

ARTISTS AS AMBASSADORS

Interview With Notable Soprano From Australia

ALTHOUGH Dorothy Helmrich is an Australian by birth and is claimed by Australia as one of her foremost singers, she has travelled so widely in the course of her musical career that she is more perhaps, a citizen of the world than of any one country. But her heart is probably most firmly lodged in



DOROTHY HELMRICH
Her heart is in England

England where she studied, where so many of her friends are to be found, and where she has lived for many years. She is at present in New Zealand, making a tour for the NBS.

"I left England two years ago, and in many ways I would like to be back among a people who are up against it and putting up with all the hardships of war with cheerful good humour," she told us. "At the outbreak of the War I was with the volunteers for the evacuation of London children to the provinces. The scheme got under way in the weeks before the outbreak of war, as we all expected that there would be a big blitz as soon as war broke out. The most moving occasion I remember was when we took a party up to Cambridgeshire. We just got off the train when we heard the radio announcing the declaration of war. Almost immediately, all the air-raid sirens began to blast, and aeroplanes flew out towards the coast. Everyone expected a raid there and then, but they all, women and little children, just stood quietly and waited. There was no fuss, no alarm, only a great calm, and a little humour."

"Most of the little London youngsters loathed the evacuation at first. I will always remember seeing a row of little Cockney boys sitting in a gutter. Behind them was some of the loveliest country in England, but the gutter was at least familiar."

English Audiences Preferred

Miss Helmrich has given concert recitals in most countries in Europe. "I

used to do a tour every year all over the Continent. My last was in 1939. Every year I could see the tension growing, political excitement becoming more intense. I gave up my concerts in Germany a few years after Hitler came to power. The authorities began making difficulties. They said that they could not have foreign artists, but must encourage German art—this at a time when artists were pouring out of Germany because they could not live there. From the time Germany began to discriminate in this way, art ceased to take the place that it should in the life of the country.

"I love Dutch audiences. When they feel enthusiastic, they sometimes sit very still and don't applaud at all. The Poles on the other hand, show their appreciation emotionally and get very excited. But best of all I like English audiences."

"Too Much Listening to Records"

Since her return to this part of the world, Miss Helmrich has been making tours in Australia, Malaya, and the Dutch East Indies, and she has also been teaching at the Sydney Conservatorium. We asked her whether she found Australian audiences appreciative. "Yes," she said, "they are, and there is a good deal of talent in Australia, but it is always hard in a new country to build up standards of criticism. You don't get the same opportunity to hear things, though broadcasting is doing a good job with orchestral concerts. All the same, I can't help thinking that too much listening to records is bad. After a while the imagination just lies dormant. You in New Zealand may be interested to know that I have been working with Peter Cooper, the New Zealand pianist from Christchurch. He seems to me very gifted, and was making excellent headway until the war absorbed him, as it has so many others. I believe myself that art and cultural life, which stands in danger of being swallowed up in war-time should be kept alive. Art helps us to keep a sense of balance. Because it is so much international, it serves as a link between countries. After the war, I hope that we shall see more exchange of culture between countries. An artist may sometimes be a better ambassador than a politician."

Miss Helmrich is giving studio recitals all this month, beginning from 2YA and working south to Christchurch and Dunedin. Before returning to Sydney she will be heard from 1YA, Auckland, early in February.

Ballets to Ballads

"HIGHWAYS OF MELODY" is a programme of light classical music from ballet to ballad, and from songs to symphonies. The whole is tied together with a commentary on the melodies which are played. You may hear this on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at 9.15 from all Commercial stations.



The fact that you wear glasses shows that your eyes need more than the usual amount of care. Do you realise that the same dirt which gets on to your glasses can also get into your eyes and unless removed it can cause serious damage?

Optrex removes this dangerous foreign matter which can so easily get into everybody's eyes—whether they wear spectacles or not.

Optrex Eye Lotion also keeps the eyes healthy—gives spectacles an opportunity of doing their real work.

Doctors and Opticians everywhere use and recommend Optrex. Get a bottle today.

Whether you wear glasses or not, you should have your eyes examined at regular intervals by a Qualified Practitioner.

Optrex

EYE LOTION

Protects Your Sight

Obtainable from all chemists at 4/3,
triple size 8/-.
4.3

Optrex Ltd., Perivale, Middlesex,
England.



STAMPS

Sent on approval—
state requirements

**FINEST STOCKS IN
NEW ZEALAND**

Mention this paper

TOY CAR

Plastic body, 11in. x 4in. Almost un-
breakable. Blue, red or green.

6/11

Postage 8d.
Skeates &
White Ltd.,
48 Fort St.,
Auckland

