

NEWS OF BROADCASTERS, ON AND OFF THE RECORD,

By *Swarf*

SOMETHING TO SING ABOUT

"KEEP THE HOME FIRES BURNING," popular with British and American soldiers during the 1914-1918 war, was, as to the music, the work of the actor-playwright-filmwright-composer Ivor Novello. He wrote it at the request of his mother, the choral conductor Clara Novello Davies, who felt that "Tipperary" had "become tiresome through months of iteration." The verses are chiefly the work of an American woman, Mrs. Lena Guilbert Ford, to whom the composer supplied the tune with the first line of the words, leaving her to do the rest. It is reported that both words and music were turned out in half an hour, and that the song netted the composer £16,000.

Chicago in 1909, the child of an alderman. According to *Collier's*, nine husky young Krupas had wreaked such mayhem on the family piano that Krupa senior "refused point-blank to kick in for any more piano lessons." And that made Gene a drummer. A few years ago *Life* (U.S.) used a series of multiple-exposed photographs to show Krupa in action at the drums. So rapidly did his hands move that it was necessary to step up the speed of a movie camera. Apparently Krupa doesn't find drumming a sufficient outlet for his energy; he keeps fit with boxing and baseball.

★

"INQUIRER" (Naseby, Otago) writes: "Why does the audience stand during the singing of the 'Hallelujah Chorus' in Handel's *Messiah*?"

WHY EVERYBODY STANDS

The story goes that at the first performance of the oratorio in Covent Garden on March 23, 1743, the whole assembly, with King George II at its head, rose to its feet as this chorus opened and remained standing to the end, thus establishing a tradition.

★

WHEN I was a schoolboy the games master lugged me round and round the swimming baths in a loop of rope attached to the end of a pole. Neither of us made much headway. In desperation (or

THE BODY IN THE POOL

revenge) he suggested throwing me in at the deep end. Strong swimmers were scattered about for safety's sake. His theory was that if I got out unaided I would be able to do my couple of lengths in no time. I remember the splash, the tugging as I was brought to the surface and towed to the ladder, and the subsequent dehydration.

Recently a member of the BBC staff was thrown, by three engineers, into a pool from a height of six feet. But the sole purpose of this operation was to add to the numerous noises in the sound effects library a new "loud-splash" recording. The staff member was Sheila

Blower, who also spent several hours on a cold day, diving, kicking and swimming to add variety to the sounds. This was not done in an indoor swimming bath, with heated water as might be expected, but in an open-air bathing pool on a country estate where there was no likelihood of any interfering noises. The BBC's old "splash" record had worn out and had to be replaced.

★

"MORAR" (St. Albans, Christchurch) writes: "For about eight years I have been listening with much pleasure to a programme from 2ZB, and for a time also from 3ZB, by Mr. C. J. Cutler. I find all his programmes exciting and interesting, and I wonder if you could give me a biographical sketch of him as you do of other people in *Open Microphone*."

Charles Cutler, F.Z.S., F.R.M.S., M.Z.S. (AM.), F.S.A. (AM.), who is 48 years old, has been Curator of the Wellington Zoo for 14 years. He was in Southern California from 1924 until 1934, with a break of 18 months on a snake serum farm in Brazil, and in Mexico from 1930 to 1931, followed by a few months in Costa Rica and Guatemala. He came to Wellington in 1939. He was with Radio KFI Los Angeles for two years in a programme called *Animal Kingdom*, and with Radio San Paulo for 26 sessions, "when I am sure the listeners, if any, got more fun out of my alleged Brazil-Portuguese than information from what I had to say."

Mr. Cutler has been broadcasting from 2ZB since 1946. He receives mail from as far afield as Queenstown and Kaikohe, falling, in the summer, to Timaru and Helensville. "The best programme I have done in this country was three or four years back, on the alleged Indian Wolf Girls. This drew 4894 letters, of which more than 900 were delightfully abusive," he said. His best friends are his wife and daughter, and his hobbies are "horses, chess, worrying, listening to other folks talk, and trying to hide my personal shyness." His dislikes are "subservient persons, liars, and having to put up with people who couldn't keep a canary alive for six weeks, but feel they are entitled to tell us how to look after creatures of which they have probably never heard."

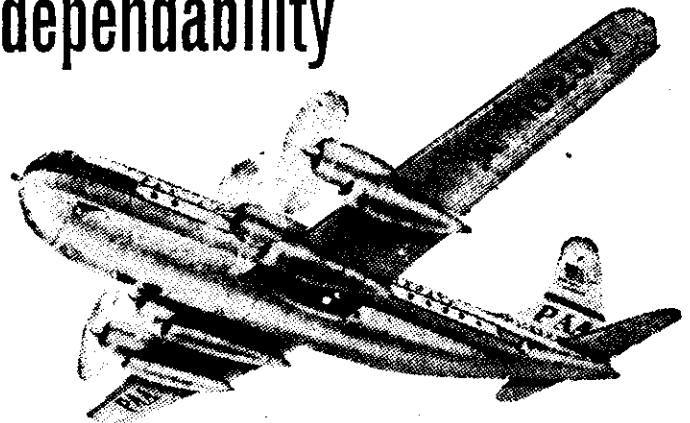
Mr. Cutler tells me that the article from the *San Francisco Examiner* which you enclose, "Morar," is "about right though somewhat on the laudatory side."



C. J. CUTLER
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