

FREE-LANCE MUSICIAN

A "Listener" Interview

"A TEACHER is born a teacher, and a performer a performer," said a friend of mine who makes her living as a concert and radio artist. "It's very seldom that the two can mix. I began by teaching, but my idea all along was to support myself solely by concert and radio engagements. The unfortunate pupils were just a means to an end, and as I began to get along without them I gradually dropped them."

"Isn't it possible to learn from a world-famous artist?"

"Yes, once you've reached a certain standard of proficiency. Heddle Nash, for instance, gave me some very useful tips, but I very much doubt whether he could have taught anybody to sing right from the beginning. And in any case it would have been a scandalous waste of his time. Generally speaking, you've got to have a special aptitude for teaching before you can communicate your own knowledge to somebody else."

"Which did you teach, violin or singing?" I asked, knowing that she was equally talented in either direction.

"Violin. I took up singing later on, when I'd decided to try my luck as a free lance. I realised that if I was to make a living solely by music I'd have to have two strings to my bow. I could sing a little and I began then to study it seriously. And another thing I realised was that if I was to make a living by music I couldn't afford to pick and choose. Many people who are beginning their musical career make the mistake of being too high-brow and imagine that they are betraying their sacred birthright if they consent to sing anything like

"When They Begin the Beguine." I remember Heddle Nash saying to me "Wherever you go always go along with your ears open" and I know that I personally learnt a lot more about rhythm from taking part in a Saturday night programme of popular music artistically arranged and presented than from a programme, however impeccably classical, which is faultily arranged and performed."

It Was Hard to Start

"Wasn't it hard work getting started? In the beginning, did you take up music as a sideline or did you always intend to take it up professionally?"

"When I was at school I decided that when I grew up I'd make a living playing in a theatre orchestra. But by the time I finished school there were no longer any picture orchestras. I had to do something and I wanted to get a part-time job so that I'd have plenty of time for practice. There weren't many part-time jobs to be had, and there was a depression on. I did various things, like canvassing from door to door and minding children, and finally I landed a job answering the telephone in a butcher's shop in the mornings. That suited me very well, particularly as the butcher often let me finish early. I still go into that shop sometimes, and he always tells me that he's following my career with keen interest. It's nice to feel one isn't forgotten."

"Broadcasting was just getting under way at this time, and I had an audition and discovered that my voice recorded rather well. Most of the time I did 'commercials' for the ZB stations, signature

tunes for the opening of new stations or sessions. I remember what a thrill I used to get from walking along the main street and hearing my voice coming at me from various shops and houses.

"Yes, and I was getting one or two odd engagements as violinist. I played for some months in a theatre lounge and after that in a well-known Wellington hotel. That was fun. I met all sorts of people. There's one thing about being a musician of any kind—you can never stop learning; you've got to go on."

"Where will you go on to? England?"

"No, I think perhaps America. But that will have to be some time in the future. Meanwhile I've still a lot to learn here. And I'm getting a lot of

enjoyment out of life. Until I started talking about it I hadn't realised what a colourful and exciting life I've had. There's always something fresh happening. I've played almost everywhere from Government House to Somes Island. And I think I've provided incidental music for every kind of ceremony except a funeral (I was up at Featherston only the other day playing for a christening). And I make enough out of my music to keep myself in reasonable comfort. Of course in our sort of life it's either a feast or a famine, but whenever the bank balance is getting low and I think I'll have to get some sort of regular job something else turns up. And I'd hate to have to know exactly what's going to happen each day."

—M.I.

Stockings last longer

IF

you buy the size that is ample for your feet
(err on the big size. For shoes up to size

3 buy 8½ inch stockings, for size 4 buy 9 inch, for size 5
buy 9½ inch, for over size 5, buy 10 inch stockings).

IF you wash your new stockings before wearing.

IF you ease the foot and the heel into the stocking and then ROLL the stocking up the leg (never pull them on).

IF you always fasten the suspender on to the special reinforced top, known as the welt. NEVER fasten the suspender BELOW the welt.

IF you buy Bonds Symetra—the ankle-slimming Full Fashioned Stockings of quality.

Bonds

HOSIERY

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temperatures were calculated. Using their own clothes, the women were two degrees lower in skin temperature and hands and feet five degrees lower than men in male garments. The temperature required to make the women feel comfortable made the men too warm. When the women wore male clothing, they felt very comfortable at practically the same temperature as men; they required only half a degree higher temperature to be happy.

Now the difference in weight between those two sets of clothes was 4.7 lbs. The clothes factor was tested out in many ways. For example, men wearing their own light summer suits felt happy at 76 degrees F, but it took 80 degrees F for comfort when covered in a woman's summer frock. When both sexes wore the minimum of clothes, men and women were warm and comfortable at the same level, between 82 and 83 degrees F. It was proven to the satisfaction of the investigators that the difference between men and women in feeling the cold was mainly due to the type of clothes worn by the two sexes.

Women in winter time, it would seem, should dress in clothes that will keep them as warm as male attire does the men. Apparently, the present winter fashions for women are not heavy enough in wool, or don't cover the extremities as warmly, and women feel the cold more simply because they are more lightly clothed. If women's cloth-

ing ceased to be so light, mother and father would share the same fire and room, and allow fresh air to come in. Father would keep awake, and be bright and social.

Watch the Temperature

It is necessary that all of us keep fit in these troubled times. Watch your room temperature this coming winter. It needs to be just right, neither too hot nor too cold, and with the right amount of moisture in the air. If you get sleepy quickly in your warm room, there's either insufficient fresh air coming in, or it is too dry. Air that is too warm and too dry will predispose to colds and influenza. So if you don't keep part of the window space open all the time, open up at frequent intervals, and freshen the air. Windows needn't be kept wide open, but in winter open enough to keep the air gently moving and to keep the temperature about 68 degrees F, which seems to suit most people. A kettle steaming or a pan of water on a radiator will help to keep the humidity right. Father is never sleepy every night during summer. Stale warm air favours fatigue and makes you "dopy." The fatigue lowers your resistance, and leaves you open to colds. So if you want to feel wide-awake, and if you want to be healthy—Mother, clothe yourself right; Father, give your home proper ventilation!

(NEXT WEEK: "The Widow's Bite," by Dr. Muriel Bell)