

(continued from previous page)

of four, and she has worked hard to build up a business that threatened to collapse on the death of her husband. As a traveller, she set out to see all there was to see, and she enjoyed doing all that travellers before her had done. She was the only woman candidate to stand for the Democratic Party in its unsuccessful campaign in 1935, and she has written an interesting chapter about that almost forgotten episode. As with so many of the other candidates, the large and enthusiastic meetings she had addressed counted for nothing at the polls and she lost her deposit.

The story of her life has been much bound up with the story of Dunedin over the past 20 years, and it is Dunedin readers who will be most interested. Her husband was Mayor during the years of the depression, and she describes vividly the campaign which Dunedin maintained to supply food and clothing to its unemployed and, more particularly, to fight the despair.

HER PRIVATE LIFE

A STAR DANCED. By Gertrude Lawrence. Invincible Press.

GERTRUDE LAWRENCE, the British revue actress, is not well known to New Zealanders except as a name in the theatrical world; but to Londoners and New Yorkers she is one of the great entertainers. She is now 46 years old, and though that age need not

mean the decline of an actress, she has been able to rest on her laurels long enough to write her biography, running to 247 pages. She has appeared in a few films seen in New Zealand, but she is better known to us through broadcasts of her recordings, notably with Noel Coward, in excerpts from his *Private Lives*.

She tells frankly of the skimpy financial days of her Kennington childhood; of her first big chance when a group of British Tommies of World War I subscribed the cash for her fare to London to appear in an Andre Charlot revue; of her domestic affairs, and of her work with ENSA during World War II. Her 40 years of stage life started in a familiar way—a childish song trilled for a sovereign with a seaside concert party. It was actually that song that launched her into one of the most competitive of all professions.

The highlight of her career came when Charlot made her a star in England, and when Archie Selwyn, who took the Charlot revue to New York, established three Anglo-American stars in one night—Gertrude Lawrence, Beatrice Lillie, and Jack Buchanan. The book tells of her successes, but omits none of her failures. Sixteen photographs are included for the benefit of those readers who like visual evidence of the changes from adolescence to maturity in a famous personality.

—E.R.B.

TOO MANY LOOSE THREADS

BETWEEN THE TWILIGHTS. By Dorothy Charques. Hamish Hamilton, London.

THIS is a curiously unsatisfying story.

All the ingredients for a fine novel are present. There is atmosphere, there is skill in writing, there is character, and there is plot in the unfolding of the character. But the mixture is too uneven and not complete. It seems, too often, as though this were the first draft of the novel, and that Mrs. Charques intended to return later to fill in the details that she has not so much neglected as lost interest in. There are minor incidents that stand out vividly, there are clear impressions of characters that appear for only one page. Yet the major characters, despite their constant self-examination, do not emerge clearly. It is as though quick outline sketches had been made, while the expression, the eyes, all the living features, had not yet been drawn. But with her village characters, all the details have been filled in with loving care and they stand out, clear and distinct and far more interesting than are the Furnesses.

Mrs. Charques writes with economy and occasionally with distinction, but the novel as a whole fails to hold our attention. It is too disjointed and has too many loose threads.

SHORTWAVE HIGHLIGHTS

THE general Overseas Service of the BBC is being received very well at present both during the day and evening, enabling listeners to enjoy a wide variety of programmes.

Stations, Frequencies, Wavelengths and Times of Transmission: GSD, 11.75 mc/s., 25.53 metres (7.0 a.m.-8.0 p.m.); GSB, 9.51, 31.55 (7.0 a.m.-7.15 p.m.); GSO, 15.18, 19.76 (9.15 a.m.-3.15 p.m.); GWG, 15.07, 19.91 (4.0-8.0 p.m.); GSI, 15.26, 19.66 (9.0 p.m.-9.0 a.m.); GRA, 17.715, 16.93 (5.30-9.0 p.m.); GSV, 19.81, 16.84 (4.30-8.0 p.m. and 9.0 p.m.-8.0 a.m.).

Headlines in the Programmes for the week August 24-30: Football Results, 6.30 p.m. Sunday; Home Flash—sound pictures from all parts of Britain, 7.15 p.m. Sunday; Sports Bulletin, 8.15 p.m. Sunday; Sunday Service from St. Mary's Church, Nelson, 10.30 p.m. Sunday; Recent Important Religious Books reviewed by Rev. Canon St. Greenslade, 1.45 p.m. Monday; Gracie Fields in Gracie's Working Party, 3.15 p.m. Monday; Can You Beat It? Variety show by three famous comedians, 2.15 p.m. Tuesday; Promenade Concert by the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent, 7.15 p.m. Tuesday; Bock of Verse—Philip Tomlinson on Shakespeare's "Othello," 10.0 p.m. Tuesday; English Music—a talk by Trevor Harvey, 10.0 p.m. Wednesday; Peggy Cochrane in "They Made Music" (2) Noel Coward, 5.15 p.m. Thursday; The Ebor Handicap—recording of yesterday's commentary from York, 6.15 p.m. Thursday; Current Events, 10.0 p.m. Thursday; Gimcrack Stakes (six-furlong race for two year olds from York), 6.30 p.m. Friday; Calling All Sportsmen, 8.30 p.m. Friday; Science Notebook, 10.0 p.m. Friday; National Sports-reel, introduced by Stewart MacPherson, 10.0 p.m. Saturday.



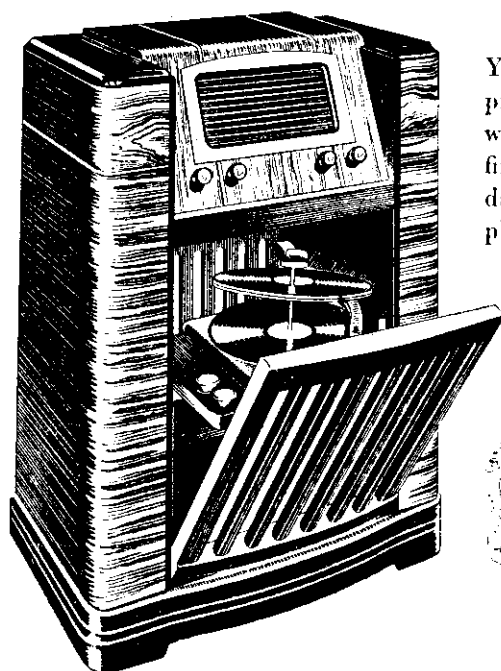
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