

PERSONALITIES

of the week

Cedric "Cashes Up"

WRITING in "The Gramophone" about the new Scandinavian coloratura soprano, Miliza Korjus (The Northern Nightingale), Cedric Wallis relates that he went somewhat sceptically to hear his first Korjus record. New and unheralded coloraturas are apt, in his experience, to be disappointing, and he was frankly not expecting a great deal. It was there a tribute worth recounting that, before the singer had come to the end of Proch's well-worn theme, he had placed the price of the record confidently upon the shop counter, a gesture he has not been able to accord to a new singer for a very long time. He has not regretted his precipitancy, if such it was, because the result of studying the few records which Korjus has produced to date resulted in a full page article which will make gramophiles expectant.

B.B.C. Leader

A TALL man, with humour in his face and a certain ruggedness which suggests the North, partly describes the man who is one of the corner-stones of that wonderful edifice we call the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra. Arthur Catterall is its leader.

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.

MILIZA KORJUS, a coloratura soprano, in recordings from 2YA on Thursday, May 30.

ARTHUR CATTERALL, violinist, in recordings from 3YA on Monday, May 27.

ALFRED CORTOT, pianist, in recordings from 2YA on Thursday, May 30.

ROBERT RADFORD, bass, in recordings from 1YA on Friday, May 31.

LILY PONS, coloratura soprano, in recordings from 4YA on Sunday, May 26.

JOHN CHARLES THOMAS, baritone, in recordings from 2YA on Friday, May 31.

GERTRUDE LAWRENCE, actress, from 3YA, Saturday, June 1.

Those who hear him play on his records may be interested to learn that the violin he plays is a Long Strad. bought for Mr. Catterall by a number of admirers in Manchester from Baron Kropke, the famous collector, who had at one time twenty Strads in his collection. Before he acquired it Baillot was the last great artist to play on it in 1810. Catterall never misses the opportunity to "like" up the hills near his Hendon home with Mrs. Catterall and the Catterall quartet No. 2—his four daughters.

A Star's Horoscope

IN the "Radio Magazine" last year Mr. A. H. Naylor gave Gertrude Lawrence's horoscope. He said:—"Being one of her admirers, it is difficult for me coolly and impartially to



judge the horoscope of Gertrude Lawrence. Were I not an admirer it would still be difficult, for here is a personality which will change year by year. Temperamentally speaking, Miss Lawrence knows not fixity. Keen emotions, well in hand, a love of power, a sound appreciation of the value of publicity, are among the characteristics indicated in the horoscope. Miss Lawrence would be well advised to make hay while the astrological sun shines. During 1935 and 1936 her chances of winning further fame and fortune will be at the maximum. After 1937 she may be apt to throw away chances—in short, life will have its difficulties. However, everything depends upon the use she makes of the exceptional opportunities which will come her way in 1934, 1935 and 1936. Her theatrical career will have its ups and downs, but like all good people so fated, she will touch good heights—greater than her present ones."

A Swiss Pianist

ALFRED CORTOT is a Swiss, having been born at Nyon, but his parents were both French. His sisters led him in his first musical steps, but

later, on entering the Paris Conservatoire, he became a pupil of an old pupil of Chopin, one Decombes. Besides being one of the foremost pianists of the day, he is also a great conductor. It is news to learn that he was so passionately devoted to the music of Wagner that from 1902 to 1911 he was assistant conductor and director of the chorus at Bayreuth. The war completely interrupted his artistic activities, so he joined the staff of General Gallieni as organiser to the military hospitals for all concerts and entertainments. As chamber musician solo pianist or conductor, he is equally acceptable.

Which of the Arts?

THE late Robert Radford, bass, hailed from Nottingham, the county of Larwood and Voce, the city of lace and goose fairs, and memories of Robin Hood. The only important singing he did as a boy was as soprano soloist in a minstrel troupe. He was getting on well with art, especially black-and-white work (which must not be confused with his minstrel work, by-the-by) and had several things published when he eventually decided upon a musical career. So to the Royal Academy of Music he went, and he certainly did that institution more than justice, becoming, at one stage, one of its Fellows.

Weights 106 Pounds

FRAGILE looking, with great dark eyes, dark hair and a willowy figure, Lily Pons, coloratura soprano, weighs a mere 106 pounds and stands a little more than five feet six in height. Born in Cannes, in Southern France, in 1905, she is Italian on her mother's side, but France claims her. Her musical background was built around the piano. At 15 she had won a first prize at the Paris Conservatoire, but three years later she abandoned the piano for the stage, accepting an ingenue role at the Paris Theatre des Varieties. Advised by her friends to study for the opera, Miss Pons instead decided on a matrimonial career and married a Dutch lawyer, August Mesritz, who also counselled a continuation of vocal lessons. Her debut in opera was in a small town in Alsace.

A Hit as Herod

BORN in Pennsylvania, the baritone, John Charles Thomas, who possesses a really great and beautiful voice, first gained prominence as a musical comedy and light opera star. Concert work followed leading to an operatic debut at Washington with the Civic Opera Company, as Amonastro in Verdi's "Aida." Responding to an offer from Brussels, he appeared there as Herod, in Massenet's opera. His success was immediate, and his contract was renewed for a period of several years.