

HOME listeners to the BBC's recently-launched drama series, *Against the Wind*—which, one assumes, will eventually come also to the ears of listeners abroad—will hear some 24 works illustrating different concepts of freedom, among them three specially-

MEET "GREGORY KEEN" (writes J. M. D. Hardwick from London). One of these, *African Interlude*, has been contributed by Bruce Stewart, a native of Auckland who now lives permanently in London.

This is Stewart's second major play to be broadcast within a few months. His police drama, *The Devil Is Driving*, was included shortly before Christmas in the weekly *Saturday Night Theatre* series. *African Interlude*, whose theme is listed as "the bondage of circumstance," concerns a Colonial Office servant's enslavement by the official machine, of which he is a part.

Bruce Stewart was born in 1926 at Mount Albert, where his parents still live. He describes his father, Bob Stewart, as perhaps the best known taxi driver in Auckland in his day. His sister, Joy Knox, also writes, and is well known to the editors of New Zealand ladies' magazines.

Stewart was educated at Mount Albert Grammar School and St. Augustine's, near Napier. After wartime service in the infantry he did freelance acting and announcing for the commercial radio and took club engagements in Auckland with songs and stories at the piano. He had some drama training under J. W. Bailey, and says he learnt much of what he knows from Alec McDowell, then producer for the NZBS at Auckland.

At the end of 1947 he went to Sydney and freelanced for the ABC. He had leading roles in many commercial serials which became familiar to New Zealand

listeners, such as *Mildred Pierce*, *Kitty Foyle* and *Saratoga Trunk*. He was best known, he believes, as Sam Greer in *Dr. Paul* and as Major Gregory Keen in *Dossier on Dumetrios*. On the Sydney stage during those years he appeared in such roles as Thomas in *The Lady's Not for Burning* and Edward in *The Cocktail Party*, produced *Cockpit* and *Shadow of a Gunman*, and was one of the founders of the semi-professional company, the Genesian Theatre.

He also gave more attention to his writing—which in New Zealand had been confined to a few short stories—and made many adaptations of stage works for broadcasting. His own serial, *Peter and Paula*, which has been running on the Australian radio for several years now, is still without a foreseeable end. Stewart writes several episodes at a time and posts off a regular batch to keep it going.

With his Australian wife, whom he met in the Genesian Theatre, Bruce Stewart arrived in England in December, 1955. With three children, and a fourth on the way, they live at Chipstead, Surrey, in a house which, appropriately enough, once belonged to Hugh Walpole, who was also born in Auckland.

Stewart's career here is still very much divided between acting and writing, a happy circumstance which enables him to live successfully as a freelance. He is



BRUCE STEWART
For television, a long-delayed shave

working on several radio plays and a television play, and is thinking hard about a play with a modern New Zealand setting.

In addition to sound broadcasting he has made several television appearances. If he has not yet had time to make his mark on television, it has already had its effect upon him. When I met him the long-cherished beard had vanished, in answer to the unarguable demands of the camera.

craft, heard at 9.15 a.m. from YA and YZ stations on the last Tuesday of each month.

He has found since he came to New Zealand in 1950 that there is a tremendous interest here in anything to do with aviation. He feels that although there are some people who are interested from the technical viewpoint, for most it is the glamour of speed and world travel which is the attraction. He tries to include in his programme news items

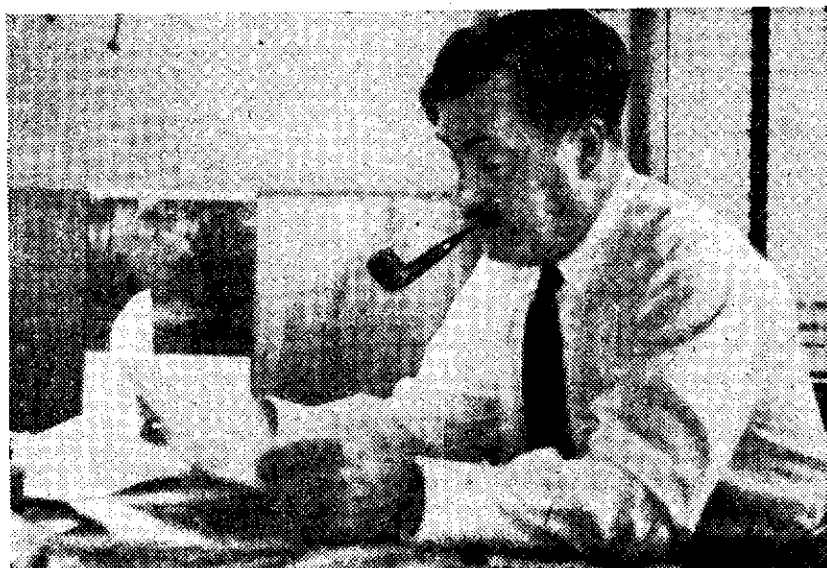
about aero engines, airline operations, or movements of aircraft—in fact anything to do with planes which he feels might interest listeners. In his capacity as the technical representative of the New Zealand subsidiary of a large British aeroplane concern he receives a great deal of information about the air world in the form of magazines, drawings and films.

Mr. Cornthwaite served his apprenticeship in England with a large aircraft manufacturing company and learnt to fly

in 1935. Since then he has, in his own words, "done all sorts of things in aviation." Aviation, in a way, tends to spill over into his spare time, too. He's chairman of the Wellington branch of the Royal Aeronautical Society and also on the committee of the Wellington and Wairarapa Gliding Club, a bunch of forward-looking types who banded themselves together last year and are now just about ready to place an order for their first sailplane. Beyond that, whatever time is left seems to be absorbed by the numerous chores which in New Zealand seem necessary for the maintenance of a house, garden, car and wife. Incidentally, the most intelligent thing he has ever done, he claims, was to marry a girl who was also involved in the aviation world, as this allows him to talk shop at all hours of the day or night.

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