

after it opened. The house had lots of gaps and, apart from the Lambeth Walk, there was nothing to distinguish it from a hundred other musical comedies.

number that had not been considered good enough for broadcasting when the original selection was made.

THE "secret history" of the Lambeth Walk is now coming to light. Like cricket, show business is a game of glorious uncertainty and history will never produce a better example than "Me and My Girl."

It had an undistinguished eight weeks' provincial tour and came to London at the beginning of this year. Lupino Lane, famous comedian and chief backer of the show, didn't realise that he was sitting on a gold-mine, when, after three weeks he put the fatal notice up on the board... "Me and My Girl" will conclude in a week's time."

But a miracle intervened.

A DOUR broad-shouldered Scot with bony, war-scarred features, the BBC's Sir John Reith, stepped in as fairy-god-mother, saving the Lambeth Walk from oblivion.

A broadcast of portions of "Me and My Girl" had been arranged from Broadcasting House, London, four days before the play was due to close. At the last minute it was found

NEXT night the Victoria Palace was crowded with curious people who wanted to find out about the "oi."

From that night business for "Me and My Girl" grew and grew. The show has taken nearly £175,000 to date, has averaged £3000 a week, has broken the record of the Victoria Palace with £4000 for a week, has been produced in Paris and New York and is shortly to be put on the stage in New Zealand and Australia.

Composer of the Lambeth Walk is Noel Gay, whose real name is Maxen Armitage, M.A., trained as a classical musician and today one of the most suc-

by
Trevor Lane

cessful of Britain's light composers. He wrote "King's Horses" and "She Couldn't Say No."

Rayclent

that the broadcast was three and a half minutes short of the allotted time and an SOS was sent to the Victoria Palace for something to fill in the extra time.

It was decided to play the chorus of the Lambeth Walk, a

SUNG and danced in Scandinavia, France, Germany, Italy, the United States and throughout the British Empire, the Lambeth Walk might have become the marching song of allies and enemy alike if the crisis of the other month had brought war. For the first time in history opposing armies

It was a dour Scot with bony war-scarred features who saved the Lambeth Walk from oblivion... Sir John Reith, formerly Director-General of the BBC. That's Sir John on the left.

would have marched to the same "Tipperary."

As it is, the Lambeth Walk will remain in Europe's memory as the peace song, the signature tune of the crisis.

LAMBETH WALK IS FRONT PAGE NEWS!

ZB Stations And "Record" Put It On N.Z. Map

PEACEFUL New Zealand homes have been broken up this week... bridge fiends have been lured away from their tables... snatches of song have rent the air.

And the reason for it all? Well, of course—the Lambeth Walk!

Since the "Record" and the ZB broadcasting stations launched this fascinating tune and dance on the public last week, its popularity has snowballed until to-day, one week after the first announcement, the whole country has some idea of the Lambeth Walk.

The broadcasts from the ZB stations on Wednesday and Friday of last week were excellently handled and everywhere listeners were trying out the Lambeth Walk in their own homes.

In Wellington the dance was featured by Sammy Lee and his Americanadians at the Majestic Cabaret and every night it was received with the greatest applause. At St. James Theatre in Wellington, a demonstration is being given on the stage this week by Mr. and Mrs. Southern Colledge, and exceptional interest is being shown.

The "Record" is pleased about the success of the Lambeth Walk, too. Despite an extra printing of some thousands of copies, last week's issue, which contained diagrams of the way to do the dance, was completely sold out in several New Zealand centres.

ASKED what they had learned from Canada on their return from that Dominion recently, a party of English public-school boys talked about salmon fisheries and colonial history.

Asked what they had taught Canada they replied in one voice, "The Lambeth Walk."

MOST unusual circumstances in which I heard the Lambeth Walk was at Tenerife when a shipload of Spanish soldiers, sailing to join Franco in Spain, gave voice to this Cockney tune in their own native tongue.

Later in a German restaurant in the little town I heard a Ger-

ed for Spain to fight for the Nationalist cause.

I WAS interested in lines of sad-looking women queued up in the streets with small boxes in their hands. The British Consul told me later that these were boxes of sweetmeats and cigarettes for their menfolk fighting on the mainland.

"But so much smuggling was going on," he explained, "that the authorities now insist that the boxes be brought to depots and examined before they are finally sealed for dispatch."

tweens" are away in Spain fighting.

German and Italian flags are everywhere... the harbour is full of German and Italian shipping, including one or two warships. We needed a reminder that the place really DID belong to Spain!

In the little boat that took us back to our liner we passed a boatload of bronzed young Nazis, stripped to the waist, and rowing with Prussian precision. We couldn't resist giving them the Nazi salute. They were thrown into confusion and their machine-like movements were hopelessly destroyed. After all, it is a little difficult to keep on rowing and "Heil Hitler" at the same time!

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Tenerife is historic as the place where General Franco began the assault that has dragged on wearily for some years now. This important island in the Canary group was under the governorship of Franco, who flew one afternoon to a neighbouring island to attend the funeral of an important official there.

BUT plans had been laid.

The funeral over, Franco continued on his way by powerful plane to the mainland of Spain, there to launch his war against the Loyalists. His lieutenants in Tenerife did their work well. With the loss of only one life—a man who was shot down in the sunny plaza on the waterfront one afternoon—Tenerife was taken for Franco.

And since then more than 65,000 men have sail-

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