

WELLINGTON NOTES.

A Concertina-like Two-seater

A "Holiday" in the Country—"So Long as I Have Lived, I Have Striven to Live Worthily"—Wellington to Gain a Place on the Map of the Musical World?

WE have all heard of the wearisome round that besets the farmer in his quest for a crust, but by Mrs. Lola Maries' authority we learn that on occasion a little fun enters into rural life. The speaker cheerfully accepted an invitation to make holiday on a Canterbury back-country sheep station, and the merry account of the journey was a diverting relaxation for the hearer, if the actual experience was a little trying. The host and hostess met the train with a two-seater that had of necessity to assume concertina characteristics. A pantechnicon load of sheep dip, canned tomatoes, and furnishings went into the dickey, and when these had shaken down on the 73-mile trip a weaner—fortunately not a rising heifer, but a piglet—found accommodation with the travellers. Mrs. Maries gave an amusing account of a day's work on a farm, and didn't fail to introduce the dramatic note in the person of a remittance man, who may have been a violin virtuoso had it not been for the demon drink. The most entertaining episode though was the drive with a wild Irishman, who knew nothing of a car, and had never driven one before. A pair of twos with a headache on top had nothing on it.

TO be asked to select a personage and prepare a talk for broadcast as a contribution to the symposium, "My Favourite Character in History," was discovered by Canon Percival James to be both an honour and an embarrassment. With such outstanding men as Moses and St. Paul to draw from, re-

marked Canon James, some might wonder why a churchman should go outside Holy Writ. It happened, however, that just about that time was the anniversary of the birth of one of England's darlings, the warrior, deliverer, and teacher, Alfred the Great. Despite housewives prejudiced by the legend of preoccupation and burned cakes and apocryphal credit for the foundation of Oxford, and establishment of trial by jury, the story of Alfred's life represents all that is best in England's history. He was a real benefactor to the Church and his people—a prototype of such selfless men as St. Oswald and St. Louis of France.

HAD it not been for Alfred's character and valour what might have happened to the Church and the English people can only be imagined. Regular invasions by pagan Danes who plundered the churches and laid waste the land were recurrent episodes of the times. Alfred's courage and defeat of the hordes saved Western Europe and ultimately won the Danes for Christianity. He created the first British fleet and won Britain's first naval victory in a fight against rapine and oppression. As a ruler he was a benevolent autocrat, the father of his people, with a great love of books and zeal for learning. He restored the Church as the educational authority, and has the right to be called the father of English literature. His code of laws was founded on the Golden Rule and the Decalogue and his fitting epitaph lies in what he wrote himself

—"So long as I have lived, I have striven to live worthily."

THE final concert of the 1933 season of the Wellington Symphony Orchestra was among the most brilliant that has been given during the five years of the orchestra's existence. Thursday's choice selection of numbers made a very fitting final programme that will remain in memory for a long time to come. Mr. Andersen Tyrer's masterly technique will be recalled for months to come as a standard for comparison. Mrs. Wilfred Andrews, who was in splendid voice, was never heard to better advantage than in the two arias from "Samson and Delilah," while the orchestra's own numbers were presented with a familiarity that was superby professional.

NO commendation is too fulsome for the work of Mr. de Mauny and the orchestra. When the sound-film made its advent local orchestral work was threatened with effacement, but the opportunity was seized to establish something really worth-while with the result that many of the great masters' works have been better presented than ever before. In all, twelve symphonies have been contributed in addition to a large number of concertos (violin and piano), together with a generous bestowal of overtures and other works not frequently heard in entirety. The increasing number of distinguished visiting artists who have co-operated with the orchestra is making it known abroad, and Wellington promises to become placed upon the map of the musical world.

WAGNER'S FATHER A JEW?

Famous German Composer's Descent Challenged

[In last week's "Radio Record" we published a story by Margaret Macpherson on the life of Wagner, the famous German composer. Below we publish an article written for the London "Daily Mail" by H. S. Gordon, which deals with the parentage of the composer and its possible relationship to the anti-Semitic views of modern Germany.]

Bronislaw Huberman, the Polish violinist, has written to Dr. Furtwangler, conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, contending that Hitler and his supporters are "deliberately ignoring the probable hypothesis of Richard Wagner's half-Jewish descent."

This is his reply to a letter in which Furtwangler asks Huberman to reconsider his decision not to appear again in Germany.

It raises a disturbing point, for Germany has adopted Wagner as one of the fathers of its music. Hitler him-

self not only attended throughout the recent Wagner Festival at Bayreuth, but his friendship with Siegfried Wagner's widow is so close that their betrothal has been reported more than once.

Authorities agree that Wagner's paternity is uncertain. Ludwig Geyer, a Jewish actor, was a member of the Wagner household before the birth of Richard. Six months after the birth of the child, the supposed father of the child, Chief of Police in Leipzig, died. This was in November, 1813, and the widow married Ludwig Geyer in the following August. The marriage, according to Ernest Newman, "was undoubtedly hastened in order to legitimise" another coming child.

The suspicion that Geyer was in fact Wagner's father, and that Richard was, therefore, half-Jewish, gains support from the likeness between the two. Unfortunately, no portrait of the reputed father exists to counteract the influence of this resemblance. Again, it is more probable that Richard Wagner's genius was derived from an actor-father than from a notary-father.

Even the keenest of German scholars admit that the 100 per cent. German origin of the new Germany's musical idol cannot be established.

THE non-technical talk contributed by Mr. A. Gibbs, advisory engineer to the Broadcasting Board, entitled "What Happens Between the Studio and the Loudspeaker," was, we hope, the first of a series of such talks. It is somewhat difficult for the technically-trained man to get down to common or garden terms, but Mr. Gibbs succeeded, and few would have had any trouble in understanding how sound and electricity are inter-related. Mr. Gibbs observed that it was time a number of listeners had their receivers attended to, for the wonderfully efficient apparatus that the board is incorporating in the stations' equipment demands, for fidelity of reception, receivers that can handle the richness of the initial production. These remarks were opportune. I listened to 2YA recently at the house of an acquaintance who has an expensive set only a few months old, and I didn't recognise Mr. Drummond's voice. His words had to be interpreted for me, while the music (?) sounded as if it originated in a paper bag.

MAE WEST is the author of plays in which she appeared, as well as "She Done Him Wrong" and "I'm No Angel," her Paramount pictures.