

NEWS OF BROADCASTERS, ON AND OFF THE RECORD.

By *Swarf*

SOMETHING TO SING ABOUT

[WAS oiling the office lie detector the other afternoon—the one we use for top level interviews—when an irreverent colleague, who was consulting the "Oxford Dictionary of Quotations," announced with a grin that the name of the composer of the song, "You made me love you; I didn't want to do it," was Joseph McCarthy. That reminded another colleague of an ancient gramophone record, "The Disorderly Room," by Tommy Handley's "Roosters" concert party, in which two lines of the song were parodied—perhaps prophetically—to read, "Take me, take me back this time, sir; I swear I never will commit another crime, sir." The music of "You made me love you" was composed by Jimmy Monaco. According to Sigmund Spaeth's "A History of Popular Music in America," the song "combines rag-time with the good old motif of self-pity."

singing with Albert do Gorostiaga in Paris. In 1928 she made her operatic debut in *Lakmé*, in

TOWN NAMED AFTER HER

Mulhouse, and other engagements in France followed. Her first appearance in America was in the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor* at the Metropolitan Opera House on January 2, 1931, and the following season *Lakmé* and *La Sonnambula* were both revived at the Metropolitan as vehicles for her. In the last twenty years Lily Pons has toured extensively and she has made appearances with leading orchestras conducted by her husband, Andre Kostelanetz, whom she married in 1938. She has the distinction of having had a town named after her—Lilypons, Maryland.

★
[OR many of the world's basses Mousorgsky's *Boris Godounov* is a "gift," and they warmly welcome an opportunity to sing it in public. Not only do they have a chance to wear some of the most magnificent costumes, but they have two long and meaty scenes in which to show off the

DOWN DEEP

full richness of the voice, rave through a couple of bloody hallucinations (as *Time* puts it), and finally fall down dead on a flight of stairs. Last month at the Metropolitan the part was taken by Jerome Hines, aged 32, the first U.S.-born basso to try it there. Hines's voice was as big, dark and smooth as the best of them, and his basketball player's height (6ft. 6½in.) gave him a properly commanding appearance. . . The crowd yelled itself hoarse after the death scene, and called Hines back for seven curtain calls. Hines took singing lessons as a boy, but spent his spare time pottering in a chemistry lab. When he got his first role in *H.M.S. Pinafore* he knew he wanted to be a singer. . . His theory about Boris is that he was a hysteric and manic-depressive whose chest-heaving and temple-



"G.W." (Christchurch) asks for something about "The Kentucky Minstrels."

Six years ago this combination (above) celebrated its 100th radio performance, and incidentally a radio run of 16 years. There are about 35 members in the choir. The first performance of a minstrel show took place in America about 100 years ago, but this form of entertainment was unknown on the English stage until about 1857, when the "Christy Minstrels" made their appearance. In 1932 Harry S. Pepper, whose father, Will C. Pepper, was the originator of the "White Coons," joined the BBC. There he met an old friend, C. Derrier Warren. The outcome of this meeting was the formation of "The Kentucky Minstrels." Warren (Bones) has ever since the first appearance of "The Kentucky Minstrels" written the jokes and he is, with Ike Hatch (Sambo), the mainstay of the show. Doris Arnold's choral arrangements have become known the world over.

Some years ago "coon shows" presented by amateurs were popular in New Zealand. Many a church choir turned out in burnt-cork make-up and put on a sideshow to attract customers to the annual bazaar.

thumping came about as natural results. His death, which is not clear in the libretto, was almost surely due to a cerebral haemorrhage.

★
NELL TAYLOR (Auckland) writes: "I was very pleased to read in *The Listener* a paragraph about Charlie Kunz. He and his wife Pat are great friends of mine. The last letter I received from Pat said that they had returned home from the

HOME FIRE'S BURNING

hospital in Wales where Charlie had been for 18 weeks. Treatment of Charlie's right hand has not been successful yet, as stated in your paragraph; his left fingers are just movable. When Pat and Charlie arrived home from the hospital the plaster cast was taken off his right hand. When he saw his fingers he said, 'They're just like wet, cold pork sausages,' and glancing at the piano, remarked, 'Dampness is no good in a piano.' Their house is closed, but someone goes in every day to light a fire to keep the piano aired. Charlie, who has been ready three times to visit New Zealand and Australia, is having further treatment which may take some weeks.

"Charlie has earned big money; not everyone knows how much of it he has given away or of the hard work he did during the war for the sick and wounded. When he himself was in hospital for two years, Flanagan and Allen visited him. One day they were listening to the radio when 'Lord Haw-Haw' announced that Charlie would be playing the next recording from the Berlin station. At Charlie's first appearance after his illness two men in the audience shouted



CHARLIE KUNZ

to him to get off the stage, saying, 'You're a German!' Charlie was born in the U.S.A., and two sons, Peter and Gerald, served in the R.A.F. during the war. Charlie Kunz is now in his middle fifties."

★
ONE of the guest artists in the BBC's *Songs From the Shows* now going round NZBS stations, is Evelyn Laye, who, in New York

BALANCED played the part of Sari Lynden in Noel Coward's immensely successful operetta *Bitter Sweet*. The international balance was restored by the American actress Peggy Wood playing the part in London.

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