

NOT THE ROMANTIC TYPE

Hollywood Cameras Have Never Flattered Lawrence Tibbett

Some Impressions of
the Greatest "Box-
Office Voice" of To-
day

by

ROGER HOLDEN



MR. AND MRS. LAWRENCE TIBBETT.
... They "shot" Auckland from all angles.

LAURENCE TIBBETT, world-famous baritone and star of New York Metropolitan Grand Opera, isn't going to make any more films until they find him a story which he is satisfied will be able to combine the technique of opera with the technique of the screen.

There are scenarists busy now looking for that story, and Tibbett thinks that eventually it will be found.

Tibbett expressed those views on his film work when he passed through Auckland recently on his way to Australia for a concert tour. And he also made it very clear to all who met him that he is very far from being the temperamental person that all opera stars are popularly supposed to be. He made this clear by his straightforward, naturally charming personality, his sense of humour, and his utter lack of conceit. All who came in contact with him in Auckland freely expressed the opinion that his engaging personality, quite apart from his marvellous voice, will make him a firm favourite in Australia and New Zealand.

"Funny Little Face"

FOR New Zealand is going to see more of Tibbett than it saw of him on that one day in Auckland. His present tour is the culmination of five years' effort, by both the singer and J. C. Williamson, Ltd., to bring him to this part of the world, and after his Australian seasons have finished he will make a tour of the main centres in this Dominion, beginning about the end of August.

Tibbett has been such a long time visiting us because he has had his hands completely full with engagements in America to the Metropolitan Opera, the films, concert tours, and—very important—his radio work. Even now he is fully booked up for 18 months ahead.

WELL-KNOWN already for his films and gramophone records, Lawrence Tibbett—possessor of one of the finest voices of this modern age and certainly the greatest "box-office voice" in the world at the moment—has at last realised an ambition to visit this part of the world. Now in Australia, he will make a concert tour of New Zealand in about four months' time.

Here are a few impressions of Tibbett, gathered by someone who met him when he passed through Auckland recently.

ACCORDING to Frank Ansell, who went to Auckland on behalf of J. C. Williamson to meet Tibbett, he is one star whom the Hollywood cameras have never flattered. And when one comes to look back on Tibbett's films that is probably a very sound judgment. Turning back the files one comes across this typical remark in a criticism of one of his pictures: "A mar-

vellous voice to come out of a person with such a funny little face."

And another: "He certainly does look like a baby with a moustache stuck on its top lip."

Anyone who met Tibbett in Auckland would probably be willing to cross swords with the critic who made those remarks, such is the charm of the singer.

Yet Tibbett himself probably wouldn't take them so seriously, for he frankly admits that he was never built or intended for some of the over-sentimental romantic roles allocated to him by

Hollywood in the past.

As to the suggestion, made at the time "Metropolitan" was released, that he had been to a plastic surgeon and had his tip-tilted nose lengthened and straightened, one doubts if that was anything more than an inspiration by a publicity writer; for Tibbett strikes one as being the last person on earth to bother with plastic surgeons.

Haphazard Methods Fail

HOWEVER, that's pure speculation. More to the point is Tibbett's attitude toward his film appearances. He thinks that the movie people have come to realise that there must be a formula for successfully adapting opera to the screen that so far has not been discovered. The haphazard methods of the past won't (Continued on page 38.)