

By *Swarf*

SOMETHING TO SING ABOUT

BREATHING having much to do with singing, here is a short essay, written by a promising young American of 14, and quoted by the "Musical Times," January, 1890: "Breath is made of air. We breathe with our lungs, our lights, our liver and kidneys. If it wasn't for our breath we would die when we slept. Our breath keeps the life a going through the nose when we are asleep. Boys that stay in a room all day should not breathe. They should wait till they get out of doors. Boys in a room make bad, unwholesome air. They make carbonic acid. Carbonic acid is poisoner than mad dogs. A heap of soldiers was in a black hole in India, and a carbonic acid got in that there black hole and killed nearly every one afore morning. Girls kill the breath with corsets that squeezes the diaphragm. Girls can't holler or run like boys because their diaphragm is squeezed too much. If I was a girl I'd rather be a boy, so I can holler and run and have a great big diaphragm."

ease, for he had nothing in common with any of the boys and could not even understand their speech. But eventually he began to like them and visited Bermondsey pretty often. He worked among them seriously with Jewish clubs and settlements and was appointed a magistrate. Henriques has always been greatly interested in the difficult child who is a misfit, and he made it his business to study child psychology and juvenile delinquency, maintaining that the vast majority of both juvenile and adult crime springs from the fact that criminals have something wrong with their

JACK LAWTON, overseas instructor at the BBC's staff training school, teaching something of BBC production to Mallam Shu'aibu Makarfi, in the foreground, and Yemi Lijadu. These men from Nigeria were two of the students attending one of the BBC's courses for broadcasters from countries overseas. Such students are nominated by their own broadcasting organisations, for the BBC is unable to train all the students who would like to attend its school in London.



BBC photograph



BBC photograph

GEORGE MITCHELL, who started the radio vogue for choirs and glee clubs, is a tall, thin, bespectacled man who could easily be mistaken for an accountant. His appearance is not deceptive; he WAS an accountant, and it was only during war service in the Army that he thought of organising a choir "just for the fun of it." Towards the end of the year, says the "Radio Times," a BBC producer heard about Mitchell's Royal Army Pay Corps Swing Choir, and invited the leader and his 12 choristers-in-uniform to go to London for an audition. "At the end of the war I was asked to provide a choir for a programme called 'Cabin in the Cotton,'" Mitchell recalls, "and after the first few broadcasts I began to receive offers to take part in other programmes." He decided to give up accountancy in favour of choirmastering, and within a short time had an organisation of nearly 200 singers and was providing choirs, under various titles, for more than two dozen shows. "At that time I was working 16 hours a day, seven days a week," he says. "It was too much and I decided to cut down." Now he has a permanent staff of 24 singers and reinforces the nucleus as his contracts demand. Seven of the original 12 members of the R.A.P.C. Swing Choir still work with him. The photograph (above) shows the George Mitchell Choir (left). Paul Fenoulet is conducting the BBC Variety Orchestra, and at the microphone is Elizabeth Welsh.

background. He has fought fiercely and successfully for a more enlightened attitude towards juvenile crime.

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EVERY profession has its technical jargon. Newspaper men talk of flongs and founts and sticks of type. Broadcasting people refer glibly to dub-bings, swarf and bridges. But since GOBOS AND FLIP-FLOP CUTS the advent of television the BBC's glossary of broadcasting terms has grown vastly. Recent additions include "flip-flop cut," "gobo," "headroom," "high hat," "hot-up" and "row." Such terms

as "headroom," "high hat" and "row" seem to be simple words which most people know, but in television they have totally different meanings which add to the complexity surrounding this already complicated medium. A "row," for instance, is a piece of scenery in the form of a low cut-out which covers and so masks the bottom edge of a backcloth; and there can be "ground-rows," "mountain-rows," "tree-rows" and many others. "Gobo" has a dark, hobgoblin sound and is indeed an opaque black screen which serves to keep unwanted light from a television camera. "High hat" is not, as might be thought, a producer with too great an estimate of his own powers; it is a low mounting for a camera, in the form of a vertical cylinder with a flange that greatly resembles a top hat. "Head room," strangely enough, has nothing to do with the high hat; it is the space on the television screen between the top of an actor's head and the upper edge of the picture. To "hot-up" in ordinary parlance is to increase in speed or temperature; in television it is to concentrate the illumination of a lamp by adjusting its focus. "Flip-flop cut"—a term already almost obsolete—refers to a cut or change from one television camera to another, followed by an early return to the original picture. Pity the novices in their first weeks in BBC television when they are endeavouring to master the queer jargon to which these few words are merely a supplement.

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