statisticians love to cut off the living joint and serve up to us cold and lifeless. Handley was not a statistician's joint; he was neither cold nor lifeless. The people in his show were all a little bit more alive because of his tremendous vitality, and I'm sure millions of listeners felt it surging out of their loudspeakers and let it run through them gladly, not knowing that he wasn't leaving enough in himself for his own personal needs. Broadcasting for 24 years can't have left him much, but let's be grateful he was given those 24 years, and particularly the last nine. We should be grateful to any man who could for a while each week, put new life into the sick, invigorate the weary, and erase the thought of queues from the mind of the British housewife,

Crime Plays

AFTER reading in print a terse note which I had penned for these columns about the prevalence of crimeplays, and reading elsewhere the satisfactory news that the BBC has issued orders for the soft-pedalling of subjects dealing with crime and violence, I guiltily listened to a thriller of the rather macabre type by John Gundry, and enjoyed it very much. The title should have warned me what to expect

—I Killed Alexander Collins. But it was an NZBS production, and that was enough to make me tune in and risk the effect of yet another crime-play. However, this one was quite good enough to escape any ban that might be placed on such plays. It was wellwritten, well-acted and well-produced. It placed no undue accent on the horrific side of its subject (suicide and the dope traffic), except, perhaps justifiably, at the very end. It firmly maintained the moral that crime doesn't pay. But the thing it did accent was the amazing

versatility of John Gundry, whose name attached to any play is now enough to attract most listeners. His prolific output is something to be thankful for. We could do with many more people capable of finding good subjects and turning them into good plays.

Beating Air?

HE NZBS Christmas programmes looked very good indeed on paper, and I'm sure they sounded very good indeed over the air. The snag is that the air was clear and sunny, the maximum temperatures were at their maximum all over the country, and even the mean temperatures were a good deal more generous than usual. In other words, the 64-dollar question of Christmas broadcasting is, how many listen? A lot of people must have been outside in the sun, or in the warm evening air. Some would have had portable radios, probably there would have been a good deal more of them than there were last year, but the vast majority, amongst whom must be numbered myself, didn't have a radio, didn't want one, and probably didn't even think of what was being broadcast. I'm not sure that this is altogether a bad thing, and even if it were wholly bad I don't think anything could be done about it. We have Christmas in summer in this part of the world, and if we are wrenched from the atmosphere and traditions of the Northern Hemisphere, what of it? Christ-mass is within us, and each individual makes of it what seems fit to him—sun or snow, beach or fireside, radio or no radio. And because the individual is important, the people in NZBS who put together these admirable Christmas programmes weren't just beating the air so long as there was one person who listened with enjoyment. And I'm sure there were many more than one.

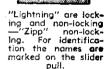
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Clues Across

- He was famous for his judgment.
 Plan with wig to get the bird.
 Boring hue for someone next door.
- Salute in bad weather?
- 1. He runs away.

 4. "Now to the banquet we press,

 and the ham."
- Now for the —s and the ham."

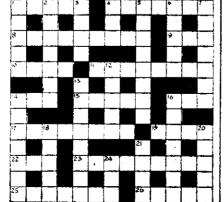
 (W. S. Gilbert—"The Sorcerer.")
 "I wandered lonely as a —" (Wordsworth)
- 45 inches. Then Cora becomes a recluse.
- 19. A relispse always ends in this.
 22. Swift wrote the Tale of one.
 23. "We have rose cardy, we have spikenard, Mastic and and oil and spice."

 (J. E. Flecker—"Hassan.")
- Befell.
 Part of a clasp earring.

- . 1. Toby's master.
- 2. In in in a rag.
 3. London district.
- Waterless battle-it's only a game.
- 5. Foreshadows the finish of the wine?

- 5. Forestandows the minsh of the winer 6. Got in out of order.
 7. "Twas caviare to the —"
 ("Hamlet," Act II., Sc. 2.)
 12. Run away—but not for the same reason as 11 across.
- 13. It's a puzzle.
- 13. It's a puzzle.
 14. Turned up in an illicit sale?
 16. "Oft of one wide—had I been told"
 (Keats—"On First Looking into Chapman's Homer.")
- 18. Venomous hooded snake.
- 20. There, in a way. 21. Stork-like bird. 24. Disencumbered.

No. 428 (Constructed by R.W.C.)





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