

Dictator Reith

(Continued from page 8.)

his canningness, his far-sightedness, and his burning enthusiasm for thoroughness in detail, there seems very little for the average enlightened (and therefore somewhat irresponsible) man to admire in him. Mr. Allighan paints him as, above all, righteous—religious almost to the point of intolerance, a teetotaler, a moral bigot and the prince of snobs.

"THIS pernicious snobbery," he writes—in surprising vein after some 50,000 words of almost undiluted admiration—"runs right through the organisation. . . . His (Sir John Reith's) policy has been to make his 'Directors' believe that they are not just workers, but Men with a Mission—and there's no hypocrisy more calculated to turn a decent sort of a mortal into a despicable moral snob than for him to believe he has a Call to uplift his fellows. 'Directors' of the BBC have attained that eminence after having accepted the Reithian ideology: 'Unless you are convinced in your own soul that you are doing your duty to the world by working in the BBC for less than half the salary you would get elsewhere—don't stay.'"

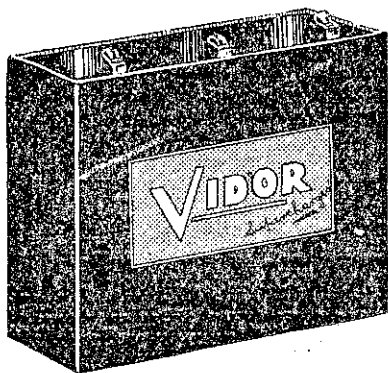
STILL, for all the irritating narrowness of a man who actually endeavours to interfere with the private lives of his staff—sucks them if they are seen tipsy off duty, or are the guilty parties in a divorce suit—one feels that British broadcasting to-day could be in far worse hands than those of a man who wrote these words of the Crawford Committee and meant them: "In broadcasting there is to hand a mighty instrument to fashion a public opinion, to banish ignorance, and a great deal of misery, ultimately to paralyse the agencies that make for war, to contribute richly and in many directions to the sum total of human happiness and well-being. . . . As for the future, the main concern is that those basic ideals to which the BBC devoted every effort shall be safeguarded in the interests of the great Service which should play so considerable a part in the future of civilisation."

The real snag is that there are many eminent men whose concept of civilisation differs very considerably from Sir John Reith's. One is assured, however, that he will at least never try to alter things. . . .

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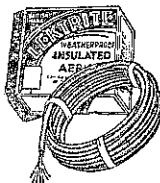


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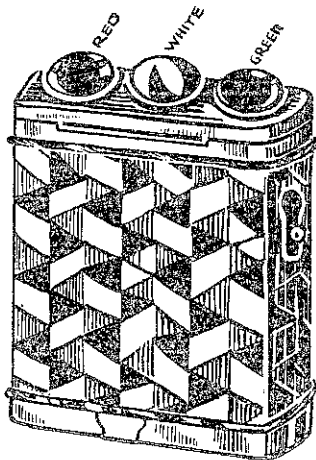
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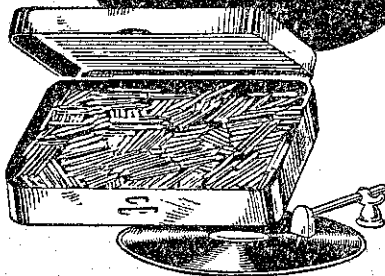


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