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Musical Express

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1947

No. 57

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(By The Editor)

THE BELIEF OF CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE MUSICIANS' UNION THAT ENGLISH RECORDS BEING MADE FOR DECCA FOR EXPORT TO AMERICA IS A MEANS OF CASHING IN ON THE EXPECTED AMERICAN RECORDING BAN IS NOT TRUE. IN POINT OF FACT THE LONDON GRAMOPHONE CORPORATION WAS ORIGINALLY FORMED TO EXPORT MACHINES, AND NOT RECORDS, AS A RESULT OF WHICH A NEW DEAL WITH DECCA WAS ARRANGED. THE PRESENT SALES OF ENGLISH RECORDS IN AMERICA IS NOT AN OVERNIGHT WONDER BUT THE RESULT OF TWO YEARS' HARD WORK AND THOUGHT PUT INTO IT BY TOOTS CAMARATA AND E. R. LEWIS, CHIEF OF ENGLISH DECCA. MR. LEWIS TOLD "MUSICAL EXPRESS" IN AN EXCLUSIVE STATEMENT:—

"The records which go out under the London Label will retail at seventy-five cents, which is the standard price for recordings of this description. The records are being shipped in bulk to our own organisation. This is the first time that English records have been distributed throughout America with the company's own distributor and will mean that this is also the first time American dealers have been in a position to have access to English records in the same manner as they have to American records. Some of the cities that have been covered by this distribution up to date include Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, New England, Boston, New Jersey, Baltimore, Washington, New Orleans, Philadelphia, Memphis and Atlanta and within a week or so the distribution will cover every State in America.

"The records so far pressed, and which will be delivered in the U.S.A. on the fifteenth of this month, include those made by Gracie Fields with Phil Green's Orchestra, Denny Dennis with Stanley Black's Orchestra, Vera Lynn with Ambrose, Anne Shelton with Harry Boy and an orchestra under the leadership of Camarata, Beryl Davis and Stephan Grappelly, Ambrose Orchestra with Reginald Kell as soloist on one side and Carl Barritau as soloist on another side and Mantovani's orchestra. The records have had a very good reception from the distributors and from the disc jockeys in America."

From this statement it will be obvious to our readers that a great deal of forethought has gone into the planning of records for distribution in America.

These records were made before it was known that there was any possibility of members of the A.F. of M. not being permitted to record.

"Musical Express" wonders whether a recent statement made by Hardie Ratcliffe, assistant secretary to the M.U., to a daily paper will stand up when the profession is acquainted with the full facts. He said:—

"Our choice would be either to support the American musicians or to allow bands in London to cash in on the American market by making scab records. I think British bands would not want to be blacklegs."

Consulting this newspaper, after consulting many well known members of the music profession, would like to ask Mr. Ratcliffe whether he made that statement as a result of a General Meeting, and whether, if there were to be a car strike in Detroit, British workers at Austin's or Ford's would be expected to strike also and if so what would happen to British

TIN PAN ALLEY BALL A SUCCESS

AT THE Tin Pan Alley Ball held in aid of the Music Publishers' Contact Personnel Association Benevolent Fund last Thursday, the music and entertainment profession turned out in full force for what must surely be called the finest gathering since before the war. General opinion of all present was that this must become an annual institution. The bands of Les Ayling, Ivor Kirehin, El Mario's Ladies' Rumba Band, The Old Time Dance Orchestra and Joe Lees and his Orchestra all gave fine performances and gave complete entertainment to those who normally have to entertain themselves. There were many fine prizes and raffles and to the organisers of this wonderful evening's entertainment must surely go all thanks from the profession for the best social evening we have had the pleasure to attend.

Many people are desirous of obtaining copies of the Souvenir programme and as there are a few copies left readers may obtain these at 2/6d. each from Reg Evans, 21 Denmark Street, W.C.2.

On November 14 they are appearing in the recording of Hapgood following this up with two spots on Sunday November 16. The big broadcast from his Majesty's Theatre of some two hours duration, is in fact a special Jubilee Variety show and the Revelers will be on the air about 7.30 p.m. As they are due also at the Coliseum the same evening in a show organised by John Sharman, the Revelers will have to manoeuvre smartly to fulfil their second engagement. Luckily the Orchard Room is not open on a Sunday for the boys are also currently appearing at this well known night club.

Undoubtedly Kramer and Wolmer are musicians of the first order and have a remarkable control of their instruments. They have a brilliant technique and are exceptionally well rehearsed—one would even say that there is a certain amount of telepathy between them. The fact that they possess specially built instruments of the latest design is also a great point in their favour.

STUART S. ALLEN.

FENOULHET RESIGNS Big changes in Policy and Leadership of The Skyrockets Orchestra

(MUSICAL EXPRESS STAFF REPORTER)

LEADERS WILL BE SURPRISED TO LEARN THAT AFTER HIS LONG ASSOCIATION WITH THE SKYROCKETS ORCHESTRA, DURING WHICH TIME HE HAS BEEN THEIR CONDUCTOR AND ARRANGER, PAUL FENOULHET RESIGNED HIS POSITION AS CONDUCTOR OF THE BAND THIS WEEK. WELL-KNOWN BANDLEADER-ARRANGER-TROMBONIST WOOLF PHILLIPS WILL TAKE OVER FROM FENOULHET ON NOVEMBER 17. INTERESTING FEATURE OF THIS NEW APPOINTMENT IS THE FACT THAT PHILLIPS AND FENOULHET HAVE THE SAME QUALIFICATIONS IN THAT THEY ARE BOTH BRILLIANT ARRANGERS, BOTH BANDLEADERS AND TROMBONE PLAYERS. FENOULHET LEAVES THE BAND WITH THE VERY GOOD WISHES OF ALL HIS CONFEDERATES FOR HIS FUTURE PLANS WHICH ARE NOT YET AVAILABLE FOR PRESS PURPOSES.

SHEARING SAILS on 27th

ON THE 27th of this month, George Shearing and his family will sail for New York aboard the liner s.s. America. This action confirms Shearing's statement to "Musical Express" earlier this year on his return from the States, that he would return to New York, possibly for good. George Shearing made a remarkable impression on American musicians during his last trip to New York, and was offered a job at the famous Three Deuces on 52nd Street. Although he has no definite plans concerning his future, George can give no assurance that he will return to Britain. He expects to begin work "somewhere" as soon as he has settled down in his New York home.

Les Lambert who, apart from being a member of the band, is also Manager of the orchestra, told "Musical Express" that this change will also mean a change in the musical policy of the band. He said that the comments and criticism written by Lee Conway in this newspaper's "Radio Diary" last week, were quite correct and had a certain amount of bearing on the future policy of the orchestra. He also wished to thank Conway through these columns for the constructive remarks that have been so helpful to the band.

Selby with Beryl Davis

Well known pianist Ronnie Selby who is currently accompanying Beryl Davis in New York, has asked us to remember him to all his old friends in England. People wishing to write him can do so c/o 288 West 92nd Street, New York City 25, N.Y.

Phillips has recently been leading his own band but in latter months has been concentrating mainly on arrangements, some of which have been done for "Toots" Camarata's British export records for Decca. His name is highly esteemed in the music profession not only for his arrangements, but also for his fine musicianship. We feel sure that we speak on behalf of the profession when we wish him every success in his new appointment.

MOSS JOINS STAPLETON

Cecil Moss one of the up and coming young trumpeters in the business will join Cyril Stapleton's Orchestra at the Embassy on Monday week. He will take the place of Tony Osborne who has been with the band since its inception. Osborne is leaving Stapleton with amicable feelings for the purpose of freelancing for a while. Moss who has been playing lead trumpet for Nat Temple during his stay at Butlin's this summer, is currently appearing with Jack Jackson at the Potomac. The Stapleton band will give him a chance to show his fine musicianship which is also combined with a very mellow tone which is essential to the type of band he is joining. People wishing to contact Osborne can do so at Park 4874.

CELEBRITIES at "JAZZ CLUB"



Mark White, Fred Elizalde, Sid Phillips and Tom Henry with Billy Munn, recovering from his recent serious illness, prior to going on the air in last Saturday's "Jazz Club."

Radio Revellers all set for Jubilee Week

All set for a record number of broadcasts during the B.B.C.'s Jubilee Week, the Radio Revellers kick off on the Monday November 10, in a special recording of "Ignorance is Bliss". The new series of this programme opens on November 23 and will run as a live show each Sunday for ten weeks, the Revellers having their own spot each week. The previous announcement gave this date as the 16th.

On November 14 they are appearing in the recording of Hapgood following this up with two spots on Sunday November 16. The big broadcast from his Majesty's Theatre of some two hours duration, is in fact a special Jubilee Variety show and the Revelers will be on the air about 7.30 p.m. As they are due also at the Coliseum the same evening in a show organised by John Sharman, the Revelers will have to manoeuvre smartly to fulfil their second engagement. Luckily the Orchard Room is not open on a Sunday for the boys are also currently appearing at this well known night club.

KRAMER AND WOLMER AT FELDMAN CLUB

Last Sunday evening at the Feldman Swing Club, I had the privilege of hearing Gorni Kramer and Wolmer, the two Italian accordionists, give a show before most of the country's top jazz musicians who had come there specially to hear them. Before an audience that included George Shearing, Tito Burns, Ralph Sharon, Jack Parnell, Aubrey Franks, Bernie Fenton, Cab Kaye, Tommie Whittle, and others, these two fine instrumentalists gave an excellent performance of both standard and original compositions. Undoubtedly Kramer and Wolmer are musicians of the first order and have a remarkable control of their instruments. They have a brilliant technique and are exceptionally well rehearsed—one would even say that there is a certain amount of telepathy between them. The fact that they possess specially built instruments of the latest design is also a great point in their favour.

RESIDENT JOB FOR PLEYDELL Princes, Brighton, Changes Hands

Ronnie Pleydell and his band will be the resident orchestra at the Princes Ballroom, Brighton Aquarium as from December 1, when the ownership of the ballroom changes hands. The new proprietors heard the band when they were appearing at Hammersmith Palais and were so favourably impressed that they signed them up through their agent Alf Preager, right away. The band will be exactly the same size as that with which Pleydell broadcasts i.e. five saxes, four rhythm and trumpet. Since its inception some months ago the Pleydell band has become a firm favourite with dancers as well as their listening public on broadcasts.



Britain's foremost accordionists George Shearing and Tito Burns photographed at Feldman's Club last Sunday with Gorni Kramer and Wolmer. (Photo by Peter Lord)

LENA HORNE ARRIVES



Lena Horne, famous American singer and M.G.M. film star, chatting to Carole Lynn at the Press reception at which she captivated her entire audience. Miss Horne opens at the London Casino next Monday when she shares billing with Ted Heath.

GRACIE FIELDS SCORES AT FINIAN'S RAINBOW

(M.E. Staff Reporter)

AFTER conducting the orchestra during rehearsals for Gracie Fields' appearance in the Command Performance, her Musical Director Phil Green took Miss Fields to see Finian's Rainbow last Saturday. During the show she was spotlighted and the audience gave her such a terrific ovation that she had to appear on the stage. She then sang the theme song from the show "How are Things in Gioiosa Moira" which completely stopped the show. The audience and the musicians in Green's orchestra called to her to sing "Sally". The band busked it for her and her performance, as one would expect from such a consummate artiste, was so great that she brought tears to the eyes of everybody in the crowded theatre.

New Quartet for Ray Ellington

Ray Ellington popular drum-vocalist who is regularly featured on the "Accordion Club" programme is to be joined by three star musicians formerly the Caribbean Trio for his new Quartet which will go out under the guidance of Music Artistes Ltd. Famous theatrical producer Buddy Bradley who will be closely associated with the staging of the new team says "The idea is to present jazz so that it is acceptable to everybody and not just to jitterbugs and a select music public". The Caribbean Trio consists of Lauderie Caton guitar, Coleridge Goode bass, and Dick Katz piano. The boys are building a library of special arrangements including numbers which will feature Ellington's voice as an instrument in the section. There will also be duets between Ellington and Goode. The Ray Ellington Quartet will have its first broadcast in "Beginners Please" this Saturday November 8. "Television are so interested in this new group that they have arranged a visual broadcast for the same day and are providing all transport so that both engagements can be fulfilled. Louis Jordan's "Let the Good Times Roll" will be the signature tune of the new quartet.

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 That's My Desire & Foolishly Yours ... 3/4
 Danger Ahead & Around Love Time ... 3/4
 I'll Make Up Everything & Irish Girl ... 3/4
 Wish Didn't Love & Poppa Don't Prch ... 3/4
 Lovely World and You & Everywhere ... 3/4
 My First Love & Gonna Hold You ... 3/4
 Can't Believe You're in Love & Maria ... 3/4
 I Wonder, I Wonder & Chi Babo ... 3/4
 Sweetheart Ave. & Mid. Masquerade ... 3/4
 My Love is Only (W) & Babette (W) ... 3/4
 Artistry Jumps 4/4
 Artistry Rhythm 4/4
 Begin Beguine 3/8
 Carb. Clipper 3/8
 Cerebral 3/8
 Doubleton 3/8
 Drop of Harim 3/8
 Eager Beaver 3/8
 Fan It 3/8
 Flying Start 3/8
 Living Greens 3/8
 Jump Time 3/8
 Jump Woodside 4/4
 Leave Us Leap 4/4
 Medium Bounce 3/8
 Moonlite Ser'de 4/4
 Night and Day 3/8
 Opus One 3/8
 Opus Pastels 4/4
 One o/c Jump 4/4
 Painted Rhythm 4/4
 Perdido 4/4
 Rocokeye Base 4/4
 Rosetta 3/8
 Sent Over You 3/8
 Skyliner 3/8
 South's Scandal 4/4
 Southern Fried 3/8
 Stomp at Savoy 4/4
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ORCHESTRE MODERNE ON THE AIR
 Jack Coles' Orchestre Moderne will be on the air again November 10 from 11.15 to 12 noon in the Light Programme. The broadcast will introduce a new orchestral piece written by Coles which he calls "Elegy", slow and quiet with almost a sad note in its theme. In almost direct contrast is a bright Swedish March written by Lars-Erik Larsen with a title "Liten March".
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THE VOICE

THE UNION ACTS.

The Musicians' Union acted last week in connection with the Tin Pan Alley band several famous orchestras were playing for charity. These orchestras had offered their services free and gratis in the cause of the Benevolent Fund for the Music Publishers' Contact Personnel Association—a kindred fraternity—as announced elsewhere in this issue. But the Musicians' Union decided that all its members must be paid at least minimum Union rates and the Association was forced to remunerate them accordingly. And rightly so. This is a procedure in which the Union was obliged to act. "Musical Express" finds no reason to dispute the action of the Union. On the contrary, this newspaper congratulates the Union upon adhering so strongly to an established principle. But it takes a situation like this, where inter-professional interests are at issue, to make us realise that perhaps a little flexibility in certain circumstances is overdue.

CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME.

The show business has a long and noble tradition in the cause of charity. The services of the highest and lowest on the stellar scale have always been available in the cause of money-raising for worthy causes. This tradition is older than Trade Unionism. It is as old as Shakespeare himself. Mythologically the Muse is at the disposal of Charity. But there is no mythology about the practical and unselfish service of professional people in this modern age. In our view, therefore, minstrelsy should be no exception. The same generous spirit is there, as witness the splendid gesture of the bands appearing at the Tin Pan Alley Ball. But the letter of the law overruled it. From this situation we conclude immediately that musicians are very conscious of their responsibilities in the great tradition of charity. They have the desire to make it practical but are prevented by a system. Charity begins at home. But Tin Pan Alley is home—right on our own doorstep.

FLEXIBILITY IS NEEDED.

It would appear that reforms and amendments are overdue where Charity is concerned. I make it quite clear that I place no blame on the Musicians' Union for demanding minimums as payment for the services of those generous musicians and bandleaders who appeared at the ball. This procedure is perfectly constitutional and in strict accordance with the regulations. What I do suggest is that a review of the existing regulations might well be considered in the light of a great charitable tradition. Such reforms will present difficulties, I know. It will not be easy for a body like the Musicians' Union to stipulate what is charity and what is not. Unless it protects its members they would be wide open to disgraceful exploitation—a contingency this newspaper would never condone in any circumstances. But I know there are many public-spirited and highly intelligent members of the Union who, between them, could construct a foolproof system of deciding, with great fairness, what a deserving charity really is and whether that event warrants the free services of its members. It could be done.

BOARD OF TRADE PLEASE NOTE.

The Board of Trade, now risen to a prominence in Britain's economic life unprecedented in our history, has departments dealing with all branches of industry. The Overseas Department is concerned with export and the healthy promotion thereof. In this connection the Entertainment Industry warrants a department all to itself. Here is a business which is not only an integral part of the nation's life, but which has increasing export potentialities. Music, instruments and accessories, shows and their royalties, artists, bands and gramophone records. These are the products that are earning hard currency for Britain and which, with healthy encouragement, could earn a great deal more. British entertainment must have high priority—particularly on the air which is an admirable shop window for it. It would be interesting to compute the figures in terms of export earned by British music, musicians and artists. Take all the performers, bands and conductors appearing abroad, the sales of records, the royalties on British copyrights, the sale of Decca records (actual discs exported—not matrices!) which scheme was under way long before the Petrillo ban, and lastly the sales of "Musical Express" throughout Europe and the United States of America. All these collectively are already giving the Treasury some well-earned hard currency. British entertainment is no longer a luxury. It is a valuable national asset.

CASINO GARDENS CLOSE Frank De Vol in Novel Music Deal

ABOUT two and a half years ago, when I used to write the "Top Notes" feature for Band Wagon magazine, I drew my readers' attention to a fine musical programme then being relayed over A.F.N. called "California Melodies", which I still rate as one of the best musical shows of its kind I have heard. The reason for my reference to this programme is because, even then, I did everything short of rave over its musical director who was, at that time, a Mr. Frank De Vol. Mr. De Vol's orchestra and arrangements were first class and made a big feature of the echoing alto sax against strings effect that Stanley Black used on that "Bluest Kind of Blues" record.



AMERICAN COMMENTARY BY STUART S. ALLEN



Margaret Whiting with Paul Weston. Frank de Vol was busy!

My interest in De Vol has not lapsed since first I heard his "California Melodies", and I have followed his busy career ever since. Apart from conducting one of the house bands for Capitol Records (Paul Weston conducts the other), which includes the provision of accompaniments for all recordings made by vocalists Margaret Whiting, Peggy Lee, Hal Derwin, Bobby Hackett, The King Sisters, and others, De Vol conducts the Jack Carson-Eve Arden "Village Store" programme over N.B.C. each Thursday evening. (I do not think the new transcriptions have arrived at A.F.N. yet). What is more as though all this were not enough for one man, news of his latest venture has just reached me. By arrangement with his former band leader boss, Merle Jacobs, of Cleveland, Ohio, who is now an M.C.A. representative, the De Vol library of scores will be available to a local orchestra of similar size and instrumentation providing that De Vol receives a retaining fee for so long as the orchestra wishes to feature his style of music. He will also receive featured billing with all the units concerned in the deal.

First one has been signed between Jacobs, De Vol and Jacques Pollack, who leads the orchestra at Cleveland's Continental Restaurant. Billing reads as follows: "Jacques Pollack and his Orchestra featuring 'Music from Hollywood' with arrangements by Frank De Vol." Pollack has already featured the new style over the air and has received wide local acclaim. The arrangement is now to be extended to other leaders in other territories and should provide De Vol with a large additional source of income. Several major hotel chains are reported to have contacted Jacobs with a view to using De Vol styled orchestras in their restaurants. The library stands at present at over two hundred standards as well as a large section devoted to pops and current show tunes.

WELL-KNOWN manager Bill Burton, who built up Harry James, Frank Sinatra, Dick Haymes, Glenn Ford and others, is now busy working on the final arrangements for a big concert tour to feature Margaret "Mad Cap" Whiting and Frank De Vol's orchestra as a result of their unbelievable success on the air and Capitol Records. Featuring the record hit as well as some new works by the conductor-arranger, the tour has been tentatively set for Hollywood, Denver, Kansas City, Chicago, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, Indianapolis, Cleveland, Philadelphia, and a summer spent in the New York area when their regular radio shows come off the air for the seasonal

rest. When he has the time, and that can't be often these days, I am informed that Frank De Vol studies with composer Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, whose most recent contributions to the realm of film music include the ballet for "Down To Earth" and the score for "Time Out of Mind", which he wrote in collaboration with Miklos Rozsa.

LOU LARKIN, Hollywood's noted music columnist, reports exclusively that Tommy Dorsey's Casino Gardens has closed for an indefinite period due to bad business. Since the nearby Aragon Ballroom has also stated its intention of closing, this leaves the Palladium free from all heavy competition. The Christmas season when they will present Tex Beneke and the Glenn Miller Orchestra, one of the biggest money-making organisations in the States today. Larkin tells me that both the Les Brown and Bobby Sherwood dates for the Casino Gardens have been cancelled. . . . Keenan Wynn has just begun a new series of musical shorts for M.G.M. called "Musical Merry-Go-Round". Freddy Martin and his orchestra are the first subject, and they are to be followed by Harry James and Tex Beneke, all of whom are in Hollywood over the Christmas period. . . . Lovely Kitty Kallen and Buddy Grannoff, of publicist George B. Evans' New York office, will be married next month.

Larkin's Quip. "Frankie Carle is testing an all-plastic piano on his dates. Chief feature of the new instrument is that it may be broken down and carried in luggage. This is news to all but Jimmy Durante, who has been breaking down ordinary pianos for twenty-five years!"

MUSICRAFT records have signed up Shep Fields and

his Rippling Rhythm Orchestra to what they expect to be a long term contract. The orchestra is making quite a comeback in popularity and is currently at the Glen Island Casino, New York, which Fields owns on a lease, until they begin an extensive tour now being scheduled by the new Mus-Art Agency which has the band under contract. The twenty-three piece outfit will have to get busy with their recording if they want to amass a back-log before December 31. I understand that Capitol in Hollywood are using every possible studio to record as many artists and discs as possible before the deadline date.

OCTOBER 18 marked the beginning of King Cole Week, marking the tenth anniversary of this famous combination. As announced the week before last, Oscar Moore has now left Nat and Johnny Miller to return to Los Angeles for a long rest. He recently purchased a record shop there and intends to devote a considerable amount of time to its running. My latest report tells me that he will not join the Three Blazers as a permanent member, although he will record with them. Oscar's place has been taken in the Trio by former Lionel Hampton guitarist Irving Ashby, who joined ten days after their Carnegie Hall concert on the 18th. I have had no news of this yet, but if it went anything like as well as the Chicago affair, it should have been magnificent. Ashby, a former "Down Beat" columnist, had travelled with Cole for several weeks in order to learn the book. . . . Undoubtedly the highest paid threesome in the music world, Oscar Moore's share of the earnings for last year was about fifty thousand dollars—an average thirty-six per cent. of the net take. Cole's percentage is said to be forty,

leaving Miller twenty-four. I expect that Nat's share will be increased from now on—Oscar was a founder member. The Trio is currently at Frank Dalley's New Jersey Meadowbrook with the Tony Pastor band. Their scheduled Troubadour can be heard on A.F.N. each Thursday at 8.30 p.m. Art Van Damm and his group provide the exhilarating music. . . . The Jean Sablon number "Passing By" is my tip for a big plug over here soon. It is among the top tunes on current A.F.N. broadcasts. "Peg O' My Heart" and "My Desire" are other top plugs—all oldies you'll note. . . . Columbia Records announce that Frankie Carle has sold over 25,000,000 records since forming his new band in 1943.

BILLIE HOLLIDAY is responding well to her treatment for narcotics. She has already served four months of her sentence of one year and one day in a Federal Reformatory, and may be released in the very near future. She has gained at least ten pounds in weight.

How's Your Radio? Archie: "Ah! Mrs. Nussbaum!" Mrs. Nussbaum: "You were expecting maybe the King Cohen Trio?"

WOODY HERMAN has ordered Continental Artists, his managers, to cancel an entire week of his mid-western one-night stands this month so that he can remain in Chicago for a solid six days of recording for Columbia. . . . Charlie Barnet and his band are to begin a week at Harlem's Apollo Theatre on November 22. . . . Louis Armstrong will give a Carnegie Hall concert on November 15. . . . Russ Morgan, the guy who made that "So Tired" disc, has just completed seventy-five weeks at the Biltmore Bowl and has left for a tour of one-night-stand spots at the Bowl has been taken by Jan Garber. . . . Tommy Dorsey has been offered a season in Buenos Aires, Argentina, at a guaranteed salary and with full air transportation paid for his entire aggregation. Although he has not accepted, he is definitely interested in the deal. . . . D.D. has stipulated, however, that should he agree to the project, one month's salary must be deposited in his American bank in advance. The fee mentioned was in the region of 17,500 dollars a week. He will play at the New York Capitol Theatre for three weeks beginning December 24.

STAN KENTON is scheduled to play at Frank Dalley's Meadowbrook for two weeks commencing November 13. G.A.C., who booked the date, have also booked the popular Desi Arnaz aggregation into San Francisco's Palace Hotel until Christmas Eve. This is the first time that this agency has secured a booking at this location.

idea to have a series on the air for the "under twenty"? There is talent aplenty. ZERO.—The scribes on the "Daily Herald" who know not what they write. They should be jumped on from a dizzy height!

GRAMOPHONE COMPANIES. With this new American non-recording move, now is the hour for our old friends Wally Moody and Harry Sarton to really get busy and ferret out the right British material for the American market. Not only current songs but MATERIAL. In view of the present Petrillo situation it would be a good idea for the two companies to hold meetings with the bona fide pop writers, in the same way as they do with the bona fide publishers. They might be amazed at what they would get out of the bag!

PEN PORTRAIT. JIMMY KENNEDY. Britain's Ace writer—writer of such hits as "Let's all sing the barmaid song," "Play to me Gypsy," "My song goes round the world," "Teddy Bears' Picnic," "Red Sails in the Sunset," "Harbour Lights," "Serenade in the Night," "Roll along covered Wagon," "South of the Border" etc. etc. and I DO mean etc.: Irish, ex-school master, with a flare for words and music that came off!

IF ever there was a poet of the people it's Jimmy K. Attained the rank of Captain during the 1939-45 war, early forties, fresh complexion, charming manner, recently back from the U.S.A. Current hit—"The Old Spanish Trail"—that's Jimmy Kennedy!

THIS WEEKS QUOTATION. (RALPH WALDO EMERSON) 1803. A word of encouragement to all struggling young song writers. "If a man write a better book, preach a better sermon, or make a better mousetrap than his neighbour, tho' he build his house in the woods, the world will make a beaten path to his door."

"MORE HARM THAN GOOD"

I WAS interested to read a couple of weeks ago in a contemporary paper, an article by Mr. Irwin Dash, the well-known music publisher. In his article, Mr. Dash rose to the defence of Mrs. "Tawny" Neilson whom he describes as . . . "the most abused and kicked-about person that has ever worked at the B.B.C." Mr. Dash is as entitled to defend Mrs. Neilson as others are to attack her and I have no quarrel with either of them on that score. However, in his closing passage he says . . . "but I do think she has given Tin Pan Alley the best break it has had in years." May I humbly ask, "Is Mrs. Neilson's job to give Tin Pan Alley the breaks, or is it to encourage and present Dance Music in the best possible manner?" The answer is so obvious that I will say no more on the matter, only I'm afraid Mr. Dash has done his "cause" more harm than good.



By Lee Conway

IN view of what I have had to say about "Jazz Club" my readers (or am I being optimistic?) will probably think I have a "down" on the programme. Let me hasten to say that nothing could be further from the truth. I try to be as honestly impartial as it is possible for anyone to be. I am forced to write this before making my comment on what I heard last week, and what I heard last week was the same as I have heard before—with one difference. I was startled out of my boredom by hearing Harry Parry announce that he was NOT going to play his usual clarinet solo (and very wise too sez I, with Carl Barritt on the programme). Instead, Harry proceeded to render "The Poker Game"—and I do mean "render." It's been a long, long time since I heard such a "busy-busy" drumming. In case you are under any misapprehension that that is Be-Bop drumming, may I be the first to disillusion you? It just doesn't mean a thing.

THAT Heath band goes from strength to strength and there's nothing I can add to what has so ably been said before by others. But, did you hear the Eric Jupp arrangement of "Baila"? It was simply super. Congratulations Eric Jupp on a wonderful arrangement and ditto Ted and the band for a brilliant performance.

By the way, Norman Burns, why all that "busy-busy" drumming? In case you are under any misapprehension that that is Be-Bop drumming, may I be the first to disillusion you? It just doesn't mean a thing.

ONE band which, in my way of thinking, does not get the plaudits it deserves is the Oscar Robin band. Let me, therefore, here and now say that it is a great band and deserving of the highest praise, if for nothing else, for the terrific "atmosphere" they get whilst playing. Listening to the outfit the other Saturday I was immensely impressed by the reed section and the "beat" of the band. The brass too, were very good though not up to the standard of the saxes, and the arrangements were excellent. Bob Dale the male vocalist has a fine voice and sings very pleasantly, apart from a slight tendency to wobble off the note. The girl singer is Annabelle Lee. The closing number "Hamp's Boogie" had me jumping in my seat and I almost "felt" the enthusiasm of the band coming through the loudspeaker. . . . which is what I mean by "atmosphere." All in all, a band to be reckoned with.

"TERRIFIC" is not a word to be used loosely, but I do feel that it is the proper and only adjective to describe the harmonica playing of Max Geldray. Listening to him in "Variety Bandbox" I realised that here was someone who knew how to be commercial without being corny. Furthermore he showed that the much-maligned mouth-organ when in the hands (and mouth) of an expert, can sound really MUSICAL. If further praise be necessary, let me say that Max has as much feeling for Jazz, if not more, than some of our so-called "leading lights."

MY spies tell me that "Cabin in the Cotton" is coming off and no one seems to know why—including the powers-that-be. I understand that the listening figures for this programme have gone up every week since its inception and though I don't set much store by such things, it proves that the programme is popular. Then why is it coming off? Your guess is as good as mine.

AND despite my remarks about Billy Ternent's "ricky-ticky" music, I want to hand him a bouquet for the splendid manner in which he accompanies the acts in the aforementioned programme every week. Not the hardest of tasks but certainly not the easiest and Billy and the band do a grand job!

PLANS for the B.B.C. Jubilee are, I understand, all afoot. There will be, on the lighter side, special programmes by the Charlie Chester gang, "Ignorance is Bliss" and "ITMA" among others. But where oh where are the dance bands? Why not allow Pat Dixon and/or Charles Chilton to produce a programme showing the changing pattern of dance music since the early days of the B.B.C. Or is it too much to hope for?

WHAT'S happened to the girl singers? Since Beryl Davis left these shores for pastures new, there doesn't seem to be anyone to take her place. Or is there? My tip for the next star in the female vocal firmament is, Bette Roberts. This girl has voice, style and everything it takes. Listen to her with Chap-

WHO is our greatest broadcaster? I have been conducting a little private investigation and I find that the odds are greatly in favour of Wilfred Pickles. I am more than inclined to agree, in fact I would go further and say that I doubt if he has an equal anywhere. For the record; the runner-up in my investigation was Stewart Macpherson.

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AL-HAM-bra OF THE AIR.—I thought it might be alright, but NOW. . . . BEAUTIFUL DREAMER.—The songwriter who believes everything the publisher tells him! Beautiful Dreamer awoken to me! CAMARATA.—These shores could do with a few more Salvadors! DAIRY TALK.—Even if Eric Coates is a member, so what are they doing? EASY ON THE AIR.—The Charlie Chester Show. FRIENDSHIP ON THE SURFACE.—I saw it all at the Alley Ball! GRACIOUS ME! Publishers meetings at the B.B.C.? HANDS ACROSS THE SEA.—To Petrillo for giving us a chance to make a song and dance. I WONDER WHY Bond Street is more interested in chain letters than songs! JUMPING JIMMINY! You don't like "Musical Express"? What are YOU trying to hide? KISS to Joy Russel-Smith for Variety Band Box. Maybe it's a late one—but now she really rates one. LAUGHING WITH TEARS IN MY EYES.—No news from my favourite M.P. Alright—the laugh's on me! MY COMPETITION.—Don't forget next week is the last for entries. Closing date November 12. Keep listening!

Tin Pan Alley "The Troubadour"

REVIVALS.—Why do they all play "Peg O' My Heart" so slowly? SERIES on his own at last—for Steve Conway—in the New Year I hear. THE VOICE.—In times of stress, the press said Vera Lynn. Her fame was made firmer in Burma. She's still a favourite trill. UNDER THE TABLE.—ME at the Tin Pan Alley Ball. VEXING! Kitty McShane doing a "Garbo" at the theatres! YOU TELL ME.—Don't you think it would be a good

THE RASCALS IN ACTION

Photograph of Johnny Puleo and the Minevitch Rascals. Johnny Puleo "throws" a six-footer during the show of the Minevitch Rascals at the London Casino, where their contract was extended.

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A WORRY WARFARE

An Editorial Comment on Jazz Criticism

A FORTNIGHT ago in these columns M. Charles Delaunay held forth upon the jazz critic's rôle. He found some harsh things to say, especially about what he called "the well-meaning amateurs" whose petty rivalries and disputes have done so much to discredit jazz criticism in recent years. But his was not harshness for its own sake. M. Delaunay's article reflected the self-questioning spirit which is abroad among sincere jazz writers of the day. At the same time, it is possible that Delaunay did not make sufficient allowance for the difficulties which beset the aspiring critic.

In a recent article in The National Dance Band Champion I had occasion to point out that jazz, of all the arts, was the least academic. This lack of academic principles in the music itself must necessarily confuse the critic who, needs to be, creates his own standards of judgment out of his purely personal reactions to the music. It is, of course, true that personal likes and dislikes condition every critic's appreciation of what he writes about. But his approach is based upon academic accepted rules and aesthetic standards.

Jazz criticism did not grow up with the music; indeed, the first substantial critical work ("Hot Jazz" by Hugues Panassié) was published only in 1934, by which time jazz had already become a complex body of diversified strains and styles. The importance of New Orleans in the historical scheme of things was, at that time, scarcely evident to the most perspicacious critic, and when, eight years later, Panassié's "The Real Jazz" was written, the author had to admit to a complete volte face in order to accommodate the mass of fresh historical evidence which had become available in the period between the two books.

Few critics would have the courage to cancel out their acknowledged premise of criticism

as did Panassié in "The Real Jazz," but that he did so is in itself a commentary on the sadly inadequate material available to the jazz writer. Even to-day there are many missing links in the chain of jazz history, any one of which if brought to light might nullify the standards which we now accept and on which we now work.

In his article Delaunay admitted human fallibility: "We

"Few critics would have the courage to cancel out their acknowledged premise of criticism"

all make mistakes . . . but the broader our knowledge and the more acute our powers of observation, the smaller are our chances of error." True—but unhappily there are still great gaps in our knowledge, and the most acute observer can hardly be expected to exercise his critical faculty in a vacuum! Thus it is that personal bias has come to play so big a part in jazz criticism, for lacking the evidence of history, the critic, more often than not, is forced into making his own reading of history. In Panassié's Hot Jazz (1934) one may read a very convincing argument on the importance of Chicago Style; in The Real Jazz (1942) there is an equally convincing argument on the importance of New Orleans Style. Which of these arguments is the more valid? That is something which only the documentary evidence of history itself can reveal. Failing such evidence we must rely upon

the persuasive power of the author's pen. The real danger of this "personal" criticism is that the gullestons may accept it all unquestioningly—the gullestons not only among jazz lovers but among aspiring jazz critics! The little world of jazz criticism is full of "lesser deas."

As we now stand it is in many ways the best course for the tyro to make a synthesis of all critical findings rather than

among practicing musicians there is far less antipathy towards jazz than there is among the critics—perhaps because the musician is reader than the non-playing writer to appreciate at least the technical and expressive qualities of the music. Stravinsky, Milhaud, Krenek, Francaix, Lambert, Malinge, Ormandy and Stokowski are but a few of the more famous names that spring to mind.

In recent years there has been greater activity amongst avowed jazz critics than ever before; in fact, many a writer has been catapulted to prominence by sheer wordy industry. A notable example is Mr. Rudi Blesh of America. Blesh and his kin represent the most dangerous partisan movement in jazz criticism to-day—a movement which Stanley Dance has humorously dubbed "The New Orleans or bust boys."

Blesh and his brothers have, I fear, taken too much to heart the gibes of the legitimate critics that jazz is virtually "gutter music" and, in embarrassed self-defence, flaunt the music's humble origins as prima facie evidence of its earthy folk value. As far as jazz is concerned the term "folk music" is one which has already been bandied about much too loosely and, while it is both convenient and expedient to excuse the shortcomings of early jazz by labelling it with this well-worn tag, no thinking man will any longer accept the definition as other than an adventitious critical device.

"Jazz as folk music" or "Jazz, the music of the proletariat" are equally false premises for constructive criticism. Let us be bold. . . . "Jazz as music" must be the critic's watchword hereafter, and if the music has its shortcomings they must be faced without shrinking from the consequences and sheltering behind a facade of doctrinaire theories.

Delaney made a sound point with his attack on the bankruptcy of legitimate music criticism so far as jazz is concerned. In quoting Ernest Ansermet, he has the exception to the rule, however, Delaney unwittingly confused the issue. Ansermet is primarily an executant, and

blindly follow the workings of a single critical mind. Unfortunately, the leader complex is not confined to power politics, as the present position of sectarian discord in jazz clearly shows. And in this unacademic air of ours it isn't merely a question of rival schools of thought tangling with each other on specific incidental issues: it is a question of the partisan gangs of jazz criticism opposing each other on the fundamental issue of the music's origin, development and significance!

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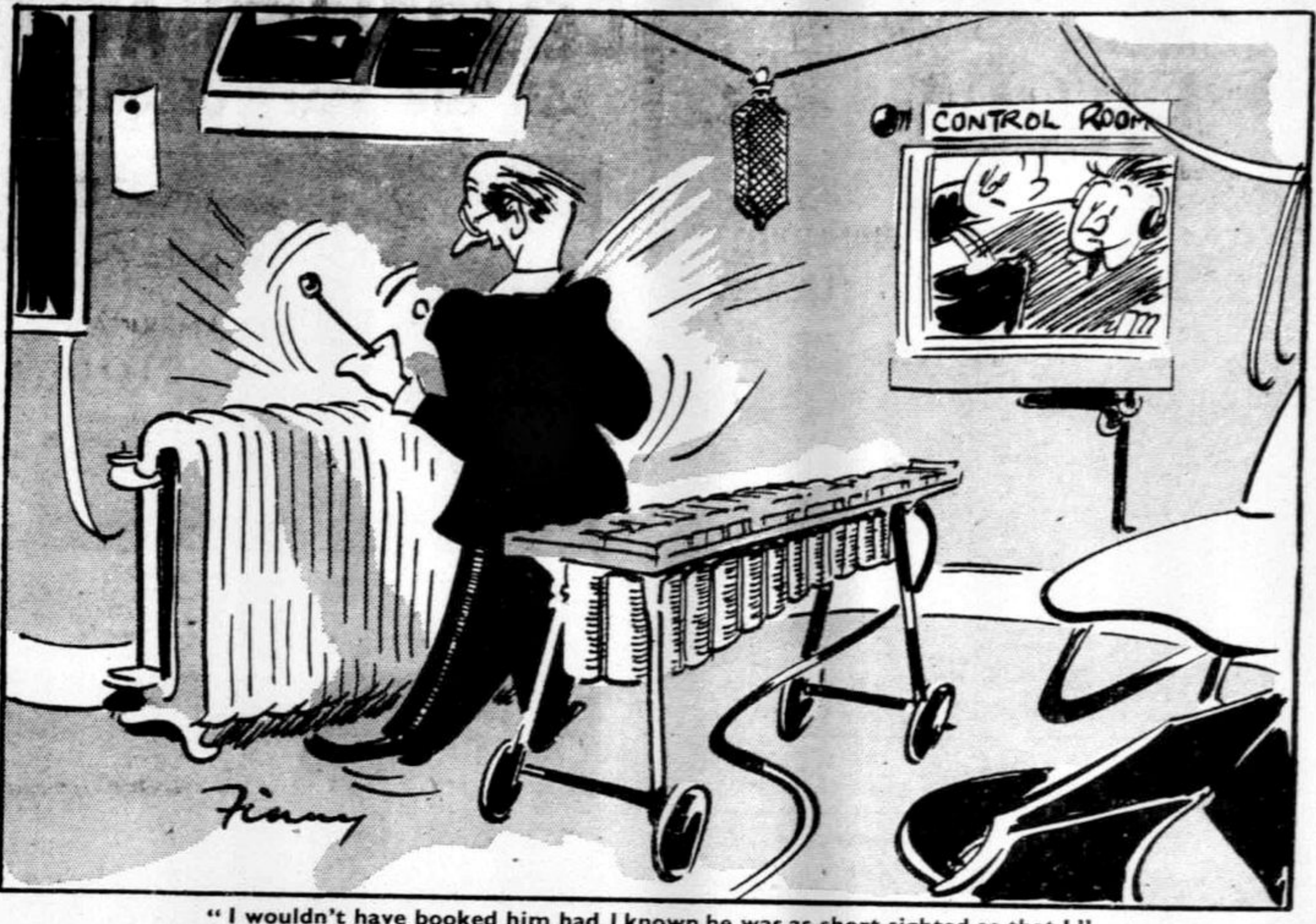
we do not think that anyone of importance is likely to have been around. Nevertheless, it is a subject intriguing enough to have involved us in considerable research. At present we are still in its throes and in dire need of assistance. In particular, we sadly need the matrix numbers of 8275, 8278, 8281 and 8293, and shall be more than grateful to any reader who can supply them.

Other famous names that reached the Okeh lists at this time included Richard M. Jones and Heral Thomas. And there was Charlie Creath of St. Louis, whose little known recording of "King Porter Stomp" (9019) on 8210 is worth a hearing.

But despite all these and Oliver too, Clarence Williams still had pre-eminence with personal appearances on at least thirty-one records! For the time being, however, we will ignore Mr. Williams, since nearly every discographer from Barnes to Bridgman is involved in a riot of conflicting conclusions based upon all sorts of extraordinary premises. When they've straightened out their differences we will review their progress—until then, let us explore other channels.

Apart from the Armstrongs, the most desirable item hereabouts is the Original Tuxedo Orchestra's "Original Tuxedo Rag." This is very rare indeed, which is a pity. As a piece of jazz it beats 8198 (mentioned last week) and is worth a place in anyone's collection as much as an Oliver Gennett. Catalogue number is 8215.

Finally, there are a couple of obscure items which might repay research—8274, on which Billy and Mary Mack sing "Fetch It When You Can" and "You've Got to Quit Your Low-down Ways," with an accompaniment of piano, banjo and trombone; and 8294, which has Alberta Hunter singing "Double Crossin' Papa" and "I'm Hard



"I wouldn't have booked him had I known he was as short-sighted as that!"

WHAT right have I—a percussionist of the nineteen-twenties—to sit back smugly in the unassailable stronghold of my office and air my views on the drummers of to-day? No right whatever if my opinions are based upon obsolete shibboleths and if my taste is still influenced by twenty-year-old styles. Those who know me, however, will not accuse me of standing still in this age of rapid progress. Having watched the up-and-coming champions reach the top of the percussion tree, a fight which afforded me much excitement and a great deal of interest, I feel certain that my opinions on the percussion section of dance orchestras to-day will be absorbing if not provocative to all drummers. Although I have not played for more than twenty years, percussion was my business. I loved it and I made a speciality of it. In my day I couldn't have been so bad, for I held down some first-class jobs here in London and, indeed, wrote a very considerable amount of technical literature on percussion instruments. I mention this only as my qualification to write this article and in view of the fact that the new generation of drummers will not be familiar with my name.

I used to have a slogan which may or may not have been infallible. "A drummer is only as good as the band he plays with." Perhaps this statement is a little broad, but in point of fact it means that the perfect drummer in the perfect band sounds much better than the same drummer sitting in, extempore, with a scratch outfit. The reason for this is because the perfect drummer in the perfect band has the benefit of adequate rehearsals and the perfect setting for his application, ingenuity, style and showmanship.

I cannot review the percussion situation without mentioning names. In doing this I shall be reprimanded for leaving some names out. Believe me this is not intentional. I can only mention names of those who illustrate my particular point. There are, and always have been, drummers in obscure parts of the country who are potential world-beaters. In fact Jack Parnell was telling me recently of a drummer he met somewhere down in Kent whom he promptly placed in a class with himself. But that is all beside the point.

Looking around, I cannot be blamed for commencing with the drummers right in the limelight to-day. For this reason I choose Jack Parnell, Jock Cummings and George Fierstone. I wonder what these great artists will think of my presumption in discussing their work? I choose Parnell because he is in the most discussed, most publicised and probably the greatest "drawing" band in the country—that of Ted Heath; I choose Cummings because he is with one of the greatest show bands (of the highest musical standard) we have—the Squadronaires; I choose Fierstone as a member of a most versatile dance orchestra—the air playing dance music and in the pit at the London Palladium at night—the Skyrocks.

What strikes me very forcibly about them is the tremendously exacting demands made upon them. Take Parnell. In the first place there can be no leiscure for this drummer. He is constantly rehearsing and when not rehearsing he is playing on the job. Constant playing keeps a drummer on his toes. The standard of orchestration in the Heath band are not to be compared with what we used to consider intricate in my time. Consequently the standard of performance required from a man like Parnell to-day is fantastically high. In my day an ability to read together with maintenance of a steady tempo was the main pre-requisite of a drummer. A nice appearance, flash kit and, discreetly applied, a little showmanship qualified you for a smart engagement. Not so to-day.

My impression, therefore, is that taking Parnell, Cummings and Fierstone as examples of the modern drummer in the jobs of to-day they have all we had and plenty more. While I always advocated that no drummer should be classed as such

"The amount of artistic drummers are conspicuous by their absence" says JULIEN VEDEY—pioneer drummer of the 1920's.

without a sound technical training on his instrument, to-day it would be absolutely impossible to fit into bands like those of Heath, the Skyrocks or the Squadronaires and play their intricate arrangements, adding the flashy showmanship so necessary in this age, without a sound and very thorough technical training.

There is one point I have not yet discussed. That is what I term "application." Most important thing to any drummer in a dance band is "application." This I call the ability to fit in all the little rhythmic tricks of the trade. This is the fine art. I regret to say I have heard many new-age drummers who appear to me to have

LEARNED a few rhythmic tricks and whose only claim to being dance drummers is the ability to "bung them in" indiscriminately. Nothing sounds worse. One terrible trick every body seems to be doing is that awful emphasis at the end of every two bars, finishing on a "te-tonk." In simple words, without musical notation, I can describe it as "one-two-three-four-five-six-seven-E-E - TONK!" I think it is positively crude to emphasize the end of phrases which are obvious anyway. It is very prevalent to-day, whereas in my time it would have been considered corny. Why do it at all?

Another bad habit is quite new. I refer to bashing four-in-a-bar on the open cymbal. There is no justification for this in ANY band. It is noisy, has NO rhythmic value whatever and detracts from a marked rhythm instead of adding to it. This is one bad habit among drummers which hurts my susceptibilities. In my day soloists and teams playing ensemble passages were very particular about what accompaniment the drummer was giving them and had much to say about what was suitable. I cannot imagine any of them standing for four-in-a-bar on the OPEN cymbal, soft at that!

In general, the amount of what I call "artistic" drummers are conspicuous by their absence. By the word "artistic" I mean drummers with a wealth of rhythmic tricks and the ability to apply them in the most effective places with discretion and artistry. It seems to me that the general view is that all you need is the ability to bash out four-in-a-bar steadily and accurately (with the inevitable "te-tonk" at the end of each bar) and that makes you a dance drummer. There has always been sufficient work available to absorb this type of drummer. But there is no glamour, no stardust and no big pay packet for him and there never will be. The band in which he plays will tell you, in his favour, that he is "steady as a rock." True. And he sounds like one. Some of these lesser bands would sound more interesting without any drummer at all than having a rock tied round their necks.

I used to carry around with me a practice pad which I put into silent operation when I was not playing. Judging by the wire brush "te-tonk" work so prevalent at the moment—I should imagine the practice pad has fallen into dis-favour. But I would heartily recommend all and sundry to give it a second thought and purchase a practice pad as a valuable aide mecum and use it against the time that MAY come when ALL orchestras and their leaders will demand something a little more technical from their drummers.

The Jam Session was not new to us in the 1920's. I myself had the good fortune to be resident drummer in the greatest "Jam

frustration which all musicians feel when their inherent rhythmic proclivities are repressed. But I soon realised that I had to adjust myself.

One little reminiscence may be fitting to close this survey of mine and may prove surprising to the younger generation of percussionists. When I used to record with dance orchestras they did not record drums at all. The cymbal alone constituted the drummer's recording kit unless, of course, he had vibraphone or xylophone passages. I remember doing one session of four numbers in which I had one cymbal crash. That took place in the first number. I collected my fee when the master was made and went home (to my practice pad, of course!) And the fee? Five guineas. That's what we used to get—five guineas for one session—one cymbal crash! And in an age when a pound was a pound. How much do you get to-day, Mister Drummer? Whatever you get I play. The transition brought and musically, you have to be far more talented than we were.

Book Review :

By Charles Wilford

RECORDIANA

By John Davis and Gray Clarke

JAZZWAYS. Pub. Musicians Press, Ltd., London, 1947. Price 15s.

THE American volume "Jazzways," published late last year, was reviewed in "Musical Express" dated January 14, 1947. The above edition has now been published in this country by Musicians Press, Ltd.

This deluxe edition is an almost exact transcript of the original manuscript, with some detail improvements in make-up and editing. It has stiff covers, no advertisements, some new photographs—Baby Dodds in colour and an excellent Gillespie—and has got rid of some of the more epigrammatic reading matter, such as "News from Europe." In return for these advantages the price has been set at 15s., as against a dollar for the paper-covered original American edition.

"Jazzways" in its new dress remains a first-class photo album with incidental text. There are at least two dozen really good full-page photographs of jazz musicians—and full-page means 11 inches by 8½". This is the sort of shiny expensive-looking volume it's nice to receive as a Christmas present.

5. OKEH 8200-8299.

The primary significance of this "century" was the emergence of Louis Armstrong under his own name (for the first time) at 8258. On this record his Jazz Four accompanied Hociel Thomas in "Adam and Eve got the Blues" (8473) and "Put It There" (8474). These were made in Chicago a day or so before the first recordings by Armstrong's Hot Five on Nov. 12, 1925. Of secondary importance is the appearance of Perry Bradford's Mean Four as an accompanying unit to Laura Smith (8246), Alberta Hunter (8268 and 8278) and Louise Vant (8275, 8281 and 8293). Armstrong, of course, appeared on the Okeh label earlier as a member of Clarence Williams' groups. These outings are still a little obscure, but everything under the Armstrong name has been well documented. The position with Bradford is very different, and even the matrix numbers of some items are still missing. We have made some study of the subject, and, as far as the possibility of leading musicians having been present is concerned (other than the problematical Johnny Dunn),

Jazz

Edited by DENIS PRESTON

to Satisfy," to an accompaniment of piano, saxophone and cornet. Those are the details according to the supplements, but we have never heard the records in question and Columbia cannot trace the matrix numbers. The Hunter titles may link up with a Bradford session, but we are at a loss for the identity of the trombone behind the Macks.

6. STAN KENTON.

Going from the sublime to the what we will euphemistically call "the other end of the scale," here is the line-up of the new Kenton Orchestra: Trumpets: Buddy Childers, Ray Wetzel, Al Porcino, Chico Alvarez and Ken Hanna. Trombones: Milton Bernhard, Eddie Bart, Harry Forbes, Harry Betts and Bart Varsalona. Saxes: George Weidner, Bob Cooper, Warner Weidner and Eob Gioga. Rhythm: Stan Kenton (piano), Eddie Sfranski (bass), Shelly Manne (drums), Laurindo Almeida (guitar) and Jack Costanza (bongo).

This shows little change from the old dynamo which suspended animation almost a year ago. Notable absentee is Vido Musso, and significant recruit is Al Porcino. We will admit that it takes a more than competent musician to hold his place among the Kenton brass, and we shall watch the new Kenton recordings with interest—and not only for the bongo! When the discs appear, and there is plenty of time for them to beat the Petrillo ban, they will no doubt be noticed on this page. But we do not expect the brief to come our way!

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WHAT GOES ON IN BRUSSELS

By Musical Express Correspondent
STUART S. ALLEN

BRUSSELS is quite a town. And if you've got plenty of cash you can have quite a time there. Everything is gay and the atmosphere is enough to revitalise you without even touching the food. The city is streaming with new American cars, there are clothes shops galore and the beer is excellent—so is the stronger stuff!

But how is the musical situation?

Though not as good as it could be, people are happy and philosophical. Although I was informed that most of the best Belgian bands were out of the country during my stay, I did get to hear one unit that, for my money, is one of the best of its kind in Europe—or will be when it settles down.

Run by a good looking twenty-year old Dutchman named Eddie De Latte, who is also an exceptional violinist in either the straight or swing idioms, the orchestra consists of trumpet, trombone, two alto and a tenor doubling flute, oboe and baritone sax, four rhythm, harp and eight strings, and puts on a show that many of our own units would do well to emulate. They play at the Hotel Metropolitan Café, which is the biggest and most popular in Brussels, and compares in size to one of Lyons' Corner House Restaurants.

The answer to that was given me by Eddie De Latte himself. They are much better off than before the war, and dance musicians have never done so well for themselves. The union in Belgium is practically non-existent and only a small percentage are members. It does not mean much, has very little influence and does not enjoy the confidence of the majority of musicians, who find it better to fix scales with managements on their own and make all their arrangements to suit their individual needs. While Belgian musicians would welcome a strong union, they find that they are better off by making their own agreements at the moment.



Before the war most Belgian restaurants featured salons or orchestras, and dance music was almost unheard of in such establishments. Since the war's end dance music, especially the sweet type, is enjoying tremendous popularity, and dance musicians are able to draw decent wages and work in places which, before 1940, would not tolerate a dance band.

While De Latte plays a lot of gypsy music and popular classics, he also features modern arrangements of French and Flemish folk tunes, South American numbers, which are very popular, and a certain amount of out-and-out swing. This balance, with additional comedy, I have heard some and they are great. They will all appear on the Victory label.

Before I left, I met Johnny Claes, who is now happily married and looks disgustingly healthy. He runs a super club at Blankenburg, two cars and a big trading company. Before he left for Italy, Johnny asked me to send his regards to all his old friends in this country. If any of you care to write to him, I'll be glad to give you his address. Also in town was Freddy Crump, who has been sending 'em at the Pariseanna Club for umpteen months. Freddy still does his drum act and is phenomenally popular. There—he can hardly walk down a street without stopping at least four times to greet friends. He is currently in Prague doing same act, and says "Hi-yah!" to everyone over there.

As I went mainly for holiday purposes, I did not get around as much as I could have done, so didn't see quite a few things. Anyhow, that's Brussels for you—I enjoyed it very much, including the juke-boxes that show pictures. They're really something!

better go unsaid. The standard of music is very low indeed, even though the actual clubs are quite lavish. I will say no more on this.

It was a pleasure, however, to meet Jack Kluger and Felix Faecoq, who run the biggest music business and recording plant in this part of Europe. While Felix looks after the contracts and all the commercial aspects of the business, Jack supervises the recording sessions, broadcasts, handling of musical numbers and also manages to produce a couple of shows a month for touring in the American Army zone in Germany. Jack told me that he thinks the swing away from jazz music will last for about two years. The demand in Belgium, as in other countries, is for sweet commercial numbers, and his factory are pressing this type of number as fast as it can.

But while jazz is down in popularity, Kluger does not intend to neglect his jazz catalogue. He has some fine masters cut for him in Paris by the Mel Powell Sextet with Django Rhinehardt, some by Tyree Glenn and members of the Don Redman band, and a few American sides recorded specially in the States. I have heard some and they are great. They will all appear on the Victory label.

Further notes for Club organisers will be included in forthcoming issues, and I shall be pleased to receive notes from Club directors for inclusion, particularly regarding difficulties which they have encountered in their own experience.

SEVERAL readers have asked for more news of professional players, including "life stories", and particulars of their forthcoming engagements. Naturally, we already have regular contacts with many of the most well-known players, but there must be a large number of "pros" and "amateurs" who are not already on our records. If any of them see these notes, I shall be glad if they will pen to paper, and send me the latest news of their current activities, together with any other items which they think might be of interest to readers. All accordionists who play in public are invited to send details of their forthcoming engagements, for inclusion in the columns of the paper. Reports of concerts in which the accordion is featured are also welcomed.

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Accordions Times

Edited by J. J. BLACK

I AM pleased to be able to record that several new Accordion Clubs are in the process of formation. Many teachers have written to say that they are anxious to get a Club going amongst their pupils, and asking for whatever assistance or advice it may be possible to give them. The first important requirement of any successful Club is, of course, a qualified teacher. Where a good teacher is the man forming the Club, the chances of success are almost certain. If the initiative in forming a Club springs from someone else, then it is most important that he should first of all set about making contact with a reliable teacher in the district.

One teacher who is at present making preliminary arrangements for the formation of a Club is Mr. Maurice Jones of Cannock, Staffs, a member of the Accordion Teachers' Guild. As Mr. Jones is an Associate (with Honours) of the British College of Accordionists, his Club should run on sound musical lines from the start; and as he already has about twenty pupils, there will be a strong nucleus for both senior and junior sections.

One of the questions which teachers contemplating in the formation of a Club are asking is whether the Club should be confined to their own pupils, or whether they should allow other interested persons to join. The answer, I think, must depend upon whether Club nights are to be instructional sessions, or whether they are to be confined simply to band practice. Due account would have to be taken, however, of the playing ability of the prospective members. Obviously, there would be no need to insist on an experienced player taking lessons, but where some of the members of a band are possessed only limited ability, they might well hold up the progress of that band unless they were receiving regular instruction.

AS I have mentioned before, it is always wise to enlist the active support of a local dealer. He will have numerous contacts amongst accordionists in his district and will be able to put the organiser in touch with prospective members. He will also be able to advertise the Club on his premises. The Club organiser would do well to point out to the dealer the many benefits which would accrue to him as a result of being connected with a successful Club. There would undoubtedly be beneficial effects on his sales of instruments, music and accessories.

The problem of finding suitable Club premises may raise difficulties in certain instances; but here again, the dealer will very often be able to assist. Costs of a suitable meeting room will vary in different parts of the country, but, as an average, it should be possible to find something suitable at a cost of about 5/- per night. It is quite a sound plan to charge members so much at each session to cover the costs of the room, and the reasonable fees of the teacher, in addition to the annual membership charge which would be used in connection with general Club expenses.

The organiser should keep careful record of Club receipts and expenditure, or should arrange for a suitable person to be appointed Treasurer to look after this aspect of the Club business. Generally speaking, it is best for pupils to buy their own music, though a few Clubs provide members with music as part of the Club service. This, however, is not generally considered to be so satisfactory, and will result in a considerably larger membership fee.

Further notes for Club organisers will be included in forthcoming issues, and I shall be pleased to receive notes from Club directors for inclusion, particularly regarding difficulties which they have encountered in their own experience.

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Jack Laroque who during this summer, led the orchestra for Greatrex Newman's "Music Box" at Scarborough has just completed the formation of his new orchestra which will make its first appearance in Television on November 8. Laroque who is himself a versatile musician being both a fine clarinet player and violinist, has formed the band of musicians who double on various instruments. The orchestra plays everything from dance music to gypsy airs and classical music, and it is to be hoped that they will shortly be heard on the air. A programme would surely give a variety of entertainment to every type of music lover.

Blue Rockets in Scotland

For the next two weeks the Blue Rockets are at that popular Scottish rendezvous for dancing, the Eldorado Ballroom, Leith. On Monday of each of the two weeks, the outfit will go over to the Empress Ballroom Dalkeith. This is in line with their previous engagement at the Eldorado in March this year.

With the completion of the above dates the Rockets travel South to open their variety tour at the Regal Southern on November 24. This will be followed by a week at the Chelsea Palace commencing December 1. Since week the Rockets are playing at the Empire Dewbury with a well balanced, fast moving mixture of comedy and music.

One-Nighters for Ruby Richmond

After a successful summer season in Newquay, Ruby Richmond and her Dance Orchestra are now busy on one-night stands throughout Cornwall. She tells us that Val Thurley, late of Bertini, has now taken over on 1st tenor from Archie Taylor who has returned to the North. Alto sax player Clem Jennings has recently joined Ronnie Pleyden and his place has been taken by Arthur Cooper.

Snooker League

Len Franks well known tenor player with Carroll Gibbons' Orchestra has asked us to inform our readers that a newly formed snooker league is in process of formation. The Gibbons orchestra has already played a match against Arsenal Football Team and it is proposed to get three more bands in the league to play against other well known football teams. Any bands interested in joining the London Professional Men's League can contact Franks c/o Carroll Gibbons at the Savoy Hotel.