

NEWS OF BROADCASTERS, ON AND OFF THE RECORD,

By *Swarf*

is essential because the BBC has an agreement with the Incorporated Society of Musicians not to engage amateurs in London. If this information is satisfactory an audition is given.

At this first audition, which lasts for 12 minutes, performers are heard by three people; two of these are judges who are not members of the staff of the BBC; the other is the Music Booking Manager of the BBC. Those who pass this audition are given another one. This time the judges consist of one assessor not on the BBC's staff, and three members of the Music Division of the BBC. For the successful candidate an engagement to broadcast will follow as soon as possible. The first broadcast of a new performer is also heard by a member of the staff of the BBC, and a member of the Outside Listening Panel which, again, includes eminent musicians. A recording is also taken. Duos, quartets and chamber music ensembles are selected in the same way. The BBC does not usually ask a brass band or a choir to attend the studio, but sends a representative to a rehearsal. When an orchestra has become newly established, it will probably be judged at a public concert. Foreign artists, too, must give auditions, unless their work is already known to the BBC.

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HERE is a photograph of Jean Metcalfe, who introduces the BBC's *Woman's Hour*, and who is to join the team of sound commentators for the CORONATION COMMENT Coronation broadcast. From a room overlooking the quadrangle of Buckingham

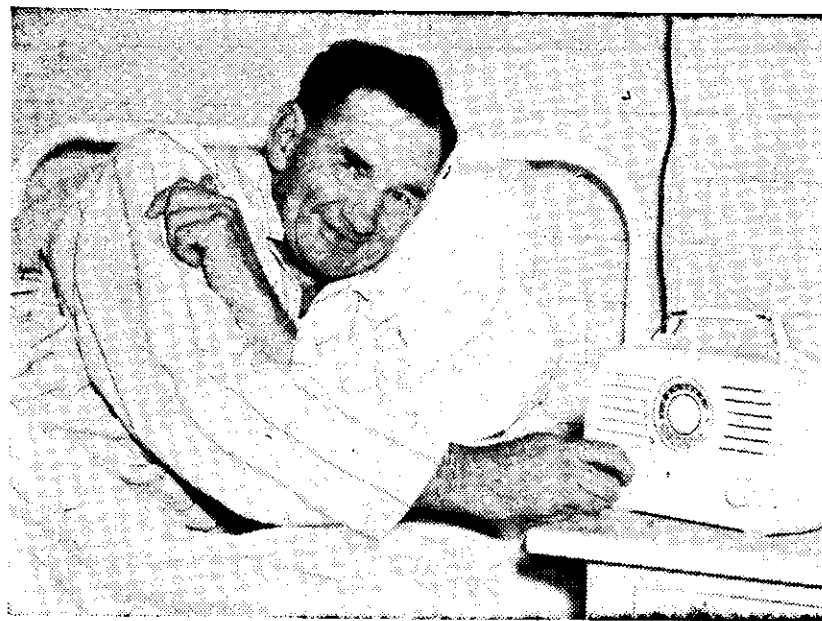


BBC photograph

Palace, she will describe the scene as the Queen enters the State Coach for the procession to Westminster Abbey.

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WE have got a gratifying number of people who can actively enjoy an absence of action—people who, like Sir Max Beerbohm, appreciate the gentle pleasures of "fenestration," which means just sitting at a window and ruminating over what you see going on outside it. Some of these people, I notice, do occa-



RADIO PROGRAMMES of long standing are reviewed every now and then to test their popularity with listeners. During the 14 years of its life the 1ZB Request Session, broadcast between noon and 2.0 p.m. on Sundays, has undergone regular examination, and the verdict, 1ZB tells me, has always favoured its retention. Of course, volume of mail is a guide, but an individual letter also will sometimes indicate that a service is being provided for a particular section of listeners, and give evidence of a wide audience. Here, for instance, is a letter from the 1ZB Request Session mail bag, written by Eric Booth (above), a patient in Auckland Hospital: "Every day since you broadcast my request I have had no end of mail from people whom I had almost forgotten—real old and good friends I knew many years ago. Every visiting day some of my pals come to see me. One has to be in hospital to appreciate the good that your request session does for inmates. One family came from Manunui, below Taumarunui, to see me; they would never have known I was in hospital had it not been for your call on the previous Sunday." It looks as if 1ZB's Request Session may have an innings of another 14 years

sionally plunge down into the dust and heat of the arena of physical exertion. If they're lucky enough to have access to a fuchsia tree, they may spend an exhausting hour or two going round popping the buds. And although I haven't yet run across a New Zealand Lodge of that Society that calls itself "The Snail-watchers of Great Britain," I feel morally certain that somewhere in the Dominion there must be an active society whose vocation it is to go in for—well, frog-listening, for example.—From an NZBS Book Shop programme.

★

BERNARD BRADEN, whose BBC show *First Rehearsal* is now being broadcast on Saturday nights by the four YA stations (other stations later) recently satisfied a personal ambition

and at the same time returned temporarily to a NO HAMLET job he did as a broadcaster in Canada before the BBC claimed his services. Bernard Braden is a great admirer of the American humorous writer Mark Twain. He was delighted with an opportunity to give a reading from one of Mark Twain's books in the BBC's Third Programme, and he recalled that as a reader on the radio in Canada he broadcast hundreds of stories in the space of three years. Braden, by the way, is another comedian who is not pining to play Hamlet, for the simple reason that he was a Shakespearian actor in Canada years before turning to comedy. His latest straight part is in a London play *The Man*, in which he is said to give a spine-chilling interpretation of a homicidal maniac. Most actors would look on a role of that sort as extremely

demanding and strenuous, but Braden, the comedian, says it's not as hard as working up enthusiasm at a Monday first house in any music hall.

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CHARLIE KUNZ, born in Allentown, Pennsylvania, began to play the piano at the age of six, and by the time he was 15 he led his own band. He went to Britain more than 30 years ago and has been a popular artist there ever since. He has a peculiarly individual style which accounts for his nick-name, and



he specialises in recordings of popular tune medleys. Charlie Kunz is being heard from the four ZB stations at 7.15 p.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays.

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