



Accordian Times and Musical Express

Editorial and Advertising Offices 38, Store Street, London, W.C.1 Telephone: LANgham 1131

THE VOICE

THE results of the election for the Executive Committee of the Musicians' Union, Officials and Delegates, is now known. In returning to office the positive proposal of the last Executive Committee...

HEARTENING

THE results of this election is truly heartening. Until now there has been such vehement moil slinging by political rivals and it is deplorable that they should choose the last Executive Committee...

WARNING FACTORS

THESE warning factors with political bias are quick to attack any person or any movement towards which they are inclined. If a critic, for example, is not kind to a certain record or broadcast he is immediately branded as a "Fascist," a "Communist" or an "anti-Semite," according to the whim...

INTELLIGENCE

THOSE who are so active in slinging mud and thumping the tub for their political movements do not realize that it is a measure of their own inferiority expressing itself. Musicians with extreme views might as well reserve their venom for Hyde Park. There is no place for it in the modern room. Furthermore the time and effort expended might be put to better use in perfecting their own instrumental efficiency...

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Howard Lucraft continuing his series on the American musical scene, tells of A LOCAL CARNIVAL AT CLOSE QUARTERS

WHILE in Hollywood I had the opportunity to study American radio at close quarters. All radio there is, of course, commercial, and there are four main network stations—B.C. (American Broadcasting Company), C.B.S. (Columbia Broadcasting System), N.B.C. (National Broadcasting Company), and the Mutual network.

There is a large number of independent stations operating in various parts of the country to come over at the same hour allowing the evening standard Times (Eastern, Pacific, etc.). Also, all the shows go to every station on the network as they have distribution or a market. There is a 30-second break in between each programme for the stations to insert their local commercial announcements as possible.

SECOND THOUGHTS

By Steve Race

THERE has been a change around the Musical Express office. The reader might be interested to know what has happened. The Managing Editor has now become Manager-in-Chief, Dick Harrison. The Chief Sub-Editor has become the Deputy-Assistant Managing Editor, and the Editor has become the Deputy-Assistant Managing Editor.

The position here is probably rather different without the complete staff. The choice of programmes, I am now more than ever convinced, however, that the British public's apathy towards dance music is entirely because they have so little on the air, particularly at the times the majority can listen.

The four main network programmes emanate mostly from studios in New York and Hollywood, etc. The studios in Hollywood were built only a few years ago, and they are a handsome dream. Each building has a large number of studios of all types, many arranged for audiences and all have the most modern recording equipment.

Another popular figure of our offices is Pearl Fisher, the girl who answers "Musical Express" can I help you? The oldest of the studio wood actors. These are attended by a very large proportion of young men, and they are the most interesting of the war; many are ex-servicemen under the G.I. Bill of Rights, and they are being trained, etc. to those from the States. The consequence is that

there is always a surplus of highly trained radio men—producers, engineers, announcers, etc., and the best hold the jobs at the bigger stations are the most interesting. Many of the commissionaires and studio attendants are smart young college boys who have completed their radio school training and swing to the glut of radio men cannot get a better job.

CONGRUOUS DESIGNS

Northampton, further illustrations are still required. It is hardly an opera that is notable for the continuity of its various elements, but it is notable for its exaggeration of its constructional failings (dramatic, not musical).

A GREAT BOSS

The sensation of these performances was caused by the appearance of Boris Christoff in the title role. The fact that he is a Bulgarian and that he is a Russian, while the rest of the opera was given in English, in no way detracted from his success.

OUT OF THE OLD! 1949 says goodbye with a bang by MALCOLM RAYMENT

THIS is the way the year ends, not with a bang but with a whimper (as said by T. S. Eliot). The year 1949 reaches its close with musical programmes which will live for the whole of 1950 and probably much longer. In the past, there have been several interesting programmes, but few which were well worth our attention. Perhaps pride of place should be given to the two performances of Boris Godunov at Covent Garden, of which I was present at the last, which took place on December 4.

OVER TO SOUTH AMERICA

From Harold Morris comes the following report of a most interesting and unusual event which took place at the Wigmore Hall on Thursday, December 8.

AMATEURS, BUT THEY DON'T SHOW IT

Let us take a quick glimpse for a moment of the achievements of an amateur orchestra—the Modern Symphony. Conducted by Arthur Denington, it gave some distinguished performances at the Northern Polytechnic Theatre on Saturday, December 3.

NEW IAN PARROTT WORK

The Schiraz Orchestra by Ian Parrott was played with much assurance by the orchestra. It is a concentrated piece making many demands upon the players. Nevertheless, the performance was always accurate and convincing.

THE SHOW STOPPED

At the end of his two great seasons, the conductor and the orchestra were held up for several minutes. He has a great range of power and intellect in his voice, and when he is called upon to sing, he makes every note carry and every syllable distinct.

FAIRFAX AT SULLY'S

ANOTHER important operatic event has been the revival of Sully's "The Merry Wives of Windsor" at Covent Garden. I have not yet seen it, but I have heard that it is a very fine production.

FINE TEAMWORK

It is not good singing which makes this new "Fairfax" so successful. It is the teamwork of the whole cast that makes it so interesting. The whole cast throw themselves wholeheartedly into their parts, and the result is a most convincing production.

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OUT OF THE OLD! 1949 says goodbye with a bang

weakest part of the orchestra, were on this occasion to be worthy of praise than their colleagues. In the Andante Cantabile their beautiful tone and admirably restrained playing was marred only by excessive scolding of the strings.

THINGS TO COME

Shortly, the L.P.O. is to have again the advantage of Edward Van Binnin's training and conducting. Among notable forthcoming events are those of Bartok's Concerto for Orchestra (R.H.M. from Toronto on January 4) Mahler's "Song of the Earth" (Albert Hall, January 20), and Beethoven's Ninth (Royal Albert Hall, February 9). On March 2, with the assistance of the L.P.O., will be the first performance of English of Benjamin Britten's "Spring Symphony" will be given at the Albert Hall.

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BARBIROLLI AND VAN BEINUM

INAUGURATING the first of the Sunday evening orchestral programmes in the Home Service Sir John Barbirolli and the Hallé Orchestra will broadcast a programme of three works on January 1. The concert opens with Max Reger's Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Mozart. Then comes Debussy's "A Song of Summer," and the Symphony in G minor, Op. 48, No. 1, in which Sir John has given more than one memorable performance, both here and abroad.

On January 4, also in the Home Service, the well-known Dutch conductor, Eduard van Beinum, pays another visit to this country to conduct the London Philharmonic Orchestra. The completely orchestral programme includes Mozart's Symphony No. 39 in E flat (K.503), Brahms' Variations in a Theme of Haydn, and Bartok's Concerto for Orchestra.

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BOBBY HOWARTH
LATEST acquisition to Moreside and Southport dance band is noted tenor sax player Bobby Howarth, who has now married and settled down. Bob has thrown in his lot with Gaumont-British. He played clarinet at the age of 14, the saxophone at 15. His players with the George Evans 30 sax team and whilst in the R.A.F. did a 17,000 mile tour with a Service band. Bob, strongly opposed, prefers ballad to ballroom dancing and likes most "straight" music.

NEW BALLROOM FOR LIVERPOOL

MERSEYSIDE, considered by many the birthplace of good dancing, is to have a new first-class ballroom, to be called the "Leopard," owned and managed by Messrs. Ballrooms, as exclusively announced in Musical Express. The new ballroom is to be in the "Glenisla Theatre." So far, opening date has been set for early February, and there are many guesses taking place as to which band will get this plum.

JOHNNY VIOLENT AND HIS VIOLIN

IT'S pretty safe to say that Johnny Violent has more fans amongst the older music lovers than anyone else in Liverpool and Southport circles. Father, who was conductor of the Manchester and Pendleton Orchestral Societies, which gave him several concerts at the Manchester Free Trade Hall, Johnny got his first professional job at the age of 19 as musical director of a cinema orchestra. He served in France as leader-conductor of the headquarters staff band and afterwards formed the Ex-Servicemen's Orchestra, and appeared with it at the Lord Derby's Knowsley Hall. Thus followed several years as M.D. at the Magnet and Coliseum Theatres, followed by employment in U.K.A. at the famous Empress of Britain on a world cruise in which Johnny was the principal broadcast from nearly every part of the world. This was up till 1939, when he was appointed M.D. at the Scarborough Hotel, Southport, where he has been ever since. The B.B.C. have

promised him an audition, for the New Year.

PRESENTED BY LEWIS BUCKLEY

GEORGE EVANS and His Orchestra are to make a special appearance at the Plecton Hall, Liverpool, on January 1, at 7.30 p.m. for a Sunday Concert featuring Bill Gietard, Judy Dancy, Norman Stephens and the Bernice Sharpe Dancers.

BROADCASTING TIME IN THE REGIONS

WE are led to believe that early in the New Year the "Band of the Week" programme is due to commence. In the opinion of Northern band-leaders this does not give them sufficient air-time. More of this type of programme is desired by the already lively competition in the North and this trend to raise the already high standard which the band-leaders have developed against heavy odds during the past few years. Northern band-leaders fully realise the difficulties, but nevertheless realise that obstacles have or can be overcome.

TOMMY HUGHES AND HIS BAND

TOMMY HUGHES is a semi-pro band leader and a standard which would not disgrace many a professional outfit. Tommy has been playing since he has been ten years old, as pianist-arranger Jack Woods, who has been a regular on the Philharmonia, at this time under Karl Böhm, former music director of the State Opera, and now with the Vienna Opera.

OVERWHELMING SOUND

More than any of the above events, the misanthropic "The Hollow Men" with which I began, applies to the two recitals. The broadcast of Humphrey Sparke's setting of Edith Sitwell's poem "Gold Coast Customs" is certainly one with a bang! Indeed, the orchestra, described by the B.B.C. as a chamber orchestra—though it consists of brass wood-wind (no horns), liberal percussion, double basses, and two pianos—makes an overwhelming sound.

HONEGGER'S "JOAN OF ARC"

On Wednesday, December 7, at the Albert Hall, the B.B.C. Symphony Concert consisted of a performance of Honegger's "Joan of Arc" at the Albert Hall, which was preceded by Sibelius's Seventh Symphony. The large list of artists taking part was headed by Constantine Cummings and Valentinian (both singing parts). Basil Cameron conducted the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, and C. Clifton and G. Clifton of Mary Datchler Girls' School.

FROM A FIRST VIOLIN DESK

This was the impression that Wednesday's performance gave me, but as I was sitting almost in the front row and therefore beheld most of the solo singers and the speakers, I naturally more than heard the words in a very ill-balanced form.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF MUSICAL EXPRESS FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE LONDON FELLOWSHIP OF MUSICIANS

Dear Sir, As you are the leading newspaper for professional musicians, I should be grateful if you would assist by publishing this letter.

On December 11, "Reynolds News" gave prominence to the following facetious conclusion: "The London Fellowship last night dissociated themselves from the strike on the grounds that it was contrary to the policy of wage restraint of the Trades Union Congress."

As President, I state most emphatically that no such statement has been issued by the L.F.M.

The following copy of similar telegrams were sent to the Musicians' Union Secretary, and Editor of "Reynolds": "Statement in Sunday's Reynolds is a forgery. London Fellowship of Musicians 100 per cent loyal support M.U. aims in present dispute.—Edward Blundell, President."

There is no doubt that this spurious statement was concocted to discredit the L.F.M. and to create dissension in the Union, at a time when 100 per cent unity is essential to our cause during the present dispute. It might possibly be linked up with the opposition, who oppose the support given by the L.F.M. to the candidates who were successful in the London Branch Elections.

The L.F.M. is 100 per cent loyal members of our Union, and has never, nor will it ever, usurp what appears from time to time on Agendas and voting papers.

The stated principle of the L.F.M. is "Musicians professional interests and welfare." It is "Musicians" in the London membership three objects, namely:

- 1.—To foster a greater interest in matters vitally affecting musicians through the medium of the London Branch of the M.U.
2.—To explain the meaning of propositions, amendments, new rules, and technical matters which appear from time to time on Agendas and voting papers.
3.—To encourage a larger attendance at Branch meetings in order to secure a wider expression of opinion than hitherto.

May I thank you on behalf of the L.F.M. for the privilege of expressing your valued columns, this attempt to split the M.U.

Yours sincerely, EDWARD BLUNDELL

VOCAL DISCS

It is not the best thing for an opera singer; he takes both the original score, indeed, produced by the composer, and does it with it and it is generally sung by Elvira along on the original score, the second volume song of Leporello. It was as Elvira that we first heard Schwartzkopf with which the Company in 1947, and also sustains the vocal line admirably. The original score is in the record, as she did then. Admirable performance is given by the Philharmonia Orchestra under Josef Krips.

SCHWARZKOPF

ELIZABETH SCHWARZKOPF offers some of her best singing on records to date on COL. L.A. 2185, the second volume recitative and aria "Mi Tradì" from the first Act of Don Giovanni; this scene was set.

PERFORMANCE

The difficulty with this setting is that it is difficult to see how the full effect can ever be realised in the hall. The radio, the orchestra and chorus have to be considerably toned down to be heard in the hall. It is a pity that the orchestra, described by the B.B.C. as a chamber orchestra—though it consists of brass wood-wind (no horns), liberal percussion, double basses, and two pianos—makes an overwhelming sound.

A LANDMARK IN BRITISH MUSIC

Such a violent piece of music frays the nerves, and it is easy to understand hostile feelings, but surely no one can deny that it is a landmark in British music. Incidentally, there is a similarity between "Gold Coast Customs" and Stan Kenton's "This Is My Theme." Both are recitations against a powerful orchestral background. The difference is, of course, that the latter is a popular song, and the text of "This Is My Theme" is not and never will be an Edith Sitwell poem. It is a thousand miles; nor has Kenton the technique or artistic recitation of the latter. The latter, due, however, may be the work of the same composer, but the latter, due, however, may be the work of the same composer, but the latter, due, however, may be the work of the same composer.

QUEBEC CONCERTO
A NEW RECORD SERIES

A NEW series of record programmes will be inaugurated on January 1 by Jonah Harrington under the title "Jonah Harrington's Record Album." The programmes will be presented in a ranging miscellaneous character in which listeners will hear both Bing Crosby and Toscanini. Emphasis will be made on new records and the general character of the series will be on popular lines. The Album will be broadcast weekly on Sunday mornings in the Light Programme.

SONGWRITERS' FRANKLYN BOYD LEAVES FOSTER

THAT excellent vocalist, Franklyn Boyd, informs us that on December 31 he will be leaving Foster, with whom he has been working for some time. Boyd told Musical Express that he is a specialist in the field of vocal records and that he has been a long and happy association.

SOUND TRACK

As the year draws to a close I would like to thank all those readers—hundreds of you—who wrote to me throughout 1945. Your letters are a valuable indication as to just how far I might be succeeding.

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