

# "Putting the Baby to Bed"

That's the old journalistic phrase for closing the presses.  
Delmar Edmondson tells how it's done on the air.



By DELMAR EDMONDSON  
(Editor Columbia's "Magazine of the Air")

IF there's a newspaper or magazine man in your family you may at some time have been startled to hear him speak of "putting the baby to bed." That expression—as you doubtless made it your business to find out in a hurry—is journalistic parlance for sending the completely written paper to press.

Sending a magazine of the air to press, so that a copy is delivered through the radio to any house where a subscriber has the proper station dialed in, is a bit different. The cry in this case is "QUIET! Fifteen seconds." That means that in fifteen seconds all the vast paraphernalia of the broadcasting station will be concentrated on the group in the given studio, and that group must be on its toes, and await the signal of the control operator for the music to start. Most programs start with some sort of music, so with a magazine of the air that music may be taken as the sound of the presses. So when the cry "Fifteen seconds" echoes, the musicians stop scraping on their strings and blowing into their brasses, the singer stops vocalizing, and a deadly silence descends upon the studio. The control room gives the signal when the passing hand of time falls exactly on the assigned second, the orchestra leader brings his baton down, and the musicians let 'er roll.

Radio pages are fed to the air presses one at a time. You will understand readily that an ozone publication can't be put out like a three-ring circus, with eight or sixteen pages going on at once, with a singer's warbling about "Chloe" providing an obbligato to a speaker's dissertation on babies, while the orchestra labors at drowning out both of them. No, no, a magazine of the air, let the printers' unions say what they will, must be printed a page at a time.

Now for the copy on the Heinz Magazine of the Air, which is published every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Your friend and editor, Delmar Edmondson, who introduces the famous guest celebrities heard on the "Heinz Magazine of the Air."

That, of course, is prepared in advance. Proofs are made and errors in printing are corrected, and the lines containing them are reset. An attempt is made to turn out the publication without mistakes, but that ideal is almost never realized. You have probably never read a newspaper or magazine that didn't contain some typographical errors. In correcting one error the linotype operator is quite apt to make another error. Here the magazine of the air is most like the printed magazine. Errors are made. You may not notice them, but tongues are no more infallible than the fingers of a linotype operator. There are verbographical errors. You may have thought the baritone was in excellent voice, but at the end of the broadcast he may be saying, "Was that a sour performance I gave!" just as an editorial writer, as he glances over the first edition, may sigh,

Mary Knight, newspaper correspondent and famous "stunt" girl who likes her "Bermooda."



"Well, I knew what I had in mind, but I'm afraid I didn't put my point over." As for verbographical errors, they

properly pronounced, is so pronounced by the family, Pull-itzer. Various versions of the name of the famous artist, Neysa McMein, were stated and violently defended. The burden of argument seemed to favor Nay-sa McMain, so your editor used that version until the lady herself heard him in dress rehearsal when she contributed to the Heinz Magazine of the Air. The right way to say it, she declared, was Neesa McMean. She'd had a lot of trouble with the name, she admitted, since she'd worked it out for herself by means of numerology. She had used to change her name on every birthday when she was a girl, but she didn't feel that she could change her current name again, in spite of the complaints about it. "You are lucky," she ended, "that you don't have to call me by my married name"—



may be due to accident or ignorance. Who in the world is able to pronounce off hand every word in his native language, which may be derived from a dozen languages, as English is? Your editor discovered not long ago that culinary is q-linary, and not, as he'd banded

which is Baragwanath, or something of the sort.

Mary Knight, famous newspaper correspondent, once called the Stunt Girl of the United Press, gave the name of the island resort as Bermooda. A diligent traveller who has visited the place five times backed her up, but the dictionary does not.

Deems Taylor, renowned composer and critic, uses the English variation of all foreign words. He has defended on the air his pronunciation of Don Quixote, and the dictionary corroborates him in calling it Don Kwiks-ot. A magazine of the air, then, unlike a magazine of the news stands, makes its errors, not in spelling, but in pronunciation. Charles B. Driscoll, head of a newspaper syndicate, carefully enunciated col-yumnist, though the dictionary does not justify any form but col-um-nist. But suppose the dictionary is wrong, and who is to say whether it is or not? If doctors disagree, why shouldn't lexicographers?

As for verbographical errors due to accident, those are just slips of the lips. A tricky combination of syllables throws you, such as Bill Adams' "quick trick," or "fashion flashes." The speaker stumbles over one word, but through the rest of the sentence he may feel like a tight-rope walker who wavers perilously, never quite falling, till he reaches the period, and can take a second to recover his equilibrium. Meanwhile, the boys in the control room above have risen up to sight from their seats, appearing, behind the plate glass that encloses them, like disapproving seals, or like Punch with homicidal designs on Judy.



Neysa McMein, famous illustrator, who had a lot of trouble with her name but finally worked it out through numerology.

it ever since it came into his life, cul, like the English slang for "that guy." Equivalent to a fum cove. Q it was, with no allowance for dissenting opinions. Cul wasn't even brought up.

Most people pronounce the great newspaper founder's name Piu-litzer. But William Lyon Phelps, Stephen Vincent Benet and others, contend that it is