

Almost ten years ago he left Coventry (where he conducted the Hippodrome Orchestra) with his wife, four daughters, and a tandem bicycle he and his wife used to get about the city. Since



CHARLES SHADWELL in action

BBC photograph

then he has appeared in "Saturday Night Music Hall," "Variety Band-Box," "Garrison Theatre," "Monday Night at Eight," and "Navy Mixture."

His father was a doctor whose musical leanings were so strong that for a few years he gave up medicine to tour as a professional baritone. Charles was de-

signed for the Navy, but declared unfit. He served in the Army in World War I and found himself in 1918 without his lieutenant's pay but with the ability to play the violin, piano and organ. He studied at the Royal Academy of Music and afterwards became caught up in the whirl of the new-fangled jazz bands.



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