

## Air Terror Startles England

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rat-tatted into the night. Newsboys appeared with posters, "War Declared!" And then came the long, low wail of the "All clear" siren. It was almost too realistic.

Within a week or two England had become thoroughly roused to the menace of air raids. I was staying with some friends at their country house in Sussex. At afternoon tea one day I was told to help myself to a cigarette. The box was unopened and I began to tear off the cellophane wrapping. "Oh, don't tear it," said my hostess. "I'm saving all those wrappings."

"Whatever for?" I asked.

"In case of air raids," she said. "Cellophane glued over the windows will prevent splinters from flying about."

That is typical of the whole of the English people to-day. Even the veriest yokel, buried in the tiniest village, is being given his air raid instructions, shown how to don a gas mask.

In the West End of London the big stores are devoting whole floors to displays of modern bombs and methods for keeping out of their way.

I saw two old ladies of 70 or more putting on gas masks and walking into chambers filled with poisonous gases. I saw school children studying charts showing the speed of bombing planes and the flying distances from London of the Continental capitals.

I saw a display of photographs showing the damage done to London during air raids in the last war—a hole knocked in the National Gallery, a veranda dislodged from a theatre in the Aldwych, some windows smashed in a hotel in Soho. And next to these were pictures of the results of modern air raids—skyscraper tenements ripped and shattered in Valencia, trams and cars buried under tons of debris in Shanghai, women and children in horrible huddled heaps in the streets of Barcelona.

It was impossible to compare the raids of 1916-17 with to-day's.

Before I left London, forms had been sent to every householder in Padding-

ton asking how many gas masks were required for the house, and instructions were being issued.

The Government had completed its scheme for the digging of trenches in Hyde Park, trenches big enough to accommodate 200,000 of London's West End population.

At a reception in London in May, I had the privilege of talking to Mr. Malcolm MacDonald, the new Colonial Secretary. I asked him whether this swift preparation meant that we were in immediate danger.

"Not at all," he said, "but the English character is such that the average Englishman almost needs a bomb under him before he can be persuaded into action of this kind. And this air-raid publicity and activity of the past few weeks is the bomb, as it were. The country must take these precautions seriously."

## Meet Tibbett's Wife

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seems so interested in meeting the other. Bring them together and they find their own enjoyment if they are allowed!"

**A**NOTHER branch of Mrs. Tibbett's obligations as a famous singer's wife is her duty to charity. She explained the system on which much of the funds for New York's charity work is raised—a system not altogether impossible of adaption in New Zealand.

The scheme is very simple. An organiser buys up the Metropolitan Opera House, guaranteeing a full house, for any opera which she prefers. She then arranges among her friends, who work in teams, to sell tickets in their various districts. These tickets are sold at perhaps one-quarter or one-third above the usual price. Everything that is taken above the guarantee is handed over to charity. The Metropolitan artists are not affected because they are engaged on contract for so many performances. A performance is still a performance—charity or not. "People know they will have to give to charity some time," explained Mrs. Tibbett. "They find it convenient to give and at the same time have some enjoyment for their giving. The guarantor hardly ever has to pay the Metropolitan management—her main contribution is the vast amount of organising for these concerts.

"Picture-houses are also bought up in the same way, for the previews of outstanding films."

**B**UT even Mrs. Tibbett, energetic and willing as she is, admits that however stimulating to be a globe-trotting artist's wife, it is also exhausting sometimes beyond the endurance of human nerves.

That is why she likes New York—"not only because I was born there and because it is so huge, so glorious and exciting, but also because it is the most impersonal city in the world. A place that can be desperately cruel, but a refuge as well, where you can shut

your door on everyone and be alone in the midst of the millions."

Maybe most of us don't realise how much it means to the people in the limelight of publicity to be able to sneak away from it now and then! The Tibbetts have a farm in Connecticut where they go when things get too hectic.

"It's wonderful for Mr. Tibbett," said his wife. "The strain under which those men live is terrific. There is not only his own singing, but his interest in music as a whole. He likes his finger in every musical pie. I have known him eleven years, been married for nearly seven, and I have always been amazed by watching him among people. He is like a sponge, sucking from them whatever they have to give. But what does it matter? He returns it on the stage, redoubled."

Yes, Lawrence Tibbett has an admirer as well as a helpmate in his wife. You don't meet many like them—so famous, so feted, and yet so unaffectedly careless of glamour. Two artists perhaps, but two real people, too!

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## Lady Patricia Stanhope

(Continued from page 9.)

**S**TRANGELY enough, one thing on which Lady Patricia was not prepared to be dogmatic was the fashions themselves. Mannequins, one discovers, are never very fond of discussing this topic. They see too many frocks of elaborate and advanced styles to be confident of gauging popular trends very much more quickly than anyone else. Besides, Lady Patricia is not so interested lately in mannequining as a job—she's preparing a trousseau for her marriage toward the end of the year to Lieutenant Ian McDonald, R.A.N., of H.M.A.S. Voyager.

Assuredly, this attractive young society leader spent a crowded six months in the New South Wales capital! To have stormed the defences of two closely-guarded professions, and to have captured also the heart of a young naval officer—that is success indeed, as most of us would like it in our own lives.

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