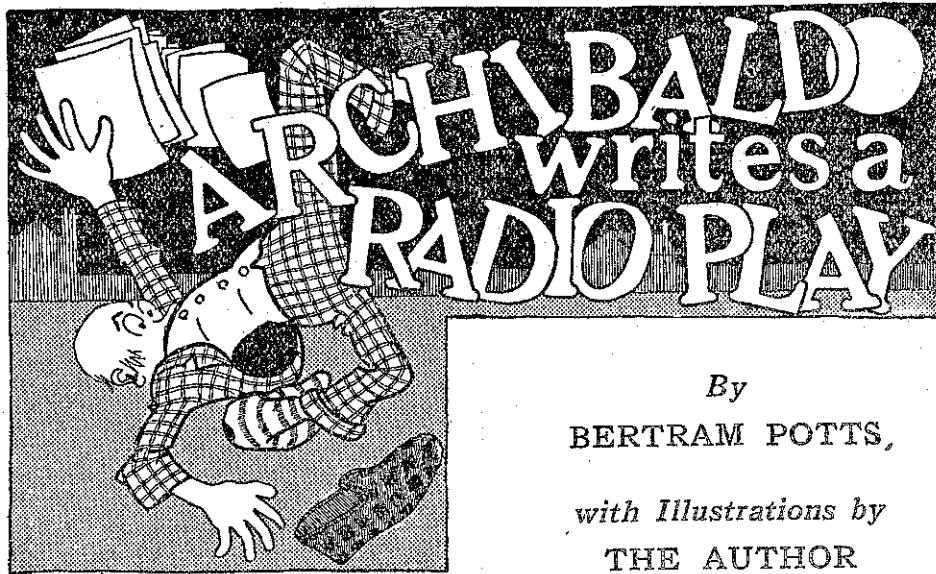


SINCE writin' yer last, I've been 'ard at work writin' a radio play, somethin' out-standin', because I realises that radio must 'old its own in keen competition with baby-shows, dog-shows, 'orticultureal exhibitions, and organ recitals!

I 'ave realised for a long time that most play-writers is in a rut, so I sets out to view the matter from a fresh point of view. Now, most plays 'as a 'ero and a villain. I 'ad to alter that.



By
BERTRAM POTTS,
with Illustrations by
THE AUTHOR

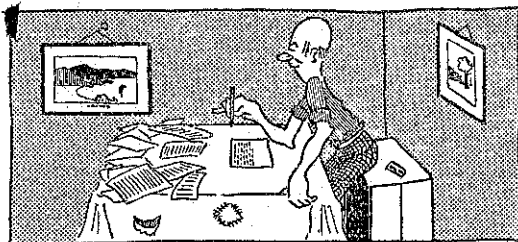
that by just mixin' up the sheets, the 'ole story is better, with the thrills comin' in the most unexpected places.

I reads the play through to see 'ow long it took, and it was six 'ours—a long time, certainly, but think of the breathless thrills! Of course, if the broadcastin' company thinks two 'ours is enough, well, the actors will 'ave to speak faster, that's all. It might 'elp a bit if the women speaks two or three at once, as in real life!

*I scratches 'ard upon me 'ead and then I gives a shout—
My play will 'ave two villains, and I'll cut the 'ero out,
Because the villain adds the spice and does the moans and groans.
Two villains, then, should freeze the blinkin' marrer in yer bones.
And give yer twice the shudders and make list'ners cringe and quail.
And finish not in weddin' bells and sendin' folk to jail.
But in a 'arem far away, where all is gay and bright—
The 'eroine gets left be'nd, and that will serve 'er right!*

I 'ave always noticed in ordinary plays (mine bein' extraordinary) that just as the plot gets excitin' and Dirty Dick is in the limelight, the 'ero stops all the fun by nosin' in at the wrong time! With the 'ero out of the play 'e's out of the way. Think of the fun the villains will 'ave and the extra thrills for the folks what listens in and wishes they was the villains. It would encourage folks to take up dramatic art, so that they can act the part of villains, instead of listenin' in and 'avin' to use their imaginations!

NOW, I proposes to 'ave two fresh 'eroines in every act, so that when the villain gets rid of one the play don't end too soon. For instance, in the first 'alf of the first scene, the villain goes through shot and shell, storm and static, to reach the beautiful maiden, and after fryin' Barney, the Boy Scout, and skinnin' Cuthbert, the curate, 'e corners 'er in a deserted mill a 'undred miles from anywhere! The dastardly villain does not 'esitate a moment, and seizes 'is opportunity to drag from 'is pocket the missin' will. 'E tears it up and throws the pieces in 'er false teeth and dashes away to flout the second 'eroine!



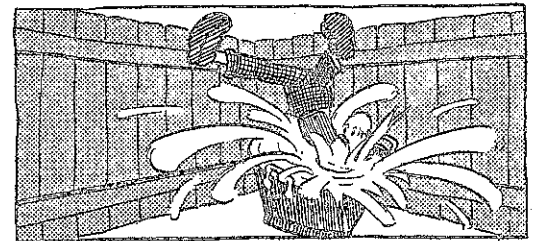
*Now, that's a play
that's chock-a-bloch
with passion,
When villains are not
thwarted in their
scheme—
They kick the tott'ring
squire without com-
passion,
And bind the milk-
maid while they
scoff the cream!*

Well, I covers dozens of sheets of paper, because these startlin' new ideas pops into me 'ead real quick, and at last I draws a line at the finish and writes "Curtains!" I knows what Shakespeare must 'ave felt like after writin' "Julius Caesar with the Merry Wives of Windsor: Or, Much Ado About Nothin'!" But there is one difference between Shakespeare and me—'e made 'is plays 'ard for grown-ups to understand and 'ard for scholboys to parse and analyse. I makes mine easy for everybody!

I writes so fast that I forgets to number the pages, and I finds it impossible to put them in their original order. 'Owever, I discovers

Regardin' the use of swear words, which is used nowadays on the stage, I knows that a few ripe Digger expressions would give body to the play. Knowin' that some folks is not too broadminded, 'owever, I translates these expressions into Old English as used by the Diggers in the days of Cromwell, such as "Gazooks!" "Ods Bodikins!" and "Scurvy knave!" The correct words could be supplied by the "Radio Record" on request—if accompanied by a postal note for a shillin'!

Now a good radio play 'as a variety of noises by way of thrills.



*I must 'ave noise and plenty, too,
A clatter, croak, and clang,
A chink, a crow, a cough, a coo,
A murmur, mutter, moan, and moo,
A bellow, blast, and bang!*

*A thud, a twang, a tone, a tap,
A hiss, a hum, a hoot,
A snuffle, snort, a shriek, a snap,
A rustle, ring, a roar, a rap,
A tune, a thump, a toot!*

I intends, of course, to take the role of the leadin' villain. I gets one of the tins the misses uses on washin' day, takes it into the back yard, and fills it up with water, intendin' to practise a realistic gurgle. Our 'Erbert'll 'ave to learn not to throw 'is banana skins about, for I blinkin' well treds on one and dives into the bath, where I performs a series of real gurgles. I can't understand 'ow folks 'as got the 'eart to laugh at beauty in distress. The missus ain't got much culture. After this, I decides to cut out the gurglin' part, or leave it to the second villain, me 'avin' 'ad enough to last me a lifetime!

NEXT I calls in a couple of me friends to 'ear me read the play. After I 'ad read for five minutes, one of them says: "Excuse me, Archibald, but 'as yer any objection if Jack and me sits and listens while we 'as a game of chess? And so they plays chess and listens at the same time. The missus 'as no manners, for she starts snorin' after I 'ad been goin' a couple of 'ours or so. Jack and Charlie didn't seem to see the jokes very fast, for they laughs in the wrong places. They wouldn't wait for the finish, and I made them promise to come back another night and 'ear the rest of it. It's a pity they'll both be doin' so much night work durin' the next couple of months! (Concluded on page 30.)