

PERSONALITIES

of the week

BEATRICE'S NIGHTINGALES

DATED 1739, the 'cello played on by Beatrice Harrison is a Peter Guarnerius, the only one existing in the world. This instrument formerly belonged to Baron Krupp, and was with his collection of instruments at Moscow. It afterwards passed into the possession of a Belgian wine merchant who was compelled to part with it and Miss Harrison was able to purchase it for £2000. For tone, colour and varnish this instrument is perfect. No wonder the birds tune up when they hear its enchanted tones. Miss Harrison counts among her most successful concerts those she gave for the nightingales in her Oxted (Surrey) garden. The little feathered musicians were roused to their most beautiful songs by the music of this marvellous 'cello.

BEST DRESSED.

ONE of the most attractive singers of to-day, who shares with Jeritza the distinction of being the best-dressed operatic star in the world, is Conchita Supervia. Her initial success was as Rosina in Rossini's "The Barber of Seville," and this role she sang in the original setting—i.e., for coloratura contralto, a most unusual voice. Rossini's own wife was the original Rosina, and the part was written specially for her. The singing of Supervia a few years ago created an absolute sensation. London was soon at her feet. She loves England, and her new home is in Sussex, where she cultivates choice blooms, and wins prizes with her chrysanthemums. She has superstitions, and will never appear on the platform without the odd little mascots she sews inside her frocks.

PIGEON BREEDER.

BORN in 1888, Sydney Coltham, tenor, was a boy of eight when he joined the Canterbury Cathedral Choir, and was soon promoted by the then principal organist, Dr. Longhurst. Coltham's voice was one of peculiar character, in the fact that it never broke. At 14 he gave up singing treble and at



fifteen he sang tenor. At the age of eighteen he was appointed lay clerk at Canterbury. This must surely be a record. He is also a violinist, and acted as violin master at Canterbury Cathedral School. Later the tenor went to Westminster Abbey. As a soloist at all the leading festivals he enjoys great success. His chief hobby is pigeon breeding, and his birds have taken prizes; as a side-line he plays the 'cello.

IRISH BLOOD.

SIR HAMILTON HARTY'S genius as a conductor has a little obscured his genius as a composer, and as an

accompanist. Yet it was in the latter capacity that he made his name when he went to London in 1900, and it was as a composer that he achieved fame in the decade immediately following. As early as 1901 a trio by him won a prize at the Dublin Feis Ceoil, and such characteristic works as the "Comedy Overture" "With the Wild Geese," the "Violin Concerto in



D Minor," and "The Mystic Trumpeter" proclaimed him a composer with something very definite to say. As an accompanist his remarkable performance in Constant Lambert's "Rio Grande" is well known.

BREATH CONTROL.

DURING a rehearsal when Ivar Andresen, the famous Norwegian basso, was preparing the role of Hagen in Wagner's "Götterdämmerung" at Bayreuth, he sang a long sustained passage in one breath, the control of which was most remarkable. The conductor, Dr. Muck, was quite worried and exclaimed, "If this fellow does not breathe quickly I shall choke!" From an early age Andresen showed an inclination to go on the stage. Eventually he left his native city, Oslo, and was sent to Stockholm in order to study singing under Gills W. Bratt, one of the leading professors of the city. In 1919 he joined the Royal Opera of Stockholm, where he remained until 1927, when he moved to Dresden.

FROM PIANO TO VIOLA.

LIONEL TERTIS (born at West Hartlepool in 1876) began by being a pianist. "My first platform appearance (in velvet and lace collar) was in 1882," Mr. Tertis tells us, "when I was six years old. I took up the viola in 1898 in the following manner: A fellow student at the R.A.M. wanted

WHAT NAME, PLEASE?

THE names given below are those of men and women who are featured in the coming programmes from the New Zealand national stations or of radio performers who have been featured in the news during the week. On these pages are paragraphs relating to the activities of the persons mentioned in this column.

CONCHITA SUPERVIA, in recorded mezzo-soprano solos from IYA at 8.25 on Tuesday, December 4.

LIONEL TERTIS, in a recording of viola solos, IYA, Tuesday, December 4.

SIR HAMILTON HARTY, conducting the Halle Orchestra in recordings from IYX, Tuesday, December 4.

BEATRICE HARRISON, in recorded 'cello numbers with orchestral accompaniment, 2YA, Monday, December 3.

EILEEN PLANK, in a talk from 2YA, "All About Fleas," at 8.40 on Thursday, December 6.

IVAR ANDRESEN, in recorded bass solos from 2YA on Wednesday, December 5.

SYDNEY COLTHAM, in a recorded tenor recital at 4YA, Thursday, December 6.

KEITH FALKNER, recorded baritone numbers, IYA, Saturday, December 8.

ALEXANDER KIPNIS, in recordings of bass solos, 3YA, Friday, December 7.

ARTHUR DE GREEF, pianist, in recorded numbers during the classical programme from 4YO, on Monday, December 3.

to play string quartets, and there was no viola player to be found—they were a rare species at that time. He asked me if I would. I did so, and with two other students formed a quartet. Three weeks later we played to Sir Alexander Mackenzie, then the principal of the R.A.M. When we had finished he asked me how long I had been at it. I told him, and he replied, 'Well, in my opinion, you will never regret it.' I never have."