

PERSONALITIES

of the week

"OUR BILL"

F. H. GRISEWOOD, universally known as "Freddy," was a singer before he became famous as a B.B.C. announcer. He sang the solo part in Henschel's "Requiem" at the first performance in England, at Queen's Hall in 1913. Then the war intervened, and took up all his energies until, after being knocked out on the Somme, he was invalided out in 1917, and retired to Oxfordshire to farm. He kept up his singing and he first broadcast in 1925. He joined the B.B.C. as an announcer in July, 1929, and has broadcast in programmes for every single department. Famous as "Our Bill," the Oxfordshire rustic, with Stamford Robinson, he devised "Nuts and Wine," and other famous programmes. This

splendid musical show delighted listeners all over the Dominion when the first series of B.B.C. programmes was released.

YOUTHFUL ALBERT.

THE youthful Albert Sandler (he was born in 1906) has long been one of the most popular artists on the lighter side of broadcast music. He began his musical career at the age of twelve, playing in a cinema orchestra every evening after leaving school. He won a scholarship at the Guildhall School of Music and, after two years' study, became leader of various of the orchestras employed by Messrs. Lyons. He continued to study with the late Haus Wessely, and later with Kalman Ronay, nephew of Professor Auer. He first came into prominence as a broadcaster when he took over control of the orchestra at the Grand Theatre, Eastbourne, from which he was the first violinist to broadcast. In 1928 he left Eastbourne for the Park Lane Hotel.

ALEC BECOMES DICK.

AT the age of twenty a tenor named Alexander Crooks was soloist at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York. To-day he is Richard Crooks, American tenor, known on both sides of the Atlantic. He is less important to himself now. Then he knew he was good. To-day he hopes he is. Alexander was too ponderous a name to affix to Crooks. A telephone book upon consultation supplied a more suitable Christian name. Hence the Richard! The name suits him. He is a modern crusader. A twentieth century prototype of the lion-hearted Richard of song and story. Six feet two, black-haired, keen-eyed, athletic. Now a married man, he adores his wife and children (the pigeon-pair so often longed for). His wife was the girl who sat next to him at school and played his accompaniment when he sang at the prize-giving.

"REVELLERS" IN PARIS.

NO sight is more interesting than the one of a huge French audience watching and listening to that amazing quintet of music makers with whom all Dominion listeners are now familiar—the Revellers. It is as fascinating to watch the listeners as the performers. All the songs are, of course, in English, none the less the French seemed to gather them all in, laughed and applauded at the right places. No doubt most of this appreciation is due to "La voix de son maitre," as the legend runs in France beneath the pictures of the little fox terrier and the gramophone horn. Year after year this group consisting of James Melton, Lewis James, Elliott Shaw, Wilfred Glenn and Frank Black—four fine voices supported by a brilliant pianist, seem to move from success to success.

QUICK STUDY.

JOHN BARBIROLI'S rapidity in absorbing model complex scores was revealed in 1927 in a performance of Elgar's "Second Symphony" by the London Symphony Orchestra. Sir Thomas Beecham, who was advertised to conduct, had fallen ill. Barbirolli stepped into the breach, learned the symphony in three days, and won a congratulatory letter from Elgar on the performance. The exclusive gramophone recording sessions of the work were entrusted to him, and the symphony and its performance made such an impression that invitations to him and his orchestra came from Turin and Milan. The uncanny conducting genius of this 35-year-old son of an Italian father and a French mother, has been productive of a brilliant series of recordings.

PICCOLO PIPING.

MUSICAL acrobatics on such a tiny instrument as the piccolo calls for a nimble set of fingers, and for years Hal C. McLennan has possessed a piccolo technique which few New Zealanders have achieved. His connection with the Auckland Municipal Band has brought him before a large public, and the contrast of a piping piccolo in between two heavy brass numbers adds somewhat to the interest of the fine performances put up by the band. The piccolo, too, is one of the few musical instruments which have been made the subject of a song—dance tempo, of course. "Piccolo Pete" had a good run of popularity, like the pieces about ukuleles, guitars or banjos. But could you imagine even an American song-writer turning out a dance number about an oboe, a mouth-organ, a balalaika or a sousaphone?



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UNFORGETTABLE GIANNINI.

AN imposing figure of the strictly Latin type, garbed in a red velvet gown with a long train, Dusolina Giannini makes a striking and unforgettable picture. With poise, dignity, intelligence and a truly magnificent soprano voice, she possesses all those elements of the truly great artist. Born in Philadelphia, she was taught by her father, Ferruccio Giannini, a fine Italian singer. With her sister, Euphem-

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.

DUSOLINA GIANNINI, soprano, in recorded items from 1YA, Friday, February 8.

JOHN BARBIROLI, conductor, in recorded items from 2YA, Thursday, February 7.

THE REVELLERS, male quartet, from 2YA, Friday, February 8.

"OUR BILL," dialect recitalist, in recorded items from 4YA, Tuesday, February 5.

CHAUVE SOURIS, Russian singers, in recorded items from 4YA, Friday, February 8.

RICHARD CROOKS, tenor, in records from 3YA, Monday, February 4.

ALBERT SANDLER, violinist, recorded, from 3YA, Tuesday, February 5.

DEANE WARETINI and **ANA HATO**, Maori singers, from 3YA, Wednesday, February 6.

HAL C. McLENNAN, with his piccolo, from 1YA, Sunday, February 3.