



RAYMOND LAMBERT

Associate Artist with Joan Hammond

WITH a reputation unsurpassed in Australia as an accompanist, Raymond Lambert has toured during the past 10 years with most of the overseas singers visiting the Commonwealth. The list has been steadily mounting—Dame Clara Butt, Ezio Pinza, Elisabeth Rethberg, Alexander Kipnis and the Australians Essie Ackland, John Brownlee, Florence Austral and Marjorie Lawrence. Now he is visiting New Zealand, as accompanist and associate artist with Joan Hammond.

He found his tour with Marjorie Lawrence a few years ago—taking in such widely separated places as Townsville, Darwin and Adelaide—a most interesting experience. The pianos were not always up to concert platform standard, but the appreciation of soldier audiences all along the line was none the less warm. At Darwin, on one occasion, Lambert came out to play the anthems, and after completing *God Save the King* and *The Star Spangled Banner*, he noticed a slight commotion as he retreated from the improvised platform. He was later told that voices all over the hall were calling out "What About Joe?" in professed indignation. Programmes on the whole were popular choice, but he would sometimes include a movement with a march tempo from a modern Prokofieff work, and he found that it was received with great enthusiasm.

Raymond Lambert has maintained equally his standing as a concert pianist, and on all tours he plays solo items as well as accompaniments for the singers.

Musical Upbringing

As he was born into a musical environment—his father, the late Edouard Lambert, was a concertmaster of leading orchestras in Belgium, and his mother an operatic singer—it was natural that Raymond Lambert should have become a musician. After graduating from the Brussels Conservatoire he appeared with his father in sonata recitals in Belgium and elsewhere on the Continent. When his family went to Australia to settle he accompanied them and has remained there ever since, with the exception of one visit to Europe, when he did a refresher course of study.

The musical talent inherent in the Lambert family has every chance of revealing itself in still a third generation. Of the three children of Mr. and Mrs. Lambert, John, aged 10, and Jillian, who is eight, are both being taught music. Raymond the younger, at four, is still too young.

As their father adds, with humorous resignation: "They are not being taught by me. . . . I can exert my authority over my pupils but not over my children." In any case, he does not mean to push them, for he believes that if they have any talent it must develop naturally.