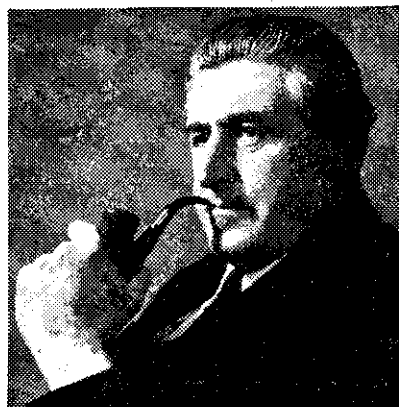


BRAINS TRUST BACK

HAS man's character changed as much as his clothes?
AS civilisation advances, does art decline?
WHAT are the eternal verities?
WITH whom would you like to dine at your "journey's end?"

THESE questions will be put by Questionmaster S. C. Roberts in the first of a new series of BBC Brains Trust sessions which will begin at 1YA at 7.47 p.m. on Monday, December 8. After an absence of over a year, the re-appearance of the Brains Trust is likely to be warmly greeted by its many devotees here. In Britain the Brains Trust achieved a popularity which had previously been accorded only to music hall turns, and when the session was introduced to New Zealand here too the names of the more frequent speakers became household words and their idiosyncracies well known, the witticisms which fell from their lips were



COMMANDER GOULD

answer the questions in the first broadcast will be the editor and author, Kingsley Martin; the conductor, Sir Malcolm Sargent; the politician, Lord Samuel; the head of the Victoria and Albert Museum, Leigh Ashton; and the headmaster of Westminster School, John T. Christie.

Donald McCullough, who will be remembered keeping a friendly rein on discussions in the previous series, will return as questionmaster in the second broadcast with half a dozen questions ranging from "What is Glamour?" to "Is the Day of Small Nations Past?" Other sessions also contain a wide variety of topics from serious political questions such as "Do we think there is any more hope for the United Nations than there was for the League of Nations?" to posers allowing for a good deal of flippancy in the replies, an early example of which is "Is addiction to oratory a sign of decadence?"

Lieutenant-Commander R. T. Gould, who was one of the best known speakers in the previous series, will be heard again in the fourth broadcast, while others who will be making an appearance early in the new series include Bertrand Russell, Julian Huxley, Robert Boothby, M.P., Professor E. N. da C. Andrade (physicist), Barbara Ward (editor), and Mrs. M. A. Hamilton (novelist).



BARBARA WARD

many times repeated, and the discussions they started often were continued at gatherings round a cup of tea or a glass of beer.

The new series, which will be heard from Southern stations later, will be on the air weekly for three months. To

(continued from previous page)

and, in the eyes of millions, probably a rather dirty player (depending, of course, on who is in at the moment).

Ingenious Evasions

Frenchmen are passionately patriotic, courageous, often recklessly generous, but they are not united on what they mean by "France." Even St. Joan, we should remember, was a leader in a civil war. For the average Englishman, as the authors of *1066 and All That* point out, history consists of "good things" because the bad things are forgotten. They are not forgotten in France. And because the French are extremely intelligent and delight in intelligence, they not only rub salt in the national wounds, but they delight in ingenious evasions and adaptations. "Système D" is wangling; it is a national institution and it is more than mere "wangling." It is often exemplified in highly ingenious evasions of foolish regulations.

It is not a mere question of profit. I have known French officials take a good deal of time and display admirable ingenuity in suggesting ways in which I

could avoid some preposterous regulation that would cost me time or money, but was no concern of theirs. It is the same spirit that makes the French mechanic delight in repairing a car or tractor with the most improbable materials. It was the same national talent that made a Dutch business consultant say that France was the most impossible country to reorganise a business in. Everybody from the managing director to the office boy was cleverer than you were. They grasped the plan almost before you had formulated it. But when you returned in a year, there was no plan, for everybody had thought of improvements, and had carried them out on their own. They were genuine improvements, too, things well worth doing, but not all of them at the same time. It is this originality and spontaneity that is the charm and was the strength of France. Is it a strength now, or a luxury that can no longer be afforded? Is Russian discipline or German docility what is needed? If it is, will it be provided? I don't know.

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