

PERSONALITIES

of the week

"KING'S MUSICK."

SIR WALFORD DAVIES, "Master of the King's Musick," has been having more or less distant contacts with royalty for over half a century. At 12 he was a choir boy for Queen Victoria in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, and as far back as 1882 was head boy soloist there. Later he was organist in some famous churches, won a scholarship for composition at the Royal College of Music and received his doctorate of music at Cambridge in 1894. "Everyman," his most famous work, was produced in 1904. During the World War he organised music for soldiers, and in 1917 was made musical director of the Royal Air Force with the rank of major.

N.Z. CLAIMS HIM.

ALTHOUGH he was really born in Melbourne, New Zealand likes to claim Dr. J. B. Condliffe as her own. He came across to the Dominion with his parents at an early age and was educated at the West Christchurch District High School and Canterbury College, graduating M.A. at the latter institution. At the close of the war he became a N.Z.E.F. Scholar and a Sir Thomas Gresham Research Student, studying at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. For six years he was professor of economics at Canterbury College, and later research secretary for the Institute of Pacific Relations at Honolulu. Dr. Condliffe is now attached to the Economic Secretariat of the League of Nations at Geneva, his chief task being the compilation of the annual world economic survey.

WALKS AND ACTS

LUWIS CASSON is a man of many parts. He is not only a superb stage actor, but he has played in many English films and made numerous radio appearances. When he was in New Zealand last year with his famous wife, Sybil Thorndike, he enchanted playgoers with his perfect diction and stage deportment. But in private life Mr. Casson is a man of simple tastes. He likes reading, and he is fond of walking. When he was playing in Christchurch he was a frequent passenger on the Cashmere Hills trains. From the terminus he would walk with his wife and son, Christopher, to



the Sign of the Kiwi, and there were not many people who recognised the trio in heavy shoes and dusty tweeds as England's famous artists.

MABEL MEETS MICHAEL.

IN the autumn of 1925, two people snatching a few minutes' break in intervals of a stage play rehearsal, met in a tea shop. One was a newcomer to radio who had developed a flair for writing cockney monologues—the result of first-hand knowledge in slum welfare work. The other was Michael Hogan, actor and author, also new to radio. "How about joining forces for the microphone and writing our own material? And let it be comedy. Radio humour is rare. Let's create a living family of real people—people the listener can be made to believe are real." So Father Buggins and Bert Buggins, grandma and the rest, came into being. Michael Hogan brought along the male bad temper and stupidity to harass the



ever-worried Mrs. Buggins. And that's how the diminutive Mabel Constanduros, creator of the most famous family in radio vaudeville, met Michael Hogan, radio actor.

BARRYMORE PROFILE

JOHN BARRYMORE'S profile has become something of a tradition—or a joke if you may prefer it—in America. The Barrymores, Lionel, Ethel and John, are regarded as the Royal Family of the stage in the United States, and, while Lionel and Ethel are somewhat indifferent about their looks, John has been careful to preserve his reputation for handsomeness. New Zealanders know him less for his readings of Shakespeare than for his talking picture appearance, one of the cleverest and most satirical of his screen appearances being in a film that was a sad "flop" in the Dominion—"Twentieth Century." It ran for three days at the Regent Theatre, Wellington, and was withdrawn.

DOCTOR-ACTOR

ONE of the mainstays of the Canterbury Repertory Theatre is Dr. Robinson E. Hall, popular Christchurch doctor and actor of no small ability. Acting is probably in Dr. Hall's blood—his brother is Winter Hall, well-known in American films, and his sister is Miss Maynard Hall, "Aunt Pat" of 3YA. Dr. Hall has played many parts for the southern repertory society and has lent valuable assistance on the committee and behind the scenes. In fact, he has just enjoyed a season in the society's latest production—St. John Ervine's "Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary." Dr. Hall's wife is also a keen repertory worker, and is, at the present time, wardrobe mistress in Christchurch.

DICKEN'S "MISSIONARY."

ORIGINALLY intended for the calling of a missionary, Bransby Williams, actor and best character impersonator of the British stage (born at Hackney, August 14, 1870), abandoned a clerkship in a tea-warehouse for the stage, which he has adorned for many years. He was not always a Dickensian actor. Time was when he gave imitations of famous actors in favourite roles, such as Irving as Matthias and Charles Wyndham as David Garrick. This was just before the turn of the century. In Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee year (1897) Mr. Williams started on his career as another kind of missionary—that of preaching the gospel of clean Dickens humour and pathos in impersonating many of that author's most famous characters. Since then he has worked on the legitimate stage, including Hamlet among his parts.

ST. HILDA'S CHIEF.

THE story of the inception of St. Hilda's Band is less romantic than its astonishing run of good fortune under the bandmastership of James Oliver, its "chief." This "hefty" Geordie is one of the best-known band teachers in the North of England, and his splendid achievements with the Felling Band alone would remain a lasting monument in the history of the brass band contesting movement in the North of England. His services are in



great demand throughout the United Kingdom in the capacity of adjudicator. In 1906 the South Shields Borough Band, a modest enough organisation,