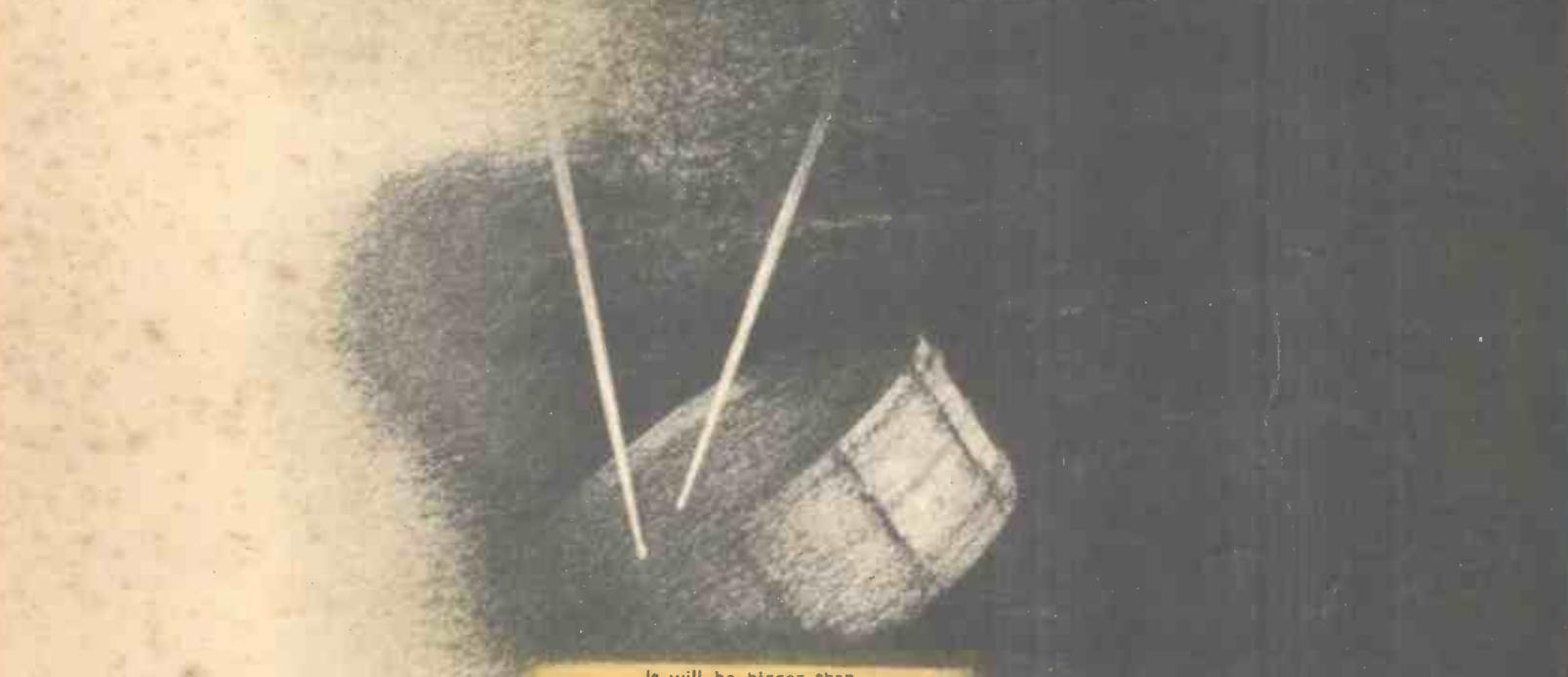


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The Melody Maker



Editor
P. MATHISON BROOKS

Technical Editor
DAN S. INGMAN

After months of silence, voluminous letters have reached many British friends of Louis Armstrong. We have had ours; twelve pages of delightfully naïve recollections of his English tour. (See page 173). He wishes to be remembered all round.

EVERYBODY is talking about the soaring reputation of Harry Roy. At the Anglais he works his band and plays up to his audience in a manner reminiscent of Ted Lewis and Abe Lyman. Harry uses his nut.

After all these years the band at Chez Henri is being changed. Charlie Kunz, after eight years, has left.

THE "Bag o' Nails" is more popular than ever with musicians. Gerry Moore, Johnny Walker and Sid Hieger—all fine artists—are the attraction. A "muck in" with these boys is a busman's diversion.

KEN DUNCAN, the British Musicians' Open Golf Champion of 1931, has for years been the resident dance band director at the Queen's Hotel, Southend. On

1. Harry Roy;
2. Spike Hughes; 3. Lew Stone;
4. Roy Fox; 5. Bert Wilton;
6. Louis Armstrong; 7. Howard Jacobs;

Editor
P. MATHISON BROOKS

Technical Editor
DAN S. INGMAN

GHOST

Thursday, February 9th, he was given a well-earned benefit. It was a great night.

GOLFERS are in the news! Eddie Freeman, who has originated the new four-string style of guitar playing, says that, in his opinion, Joe Fenton is the finest technician in this country on the six-string guitar.

Joe Fenton is, of course, the present holder of the Golf Championship title.

ONCE again Howard Jacobs finishes (?) with the Savoy firm.

"THE ERA'S" poster, "Ambrose Sensation—Exclusive," proved to have reference to the May Fair Hotel leader's transference from H.M.V. to Brunswick records, news which was given in the Press by Mathison Brooks as long ago as December 14th last!

IT is significant that whenever Lew Stone discusses the Monseigneur Band he always refers to it as *our* band—never *my* band.

GOOD work noted. Bert Wilton and Freddy Mann playing trumpet in the pit orchestra of "Ballyhoo" at the Comedy.

ARNOLD SCHONBERG thoroughly mogadored us with his Op. 31 as broadcast on February 8th. Dance musicians who fancied themselves as modern harmonists are fancying themselves no longer.



"I'm afraid this isn't much fun for you, Mr. Fillis"

Editorial Offices:
93, LONG ACRE,
LONDON, W.C.

Telephone: Temple Bar 2468
Proprietors—Odhams Press Ltd.



8. Art Christmas;
9. Freddy Schweizer; 10. Freddy
Mann; 11. Frank Coughlan; 12. Charlie
Kunz; 13. Arthur Rosebery; 14. Sid Hieger.

Advt. Manager Managing Ed. for Odhams Press
FRANK J. TAYLOR JOHN DUNBAR

NOTES

"THREE-JOB" Rosebery had the misfortune to lose all his engagements at the same time, and through circumstances over which he had no control. Strange how the breaks go.

A PERSONAL success. At the Kit-Cat diners just shimmy on one spot in front of the bandstand to watch Roy Fox leading his band.

L AWRENCE WRIGHT got himself married on Wednesday, February 1st, to Miss Betty Warren, the well-known actress. Congratulations!

CABLES from Spike Hughes to **THE MELODY MAKER** from America bore his telegraphic address, "Sixbells, New York."

THE whole of the Monseigneur Band attended and played at the All Yorkshire Dance Band Championship on February 13th. Terrific enterprise on the part of the organiser, R. M. Ackroyd, of Leeds.

THE scandal of Logani's Restaurant, disclosed in last month's **MELODY MAKER**, was exposed in the County Court recently, when musicians secured judgment against Oscar Logani. Judge Dumas described Logani's conduct as "a terrible ramp."

A RT CHRISTMAS has done the world of good for Roy Fox's Band since he joined up to lead the sax section.

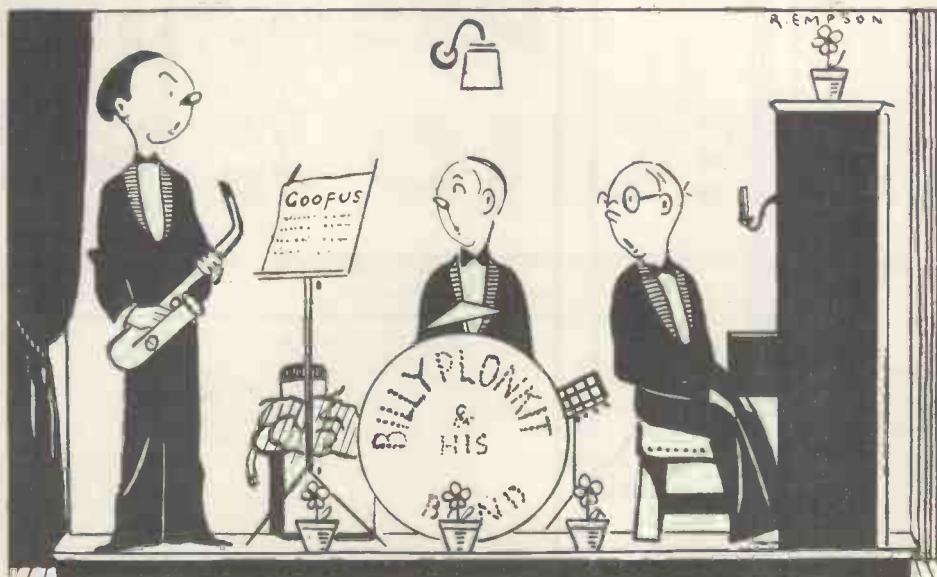
A BE ROMAINE, Jack Hylton's saxophonist, having left the band, has returned to his home country, Australia, where he hopes to form his own stage band.

THE Australian trombonist, Frank Coughlan, who visited London some years ago and played with many leading bands, including Fred Elizalde's Music, is one of five brothers, all of whom play instruments and mostly brass at that!

REPORTS have it that the Platinum Blonde—Jean Harlow—has encountered Jay Whidden, ranching in America, and is contemplating making him her leading man in her next film.

DICK ROYLE, late of C. & C., is now in charge of the Orchestral and Radio Departments of United Music Publishers, Ltd. Watch him hustle!

A BRILLIANT comedy instrumentalist is Freddy Schweizer, the saxophonist whom Jack Hylton discovered in Germany and engaged on the spot. He was known as the "Joe Crossman of Berlin."



"Now in this number we have to muck about. Sort of make out we can't play properly"

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TRY A LITTLE TENDERNESS
CAN'T WE MEET AGAIN
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16

NUMBERS

SMALL ORCH.

12/6

He ought to be —



— the correspondent in the evening paper, who, rashly embarking on the subject of radio dance bands and song plugging, spoke of:—
"Bundles of pound notes being passed across to the leader in the restaurant during broadcasting."

THE gentleman on page 238 (to which please now turn) with the dirty look and the fluffy legs is not all you would suppose him. Nor does the fact that he is wearing a snappy bathing suit necessarily imply he is a Channel swimmer; in fact, you can tell from his pipe that he's a land-lubber and probably sucks a good saxophone.

Ah, there's a clue! Is it Groucho Marx, or is it? Those dreamy eyes; that dashing 'tache—and, cop the lamps! It must be he!

Yet, suppose you put one, Peter Rush, on the spot before a camera skilfully employed by Bill Rogers, and suppose you let Peter make-up just a bit, would it be he? Yessirs, it would—and is!

Sunny Sim

The king-pin of Sunny Bournemouth is Sim Grossman, who has now reigned in that town for four years at the wonderful Pavilion ballroom.

His band is a most versatile and stylish outfit, from which sub-units of genuine Cuban rumba and Continental tango instrumentation can be recruited.

Sim not only relies on good style rhythmic and melody playing, but knows the value of entertainment, and he features straight and comedy vocals and a hot harmony trio and finds that the propitious introduction of old-time dances is eminently to the taste of certain sections of his public.

Sim has had a thorough grounding in the business and one of his earliest jobs was as cornet in a little four-piece

combination in which Billy Cotton played drums, Arthur Rosebery the piano and Lal Johnson the violin.

After that he had hosts of jobs until he became a leader himself and now he is one of the biggest noises out of London.

It is no mean triumph to hold down a public dance hall engagement for so many years. There are plenty of offers for such a job.

• Gigsters Get Together •

Ireland, despite its many troubles, can at least claim that some of its musicians are not afflicted with that apathy and unnatural abhorrence for any form of organisation which characterises the London player.

From Rube Nathan, the well-remembered guitarist, who now lives and works in Belfast, comes news of a fine organisation of musicians which has commenced in that town.

It is known as the North of Ireland Dance Musicians' Association, and one of its chief interests concerns the vexed question of standardising rates of pay.

The Association has already made some very strict rules in this connection, and has fixed a basis of five shillings per hour for all gig work, a modest enough sum, in all conscience, to make it possible for all well-meaning musicians to rally-up. And, as all the worth-while musicians over there are joining the movement as fast as they can, it will be seen that the scandal of instrumentalists working for a few shillings per night is rapidly being stamped out in Belfast.

The North of Ireland Dance Musicians' Association already boasts over 80 members. Its enterprise even goes to supplying all those who join with an attractive badge, which is always worn at functions at which the musicians perform.

London, with its hundreds of actively engaged dance players, would do well to take a lesson in enterprise from the

handful of musicians in the Emerald Isle.

• Hard-Working Mother! •

Ray Summers, who has a band well-known in Lancashire, had the laugh of a lifetime recently.

A neighbour (a lady) came in to see his people and asked them whether they had heard about the woman who had several sons with her on the stage, and every one of them playing instruments!

When Ray asked her for further information about this marvellous mother she produced a handbill which read:

"Mrs. Jack Hylton and Her Boys" appearing at the Manchester Hippodrome," etc., etc.

• Worth Winning •

In the last Christmas MELODY MAKER an offer was made by the *Daily Herald* of a prize of £50 to the dance band giving the most effective tie-up with the newspaper's £7,500 dance tune contest.

There were a great many entries as a result of this offer and, finally, the £50 had to be shared out among six entrants, including Arthur Gadsby's Band, of the Lido Dance Hall, Croydon; J. A. Griffiths' Commodore Dance Band, of Swansea; A. Gambage's Band, of the Imperial Ballroom, Nelson; Munro's Band, of the Grafton Rooms, Liverpool; F. Jarrett's Band, of the Astoria, Northfleet, and H. W. Saxton's Dance Band, of Rotherham.

• A Drum for Colossus •

The world's largest double-headed bass drum has just been installed in the mighty Rex Cinema (Paris) Orchestra pit over which Pierre de Caillaux presides. In addition to this, a set of fifteen chromium-plated chimes, nine feet high, has also been installed, and these tremendous instruments were built by the British firm of Boosey & Hawkes, Ltd.

The problem of their transit to Paris was not easily solved, but finally they were carried by the largest of the Imperial Airway planes, and even then the



A Suggested Badge

door of the fuselage had to be removed before the instruments could be loaded.

Britain seems now to be getting a new grasp of the overseas market for musical instruments, which, for some time, was lost in a large measure to America.

The rates of exchange help the British manufacturer, of course, but, apart from that, the quality of the produce counts a great deal, especially in such a case as this when the goods are ordered almost regardless of cost.



...the biggest drum in the world...

A Hold-up

The last barriers of colour prejudice are being broken down, due largely to the growing prestige of America's coloured orchestras. Even in the Southern strongholds of the States, where the colour line is more rigorously enforced than in any other part of the world, there is now more tolerance, though a coloured man, no matter how famous, never knows quite how he will be received by the white man when he enters the uncompromising territory.

Some time ago, Cab Calloway and his Band booked a tour of the most popular halls below the Mason-Dixon line and found to their delight that they were received favourably everywhere. But to avoid complications on trains, in which coloured people are not allowed in the same coaches as white passengers, they provided their own transport in the form of a big private charabanc in which they made their jumps from one town to another.

The last place on their touring list was Tybee, the most conservative stronghold of the Old South prejudices, and they were naturally enough rather nervous of the reception which awaited them as they sped towards the town. When, on the outskirts, instead of a single motor-cycle policeman to hold them up there appeared a whole detachment with a lieutenant at the head, they feared it meant that they weren't going to be allowed to enter the town at all.

"This Cab Calloway's Band?" demanded the officer as the charabanc drew up. "Yes," said Cab, apprehensively, "what's the matter?"

"Nothing," said the police officer, "only we've come to march you to the



...key to the city...

peared a whole lieutenant at the head, they feared it meant that they weren't going to be allowed to enter the town at all.

"This Cab Calloway's Band?" demanded the officer as the charabanc drew up. "Yes," said Cab, apprehensively, "what's the matter?"

"Nothing," said the police officer, "only we've come to march you to the

City Hall. The Mayor is going to present you with the key to the city there."

This may not sound much of a story over here, yet it is by way of being the tale of a minor miracle.

Catch-penny Advertising

It is an old stunt on the part of dance promoters so to twist their advertisements that casual readers will erroneously imagine that some top-line attraction is appearing with the band or as an act.

Many a musician who has worked an odd date under the banner of a famous West-end dance band is not slow to bill his own name quite small and modestly, but quite bold and gallantly as late of JACK HYLTON'S BAND, for instance, thereby persuading people into the belief that Jack's band has been engaged. It is not a fair practice but nevertheless it dies hard.

Still I doubt if there was ever a thinner excuse or a more glaring impertinence for the improper use of a band leader's name than the one afforded by a case in Worksop.

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Sissons & Son, Printers, 'Guardian' Office, Worksop.

Look at this reproduction of a handbill and see how Roy Fox has nothing to do with the affair at all!

The public really ought to be protected from too-sharp stunts such as these.

Le Mot Juste

At one of those Kensington soirées where everything has to be done just-so in an attempt to make it appear Mayfairish, Sidney de Jong put in an appearance to fulfil a special engagement as pianist.

He was, of course, as a solo artist, dressed immaculately in tails, and when

he was shown into the ballroom and introduced to the hostess, that lady primly looked him up and down and then said:

"Why, Mr. de Jong, are you in full dress and not a dinner jacket?"

Sidney made the obvious retort that it was customary, whereupon the dowager said, "Well, I don't think it should be; you might be mistaken for one of my guests."

A less experienced and quick-witted man than Sidney might well have been stricken dumb by such an offensive remark, but he didn't bat an eyelid.

"That's all right, madam," he replied cheerily, "I don't mind—I've a thick skin!"



"Why are you in full dress?"

So Low

Found myself passing through Streatham the other evening. A blaze of light on the roadside told me I was passing the Streatham Locarno. Why passing? A good suggestion, so in I went.

The place was packed. I had originally intended to lower a coffee in the balcony, and watch the goings on from there. But so full was it that I couldn't get near enough to the edge to see the bands. So, nobly paying my one-and-six, I descended to the equally crowded floor, and luckily found a seat near Alan Green's band.

Though hardly on a par with the world's best, it plays with rhythm and has plenty of "Newingtons." And Alan dominates it in the way that a band leader should, but as so few do.

Whilst I was there a singing competition was announced — lady dancers being invited to sing a song into a microphone.

When the M.C. had announced this, he concluded with "And Mr. Green will show you how to sing it!"

Alan's surprise was comical, but he is never one to back out, and duly had a go, although he would be the last to claim ability to show anyone how to sing.

Later, a further competition, this time for men, was announced. One of the cabaret artists demonstrated a cowboy rope-spinning trick and invited imitation. Of course, poor Alan was dragged into this also, and made a mess of it with great good humour.

Amazing fellow, Alan. I have never met a fellow with so little self-conceit, so utterly devoid of "bull," and so completely frank about himself, his earnings and his history.

In addition to these pleasant characteristics he told me the best story of the month, for which I am duly grateful.

A certain dilapidated little theatre in the north (said Alan) decided, after a long run of blood-and-thunder melodramas, to stage a revue.

One was duly fixed up, and the touring

musical director thereof wrote the customary letter to the resident M.D. of the theatre asking what band books he should require. "Bring all you've got," was the reply.

The touring M.D. duly arrived on the Monday morning and sought out the dingy little theatre. There he found a gloomy individual sweeping up the floor.

"Hey, there," said the revue conductor. "Where's the manager?"

The gloomy one tapped himself on the chest. "I'm the manager," he said, dispiritedly.

"Oh!" (a little embarrassed) "Well, can you introduce me to the resident musical director?"

Again the chest-tapping. "I'm the resident musical director."

"Oh! Well, what about the band call?"

"There ain't no band call."

"Why not?"

"No band."

"Then why on earth did you tell me to bring all the band books I've got?"

"Well, you see, it's like this. We've only got a piano in the orchestra, but the legs of the piano stool are broken off—!"



The stool's too low

rounding the lot is a gorgeous "oyster shell."

The drummer is Jack Simpson and the shell is the new band platform erected at the Piccadilly hotel. Both are things to which we raise our hats. The shell because it "sets off" the band and gives it a chance to sound its best, and Jack because he's a fine drummer and a notable xylophonist to boot (no wisecracks, please!).

Jack has been playing with Syd Kyte for a long time past, and has recently made a couple of xylo solo records (that is, four titles) for H.M.V. Get them, they're worth hearing.

As a rule I'm not very interested in records of this type because they all sound the same. But Jack has a new idea, and he's given me permission to tell you xylophonists what it is.

Instead of the usual endless chromatic runs and rapid arpeggios, Jack has a trick, which I have christened the "Simpson Trickle," because (a) it's Simpson's, and (b) because it sounds like a trickle. Two very sound reasons.

Taking the notes of the chord, Jack does a trill on the semitone below each, starting on the lower note. For instance, if the chord is, say, C major for two bars, he will trill first on the B natural and C for two beats, then on the F sharp and G below for two beats, then on the D sharp and E below that for two beats, and finally on B natural and C an octave below the first two, for the last two beats. This is the descending order, but it is just as effective ascending.

It seems, at first thought, that this should sound all wrong, but it doesn't, as anyone who has heard the records will agree.

It's easy, it's effective, and it's added something new to the xylophonist's bag of tricks. Thanks, Jack!

Dunbar Recites

Our tame clarinet expert, Rudolph Dunbar, is in the news again. On February 15th, at the premises of Messrs. J. Curwen & Sons, Ltd., he gave his first clarinet recital for the benefit of his pupils and others who were interested. That it was a howling success is proved by the fact that the hall was packed, and people were turned away.

He prefaced his playing with a lecture on clarinet playing, which was received with the keenest attention. Then, accompanied by Miss Mary Lucas, he proceeded to play several difficult technical solos in which he demonstrated his supreme mastery of his instrument.

During his remarks he pointed out that the clarinet is very much neglected in this country as a solo instrument.

"In France," he said, "programmes of clarinet music are broadcast two or three times a week, whereas in England a clarinet radio recital is an extreme rarity."

Altogether a notable occasion for Dunbar and his pupils.

But that does not end the story of Rudy's activities. The following night he was featured as a solo artist at a Charity Ball held at Claridge's Hotel.

and scored an equal success. He was presented, by his admirers, with a gold fountain pen and pencil.

Next October, Rudolph sails for an extensive concert tour of the West Indies and Central and South America.

His first concert will be in his birthplace, Georgetown, the capital of British Guiana, where he will receive £100 for one recital.

Apparently a great time awaits him, both financially and socially, for he is to receive a civic reception and the Freedom of the City.

An East End Illad

The novelty of adapting a traditional Yiddish folk song "A Brivele der Mame," which was featured by Lew Stone and the Monseigneur Band and subsequently published by Keith Prowse as a popular fox-trot song with a new lyric and the English title of "A Letter to my Mother," was really the brainwave of Lew Davis, the trombonist of the band.

Lew Stone thought it a good idea, but the difficulty was to find a song copy of such an antiquity, and the notion might have come to naught except that Lew told his father about it.

Mr. Davis, senior, had, in his boyhood, sung in a Jewish choir, and he thought it a pity that such a good idea should be abandoned, so, without saying a word to anybody, he imposed upon himself a search for a copy of the music.

He spent many days in the back streets of the East-end and finally returned in triumph with a tattered and dirty copy which he had unearthed on a second-hand stall somewhere in those mysterious precincts—the only copy, apparently, in existence.



... days in the back streets ...

Santos Casani has always been a dynamic force in the dancing business.

I encountered him nearly twelve years ago when he was trying to make a name as a teacher of ballroom dancing and between us we evolved a stunt whereby he received Press notices in more than nine hundred papers scattered all over the world. Some of these notices were actually in the Stop Press columns of the leading London dailies, and they arose out of his feat of dancing for eighteen and a half hours, without a single moment's stop, at the Palais de Danse, Hammersmith.

His biggest venture yet is reported in the news section.

The Busker

Hottest Place in Town

Every first Wednesday in the month, large numbers of hot record enthusiasts wend their ways to Fleet Street to meet



... hot record enthusiasts ...

at the City Sale Gramophone Salons to hear recitals of the latest releases.

They have nothing to pay, admission being by invitation to all those who have bought one or more records from the Salons during the previous four weeks.

The last recital was on February 1st, when it proved the most successful yet of the series. In addition to the playing of the latest Rhythm Style issues

of Parlophone and Brunswick, H.M.V.'s Connoisseur Album of "hot style" records was played through in its entirety.

These nights are almost club-like in their atmosphere.

Simpson's Trickle

On our News-Pictures page you will see a picture of a lot of drums. If you look closely you will see a drummer standing in the middle of them. Sur-

Peter Maurice

CURRENT SUCCESSES

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PALE VOLGA MOON STANDING ON THE CORNER ADIOS—GOODBYE

SO DOES SHE IN THE DIM DIM DAWNING I'LL NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN

CLOCKWORK TOY PARADE CHINA DOLL

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Foreign Subscriptions

Wrîtes and Wrongs

Readers Air their Views

Dear Mike,

May I appeal to you to use thick black type for the names of records under review and artists featured therein? You will agree that your new method necessitates much peering and probing if your readers wish to refer to any past review of a record.

Thick type would be a small change but it would make a great deal of difference, and would not, I think, detract from the essay-like form in which you now prefer your reviews to appear.

Of course, there is no need for that "Emerald - striped - mauve - spotted - label - released - at-cock-crow - five - days-before-the-Spring-Equinox" hooey, but, after all, it is good to know where one review ends and another begins. Your incidental sermons—much appreciated—need not be affected either.

A few words on Louis Armstrong. Do you consider him to have made any finer disc than *Mahogany Hall Stomp* in the whole of his career? Perhaps you can recommend any of "them good old good ones" which are comparable with this masterpiece (I have *St. Louis Blues* and *Shine*), and tell me what Armstrong records, if any, I would do well to avoid. Also, please, when did Parlophone's first Rhythm-Style series begin?

One more point. On page 142 of the February issue I am sure Don Redman is named "Redmond" by two of his boys. Is this really correct?

I am one of those who take your word for nearly everything, only doubting you when you disagree with John Hammond.

Good luck and thanks to both of you!

YALLER SOCKS.

Wigan.

Mr. Littler's suggestion in regard to the Gramo-

phone Review is being adopted in this issue, and we will be glad to have readers' comments thereon.

Armstrong's *Memories of You* is our favourite disc from this performer, but this is merely a matter of opinion. All Louis' records are worth hearing, and you had better make your own choice.

Parlophone Rhythm Style commenced with Eddie Lang's *Freeze an' Melt*, issued in November, 1929.

There seems to be a great deal of dissension as to the spelling of Don Redman's name, but the general weight of opinion seems to be in the way we spell it.

Filmer Fury

Dear Sir,

I am going to say something very hard,

join the Union, and heard their asinine, parrot response, "What has the Union done for us, etc.?" Why, nothing, of course. What confounded sauce to expect otherwise! What right has a non-Union and unprotected man to expect any protection?

Even if six out of a band of seven or more were Unionists and things went wrong, the Union could not help them—on principle; they would have had no right to have asked at all with a non-member in their midst.

Then they object to the "straight" members. Well, that was all the profession consisted of before the modern dance fashion came in. But if the dance musicians had all enrolled don't they realise they would have formed an ever-growing coterie, clique or whatever you like to call it?

The spectacle of a body of men, whose livelihood is dignified by the name of a "profession," appearing year in and year out on the pavement and in the gutters of a public thoroughfare like a gang of poor down-and-outs, to the amazement of passers-by, of them being hounded by the police like furtive criminals, when for sixpence a week (and nothing, when out of "dates") they could enjoy the common rooms of their Union Buildings in the heart

of the West End, is something that has always nauseated me and made me ashamed of owning myself a member of the "profession."

Yes, sir, let them be hounded, jailed and defrauded, and no complaints, please, for what a man asks for let him not complain at receiving.—VIC FILMER.

Stapleton Road, S.W.17.

We can sympathise with Vic in most that he says.

A Letter From Louis

HELLO, Percy Brooks, whatcha say, ol' pal? How's dear ol' England? And all my wonderful friends? Tell them and the boys I played with that I am still thinking about them, and talk my head off about them. Yeah, man!

I'll never forget England and its people. You were oh! so nice to me, pal. Also, my boy, Dan Ingman. You'll's kindness shall never be forgotten.

All the cats were glad to see me in New York on my return. Yeah! Big John's was packed and jammed. I arrived on the steamer *Majestic*, the same boat I went to England on.

The night before the boat arrived in New York I was the special guest to supper of the musicians on the boat. An did I enjoy it? My! My! My! It was my big moment—no fooling!

I went to Big John's the first night I landed in New York. And I took the little trumpet player from the *Majestic*, Paddy Harlow, along with me. And I mean he had a ball. Bill Mather and John Hammond were there, and lots and lots of others.

Then I hooked up with Chic Webb's band, and Connie's Hot Chocolate's show, which had a marvellous run also.

Say—by the way, how's Billy Mason? I suppose he's well by now. Hope so, anyway.

I am now at home in Chicago and enjoying myself to the highest. The folks were very glad to have their little Louie back, etc.

The first thing I had for supper the first day I arrived in the ol' home town

something that will make me detested by a large section of Archer Street.

Apropos your show-up of how certain musicians have to work for nothing, I smile grimly to think how often and how regularly this sort of thing happens.

With nearly twenty-three years in the business I've "seen some," and I say—*serve them right!*

How many times have I urged men to

There is no doubt that if all dance musicians joined up and abided by the rules of the Union, 90 per cent. of the abuses of this business would disappear.

Although we ourselves have, on occasion, taken the Union to task for not more successfully organising the dance men, we must admit that the latter are a strangely apathetic crowd. It seems that "straight men are straight men and dance men are dance men, and never the twain shall meet." Which is a great pity, for they have many points in common. The Union has done a great deal to raise the status and improve the pay of the straight men, and it could do much to help dance-band players. We have said this over and over again, but nobody seems to listen.

Therefore, whilst admitting that Vic Filmer's letter is vitriolic, we really feel that there is justification for his outburst.

* * *

Anti-Heat

Dear Sir,

It is not without good reason that many of your readers complain of your policy in recent years to devote so many columns to the cause of "hot music."

Why should we have this stuff rammed down our throats? Is it not sufficiently tantalising to hear some pretty melody being distorted beyond all recognition by some hot band without being compelled to read about these and other so-called "marvellous performances"? At the best it is a miserable effort to emulate Gershwin, and at the worst "sheer bedlam."

I, too, am a gramophone enthusiast, but I lost all faith in Mike's recommendations long since. It would seem that any record not by Duke Ellington or his satellites is quite unworthy of mention. (Incidentally, the "sacred name" occurs over twenty times in this month's Disc-

Course, and his music described as "intelligent." I ask you!)

I would like to mention that, several years back, I derived very much pleasure from reading your magazine. The articles at that time were sane, unbiased, and well-varied, and I was invariably disappointed if my newsagent was unable to obtain it on its due date. But "the old order changeth," and nowadays it might well be re-named—"The Hot Gospeller" or "An Autobiography of Messrs. Ellington, Armstrong, and Trumbauer—Their Life and Works."

Wake up MELODY MAKER! Don't forget—we've still got the best bands in the world in Debroy Somers, Jack Hylton, etc.—and there still remain quite a number of dance band enthusiasts who possess an ear for "good" music.

F. WILSON.

Breckon Hill Road,
Middlesbrough.

It is obviously useless to attempt to argue with Mr. Wilson. He has a complete absence of appreciation of the most modern form of dance music. We have been into this question of hot music time and time again, and if Mr. Wilson has read our pages regularly he must be aware of all our arguments and conclusions.

There are always two points of view about hot music, and Mr. Wilson's, we are afraid, is not ours. Might we draw his attention, however, to the fact that leaders in musical thought, such as Constant Lambert, Stravinsky, Schonberg, Jascha Heifetz and Chaliapine, to mention but five of a host, are convinced that there is "something in it," which seems to suggest that there is a flaw in the bright jewel of Mr. Wilson's logic.

* * *

Hairs on his Chest

Dear Sir,

I have taken THE MELODY MAKER for

six years. "Get it off your chest," you say. This is what I intend doing.

I have just read your reply to a correspondent, in which you say, "No ads., no paper." I think Reg Harrison's remarks are very sensible and your answer very feeble.

Look at the price of adverts.—2s. a line! Then you see 70 pages of adverts., one instructional article, one music re-orchestration idea and perhaps a calendar advertising Jack Hylton and his band, or a nice photo of Carroll Gibbons.

Well, that's all very nice, but by sending a postcard to any of these firms they will send us enough advertising matter to start a paper mill.

Give us more music and instructional articles and less adverts.

C. LUNN.

Parkgate, Rotherham.

There is rather a "publish this if you dare" attitude about this letter, so we do dare, because Mr. Lunn's criticisms are easily answered.

There is no paper in the history of journalism which has run for more than a few weeks without advertisements. In order to be able to produce THE MELODY MAKER without advertisements we would have to charge 3s. for it so as to pay for paper, printing, blocks, contributions, staff and so on. We challenge Mr. Lunn to find a successful paper or magazine which does not contain a large percentage of advertisements.

Even the Christmas Number of THE MELODY MAKER contained as many pages of editorial as of advertisements, and the average issue contains about 32 pages of advertisements to 50 pages of editorial.

The one "instructional article" consists of five pages, and in addition to this there are two pages of technical questions answered by experts, which contain a wealth of instruction. When we were running ordinary technical articles they seldom took up more space than seven pages. Much the same applies to the music re-orchestration which

GET ON THE CREST OF **HUNTLEY TREVOR'S** WAVE OF SUCCESS

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OLD FATHER THAMES

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with its instructional foreword, runs to five pages; the old MELODY MAKER feature of choruses for various instruments seldom occupied more space than this, and we would further point out that, for our readers' convenience, we sacrificed four pages by leaving the reverse of each music page devoid of matter.

The Hylton Calendar is a feature of definite value, the proof of which is that it is found hung up in offices and homes throughout the world. Readers would be disappointed if they did not get it. Much the same applies to the various presentation photographs, which are very costly to produce and which we have every proof are greatly appreciated by readers.

To carry the argument to absurdity, it would cost Mr. Lunn 4s. to send even postcards to the various firms advertised in THE MELODY MAKER in order to know all about their goods!

* * *

A Treat for Whom !

Dear Sir,

The following cutting is from a local newspaper:—

A REAL "Treat."—Streatham's most popular dance band offers services, expense fee only, Saturday, February 18th, unexpectedly vacant owing paid cancellation.

It needs no comment. At present good gigs in South London need getting. Maybe this is the reason why.

It is evident that the owner of this advertisement does not read THE MELODY MAKER.

TOM STUBBS.

Dagnan Road, Balham, S.W.12.

Comment here seems superfluous. It is deplorable that any musician worthy of the name—whether semi-pro or otherwise—should descend to these "Little Tommy Tucker" tactics. Surely the answer must be that the advertiser hasn't enough confidence in his own abilities.

* * *

Wanted and Supplied

Dear Sir,

Would you be so kind as to tell me where I can get the following records, all played by Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra: *San, When, Lonely Melody, Sensation Stomp, From Monday On and Louisiana*.

I know already that the English H.M.V. don't stock these records, for I have personally written to them, but in vain.

As you know, I am one of the readers of THE MELODY MAKER, so I hope that you can help me. If you don't know any address in England to write to for these records, then you know, perhaps, to which address I have to write to in America to get them.

F. C. DE BRUY.

Den Haag.

This is an easy one. Write to the Victor Talking Machine Co., of 28, West 44th Street, New York, U.S.A.

* * *

Thanks for the Flowers

Dear Mike,

Your monthly review has reached such a stage of perfection, both as regards enlightenment and entertainment, that I could not refrain from congratulating you. I should think that by framing your Disc-course as you do now your influence on the future of dance music in this country is as great in its way as Ellington's music. I mean, of course, that it is due to your words of wisdom that real dance records (and not milk and

water melodies) find their way into more and more homes.

I am hoping that the time will come when futile remarks of unmusically-minded people as to the cacophonous qualities of the best dance music will cease. Someone remarked to me the other day that he could make better noises than Ellington's band in his bath. I refrained from commenting that he did not look as though he had recently had a chance to try, because he was standing within easy reach of my records.

The same gentleman also remarked that I should kick myself in a few years' time for ever listening to hot music. I think it is more likely that he will kick himself for not kicking himself when he told me that I should kick myself.

Men like these!

RUSSELL E. CHURCHER.

Alverstoke, Hants.

Your letter seems to be so completely self-contained that there is nothing we can say in answer to it. In fact, it saves us a lot of trouble and, in addition, gives us a glow of self-righteousness. Modesty prevents us saying that we endorse every line of it.

Letters like these!

More Mike Brick-bats

Dear Sir,

A word about "Mike"—that pillar of your paper. Don't you think the time has come for him to take a rest? I don't know how many years he has been record critic, but I can notice a marked difference in his criticisms from those of this time last year.

In short, he has become hard-boiled and should take either Kruschen or a holiday. All the freshness has gone out of his Disc-course. He is quite insatiable, and nothing but an Ellington record seems to satisfy him. From the security of Ellington's pedestal he looks down with condescending contempt at any lesser record.

But things were not always like this, and I would be only too pleased to subscribe towards a pleasant little holiday for him so that he might regain something of his old style.

J. A. LODWICK.

Royal Naval College,
Dartmouth.

Have you ever been sitting in a stationary train with another stationary train drawn up alongside of it? Yours begins to move slowly, and, not feeling the motion, you think that it is the other train that is moving. In other words, maybe, it is you who are changing and not Mike. Think it over. And, by the way, have you forgotten the "Cricketers' Arms"?

* * *

Criticism by Record

DEAR SIR.—I have been taking THE MELODY MAKER now for the past 18 months, and I have always read it with the greatest pleasure.

I have a suggestion to make, on which I should very much like to have your views, should you be so kind as to give them.

As it is impossible for all the small semi-pro bands to have a really first class criticism of their playing, I venture to suggest that, as a 10 in. double-sided record can be made for the very modest fee of 4s. 6d., THE MELODY MAKER could carry this a step further by offering, for a

nominal fee, to criticise any record either by letter or by publication in THE MELODY MAKER with a view to pointing out faults not readily seen, if at all, by the performer(s). This, I am sure, would not only be a success, but would improve the standard of playing of the performers to a very great extent. In fact to a standard they might never attain in the ordinary way.

Wishing your magazine the best of luck in the future.

KENNETH HOMAN.

Claxton Grove, W.6.

Go ahead, by all means. Half-a-crown a time for a written criticism of each side. A good suggestion. But bear in mind that even the best of metal records will not stand much repetition, and the "underneath" parts will disappear rapidly, making detailed criticism difficult.

* * *

Thanks !

Dear Sir,

The MELODY MAKER is worth much more than one shilling for its entertainment value alone. Therefore, we get the instruction it contains for nothing.

The page, "Experts at your Elbow," is invaluable.

Try to get Eddie Freeman to write the technical article explaining the new style of guitar playing.

C. W. W.

N.P.W.N.G.S.

We are blooming under this praise like flowers in the sunshine!

Your request is attended to in this issue.

* * *

Curse the Pubs !

Dear Sir,

I write to ask the help of THE MELODY MAKER in the following matter:—

My band, I suppose in common with all others, is continually requested for numbers which patrons have "heard on the radio" or on records. The numbers are not ready for publication, and it is difficult to make these enquirers believe this.

When the publishers are appealed to, they say that they send out all numbers as "soon as ready." This means, in many cases, that the tune is thoroughly stale and worn out before we get it. In some instances, I have had to wait six weeks before receiving them, and can get no satisfaction from the publishers.

We pay full subscriptions for all issues, and receive no free copies. Some publishers send circulars in cheap phraseology, boosting up "dud" numbers, and in return ask us to fill these in on the P.R.S. forms.

I know cases in the West End where leaders of non-broadcasting bands—playing to half-empty halls, receive all new numbers *at once*—*free* of charge. We play to hundreds weekly—pay full fees—and receive poor stuff and only get good ones when they become hackneyed by the broadcasting people.

Can you do anything in this matter? I am fed up with being unable to play latest request numbers.

W. W. BEAN.

Hopwood Gardens,
Tunbridge Wells.

You certainly seem to have a legitimate cause for complaint. It is a subject we have mentioned before, and we are glad you have drawn our attention to the necessity of doing so again. The matter is dealt with at length in the Editorial on page 193.

Important Preliminary Announcement !



First Prize :
Challen Grand Piano.
YOU may win this !

MAYERL SCHOOL "MELODY MAKER" Song Writers' Competition

BILLY MAYERL seeks fresh talent, and offers valuable prizes in a novel competition. To encourage new writers, this contest is only open to those whose work has never been published.

PRIZES INCLUDE :

- A "CHALLEN" GRAND PIANO
- TWO "CHALLEN" UPRIGHT PIANOS
- A "COLUMBIA" RADIO-GRAMOPHONE
- A "P.M. FOUR" PORTABLE RADIO SET

Guaranteed Publication for the Winning Numbers by the well-known firms of KEITH PROWSE & CO., LTD., and the PETER MAURICE MUSIC CO., LTD.

THE chance you have been waiting for ! Apart from the above prizes, your song may mean hundreds of pounds to you in royalties alone.



THIS COMPETITION is under the auspices of the "Melody Maker" who—together with the Mayerl School—will judge the entries.

★ Write NOW for entrance form and full particulars to the headquarters of the School.

The
Billy Mayerl School
1 & 2 GEORGE ST., HANOVER SQ.,
LONDON, W.I.

British Song-Writers' Greatest Opportunity

Recognition at last for the Unknowns. Prizes and Publication for British Songs

NO organisations other than THE MELODY MAKER and the Billy Mayerl School have done so much for struggling British song-writers, the former by the expert criticism of manuscripts and lyrics it offers in its pages and through the post, and the latter by the conscientious and sound postal tuition it gives to composers.

Now these two organisations have come together to serve the amateur writer even more positively than they have yet done separately, and to this end are launching a Great Song Writers' Competition, for which magnificent prizes are offered, and guaranteed publication by the Peter Maurice Music Co., for the winning entry.

Qualifications for Entry

The competition is open only to song-writers who have not yet succeeded in securing publication of a number.

The competition is essentially for song-composers, but songs, which must be written in the prevailing dance mode, may be submitted without lyrics.

There are, in fact, three sections of the competition:—

(1) For melodies written by enrolled students of the Billy Mayerl School of Composition, for which the first prize is a

CHALLEN GRAND PIANO

and guaranteed publication by the Peter Maurice Music Co. on their usual royalty basis.

The second prize is a

CHALLEN UPRIGHT PIANO.

(2) For melodies written by any writer who is not an enrolled member of the Billy Mayerl School of Composition, and for which the first prize is a

CHALLEN UPRIGHT PIANO.

The second prize is a

COLUMBIA RADIO GRAMOPHONE.

(3) For the best lyric written in association or collaboration with an entry in either of the above sections, and for which the prize is a

"P.M. FOUR" PORTABLE RADIO SET.

If this winning lyric, by any chance, is written in association with the winning entry in section 1, and is up to standard, it will also be published as part of it.

Lyric-writer collaborators must, of course, also be confined to those who have not yet had a lyric published. Also any entrant in either section 1 or 2 may, if he so desires, enter his own lyric with his own composition for this special prize.

No lyric, unaccompanied by a complete song melody—verse and chorus—is eligible.

Judging

The adjudication of all entries will be shared by the Billy Mayerl School and THE MELODY MAKER, and all entries must conform to the rules and conditions published herewith.

The result will be published in the October, 1933, issue of THE MELODY MAKER, and entries must be sent in so as to arrive not later than September 5th.

A Few Tips

The usual form of modern popular song has, of course, a sixteen bar verse and a thirty-two bar chorus, and any departure from this practice should not be made for the mere sake of it, but only as necessary to carry out the idea of the song.

Make sure that your melody is written within the accepted vocal compass, viz.: C to F.

Above all, make yourself quite certain in your mind that your melody is not reminiscent of any other. Apart from the danger of infringing existing copyright, the chief merit of a new song is its originality.

Do not give your melody an involved piano accompaniment. Study an average published piano song copy and you will find the accompaniment is written in such a way that it can be played readily at sight by any average amateur pianist.

Give your melody the best title you can conceive, but the fact that it is not considered apt or suitable will not affect its chances.

* * *

Rules and Conditions

1. Entry into this competition positively implies acceptance of all the following rules and conditions.

2. The competition will be adjudicated by the Billy Mayerl School of Composition and THE MELODY MAKER, whose decision is final and binding.

3. Competitors must write their compositions on 12-stave manuscript paper and sign them at the end with their full name and address over the following declaration:—

I hereby declare that the above composi-

ENTRY

Mayerl School and Song-Writers'

Please enter the attached manuscript in the above competition, the rules and conditions of which I have read, understood and accepted.

*I am an enrolled pupil of the Billy Mayerl School of Composition.

*I am not an enrolled student of the Billy Mayerl School of Composition.

*Strike out the line which does not apply.

Name (Block Caps.)

Address (Block Caps.)

..... (Block Caps.)

If a lyric is submitted with this composi-

tion is my own unaided work and that it is entirely original. I indemnify the organisers of the competition for which it is entered against any intentional or unintentional infringement of copyright, and I declare that I have never had any song accepted for publication.

(*No nom de plume may be used.*)

4. If a lyric is also submitted, either by the composer or by a collaborator, it should be written in under the music and a copy written out on a blank sheet of paper and attached, and signed under the same declaration with address added.

5. To each entry must be attached the coupon below, correctly filled in, or a similar coupon obtained from the Billy Mayerl School, and return of manuscripts cannot be undertaken unless a twopenny stamp is loosely attached to the coupon.

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Home Notes

by

Miles Henslow

No. 3

Max Goldberg

"SEE if you can find out anything about Max Goldberg," said the Editor. "I shall not be in the least bit surprised if the Editor says, when next I meet him, 'Find out whether Pharaoh's harp was British made!'"

Eager to oblige I collected our photographer and seized the telephone.

"Jack," I said, "an easy job this time—Max Goldberg. We'll be through by lunchtime."

"Better let me try," he replied in a miserable voice. "I have other jobs to do this week." He took possession of the telephone and dialled. That was last Saturday.

On Sunday afternoon they fitted new bearings to the telephone dial. By Monday the supervisor knew Max Goldberg by his Christian name. Then I had a brainwave. There was a happy smile on Jack Marshall's face when I had outlined my plan.

"Brilliant!" he murmured, "I wonder I did not think of it myself."

Half an hour later found us at the front door of Max Goldberg's home. The idea was as simple as it was clever. We had with us an oil stove, thermos flasks, rugs, cushions and a length of stout rope.

"Wake me in four hours," I said, "and, if by any chance he comes in or goes out while I am asleep, you know what to do." Jack fondled the rope and I could see that our troubles were over.

My dream of basses and marimbas was rudely shattered a few minutes later. I awoke with a yell and found my ear was pinned to the ground by one of the legs of the camera tripod.

Lake. "Not bad, is it? Two spare wheels; full kit of tools and a traffic indicator. I had to pay a bit more than Max said, but I don't think he'll mind. He wanted something fast."

"I don't understand," I said. "You don't know Mrs. Lake," said Jack. "Without Mrs. Lake there would be no Max."

"Ah!" I said, "I see." But I didn't. Mrs. Lake is not Max's mother. She is merely his self-appointed mother. She is his guardian. She is his secretary. She is his watchdog, valet, butler, counsel,



lawyer, cook, telephonist, buyer, seller. She is his housekeeper.

Poor Mrs. Lake! But she doesn't seem to mind.

"Come and have some breakfast," she invited.

"Will Max be there?" I asked.

"No, he doesn't have breakfast."

"Can we see him?"

"Oh, yes; later."

"At lunch?"

"He doesn't have lunch."

"At dinner then?"

"He doesn't have dinner."

"Oh!"

Mrs. Lake flicked an offending spot of dust from the bonnet of the new car and led the way (indoors). As she fitted the key in the latch the baying of hounds met our ears.

"Max's dogs," said Mrs. Lake.

"Where's Max?" I asked.

"Asleep!"

"He must be tired?"

"Oh, no, he gets used to it!"

In the hall the telephone was ringing. In cages hanging round the room an assortment of self-satisfied canaries were whistling their hearts out. Through a closed door came a sound like a shunting locomotive. Max was asleep!

We had breakfast. While we ate, Mrs. Lake told us all about our quarry. "For," she said, "Max will be in far too much of a hurry to talk to you. He has got a session at ten-thirty; another at the other side of London at twelve. At two he has to go over some new arrangements with the band. At—Great Scott! It's half-past nine. I must wake him."

We followed her. As she opened the door of Max's bedroom the snoring increased in volume until it resembled the wheezing of an outsize pair of blacksmith's bellows.

"Poor fellow," said Mrs. Lake, "he must be tired."

I didn't wonder. Such vocal efforts are enough to weary anybody! From a corner of the room Mrs. Lake produced a large enamel bowl and a sponge. It was a very cold morning.

"A-a-a-a-a-ah — O-o-o-o-o-oh," shrieked Max as a rivulet of liquid ice coursed down the inside of his pyjamas.

"That happens every morning," said Mrs. Lake. "Now I'll leave you to him."

Max sat up and mopped up the water.

"Hell!" he shouted, "Where's my trumpet?" He grabbed the instrument from the table. Then he noticed us. "What do you want? Can't you see I'm busy?"

We waited patiently through "You're My Everything," "I Don't Want To Go To Bed," and the "Soldier's Chorus" from "Faust."

"I'm from THE MELODY MAKER; We're from THE MELODY MA—"

"Mrs. Lake! My shaving water?"

"Half a second."

"We're from the—"

"Well what do you want? I'm busy. You'll have to follow me round. Can't stop. Sorry. Call again one evening when I'm free. Come to dinner. Mrs. Lake will entertain you if I'm out." Then he leaped for the bathroom.

There was a flash. The shock of an overdose of flashlight powder caused Max to cut his chin.

"Don't worry, old chap," said Marshall, "the cut won't show on the picture!"

"When do you eat?" I asked.

"Right now," replied Max, "and it will have to last till to-night." He dashed for the dining-room and seized a dry crust.

"Not that," protested the harassed Mrs. Lake. "Here are some eggs, sardines, bananas and sausages."

"Ah!" cried Max, "that's better."

Mrs. Lake poured some weird tonic from a bottle. It might have been poison for all the interest Max took in it. He was reading the paper, eating, and humming some new arrangement. It appears that he is always so busy that proper meals at the proper times are out of the question. The one that I watched him eat was obviously a mixture of breakfast, lunch and tea.

"Buy the car?" he asked Mrs. Lake.

"An Austin."

"Good. Nice and fast?"

"I touched sixty in it."

"Great. You might insure it for me. And, oh I forgot to ask you. Will you call at my tailors for the final fitting?"

Mrs. Lake shook her head pitifully as he shot from the room.

"Do you buy everything?" I asked. She nodded. All I can say is that she knows a good cigar!

In the next room we found Max on tiptoe wrestling with his tie. There were three mirrors in the room—all too high!

"Why don't you ask Mrs. Lake to alter them?" I suggested.

"Been too busy. Thanks,—Mrs. Lake!" While the mirrors were being altered I noticed a kinematograph projector standing in the corner. Max saw me looking at it. He smiled. He leaped at the blinds. In a second the room was plunged into darkness.

"This," said Max, "is my favourite hobby. Mrs. Lake, please switch on the radiogram, will you? There; what d'you think of that?"

It was great. First we saw a private version of "Little Nell," then we watched the band "at play." Then an animated cartoon.

"Now this one," said Max, "I took in Monte Carlo."

There were feet and feet of it. Some even in colour. Max got thoroughly worked up. Pulled out reel upon reel. Unwound spool after spool. Then the radio stopped for a breather and we heard the telephone.

"Hell's Bells!" said Max.

"That's ripped it," said Mrs. Lake.

"Coming," yelled Max into the 'phone. "Don't forget to buy those pants, Mrs. Lake. Good-bye, you fellows."

"He's forgotten his trumpet," I said.

"No," said Mrs. Lake, "it's all right. I put the spare one in the car."

Poor Mrs. Lake. Poor Max Goldberg. Poor anyone who tries to sit with him in peace for five minutes.

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A Decade of Disc History

J. H. Butterworth traces the romantic development of dance music, from 1917-26, by examples from his collection of rare hot records

IT is apparent that quite a number of dance-music students jealously guard their collections of early "hot-jazz" records as much as they do their more contemporaneous "New Rhythm" styles, and, as a fellow fanatic, I can well understand their hobby.

After all, nothing can be so absorbing in this business as every now and then to trace out the steps in development, to see how it has progressed logically from crude individuality to polished team work.

Moreover, the collection of the old-time records is a fascinating one; I personally get as much thrill from the capture of an original "Dixieland" disc as a philatelist does from some scarce foreign stamp—and I might say that there are so many like me that the price is soaring, and even a very worn-out affair costs far more than the latest Ellington.

There is much history in these collections, and here I give you some of the recollections which my own library brings back to me when I scan the famous names of bands, players and titles.

The Daddy of All

For instance, in 1917, the ever enterprising Palladium management put on a band act which was and is unique in the history of dance music.

I refer, of course, to the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, several of whose records are in my possession. This band was five strong; besides piano and drums there were three melody instruments—Emile Christian on trombone, Shields on clarinet, and D. J. La Rocca, a left-handed cornet player, who is known the world over as the composer of "Tiger Rag."

These Dixieland records sound very crude nowadays, for they simply feature chorus after chorus in the same key, while each player puts over his one pet break in regular sequence as his turn comes round.

In their record of "At the Jazz Band Ball," Shields, in a burst of generosity, plays two different breaks! Those of you who never heard Shields play fifteen years ago can get a very good idea of his style on the clarinet by listening to Ted Lewis, who, to-day, frequently finishes his records with the famous Dixieland ending.

Christian, the trombone player, could not read a note of music, a fact which is very apparent when listening to these records, as he slides and moans about all over the place, in an orgy of abandonment.

Rough as their methods were, the Dixieland Band did produce inspiring dance music, and they were certainly the rude pioneers of the modern style of playing as well as being one of the first bands to use intelligent instrumentation. Most of the bands in those days only included one melody instrument (rarely two), the full complement being made up with two or three banjolines, piano and drums.

The drummer was the most important member of the band, and his kit would include any noise-making implement that he could get hold of, from a Klaxon horn to a revolver.

A record of "Whispering," played by Art Hickman's Orchestra, is worthy of note for several reasons.

This band was one of the first to employ voiced instrumentation, for, as far back as 1918, it was a ten-piece unit and included a three-piece brass team. To Art Hickman also probably belongs the credit of introducing saxophones and banjos into a big dance band.

Most important of all, that great leader and best of good fellows, the late Bert Ralton, joined Art Hickman's Orchestra in 1918.

A London Pioneer

Writing of Bert Ralton brings me to the next great landmark in dance music. In 1921, Bert Ralton opened up at the London Coliseum with his New York Havana Band, when he scored a great and instantaneous success—a success which was his for the remainder of his tragically short life.

This band was actually formed for recording at the invitation of the Columbia Graphophone Company, and it was originally composed of six men, three of whom were American and three British.

But it was too good to stay like that, and it became the sire of the long line of distinguished dance bands for which the Savoy Hotel has always since been justly famed.

As well as being a great leader, Bert Ralton was probably the finest performer in the world on the soprano saxophone. His solos on this instrument used to stop the house. Bright, sweet, snappy, full of pep but never noisy, sums up Ralton's style of playing. These characteristics were clearly marked in the records made under his leadership.

The Vote-Winner

An old Columbia record of "The Hooking Cow Blues" and "Old Miss Rag," played by Handy's Orchestra, brings up another name famous in the history of dance music.

W. C. Handy was the king of the blues and, judging by John Hammond's article in a recent *MELODY MAKER*, he is still going strong.

Over twenty years ago, an election was being contested by three candidates in the town of Memphis, U.S.A. Each candidate employed a band of Negro musicians to give him attractive support at his meetings, which they did by playing their own special blues.

It will surprise nobody when I say that the winning candidate was supported by Handy and his band, playing what is now known as the "Memphis Blues."

It is a good enough tune to win any election. What an idea for brighter elections over here?

The Evergreens

Another pioneer band which made some interesting records was the Memphis Five. Although this band started over ten years ago, it has always moved with the times;

and, with a slightly altered personnel, has recently attained to "Rhythm Style" honours.

I have three of their records: "Maybe She'll Phone Me," backed with "Snakes Hips" and the single-sided "Who's Sorry Now?" are very good early examples of "hot" playing, while the third, "Chinese Blues" and "Tain't Cold," which is a later record, shows a big advance on that mode of playing.

Still, with Phil Napoleon and Frank Signorelli—who was the originator and leader of the band—present, you are bound to get something good.

Old-Timers' Debuts

The Cotton Pickers—no, not McKinney's, but white ones this time—made two good records when they did "Mishawaka Blues" backed by "Jacksonville Gal" and "If You Hadn't Gone Away" paired with "Milenberg Joys." This band included such stars as Red Nichols, Miff Mole and Rube Bloom, which is a sufficient guarantee of a good performance. Also "Milenberg Joys" is particularly interesting on account of a mellophone solo played by Micky Bloom.

The King of Jazz

No collection of historical dance records would be complete without some of Paul Whiteman's. "Chicago," "My Rambler Rose" and "Hot Lips" are good examples of his early work, and exhibit the wonderful precision and orchestral efficiency which have always been features of Paul Whiteman's playing.

"Hot Lips" is very interesting because Henry Busse, the composer of the number, plays the trumpet solo in this record.

The Tiger as a Cub

I don't know just how many records of "Tiger Rag" there are, but one played by the "Southern Rag-a-Jazz Band" is in the best Dixieland traditions. Although there were six men in the band there might only have been two as far as this record is concerned, for it sounds like a duel between soprano saxophone and banjo.

A Piccaninny

Early-Negro style is represented by Fletcher Henderson's "Everybody Loves my Baby" on an old Imperial record.

It is not a bit like "Chinatown, my Chinatown," but the first trumpet sounds like Louis Armstrong might have sounded in those far-off days.

Prehistoric

Now to mention the two "jazziest" records in my collection. They are "Margie" and "Hot Lips," both played by Ted Lewis, and I have been told that the inhabitants of the Ark considered them a bit old-fashioned.

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"Spike and I go Places"

Says John Hammond in a letter from New York, dated February 10th, in which he deals with up-town affairs

AT least one usually regular, placid existence has been upset by the arrival in America of Spike Hughes. For the last ten days THE MELODY MAKER'S New York Correspondent has become an entirely abnormal soul, prowling around Harlem and forgetting entirely about everyday life.

Hughes is on his way to becoming a most important figure in music. Already he has been awarded a special key to the "men's room" in Irving Mills' office. Harlem seems to have been a revelation to him—but, then, he'll probably have something to say about it in some future issue. As a result of Hughes' stay here I'll have even more to say about the uptown sector than before.

* * *

But first we might pause to say something of the activities of Irving Mills, who returned from a successful European trip last month. Plans seem to be afoot to send Duke Ellington abroad the end of March, but there can never be any certainty until Duke actually arrives at Southampton. Mills also has great hopes for Hughes, whose music he considers "different" and quite likely to win American approval.

Besides awarding him the aforementioned key he has shown him various bits of New York life not previously covered by myself, such as the Cotton Club, and hopes to have him make some Brunswick records of his better tunes with an all-star coloured band.

* * *

Mills' greatest feat of the month was his decision to take over all the American recordings controlled by the English Columbia Graphophone Company. As a result of this, Parlophone and Columbia records will appear in England which will not have been released in the States, for Mills' contract has but little to do with the American Columbia company.

The first fruits of this liaison will be the Duke's recordings of his latest tunes on Wednesday, the 15th February, at the local Columbia studios. Inasmuch as Columbia recording is about the best in the world, this is good news for the collector.

* * *

There has been much amusement over here at Edgar Jackson's insistence on identifying ordinary Broadway bands as coloured orchestras. The latest example is that of Snooks and his Memphis Ramblers. The name of the leader of this only average white band is Friedman—at least it was until he changed it to Roger Sinclair, and there is not a vestige of Harlem guts in the entire band.

In the same way, Jackson calls Joe Haymes' Casa Loma-esque outfit a Harlem band, which it most certainly is not. And it's only a couple of months since he termed a most uninspiring bunch—Johnny Johnson's on H.M.V.—Negro! I'm afraid it looks as though Edgar sometimes can't tell what is not swing music.

And while we are on the subject, may we ask why Parlophone insists on calling Fletcher Henderson's orchestra by some fanciful pet name when Fletcher is under contract to no phonograph company? There is, of course, a reason for applying pseudonyms to artistes contracted to rival concerns, but "Stokers of Hades" and "Celestial Beings" for McKenzie are just a bit unnecessary.

* * *

Almost everybody has been party discouraged by the Victor records of Louis Armstrong with Chick Webb's band. First of all, the recording has been unhelpful, and the accompaniment is too clumsy. Louis' future discs should be made with a small group of virtuosi, as in the old Hines days.

There is some good news about Louis, though. At last he has decided to gather together a good band—headed by none other than Theodore Wilson, who has no betters as a swing pianist. His trombone player is also astounding, so I hear, and he has kept one or two of the boys from his old band, the 2nd trumpet, and the banjo.

Louis should be back in New York quite soon.

* * *

At last Benny Carter seems to have gotten a proper break. He is playing at the Empire Ballroom in New York, and, on the opening night, was selected as the band to play against Paul Whiteman.

* * *

Duke's Victor records will probably not be released, owing to faulty recording. The company should improve a bit now that Frank Walker has left Columbia and taken over the studios.

* * *

Fletcher Henderson, who has been enormously popular in Pittsburgh at the Showboat is expected back in New York almost momentarily. That is really a band for Spike Hughes to hear.

* * *

I had a chance to hear Cab Calloway in the flesh the other day, and I am still less than impressed by the band.

For a while it looked as if Al Morgan's bass playing might revive the outfit, but now it seems destined to remain in a deep rut. But I hope that the surroundings don't make people overlook the capacities of Cheatum, the first trumpet player from McKinney's. This gent. is probably the best first man anywhere.

* * *

Something should be said about these large joints in Harlem which appeal to the Broadway trade. The two most famous night clubs as a rule refuse to admit Negro patrons, though coloured celebrities are occasionally seated way off in a corner.

For that reason, the only large Harlem cabaret I frequent is Small's' Paradise, which has by far the best band of the three, and no racial discrimination, not even against Mike's Caucasian Immigrants. Of course, "Small's" is owned by Negroes, whereas the other two . . .

Why our sassiety and Broadway folk travel to Harlem for their amusement is quite beyond me. In all the large night clubs, they see the same old Broadway routines—usually supervised by whites—including ultra-professional shows with no spark of spontaneity, and a couple of dirty songs—sometimes funny. The music means nothing to them; dollar gin is too potent competition. Furthermore, the prices are fierce, except at "Small's." And the food!

* * *

The places for one to hear music in Harlem are the dance halls. Bands like the Blue Rhythm Boys, Fletcher Henderson's, Chick Webb's and Benny Carter's are often at uptown ballrooms, where one can find a most pleasant escape from white "culture." And there are some grand unknown groups playing around, the best of which is the bunch of kids known as the Louisiana Stompers, who play at the Dunbar Palace on 7th Avenue.

* * *

Spike and I were the guests of Rudy Vallée at one of his recent broadcasts. Vallée, who wanted to see Spike about some music, was too busy to talk to him before the broadcast; so we both were forced to sit through the one-hour programme.

It is hard for Europeans to imagine what the average American commercial programme is like.

Our advertisers, wanting to reach the largest possible audience of all possible tastes, try to please everyone, particularly the mythical average man. As a result, in one of Rudy's recent broadcasts, he brought out as guest artistes Mae West and Felix Salmond, the 'cellist.

The programme we witnessed contented itself with appealing to the good old masses. It had a couple of impersonators, Bert Lahr, in an unfunny skit, and a much censored scene from the "Front Page."

Rudy's band played, Rudy sang, Tommy Dorsey, specially added for the evenings, took half a chorus in some tune, while Bunny Berrigan took two half-choruses.

After the programme Vallée came to Spike and introduced him to some newspaper man as "a composer who is a combination of Gershwin and Cab Calloway. He writes music like 'Rhapsody in Blue'—only different." Spike remarked, "At last I know what kind of stuff I write."

* * *

There are practically no records over which to grow enthused this month. Duke Ellington made a couple of tunes for Brunswick composed by Victor Young, in Ellington's style: "Eerie Moan" and "Anytime." Both are pleasant but quite unimportant. Claude Hopkins has made a couple of new ones for Columbia—"Look Who's Here" and "California, Here I Come," which are not what they should be. Victor has put out—*mirabile dictu*—a good disc by Bennie Moten's band: "New Orleans," by Hoagy Carmichael, and "Lafayette."

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Editorially Speaking - - -

ONCE again the voice of the harassed provincial band leader has been raised in protest at the system of new song releases which has been forced upon the music publishing trade.

When a brand new hit comes to the hand of the publisher, he locks it up in that mysterious cupboard in the office, where he vainly hopes it may remain until the propitious moment for its general release.

But the scouts of the broadcasting and recording bands are everywhere. They have heard it successfully exploited in America; it has been feloniously smuggled to them by a ship's steward on returning from the States.

These broadcasting band leaders must always be one up on their nearest rival, and an exclusive song hit may bring them a temporary advantage.

In this way we find them visiting the unhappy publisher, who, defenceless in these days of radio exploitation finality, is literally forced to make an exception in their favour, and so causes the cupboard to disgorge its meatiest preserve.

A few hours afterwards the song is on the air, and all over the British Isles the listener welcomes it for its catchy music and snappy lyric.

He goes out to dine or dance and, naturally enough, he desires to hear once again the new favourite played in the flesh by the band on the spot, so he requests it expectantly of the accommodating band leader, who is fully alive to the necessity of meeting any such desire.

The leader has not stinted money in his determination to be equipped with all the latest tunes, so that he may not be caught napping when the inevitable requests come along.

He is a member of all the publishers' orchestral clubs, but, even so, money cannot buy for him the facilities which are freely enjoyed by the broadcasting celebrities.

Shamefacedly he has to admit to his customer that he hasn't the number in his repertoire, and no sort of explanation will satisfy the disgruntled enquirer that the leader is not asleep on his job. His prestige is lowered; perhaps, even, he gets the sack, for, as ever, the customer is always right.

Do not imagine that the publisher is not alive to this difficulty. He is, and likes the system no more than does the victim of it; as much as possible he tries to make his song releases as nearly "general" as he can, and one of these days he will succeed 100 per cent.

For it must be realised that the music industry is passing through an evolutionary stage. Performance more than sales is becoming more and more its

Fear of Favour

piracy of its wares and the free distribution of its band parts—virtually under duress—to even the most important of the bands.

It is not logical nor economical that any publisher should have to give away the free performance of his music, much less the medium, by way of orchestral parts, to make it the more easy.

The time is not long, indeed, before the industry will have coped with the situation and when band parts will be sold, without exception, to all the bands and not just some of the bands. Then the publishers will be able to issue their songs at just the right moment and in just the right way to make them available to the consuming public in the Isle of Skye simultaneously with those in the West end of London.

Minor band leaders must, in the meantime, cope with their difficulty as they can, and take consolation in the thought that they are not up against a barrier seemingly as endless as the Great Wall of China.

OF all the instrumentalists concerned in the exciting task of keeping up-to-date with the rapidly changing aspects of modern dance music, the plectrist, more than any other, is the most harried performer.

In the course of the last few years he has had hastily to switch from G to tenor

banjo, from 'jo to tenor guitar, and from the four-string to the six-string model.

Each time that has meant a tremendous concentration on acquiring a new technique within the minimum of time in order to keep pace.

Now comes yet another change, from six-string guitar back to four-string on an entirely new principle, introduced by Eddie Freeman and explained by him in this issue of *THE MELODY MAKER*.

So the game goes on in its rapid evolution; sometimes it progresses forward along a dead straight line, and sometimes it makes a cycle, so that one returns, like a lost soul in the desert, to the very spot from which one started, after a vain track over countless miles of sand.

Yet all this adds zest to the life by keeping the mind alert and young, and

objective and its source of income, and thus it follows that there must be a tendency more and more to restrict the haphazard though it has its penalties it offers its rewards.

Any of our senior or, indeed, junior plectrists—or any other instrumentalist, come to that—may hit on a new and improved system of playing which will blaze a trail on the trail of progress, just as Eddie Freeman has done.

Then to him will come that fame and other more material reward which, after all, are just as much the coveted plums of the artist as they are of the prospector after precious minerals.

THE B.B.C. is an institution which, as a reward for its labours in trying to please over 5,000,000 customers at one and the same time, receives more kicks than ha'pence from its critics.

We blush to remember that in our own history we have bestowed just a few small violets by way of bouquets, but a regular Gibraltar of brickbats by way of complaints.

One has the feeling that the B.B.C. is a soulless juggernaut riding its way clumsily and destructively to some unknown destination.

The more pleased are we, therefore, to be able to pass out a rare compliment for the way it treats its staff musicians, far more generously and far more humanely than do most of the purely commercial enterprises in whose hands rests the welfare of the remainder of the profession.

There are holidays with pay for the B.B.C. musicians, fairly secure tenure in their work, and comfort in their surroundings.

Thus it happened recently that Len Bermon, drummer with Henry Hall's Band, having had his engagement terminated, was promptly re-engaged on sympathetic grounds, when, almost concurrently with his leaving, he had the sad misfortune to lose his father.

Though this action may not have represented pure white logic, it was colourful in its humanity—a far more important thing in the ethics of life—and we thank the B.B.C. and Henry Hall for the gesture they have made and the example they have set to other employers.

All other papers—and managements—therefore please copy.

One can regret, indeed, that the B.B.C. is not a far larger employer of musicians than it is, or that there are not many more institutions which treat their musicians so considerately; for if there were more examples of this sort the principles would spread and the calling would become one with less of those many disadvantages which make it so bitterly unfair at times.

The
B.B.C.
Has
a
Soul

Taken As Red

Being the third of several inside stories of the exploits of Mr. Bertram Littler, Band Publicity Agent

by

BARRY GRAY

BERTIE THE BOOSTER leaned back in his chair, put his fingertips together and regarded Freddy White, leader of the famous Brigands Band, with a satisfied air.

"It's not for me to say, Freddy," he said, "but it's the Business and Publicity Man behind a band that puts it on top. A band can be the finest musical unit in the world, but without an alive, go-ahead business man behind it, it will never get anywhere."

"That's so, Mr. Littler," agreed Freddy, politely.

Bertie Littler was riding his favourite hobby horse. Freddy had heard it all before many times. Not that he denied the truth of it—nobody was more aware than he that Bertie Littler had put his band on the map. The golden butterfly of the Brigands Band which had emerged out of the uninteresting cocoon of Freddy White and his Band was the result only of the Band Booster's incubation. So Freddy let him have his head.

"I've put the Brigands at the top of the variety business," continued Bertie. "You've played the Palladrome four times in six months—and that's by way of being a record. I wangled—er—I arranged a first-class recording contract for you with the United people. What more can you ask of a manager?"

Freddy looked troubled. "Well" he said slowly. "There is one thing —"

He hesitated.

"What is it, my lad?" said Bertie. "Just say the word and Uncle Bertie'll fix it."

"As a matter of fact," began Freddy diffidently, "well, as a matter of fact I—er—well, I thought —"

"Come on, Freddy, spit it out. What d'you want me to do? Buy you Buckingham Palace as a rehearsal room? Anything you like. Just say the word and Bertram Littler will fix it."

Bertie stuck his thumbs in his waist-coat, put his feet on the desk, and prepared himself for the rôle of the Compleat Miracle Worker.

"I was thinking about broadcasting," said Freddy at length.

Bertie took his feet off the table with alacrity.

"I must be getting old," he said,

"I'd never thought of that. Broadcasting! Why, of course!"

He leaned across his desk and prodded Freddy familiarly with a bony forefinger.

"Broadcasting, you said? Watch Bertie Littler! Just leave it to me."

And he gathered up his coat, slammed on his bowler at its customary rakish angle and strode to the door.

"Where are you going?" said Freddie, startled at this suddenness, accustomed as he was to his chief's mercurial behaviour.

Bertie stopped at the doorway.

"Where would you go if you wanted some potatoes?" he demanded surprisingly.

"Eh?" Freddy was startled.

"To the greengrocer's," continued Bertie, disregarding Freddy's obvious doubt of his sanity. "And if I wanted a haircut I'd go to a barber's," he continued.

"Well? What has this got —?"

Freddy broke off in the middle of his sentence for the very good reason that Bertie had gone. He grinned in amusement. Bertie was really the most extraordinary —

The door opened just sufficiently for the Band Booster to stick his head in.

"And if I want to broadcast," he continued, as if he hadn't stopped, "I'd go to the B.B.C.—which I am!"

The door closed.

"Mad!" muttered Freddy. "Mad as a hatter!"

IF Bertie had left his office like a Mad Hatter, he returned to it like a roaring lion.

Freddy looked up from the arrangement on which he was working.

"Of all the —!" stormed Littler.

"I know, I know," soothed Freddy. "Come and sit down—have a cigar—and tell me all about it."

Bertie chewed the end of his weed and puffed indignantly.

"They told me that they couldn't give me a date," he said, and returned to his maltreatment of the cigar.

"I guessed that," said Freddy, with a faint smile. "Why didn't you ask for an audition?"

"Strangely enough," said Bertie, with

heavy sarcasm, "that idea occurred to me. I did ask."

"What did they say?"

"That they had a waiting list a mile long!"

"And then?" prompted the band leader.

"And then I told them who I was," said the Booster.

"And —?"

"And," said Bertie incredulously, "they said they'd never heard of me!"

"Dreadful!" said Freddy gravely.

"What did you do—tear the building down?"

"That would be doing them a favour," said Bertie, and, having got that crack off his chest, his good humour reasserted itself.

"I'm not through, though," he said.

"I'm afraid you are, Mr. Littler," said Freddy. "You see, if the B.B.C. say you're out, you're out. There is no appeal. They have the monopoly. It isn't as though we were in America, where there'd be dozens of independent broadcasting concerns. In this country the only chance you've got of broadcasting is from the B.B.C. direct, or by means of an outside broadcast from a public restaurant or hotel where there is a landline."

"Well, can't we do that?" demanded Bertie.

Freddy shook his head decisively.

"'Fraid not," he said. "I'd have to have a resident job at one of those places. And I haven't got that, and couldn't go after it —"

"Because of our variety contracts," concluded Bertie.

"Yes."

"Ah! Well, that's a bit difficult, isn't it? But I'll fix it!"

"I don't see how you can," said Freddy.

"Neither do I at the moment," said Littler, "but if you tell me that a No. 1 band *should* be on the air, then I'll bet you I fix it in a month—even if I have to blow up Broadcasting House," he concluded vindictively.

DID you give all the boys my instructions?" asked Bertie.

"I did," replied Freddy. "I told them to be here, at your office, at 9 p.m. sharp, with instruments, but not in evening dress, and not to say a word to anyone. They'll be here at any moment."

"Good," said Bertie, rubbing his hands. "They're a good bunch of boys. But you must impress upon them the need for absolute secrecy. Otherwise the whole stunt will be a washout."

"I wish you'd tell me what it's all about," said Freddy.

"My dear laddie, have I ever let you down? If Uncle Bertie says so isn't it good enough? Can't you take my word for it?"

"Of course you know I can and do," replied Freddy instantly. "But it's all very mysterious."

"Leave it to me," begged the Band Booster. "I've gone to a lot of trouble to fix this up. Just trust your Uncle Bertie. Did you get that broadcasting

programme arranged as I asked you?"

A light of comprehension dawned on Freddy's face.

"I say," he said breathlessly, "we're not broadcasting to-night, are we?"

"You are," said Bertie, briefly, and enjoyed the band leader's amazement.

"But how can that be?" demanded Bertie. "I've read the *Radio Times* from cover to cover and there's no mention of the Brigands for to-night—not even a Surprise Item."

Bertie chuckled.

"No," he said, "your broadcast wouldn't be in the *Radio Times*. But it'll be in all the papers to-morrow. 'Surprise Item' is right!"

And he laughed again, in high good humour.

A LARGE and luxurious charabanc rolled up to the door of Bertie's office. A quiet, unusually refined driver climbed down off his perch, and approached Bertie, who was waiting at the door.

"Mr. Littler?"

"Yes."

"All ready?"

"Yes."

"Then please ask the gentlemen to get on board without delay, I want to get away as soon as possible."

"I bet you do," said Bertie under his breath.

"I beg your pardon?"

"Nothing—nothing," said Bertie, hastily. "Come on, boys, all in as quickly as you can."

The Brigands Band piled into the charabanc, and the chauffeur silently and efficiently loaded their instrument cases into the luggage compartment alongside the driver's seat. Bertie had a large Gladstone bag with him, which, he told the driver, contained the orchestrations, and which he insisted on taking into the passenger compartment with him, putting it on the floor beside his seat.

The charabanc had all its blinds drawn, including those behind the driver's compartment. One of the boys started to pull one up.

"Put that down," called Bertie sharply, and the peremptoriness in his voice so startled the musician that he let go the blind with a jerk and it flew up with a snap.

Astonished, the boys all looked at the window thus revealed. It was painted an impenetrable black!

"Put that blind down," snapped Bertie. When this was done, he faced the boys, who were looking at him in amazement.

"Boys," he said, "we are off on a mysterious sort of job to-night. I can't tell you what it is because I'm bound to secrecy. I can, though, tell you this much—that we're going to broadcast to night, and I want you to put up the best show you possibly can because this may lead to big things."

"I can't tell you where we're going or what station we're broadcasting from. You'll just have to take my word for it. You're getting paid well for to night's work—very well—and you'll have to

put your confidence in Mr. White here and myself."

"That's all, lads, except you'll oblige me by not trying to look out of the windows, or in any way finding out where we're going. Moreover, when we get there, go right in as quietly as possible and do as you're told without a second's delay. Thanks, boys."

THE charabanc rolled on silently through the night, and the boys separated into little groups, eagerly discussing in whispers this latest adventure.

The noise of traffic gradually diminished until only the occasional "swoosh!" of a passing car punctuated the quiet hum of the chara's engine.

The driver seemed to know the way perfectly for he never faltered for an instant.

Eventually, after an hour's travelling, the chara stopped. The driver, leaving his engine ticking over, climbed down.

Presently, the boys, who were listening with breathless interest, heard sounds of large iron gates being swung open.

The chara moved forward a few yards and stopped again, presumably to allow the driver to shut the gates after him.

For several minutes the chara moved cautiously forward. From the scrunching sound of the tyres the amateur Sexton Blakes of the band deduced that they were proceeding up the lengthy carriage drive of a big country house.

Presently the vehicle stopped again, and the driver opened the door. The boys were surprised to notice that it had been locked.

"This way, gentlemen, please," he said, in urgent undertones. "As quietly as possible, and please hurry. Your instruments will be brought in to you."

The boys clambered down. The more observant noticed that the charabanc's lights were out.

The bus was drawn up directly to the

front door of what appeared to be, from the brief glimpse they had, a very large country mansion. Ivy covered the walls, and a short flight of wide stone steps led up to an imposing oak door, which was open.

At the door another man met them.

"This way, gentlemen, if you please," said he, and led the way through a maze of passages and rooms, and down into what were probably at one time the wine vaults.

Now, however, these big underground cellars were hung with heavy black curtains on runners. The floors were heavily carpeted, and concealed lighting showed the broadcasting studio—for such it obviously was—to be equipped regardless of expense.

The boys passed across the studio into a small room, which was comfortably furnished with inviting easy chairs. A large table set for dinner stood in the centre of the room.

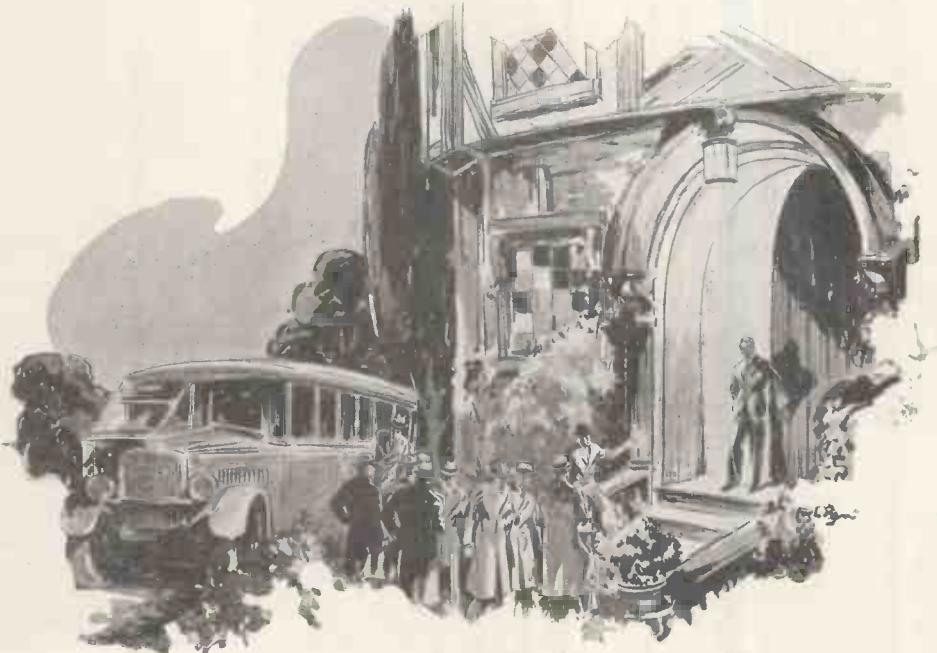
At the invitation of their guide the boys removed their coats and sat down to a most excellent meal. Meanwhile, their instrument cases were brought in and carefully placed on shelves.

The boys, under the influence of the excellent dinner and admirable wines, lost their feeling of restraint, and were soon enjoying themselves hugely.

The driver of the charabanc, still in his livery, but wearing an unmistakable air of authority, entered the room.

"When you are ready, gentlemen," he said courteously, "we will have a balance test. After that there will be a few speeches, and then, Mr. White, we'll go right into your programme."

THE balance test completed to the satisfaction of the two engineers who sat in a small room surrounded by the most appalling array of electrical instruments, the late charabanc driver stepped to the microphone, waited for



The bus was drawn up directly to the front door of what appeared to be a very large country mansion.

Hal Kemp.

ON THE LINE with

BUESCHER



This magazine, "The Melody Maker," is regarded as one of the **leading music publications** of England. It has a great reader interest of professional musicians. Hal Kemp is one of the "**big names**" in that **exclusive** group.

In the music profession, all of us like to study the methods of any fellow who has made a **big success**. Not that we want to "**steal his stuff**," but because we may—often do—find a "**hunch**." There may be a tip for you—something for **you** to think about—in the fact that Hal Kemp has always used Buescher instruments **himself**, and his orchestra.



Hal Kemp made a personal visit to the Buescher factory recently to select new instruments for his orchestra. The illustration at the left shows Mr. Kemp, with O. E. Beers, general manager of the Buescher Company, and Frank Burke, publicity manager of the Music Corporation of America, as Hal puts his signature "on the dotted line" for several new Buescher instruments.



Hal Kemp and his internationally famous orchestra now appearing at the Blackhawk Cafe in Chicago.

And don't think this is just a whimsical detail. At the **outset of his career**, Hal Kemp **studied** and **finally chose** Buescher instruments with the meticulous care that a lad picks his first pair of long trousers. His future success was at stake. Bueschers, he thought, would help him most to reach the goal he has now attained. **They have!**

Have **you** ever tried a Buescher? Have **you tried one lately**? You know the fellow who "doesn't like olives" is the fellow who won't taste them. You may find in a Buescher Sax or Trumpet or Trombone the **very thing** that responds best to **your particular ability** to play. Come in to-day and try a Buescher, if only "Just for curiosity." A **little thing** like this may lead to something **big** for you.

See the latest Buescher models on display.

Clifford Essex & Son.

15th GRAFTON STREET, NEW BOND ST. LONDON.W.1.

the red light, and when it flashed on, commenced to speak.

"This is the broadcasting station of the British Bolshevik League calling," he said, and stopped.

The boys looked at one another in amazed enlightenment.

Freddy White looked curiously at Bertie the Booster, who leaned against the wall of the studio with a faint smile on his face. He seemed entirely unconcerned at the astonishing remark made into the microphone.

The ex-driver repeated his remark twice, then continued.

"We are going to give you a special treat to-night, comrades," he said. "Before we commence the promised speech of our distinguished visitor from Russia, we are to have half an hour's broadcast of dance music by one of the finest bands in the country. I would like to draw your attention to the significant fact that this famous band of celebrities—which for obvious reasons must remain anonymous—wholeheartedly supports us in our endeavour to convert England to the principles and practices of Bolshevism."

Freddy White made an angry gesture, and moved as if to intercept the speaker. But Bertie Littler caught him by the arm and whispered in his ear. Whatever it was, it must have explained a lot, for Freddy's angry expression changed to one of surprise, passing through bewilderment, thoughtfulness and relief to enlightenment.

Eventually he grinned broadly, and signalled to the boys, who had been watching this by-play intently, that all was well. Seeing this, the boys, who had implicit confidence in their leader, relaxed. If Freddy said it was O.K., it was. Bit mysterious, but old Freddy wouldn't let them into anything unpleasant.

Occasionally Hyde-Park phrases floated to them "... liberty ... the working man ... the capitalist ... starving millions ... the Russian Soviet ... equality for all ... rebellion ... down with ... down with ... down with ..."

The speaker stepped back from the mike, and signalled to Freddy to commence.

THE broadcast was carried off without a hitch, the boys excelled themselves. At intervals the musical programme was interrupted by speeches by various individuals, all of whom seemed to utter the same platitudinous ideas wrapped up in not-so-fresh words. Their underlying message was the same in every case—Revolution—Bolshevism.

Eventually the strange broadcast came to an end. The boys were hustled back into the charabanc with its painted window and drawn blinds, and the journey back to town commenced.

The observant Freddy noticed that the return trip only took half as long as the outward journey—a remarkable discrepancy—but he said nothing. Apparently Bertie Littler's remark had explained a great deal.

The chara drew up at Bertie Littler's office, decanted its human load and drove off.

Freddy peered after it in an attempt to read its number, but whether by accident or design, the tail light was out, and the charabanc was swallowed up in the darkness before he had time to read the numerals.

With a parting admonition to the boys to say nothing to anyone of the strange episode, Bertie dismissed them all.

"Remember, boys," he said, "not a word. In a few days' time I hope to be able to tell you everything. In the meantime, unless you want to spoil some big plans I have for you, not a mutter about anything to anyone."

THE Very Important Personage sat at his desk in his room in Downing Street.

His principal secretary entered.

"There are two men outside, Sir Arthur," he said, without preamble.

The Very Important Personage peered np between bushy eyebrows.

"Who are they?" he demanded curtly.

"You wouldn't know them—one's a well-known band leader and the other's his manager."

"Can't you deal with them?"

"No, sir. They insist on seeing you personally. I've managed to get out of them that it's something about this Bolshevik pirate broadcasting."

The Very Important Personage raised his eyebrows.

"Shall I see them?" he said. He knew that his trusted secretary would safeguard him from time-wasters.

"I think five minutes, Sir Arthur."

"All right, show them in."

Bertie and Freddy entered, the latter nervously, the former with his usual aplomb.

Briefly and succinctly, Bertie introduced himself and Freddy, and told the tale of the mysterious broadcast.

The Very Important Personage listened intently.

"So yours was the band," he said at length. "I have a detailed report here of the broadcast and I wondered who they had got hold of to help them. Why did you do it?"

"We went, Sir Arthur," replied Bertie, "with the express purpose of finding out where this private station was. We'd read about the trouble it was causing and how the police had failed to find it, so I thought I'd take a hand."

"Were you able to find out where this station is situated?"

Bertie became as near to condescension as he dared.

"That," he said, "was my object in going. I knew it would be useless trying to follow the charabanc—they would take precautions against anything so obvious. So I took a large bag into the charabanc with me. This bag was really a tank of oil coloured with dye. In the bottom of the bag was a sharp, hollow spike. It was an easy matter to dig the spike in the floor of the chara and let the oil drop slowly out."

"This morning, as soon as it was daylight, I started out from my office. There hadn't been much traffic overnight and no rain, so it was easy to follow the trail of coloured oil."

The Very Important Personage focused his steel grey eyes on the Band Booster.

"And where," he said, intently, "did it lead you?"

Bertie leaned back in his chair and paused dramatically. This was his moment.

"To Regent's Park," he said dramatically.

Sir Arthur's eyes narrowed. "But you said the journey took an hour," he said.

Bertie so far forgot himself in his excitement as to lean forward and prod the Very Important Personage in the waistcoat.

"The tracks went round the Park six times," he said. "Remember, it was dark, nobody would notice the chara going round, and it spun out the time to make us think we had gone out into the country. The driver was in a hurry to get rid of us afterwards and came straight back. That's why the return trip only took half the time."

Sir Arthur pressed a bell and the secretary appeared.

"Phone Scotland Yard and ask Inspector Grayson to come here immediately," he said.

The Very Important Personage turned to the Band Booster.

"Tell me, Mr. Littler," he said curiously, "how did you get in touch with these people?"

Bertie grinned reminiscently.

"I took a soap box into Hyde Park and preached flaming Bolshevism," he said. "I'm afraid my speeches weren't very good; all I said was Down with Everything. The crowd gave me the razz —"

"The what?" queried Sir Arthur with surprise.

"They treated me with derision," amended Bertie, with dignity, and Freddy chuckled.

"And then?"

"Well, some fellow tapped me on the shoulder afterwards, called me Comrade, and asked me if I'd like to join the Cause. The rest was easy."

Sir Arthur laughed.

"I am deeply indebted to you two gentlemen," he said, turning to the band leader and his manager. "This pirate broadcasting station has been stirring up a great deal of trouble and hitherto we have been unable to locate it. You have done your country a great service, gentlemen. If there is any favour I can do you I shall be happy."

Bertie lowered his voice impressively.

"As a matter of fact, Sir Arthur," he said, "the boys enjoyed the work so much last night that they're anxious to do some permanent broadcasting. I've tried to arrange it, but there appears to be some difficulty —"

"I thought perhaps a word from the right quarter, Sir Arthur —" continued Bertie, insinuatingly.

Sir Arthur laughed outright.

"It shall be said," he promised.

These, Them and Those

Being the random thoughts of
GEOFFREY CLAYTON

Illustrated here and there by Gilbert Wilkinson

HERE seems to be a great movement at the present time for more polite songs. I don't know whether it is the result of such numbers as "She was only a So-and-so's Daughter," "Rhymes," "My Man of War"—or what it is: but there it is.

By "more polite songs," I mean such numbers as "Please," "Yes, Mr. Brown," or "Puleeze, Mister Hemingway."

If the movement develops to its full, we may go even further. I refer to such possibilities as: "Sorry to Trouble You, but do You Love Me, Miss Birtwhistle?" "No, Thanks, Lady Astor!" or "After You with the Blonde, Mr. Hepplethwaite."

After all, anything may happen, may not it, don't you think?

that the pavement be covered with a top dressing of rejected manuscripts. Or, alternatively, when the famous band leader goes forth to broadcast, he might proceed under an avenue of crossed cheques. Really, one can never say for sure, can one . . . ?

to all really serious students of syncopation.

For the first eight lessons, each student is taught to sit down and to shrug or slightly oscillate his right shoulder, known as the first vo-do-dee-o movement.

The second eight lessons are devoted to the gentle art of moving the right hand rhythmically across the jolly old features, level with the chin, palm downwards, and in time with the after beat. This is known as the second vo-do-dee-o movement.

The next eight pieces of instruction impart the necessary movement to the right foot and leg, from the knee downwards, at the correct tempo for four-in-a-bar. This is not known as anything in particular.

The last four lessons are devoted to the teaching of an instrument. Good for Harry! Now, come on, you plutocrats! Here's another idea which only needs capital to develop it. Capital? Well, p'rhaps you're right. Thanks . . .

Talking about development, as the girl said when she entered the dark room, here is another idea worth watching. Casting the critical eye over the daily paper a short spot back, I beheld therein a picture of a happy bridal pair advancing towards the lens under an arch of brass band instruments, stoutly upheld by the local band. Well, I ask you . . .

I was at Lawrie Wright's wedding; but I did not notice that Betty and he moved towards us under an arch of orchestral issues.

That, however, is not to say that the idea is not ripe and fruity. The next time any well-known publisher walks forth on a rainy morning, it is suggested

If the gentleman who practises the trombone next door to me would communicate with Messrs. Bolsover, Bolsover, Littlejohn and Bolsover, of Lincoln's Inn Fields, he will hear something to my advantage.

Boy friend of mine runs a rather good thing in gig bands. Met him some time ago and he told me that he was concentrating on the exclusive West End in future. So, borrowing the bronze, I rang him up the other day.

"Well," I queried, "have you been able to get a good grip on Society as yet?"

"Oh, yes," he replied, "I've got my teeth well into the proposition, but I'm having a bit of trouble with the upper set."

With reference to last month's photograph of Irving Mills and party, please do not think that all music publishers and impresarios (or impresarii—if you must be so particular) wear those clothes when they come over here.

For instance, when a certain well-known German publisher visited us a short while back, there was no mistaking him for a bull-fighter.

In the same way, when I honour New York with my presence, I invariably



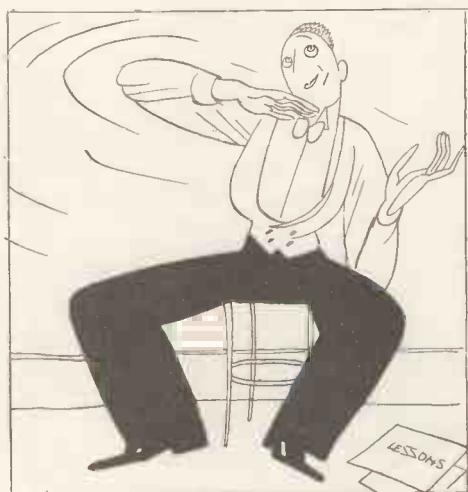
... practises the trombone . . .

Feeling my daily thirst come over me about a week ago, I gate-crashed into the local. There I was lucky enough to run up against the one and only, Harry Stafford.

I need hardly introduce Harry to all three of my readers as the talented arranger to the firm of C . . . ll and C . . . lly. (I told you before that I was not allowed to advertise; so please don't try to guess the name.)

Anyway, Harry has a great system for teaching. He wants to run a school to train dance band musicians and is only looking for the necessary capital to carry it through.

The course is divided into four parts of seven lessons each, and is suitable



... vo-do-dee-o movement . . .

am to be found in the quiet outfit of the well-dressed man-about-town. This, in my case, always consists of the black morning coat and white waistcoat (with, of course, club tie). A pair of well-creased (very well creased!) grey flannel trouserings and brown shoes complete the outfit.

In spite of American prejudice, I always insist on wearing my bowler hat. If I cannot find it, then I wear someone else's. So don't get wrong ideas.

Will the gentleman who took a brand new gold-plated — baritone saxophone from the cloak room of the — Restaurant on Wednesday last be good enough to return the mouthpiece, as the owner is suffering from rabies.

Did you hear about the drummer who had been on the dole so long that he thought "manual labour" was the name of a Spanish nobleman? Er, thanks...



... will go any distance ...

G. D. Addison, a correspondent from Canterbury, was good enough to write in last month and say that I was worth a bob by myself. Fine bloke, G.D.A.! As soon as I saw this, I put on the old hat and what-nots and oozed round to the editor to suggest to him that—in view of the foregoing, he might raise my fee by twopence an article.

Of course, I got kicked out as usual. Pity, because if not, I could have bought Mr. Addison some hops the next time he came to town. That is, if he came quick enough. Pity, as I say.

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The Pay-Way System

Parsimony towards O.B. dance music is the B.B.C.'s besetting sin, says "Quaite," who proceeds to develop his theories for better broadcasting

NOT the least interesting task which will confront some future historian of the B.B.C. will be to apportion the degrees of ignorance, parsimony and ostrich-like detachment which have characterised many of its dealings with the various professions which contribute to its programmes.

That abundant cash has been and still is forthcoming for the supply of "hobby-horses" for staff-members of the "Inner Circle" is common knowledge, but some of the tortuous workings of the official mind, attempting to cut down legitimate expenses, have still to enjoy that wider publicity their very grotesqueness merits.

Pound Foolish

In the early days one encounters the story of the harassed musical director whose programme required the services of two oboes, whereas his allowance was strictly marked "Oboe—One."

The M.D. indented accordingly for Oboe II, and his memorandum was returned to him marked:

"Is second oboe really necessary? Suggest bringing existing player nearer microphone."

And does everybody know that the original intention in offering the engagement to Jack Payne's band was that the combination should be double, or even treble-handed; capable of performing either as a straight or as a dance band and that the band was gravely auditioned by a collection of *Big Noises* to this end?

Money for Old Rope

On the whole, the B.B.C.'s policy towards the dance-band public is probably more unfair than its dealings in other directions.

Let us look at the matter squarely.

To begin with the Corporation derives its income from the licence revenue and incidentally points with not too justifiable pride to the 5,000,000 mark in this direction.

The plain facts of this case are that the law requires every possessor of a wireless receiving set to take out a licence for his instrument, *irrespective of the fact that he may not wish to listen to the B.B.C. fare at all!*

Official Dogmatism

Probably, like so many of us, he "goes abroad" every evening, but the fact remains that the major portion of his licence fee is passed on to the B.B.C., which then proceeds openly and avowedly

to give him "what the public does not want."

The truly dangerous side of the matter is, however, that although all listeners must *perforce* pay the B.B.C., that Corporation has a tendency to become more and more a "closed house" to the many.

One sees this in every sphere of its activities; certain speakers of international repute are politely barred; new musical talent is no longer encouraged by open auditions ("our books are so full" is the official explanation); the large permanent orchestra is a permanent bone of contention among members of the orchestral profession, and, as for dance bands . . . !

As for dance bands, here is briefly the position.

First and foremost there is the B.B.C. Dance Orchestra under Henry Hall's direction. No reasonable person can help feeling that this band has far too much to do in the course of the week, when one considers the variety of numbers to be rehearsed, its ever-increasing repertoire and its actual performances.

Overworked Band

Whether one is a Hall-fan or not, it is possible to admire their weekly labour as a feat of endurance alone—but one must go further than that in common justice.

While the band is worked to the present extent it would be merely ungracious to criticise it technically, but that does not prevent one from criticising the powers that ordain its being over-employed so that otherwise legitimate criticism is stifled.

The dance music fare of the B.B.C. is supplemented by outside broadcasts from hotels, etc., plus an occasional music-hall relay and occasional visits of well-known bands to the studio.

In the matter of these O.B. dance bands one finds the weakest spot in the B.B.C. dance band policy.

The O.B. System

Firstly, the B.B.C. has agreements with the proprietors of various establishments to take a certain quota of dance music from those establishments.

This immediately creates a situation whereby the path to broadcasting honours for a new dance band is not directly *via* the B.B.C., but indirectly through (say) a restaurant engagement.

It is wrong because it allows the B.B.C. to disclaim control of any performances which do not come up to scratch.

Secondly, it allows the B.B.C. to disclaim control of the programmes broadcast in any cases where the word "plugging" is breathed.

With the best of good intentions on the part both of the leader of an O.B. dance band and his employer, inevitably clients of the ballroom (or whatever it may be) are entitled to ask for "request" numbers and to have them played—whether the "request" is inspired by a "plunger" is not their concern at all.

But it is the concern of the B.B.C., although that body can, and does, disclaim any responsibility of such happenings as being "beyond its control."

There is little use in the efforts of Henry Hall to secure fair play in his programmes if, at the end of the day, his work can be undone, either in ignorance or wittingly, by his unofficial competitors.

What, then, is the remedy?

Payment and Control

Simply that the B.B.C. must throw open its supplementary dance band arrangements to genuinely competitive aspirants. It must then be prepared to pay a fair price for what it receives and in return it will be able to assume complete control and responsibility for the manner and the matter of all its dance band broadcasts.

Nor need the public fear that it would lose any of its present favourites by such an arrangement for long—if at all.

The publicity value of broadcasting would still accrue to the Bodegaleros of this world, and if it were decided still to broadcast their bands during dancing hours in the restaurants, what simpler than for the managements to display a notice "No request numbers between 11 p.m. and midnight, to-night"?

A Beneficial Proposition

By "buying the whole outfit" the B.B.C. could arrange to centralise the whole programme policy of dance music and thus finally rid us of those abuses, intentional or otherwise, which still persist. Furthermore, the actual standard of transmission could be vastly improved on the technical side during the hour devoted to broadcasting.

A Balance and Control Man (the Musician with a Technical Mission!) could be in regular attendance and made responsible for O.B. dance music. And, at last, there would be a chance for all dance-band talent to compete for the relief of Henry Hall on his heavy days.

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Monseigneur Band at Bradford Contest

Lew Stone Gets the Thrill of His Life

THERE has been a series of six intensely interesting and important contests held since the last one reported in THE MELODY MAKER, and some extraordinarily fine attendances have rewarded the enterprise of their respective organisers, three being entirely new fixtures and the remainder being important and established championships.

The series commenced with the First Annual Staffordshire Championship, presented by Mr. R. M. Ackroyd of Leeds and staged in the Trentham Gardens Ballroom, near Hanley, Staffs. This ballroom is a mammoth building some miles out of the town and situated in the centre of a wonderful park. To get there one has to rely mainly upon buses, charabancs and private cars from the Five Towns.

It was an enterprise which might have ended in disaster had it not been so capably organised as on this occasion.

As a matter of fact, prospects were not helped by a tendency to fog on this particular night, but all was well in the end and a truly magnificent crowd of at least twelve hundred poured into Trentham, where the car park looked like a corner of Twickenham on an International day.

With eleven out of the thirteen listed competitors turning up, the Staffordshire and local counties were well represented and there was a considerable element of musicians among the audience in addition to the contestants.

The adjudicators for the occasion, in addition to the Editor, were that brilliant trio from the Spider's Web Roadhouse, including Bill Airey-Smith, drummer-vocalist, Freddy Bretherton, pianist arranger, and Micky Lewis, the hot saxophonist.

Assisted by Ben Davis they gave a rapturously received interlude of solos and dance music, and each one of the four artists was given an ovation which he is not likely to forget.

This being the first contest in Staffordshire, the general standard of performance was none too high, and unfortunately the winning band had to be disqualified as a result of a sustained objection to it on the grounds of the professional status of its leader. This musician found consolation, however, in the happy sequel that he was presented with a brand new baritone saxophone by an anonymous admirer as a solatium for his disappointment.

With the Majestic Players, the band in question, being ruled out, the verdict went to another combination which had travelled all the way from Lincoln to win its second title.

The success of the fixture has undoubtedly established it for years to



Lew Stone

come as of equal importance to any other in the kingdom.

* * *

MR. LEW BUCKLEY, of Royton, is the most active contest organiser in the County Palatine, and having completed his net over the Lancashire towns he is now going further afield and, by way of experiment, staged a contest in Huddersfield for which he hired the Town Hall.

This makes a comparatively small ballroom and it was essential if the contest were to be conducted economically that he must charge 3s. 6d. admission.

As Huddersfield folk had not been made previously aware of the great entertainment provided by such an event, many of them probably jibbed at the price of admission and consequently the attendance was only round about the three hundred and fifty mark, an ill reward for the attractive event which Mr. Buckley had staged for local dancers.

Nevertheless, those who were present enjoyed themselves to the full, not only by dancing to the contesting bands, but in the entertainment provided by Senor Fosco, who played some extremely technical and difficult piano accordion solos, and Jimmy Armstrong, the saxophonist, who played some hot and straight style solos on that instrument varied with an impressive demonstration of legitimate clarinet playing.

On this occasion the Editor was assisted in the adjudication by no less a celebrity than Maurice Winnick, the ex-Carlton Hotel band-leader, who was kept busy signing autographs before and after the proceedings.

* * *

THE Swindon Branch of the Knights of St. Columba have made of the annual contest in that town the event of the year, and capacity business has always been done,

This year's fixture on February 2nd eclipsed all previous records, however, for at the last moment the Editor was able to arrange for the assistance of Bill Harty, Nat Gonella and Al Bowly of Lew Stone's Monseigneur Band as adjudicators, and the last minute announcement made an immense sensation in Wiltshire.

The G.W.R. Baths Hall had been cleverly decorated and equipped for the purpose of the contest and it presented a most animated appearance with every available seat occupied and the floor crowded with enthusiastic dancers.

Words can hardly describe the utter enthusiasm of everybody when the Monseigneur boys, assisted by Ben Davis, formed a small band for a special interlude, and every time one of the musicians took a solo salvos of applause stopped the proceedings.

The contest, too, was interesting from beginning to end, and when the Deputy Mayor of Swindon presented the prizes, each award was so heartily cheered that it was quite evident that the audience was in entire agreement with the judging.

Before the contest was concluded, the judges had arranged to catch a late train back to town, but it was touch and go because Nat Gonella, Bill Harty and Al Bowly were besieged by admirers and it was difficult indeed for them to tear themselves away from the delighted fans.

It was a most competently organised show all through, and the Knights of St. Columba have to be congratulated on the thoroughness of their methods in staging so successful an entertainment.

* * *

ALTHOUGH the Tottenham Palais is one of the biggest in London and normally is run on extremely cheap and popular lines, Mr. Leslie Ayling, who stages his North London contest there each year, had no difficulty in attracting a very large crowd of over eight hundred at more than double the usual price of admission. Nor can it be said that this great gathering was attracted by anything but the spirit of the contest, for it was not until the actual day of the event that the appointment of adjudicators was made known.

Once again these included some of the boys of the Monseigneur, namely Nat Gonella, and Joe Crossman—officiating at his first contest—supported by Dan Ingman and Arthur Rosebery, with Al Bowly also in attendance to assist in entertaining the audience in a special interlude. It is a certainty that had the visit of these celebrities been known locally a few days earlier many hundreds more dancers would have been present.

If there was one weakness in the

contest it was in the fact that only six bands were scheduled to compete and actually only five played in the end. What they lacked, however, in the way of numbers they more than made up in quality, for any of them might quite easily win a contest where they are not thrown into juxtaposition.

Leslie Ayling had his own well-known outfit in attendance as resident band, and the proceedings were kept humming even when the contestants were not actually playing.

Naturally the high spot of the evening was the interlude provided by the adjudicators, when the star players were hemmed in at the bandstand and were given a hearing which even they cannot be normally accustomed to.

It was notable that among the audience were a number of musicians from the Home Counties who had travelled many miles to see what London semi-pro bands can do. These, too, were delighted to find so many celebrities in attendance to demonstrate.

It was a great occasion to which Mr. Leslie Ayling, the organiser, will undoubtedly look back as one of the biggest successes of his career.

* * *

THE All Yorkshire Dance Band Championship which is held annually at the King's and Queen's Hall, Bradford, is always a most remarkable event. Three years ago, when it was first staged, there was no restriction upon admission and no less than eighteen hundred people crowded into a ballroom the capacity of which was officially placed at a thousand.

The authorities of Bradford were of opinion that there was danger in the floor collapsing with so many people dancing, so for subsequent years the organiser was obligated to allow only one thousand admissions in all.

Mr. R. M. Ackroyd, the Leeds musical instrument dealer, whose contest it is, had no difficulty whatsoever in selling his complement of tickets on these occasions in advance of the day, so that there was no admission through the box office.

The same result would undoubtedly have attended the Fourth Annual Championship had it been conducted on normal lines, but Mr. Ackroyd is a man whose enterprise and willingness to take a chance apparently know no bounds. He heard that Lew Stone and the Monseigneur Band were temporarily resting while the Monseigneur was being

redecorated and therefore conceived the idea of booking it *en bloc* to play at this contest.

It is no secret now that he made a very attractive offer to Lew Stone to accept this engagement and, as a result, special arrangements were made at the last minute and the price of tickets for the contest was raised from 2s. 6d. to 5s.

There was terrific excitement in Leeds when the first announcements were made, and the authorities of the Baths Hall accommodately permitted twelve hundred instead of a thousand tickets to be sold. These were snapped up long before the great day, and everybody was agog for the arrival of the boys.

On the arrival at Bradford station they were greeted by a colossal committee, including a large number of musicians playing their instruments, and there was much excitement on the platform while they were photographed and fought their way through the crowd to get to their conveyances to transport them to their hotel.

As there were no fewer than fifteen bands competing, the contest started promptly at 7 p.m., at which early hour a great number of people were already in attendance and an enormous crowd outside were endeavouring hopelessly to buy tickets for admission.

The adjudication was left solely to the Editor with the invaluable assistance of Lew Stone himself, and it was essential that a very slick organisation should see the competing bands on and off the platform in order to leave the Monseigneur Band a couple of hours in which to entertain the vast audience which packed the hall "from floor to ceiling."

The organisation was well up to the mark and the contest finished to schedule.

Then came the turn of Lew Stone's Monseigneur Band to take its specially built and well-decorated and equipped bandstand, where special Marconiphone

microphones and loudspeakers had been installed. The reception of the band's playing can be better imagined than described. The hottest numbers in its repertoire were played, together with those well-known production numbers, including "Little Nell," which are so much a feature of the band's broadcasts.

So intense was the interest of the audience that it was difficult indeed to arrange for a break in which to announce the results of the contest and to distribute the prizes, which, however, were successfully accomplished with the audience obviously in great sympathy with the results.

The Monseigneur Band then resumed and played out the time with the excitement getting more and more intense. For at least half an hour after "The King" had been played, the band found it impossible to leave the bandstand, having been besieged by hundreds of autograph hunters who brought along their albums, scraps of paper, photographs, drum heads and the like, to be inscribed.

It was the Monseigneur Band's first trip into the provinces and though it will, of course, be by no means the last, it is extremely doubtful whether it will ever have such an appreciative audience, in view of the fact that so large a percentage of it was comprised of dance musicians and out-and-out fans.

* * *

CAMBERLEY is only a very small town, or large village, whichever you may prefer, owing its existence to the fact that it is a garrison town handy to Bagshot and Aldershot.

It would not at first sight appear to be a likely place in which to stage a dance band contest, but Mr. E. Lawrence, who is the joint proprietor of the Palais de Danse, Aldershot, has had considerable success at Camberley with occasional dances at which the local residents and the troops have supported him very handsomely.

There being no suitable hall available at Aldershot, Mr. Lawrence decided to try out his luck in the Drill Hall at Camberley, thinking to reconcile a small capacity of four hundred and fifty with an increased admission of 3s. That he knows his business to the hilt is evidenced by the fact that in a very short time he secured a list of thirteen entrants, to which he could have added considerably had it been possible to cope with the enquiries.

The contest duly took place on February



Mr. R. M. Ackroyd and Sir Ronald Gunter greeting Lew Stone, Al Bowly, Bill Harty and Ben Davis on their arrival in Bradford for the All-Yorkshire Championship

15th, and the little hall was jammed. There was only one absentee from the thirteen bands entered and the standard was surprisingly high, especially when it is borne in mind that a previous contest winner, in Jack Viner's Band, only secured third place, though it must be stated that it was hardly up to its best form.

The winner turned out to be a Windsor combination entirely new to contesting, and it must be congratulated therefore on its auspicious debut.

A pleasant interlude in the serious

proceedings was provided by Ben Davis, who again gained tremendous plaudits for his masterful saxophone playing.

The prizes were presented by Dan S. Ingman, the Technical Editor of THE MELODY MAKER, who assisted the Editor in adjudicating.

The contest was so successful that Mr. Lawrence has decided to run another in Aldershot at the commencement of next season, and, in fact, his attendance broke all records for the Camberley Drill Hall.

drummer must play four in a bar on bass drum. Last chorus a great improvement.

Of the remaining competitors, the Carlton Dance Band and the Quaints Dance Band were in the van, the former supplying the best alto of the contest (W. Emery), and the latter the best pianist (N. Morrey).

Best guitar was in Les Smith's Band.

Results of the Contests

STOKE Trentham Gardens Ballroom, January 23rd, 1933.

Adjudicators: Messrs. Billy Airey-Smith, Micky Lewis, Fred Bretherton and P. Mathison Brooks.

Winners

Len Foster and his Band (Piano, banjo, drums, tuba, alto and tenor saxes and two trumpets). All communications: L. Foster, 217, Boultham Park Road, Lincoln.

Prizes: Silver Cup and replicas, MELODY MAKER Bannerette and diplomas. Also prize for best trumpet (C. Thornton).

First number played in competent straightforward manner and building up to a nice last chorus, in which the ensemble was quite good. Cleanly played without forcing, but rather lacking in tonal brilliance in the front line, and the rhythm section a little stodgy. Tempo not too well sustained, but an obvious attempt throughout to play in good style.

The waltz again cleanly played but somewhat deficient in expression. Brass particularly good throughout, and phrasing well. Alto sax inclined to gliss rather badly on high notes, and tenor somewhat better, especially when solo.

Quite a good waltz for rhythm and swing.

Excellent effort with "White Jazz," in which the ensemble of the band played to excellent advantage. The dinge attack of the brass duo especially attractive, but saxes not up to the same standard. Really good rhythm on the whole and the number played with a great deal of precision and understanding.

Rhythm section should try to combine for better ensemble, tone and lift and both saxes need improvement; alto should look to his articulation and tenor should speed up in vibrato fractionally.

Second

Fred Poynter and his Serenaders (Piano, guitar, drums, three saxes, trumpet and trombone). All communications: F. Poynter, Station House, Henor, Derbyshire.

Prizes: Silver Cup and medals, also prize for best trombone (M. Young).

First fox-trot played from printed parts with a good straight lead from trumpet and rhythm section well together and quite crisp. Saxes not absolutely together and had a tendency to overblow, with the alto glissing too freely.

The drummer makes too hard work and guitar a little too prominent.

In the waltz the opening by accordion was marred by some wrong notes. There was a well-played verse, but the tenor solo was spoilt by indifferent tone and intonation. A very fair effort on the whole, but chiefly spoilt by slack intonation.

The third number, "Stuff," brightly played, but rather too noisily. Only the brass really shone and trumpet mainly for his straight playing and technique.

Expression and precision of the band really good, although there is no actual finesse. Plenty of promise in the band.

Third

Phil Wright's Sutherland Dance Band (Piano, guitar, drums, string bass, alto and tenor saxes and violin). All communications: P. Wright, 21, Birch Terrace, Hanley, Staffs.

Prizes: Medals for each member of the band, also prizes for best drums (A. Bettelley), bass, (V. Prior), and tenor sax (J. Wooliscroft).

Careful rehearsal was reflected in the steady playing of this band, and its precision. The band has rhythm, but not of a particularly up-to-date style, and it requires to interpret its arrangements with more finesse.

Saxes work well together, but the alto is too glissy and has a bad tone production. Violin should improve tone and though he has quite a swing and considerable technical facility, his phrasing at times is distinctly "jazzy."

Much the same comments can be passed on both fox-trots, and the waltz, though not inconspicuous for its ensemble, was badly marred by the poor tones of violin and alto.

Fourth

The Virginians Dance Band (Piano, banjo, drums, bass, alto and tenor saxes, trumpet and trombone). All communications: H. L. Dean, 79, Liverpool Road, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs.

First fox-trot tempo good, and band well led by trumpet, who has quite a good idea of phrasing. Rhythm section podgy and saxophones not too well together, and not perfectly in tune.

A rather uninspired waltz was given, in which the ensemble was inclined to be ragged, and the rhythm section heavy. Drummer deficient in technique.

Own selected showed the band with better ensemble. More confidence in the band's playing and attack improved so that there was a more danceable rhythm. Tuba much too loud and more than anything made the rhythm section sound podgy.

Saxes could do with more attack and

HUDDERSFIELD Town Hall,

January 27th, 1933.

Adjudicators: Messrs. Maurice Winnick and P. Mathison Brooks.

Winners

White Star Syncopators (Piano, drums, tuba, three saxes and two trumpets). All communications: T. Cox, 34, Hollinhead Street, Oldham.

Prizes: The "Lew Buckley" Challenge Trophy, set of Silver Cups, MELODY MAKER bannerette and diplomas. Also prizes for alto sax (Jim Moran), piano (T. Cox), drums (John Moran), and tenor sax (T. Moran).

First fox-trot: nice opening with three clarinets. Correct tempo well sustained. Very nice straight phrasing from the whole band. Good piano solo and a grand attack from the ensemble in the last chorus.

Very well played waltz notable for first-class expression.

Last fox-trot excellent for balance and precision; expression very good indeed; all crescendos, etc., cleanly and nicely executed. Phrasing is not altogether first-class, but team work, attack and expression make up for it, and there is a nice four-in-a-bar foundation from the rhythm section for dancing purposes.

The band relies almost solely upon its ensemble to get its results, and is exceptionally well led by its trumpet.

Personality and individuality somewhat negated by its avoidance of solos and original ideas in orchestration.

Second

The New Oxford Band (Piano, drums, bass, alto and tenor saxes, two trumpets and trombone). All communications: T. Smith, 285, Lees Road, Oldham.

Prizes: Set of commemoration medals. Also prizes for best trumpet (T. Barnes) and bass (T. Smith).

"Some of These Days"—notable for the excellent work of the brass section, with fine hot tone and team work; rhythmic phrasing really first-rate. Saxes in correct relationship and alto led well. Rhythm section neat and well knit. Good arrangement played in good style, with fine precision and attack.

Hot alto solo inclined to be out of rhythm.

Band well balanced in the waltz, which was played with more finesse than usual. Could have had more light and shade but not deficient in depth and nice swing for dancing.

"Say It Isn't So"—unconvincing first chorus. Band is much better when playing all in, as against the solos some of the obbligati were apparently out of rhythm. Second chorus an improvement, with muted brass figures against sax melody being very good for style and playing. Precision of the band improved in the last chorus, but it cannot be said that the band was anything like at its best in this number.

Third

Clive Rugby's Arcadians (Piano, drums, alto and tenor saxes and trumpet). All

communications: C. V. Tugby, 5, Sutton Street, Scunthorpe.

Prize for best clarinet (J. Tugby).

First fox-trot—rhythm very indefinite, but the melodic outline quite nice and not devoid of feeling. Band probably at a disadvantage by the absence of its sick trombone player; seemed unsettled. This should not have resulted in bad tuning, however.

Alto played sharp and tenor had bad hand-shake vibrato. Drums too finicky, and lacking confidence.

Band fairly well in balance in waltz; unenterprising but musically; rhythm not too well marked.

Own selected cleanly played and not without rhythm. Band has learnt to use restraint, and its team work is creditable. Attention is paid to the important aspect of expression, and the boys obviously use their heads. Should develop on sound lines.

* * *

Of the remaining competitors, the Tocadrians were fourth, with Jack Taylor and his Manhattan Dance Band providing the best guitarist of the contest (N. Taylor).



The White Star Syncopators

tinctive nor inspiring, but clean and well rehearsed.

"Business in Q"—a certain amount of pep and punch, but phrasing not in the best of style. Tenor has wrong understanding when solo, and trumpet should avoid flutter-tongueing. Two trumpets together have quite nice expression, but are not too happy in the top register.

First alto a good leader of the section, but his lead not too well accepted at times.

Third

John Prosser's Rhythmic Revels (Piano, drums, string bass, alto and tenor saxes and trumpet). All communications: J. Prosser, 41, Okus Road, Swindon.

Prizes: Commemoration medal to each member of the band.

First number: rhythm section laboured and front line not sufficiently incisive. Trumpet has a good idea of phrasing, but is not sure of himself and saxes are hardly together; at times a little flat. Ensemble improved in last chorus, but was ragged in the beginning. A definite attempt made for stylish interpretation.

Very fair waltz, but not distinctive for melodic, harmonic or rhythmic interest.

"How'm I Doin'?"—vocal trio quite good. Plenty of attack and rhythm in this number. Band played with good style and rhythm much helped by sound drumming.

Fourth

Len Winslow's Queries Band (Piano, guitar, drums, string bass, alto and tenor saxes and trumpet). All communications: L. Winslow, 63, Eastcott Hill, Swindon.

Prizes for best bass (E. Ealey), and best tenor sax (W. Adams).

This band sounded laboured when playing "Please Handle with Care," and did not move at all surely, saxes being ragged and rhythm section stodgy. Trumpet did not seem capable of taking the lead in this difficult number.

Waltz played quite well on the whole, and notable for good tone of the tenor when solo. One or two falters on the part of the trumpet,

but some nice ideas in the arrangement well carried out.

"Goodbye Blues," much better interpretation, especially in the first chorus from well arranged parts. A better attack and precision all round in this number. Interpretation of a good arrangement occasionally corny, notably on the part of the trumpet, who did not phrase too well.

* * *

Of the remaining competitors the New Sylvans Dance Band was the best and the standard thereafter was not any too high.

TOTTENHAM

Tottenham Palais,

February 6th, 1933.

Adjudicators: Messrs. Nat Gonella, Dan Ingman, Arthur Rosebery, Joe Crossman and P. Mathison Brooks

Winners

The Bandits (Piano, banjo, drums, alto and tenor saxes and trumpet). All communications: M. Newmark, 66, Lynmouth Road, Stamford Hill, N.16.

Prizes: Silver Challenge Cup, MELODY MAKER Bannerette and medals. Also prizes for best alto sax (G. McDowell), tenor sax (D. Symons), and trumpet (A. Carter).

First number: good routine in the arrangement. All solos well conceived and played with good rhythm. Rhythm section somewhat lacking in lift, but may have been due to oversized hall. Drum break out of tempo. Band has very good style, and is eminently danceable. Alto played flat. Nice confident trumpet lead throughout.

Trumpet again good in the waltz, when the balance of the band was fine and the playing was full of expression. Drummer should avoid over-accentuation of after-beats in waltz playing. Piano joins a little too subdued and the tone of the violin not full enough.

"St. Louis Blues." Fine and arresting intro, and a very good arrangement throughout. The tone of the trumpet, style and

Second

The Rhythms Dance Band (Piano, guitar, drums, string bass, three saxes and trumpet). All communications: M. L. Johnson, 22, Elton Road, Bishopston, Bristol.

Prizes: Commemoration medal to each member of the band, also prizes for best trumpet (W. J. Parmenter), alto sax (M. L. Johnson) and clarinet (M. L. Johnson).

First fox-trot: inconsistent tempo, with saxes ragged. Style of the band is simple, but not "jazzy." Ensemble inclined to be a little light and lacking in attack, but the intonation of the band is good and the first trumpet blows easily in a straight style, but is not too sure on top.

Well played waltz, good for tone and general musicianship. Not particularly dis-

vibrato again outstanding. Tenor sax took advantage of his opportunities to display good style and nice punching rhythm. Drums appeared to hurry in piano solo. The number was played at correct tempo otherwise, and the vocal, in Armstrong style, was quite suitable and well sung.

A stylish band with original ideas.

Second

The Blue Sparks (Piano, guitar, drums, alto and tenor saxes, violin and trumpet). All communications: W. Rodway, 40, Falkland Road, Hornsey, N.8.

Prizes: Commemoration medal to each member of the band, also prize for best guitar (H. Jones).

First number—sax intonation bad, alto being flat and tenor sharp. Good dynamics, however, and precision fine. Fiddle should pitch to his notes and avoid sliding; obviously a limited technique. Band accommodated itself intelligently to the size of the hall. One might raise objection to the idea of the drummer beating out the start on temple block.

Foot cymbal over-employed.

Waltz spoilt by over-blowing of tenor and his bad intonation; otherwise the ensemble was good and full but tonally forced. Precision and expression good.

"Hello, Mike." Good attack and rhythm. A suggestion, however, of crudeness and lack of finesse, traceable in part to the trumpet, who, however, played some very nice phrases. Violin much better in this number. Plenty of attack and swing, but nothing in the way of arrangement and mainly dependent on a sequence of choruses.

Principal need of the band is for more polish and ideas.

Third

Imeson Family Symphonics (Piano, drums, string bass and three saxes). All communications: H. Imeson, 9, Westminster Road, Hanwell, W.7.

Prizes for best vocalist (W. A. Imeson), and bass (C. L. Imeson).

First fox-trot—taken at steady and correct tempo; wide open spaces in the rhythm section, however, partly due to militaristic style of drumming. A good interpretation for dancing and quite a lot made of a difficult number.

Saxes bad for intonation.

Waltz not too good for expression and tone of the tenor, when solo, noticeably wobbly. Good tempo again and balance much better than in first fox-trot.

"Tiger Rag." Tempo very erratic. Plenty of confidence and attack from saxes,

but intonation again slack. Rhythm section not up to this all-out hot arrangement, though young bassist outstanding.

Hot vocal trio done with plenty of punch, but very little finesse. Generally speaking, too much concentration on showmanship and not enough on finesse.

* * *

Of the remaining competitors, Stan Hodson's Ramblers Band was the best, but Jack de Benham's, making its debut in a contest, also put up a very promising show and supplied the best drummer in B. de Benham himself, and best piano in J. de Benham.

BRADFORD King's and Queen's Hall, February 13th, 1933.

Adjudicators: Messrs. Lew Stone and P. Mathison Brooks

Winners

Ambassadors Dance Band (Piano, drums, tuba, three saxes and two trumpets). All communications: G. F. Prest, "The Mount," Bailey Hills, Bingley.

Prizes: Silver Challenge Shield, MELODY MAKER Bannerette, diplomas and commemoration medals for all members of the band. Also prizes for best alto saxophonist (G. Prest) and tenor saxophonist (A. Lambert).

Nice and full ensemble with good sax-team style well led by up-to-date alto. Plenty of rhythm from front line, though rhythm section inclined to be thick and should try for more expression.

Ensemble of the band very nice, however, and competent playing from good arrangement.

Good brass playing dominated the waltz, though sax team was not far behind. Good expression, tone and rhythm in this number.

Own selected much the same as first fox-trot, sax team being again very good. A very original arrangement of this number was on the stand with scoring which demanded good execution; fortunately the band was up to it and played the parts very well indeed.

First alto has a rather too deep vibrato and tenor rather too slow. The team, if it matches up its vibratos, will find it a great advantage.

Second

Spartans Dance Band (Piano, guitar, drums, bass, alto and tenor saxes, trumpet

and trombone). All communications: J. R. Auty, Dryfield, Batley.

Prizes: Commemoration medals for each member of the band.

First number—a nice lift from the rhythm section and good ensemble in the band with the brass distinctly rhythmical. A pleasing performance with a nice simple rhythm for dancing. Not much display of originality, however.

A good straightforward waltz, not outstanding in any way but quite competent.

Own selected—again very creditable for ensemble and quite a nice rhythm predominating. Good trumpet lead. Performances O.K. for expression and plenty of life and precision.

Alto sax should improve tone, and tenor must develop his style and play with more attack.

Third

Frank Chaney and his Band (Piano, drums, string bass, three saxophones, trumpet and trombone). All communications: F. Chaney, "Fairview," Harrogate Road, Yeadon.

Prizes: Commemoration medals for each member of the band.

First number—tendency to overblow and hurry and number taken too fast, so that the saxes fell over each other. Brass well together but phrasing only moderate. Ensemble of the band is full and the playing is competent and has expression.

Much better balance in the waltz, but rhythm section made ponderous by booming bass drum. Nice restraint in front line, but too much vibrato from lead alto and muted trumpet. Expression and rhythm good.

Own selected—trumpet lead rather rat-a-tat but very clean. Saxes have nice attack and sometimes very good team work. Rhythm section too loud. Precision and ensemble of the band again good, but style not at all distinctive. In the sax section, the alto has too much vibrato and tenor is a little forced.

Pianist should fill-in in waltz, and both drums and string bass were too loud.

Fourth

Sidney Pearce and his Band (Piano, banjo, drums, three saxophones and two trumpets). All communications: S. Pearce, 59, Sholebrooke Avenue, Leeds.

Prizes for best piano (F. Naylor), drums (H. Mann), and banjo (B. Carter).

First number opened with tempo just a shade too fast. Trumpet lead quite good for tone and phrasing, but saxes ragged and unbalanced. The vocal trio singing in unison was not a good idea and its baritone sax accompaniment was too loud.

Rhythm section was not together and trumpet was inclined to anticipate. Intonation of the band not too sure. A somewhat patchy performance, but quite promising.

Waltz—tempo O.K., but rhythm not too well marked. Tone of the front line not very clean, and vocal duet not good for harmony.

Own selected—just fast; but the ensemble better and the saxophone section well together at last and sax team work greatly improved with better attack.

Good technical trumpet lead cleanly phrased, if albeit somewhat old-fashioned.

Last chorus rather excitable but spirited; expression could have been much better.

* * *

Of the remaining competitors, Hitchon Sagar's Original Players were the best with



The winners at the Camberley Contest receiving their prizes

the "Armageddon," the Trocaderians and the New Kingsway Musick in very close attendance; while the best trumpet player (W. Rooney) was found in Hitchon Sagar's Original Players. Best bass (J. Hartley) and best trombone (A. Maden) were in the Armageddon Band.

CAMBERLEY Drill Hall, February 15th, 1933.

Adjudicators: Messrs. P. Mathison Brooks and Dan S. Ingman

Winners

Astorians Dance Band (Piano, guitar, drums, bass, three saxophones and trumpet). All communications: G. H. Pickin, Thames Hotel, Windsor.

Prizes: The Ben Davis Challenge Cup, MELODY MAKER Bannerette, free orchestrations for one year (presented by Messrs. Francis, Day & Hunter, Ltd.), commemoration medals and diplomas for each member of the band. Also prizes for best piano (F. Pudney), drums (A. Pickin), and trumpet (T. Johns).

Sax team nice and full and well together and balanced. Trumpet has definitely the right ideas, if inclined to over-estimate his own technique. He certainly played one or two wrong notes, but had a good feeling for balance. The whole band is singularly competent without being outstanding in any particular respect.

In the waltz, the band still played with nice tone and balance, being modelled on the lines of a competent palais outfit. The change of key for the last chorus was rather abrupt, but the band has a good rhythm section and the intonation was sound.

Own selected—good ensemble and precision, with nice expression from front line and sax team moving together particularly well, also when playing clarinets. Piano solos rather forced. There could have been a better lead-in to the final trumpet solo, but it was

taken in good hot style, and the performance ended with a good coda.

Band, if anything, lacks for individuality and ideas.

Second

Blue Kittens Dance Band (Piano, guitar, drums, bass, alto and tenor saxophones and trumpet). All communications: J. Lindsay, "Fairholme," East Molesey.

Prizes: Commemoration medal for each member of the band, also prizes for best violin (W. Kenyon), bass (R. Woodley), guitar (B. Wilson), and tenor sax (W. Kenyon).

First number—tempo too fast, but a grand attack from the whole band. Vocal trio displayed rhythm and style, and even though it included the pianist and his instrument therefore was tacit, it was not particularly missed, thanks to string bass.

An inclination to force tone resulted in indifferent balance. Interpretation could have done with more precision and leadership, but there are certainly style and rhythm in the outfit.

Waltz also taken too fast, and the main fault here was lack of consideration for balance, but there was plenty of attack and character, if deficiency in light and shade.

The rhythm section should not play three in a bar in the waltz. Alto sax rather weak in top register.

Own selected opened with guitar solo and then into good vocal trio just a shade out of tune. A good punching rhythm in all the solos, including trumpet, violin and piano, though the former of these instrumentalists has adopted a niggerish style which is too ambitious for the band as yet.

The rhythm section is not so good as the front line; although it has lift, it is jumpy and not lilting. Saxes are not too well together, and though the band is strong for rhythm, it is not very polished.

Third

Jack Viner's Band (Piano, guitar, drums, bass, three saxophones and trumpet).

All communications: J. Viner, 62, High Street, Witney, Oxon.

Prizes: Commemoration medal to each member of the band.

First number—owing to the inconsiderate placing of the guitar, this instrument was far too prominent and the player was indiscreet enough to play syncopated rhythms all on his own, so being out of rhythm with the rhythm section. The band, however, phrased quite nicely and the saxophone section was in excellent balance.

There were restraint, interpretation and good rhythm in the playing, but here and there the trumpet split on top notes and the pianist was inclined to hurry in his solo.

The band's waltz was very lacking in expression, and it seemed that the best was not being got out of the good musicianship of the players. There was a deficiency in depth and swing in the ensemble, to balance which, however, there was certainly a feeling for "treatment," thanks to an interesting arrangement.

Own selected—very good for ideas and rhythm. Ensemble by no means good as in first number, however, but the arrangement stylish and, on the whole, competently dealt with. Rhythm section again spoilt by over-loud and over-played banjo. Tempo of this number was definitely shaky and the vocal chorus almost inaudible. Drums and bass breaks out of rhythm. This band has played much better on former occasions.

Best Local Band

Ron Derbyshire and his Band (Piano, guitar, drums, alto and tenor saxophones, violin and two trumpets). All communications: R. Derbyshire, 11, Church Lane East, Aldershot.

Prizes: The "Lawrence" Challenge Bowl and to each member a commemoration medal.

* * *

Of the remaining competitors, the Imeson Family Symphonics were a good fourth and Jack Nevett's Band fifth, this latter securing the prize for best alto playing by Jack Nevett himself. Ron Derbyshire and his Band proved to be the best local outfit, with the Moonlight Serenaders a shade behind.

Forthcoming Contests

By far the most significant aspect of the forthcoming contests, apart from the fact that there are as many as six during this month, is the circumstance that in every case the reports are that the entries are coming in entirely satisfactorily.

It seems that with the passing of time semi-pro bands are becoming more and more alive to the advantages of contesting regularly in and out of their districts. They have realised that success is the very best advertisement they can have at their disposal, and a positive business bringer.

But, even more important still, they realise that the experience and criticism they obtain is of the utmost value in the development of their playing skill.

Not only this, but the necessity to give of their best in a contest is a spur to the boys at rehearsal. They have some definite object to attain and each is encouraged to produce his very best so that he may do himself individual credit and not let his fellow-members down.

Perhaps there has been nothing which has so contributed to the development of private orchestration as this era of contesting, for it is notable that a large number of the bands concerned produce their own special

arrangements and in many cases they are singularly competent and original.

Two new contests start off the month's proceedings. The first on the 3rd at the Dewsbury Town Hall and the second at the Baths Hall, Ipswich, on March 6th. Both these contests provide opportunities for local musicians, who have not entered through some reason or other, to present themselves and learn a thing or two, as well as being well entertained for their trouble.

On Friday, March 10th, the Fourth Annual North of England Championship takes place, this time at a new venue in the Embassy Dance Palace, Whalley Range, where Mr. Lew Buckley, the ambitious promoter, expects to cap his many triumphs in the past.

He follows this event up with another new fixture in the West Lancashire Contest at the Empress Ballroom, Wigan, on Tuesday, the 28th, the first official MELODY MAKER contest to be held in that town.

Lancashire, in point of fact, is very much in the picture round about this time, for the next fixture is at the Rialto Ballroom, Liverpool, on March 30th, and it may be re-

membered that the equivalent event held there a year ago attracted as many as eighteen bands, which, by skilful internal organisation, were heard in comfort by the judges in the prescribed time.

Thence the arena is transferred once again to the East Ham Town Hall for the Eighth Annual Eastern District Contest under the banner of Mr. Ernest Rutt.

On this occasion the Premier Drum Co. are donating a Twenty Guinea Challenge Trophy, while the Howard Baker Challenge Cup will be up for the best local band. Seven bands have already definitely entered.

There are five fixtures already fixed for April, four of them being entirely new and commencing with an event at the Town Hall, Reading, on Monday, 3rd. This will be Mr. J. B. Prosser's second enterprise following his original one at Bristol. There is no time to be lost by bands which desire to compete, as already many have guaranteed themselves participation by depositing their entry fees of one guinea.

On Tuesday, April 4th, a MELODY MAKER contest will again take place in Southport

after a lapse of several years. It was here that Freddy Bretherton made his electric debut into the profession as a result of his playing in a contest, and who knows but that there are many other equally talented musicians to be discovered in the district?

A Jack Hylton Challenge Cup has already proved a great inducement for bands to enter a further Lancashire Contest, namely the Celebrity North-West of England Championship, at the Drill Hall, Bury, under the aegis of Mr. H. Newton Lane, who gained his experience this season with his first contest at Stockport.

Bury looks like proving itself an ideal centre for a mammoth success.

* * *

Old and forgotten venues are returning to the fold, apparently, because on Monday, April 10th, another London contest takes

place at the Plumstead Baths, with Mr. R. Hatfield supervising everything, to guarantee that it will be staged in a fit and proper manner.

The several local bands which competed in a MELODY MAKER contest held at this hall several years ago should rally up to prove that they have progressed with the times since that occasion.

* * *

The name of charity is again invoked in connection with the South Midland Dance Band Contest which is being held at the Town Hall, Oxford, on Thursday, April 27th. Once again it is being staged in aid of the funds of the Radcliffe Infirmary and, since it comes under the auspices of THE MELODY MAKER, the bands in Oxfordshire and surrounding counties will, as usual, be in force. There are two sections to this contest, one

for bands of eight and one for five and under.

All these contests bring us nearer and nearer to the great day when the All England Championship, for the second year in succession, takes place at the Nottingham Palais under the organisation of the Notts. Forest F.C. Supporters' Club. Which is going to prove to be the premier semi-pro band in the country? Who are going to be the lucky recipients of those wonderful prizes to the value of £100 or more, which, when they were displayed last year in the shop window of a Nottingham trader caused the police to remain in attendance to control the crowd?

The answer is any of the winning bands of any of the above or earlier contests. Opportunity knocks at the door and brooks no delay. If you desire to enter any of these fixtures do so now as to-morrow may prove too late.

DIARY OF EVENTS

Title of Contest	Date of Contest	Venue	Organiser's Name and Address	Competitor's Status	Closing Date for Entries
FIRST ANNUAL YORKSHIRE HEAVY WOOLLEN DISTRICT DANCE BAND CONTEST	Friday, Mar. 3rd, 1933.	TOWN HALL, DEWSBURY.	Mr. E. PATRICK, 13, Headfield Road, Savile Town, Dewsbury.	SEMI-PRO (Up to 8 pieces.)	Closed
IPSWICH AND DISTRICT CONTEST	Monday, Mar. 6th, 1933.	BATHS HALL, IPSWICH.	Mr. J. EGGETT, Commercial Union Bldgs., Princes Street, Ipswich.	SEMI-PRO (Up to 8 pieces.)	Closed.
FOURTH ANNUAL NORTH OF ENGLAND (Open) CHAMPIONSHIP	Friday, Mar. 10th, 1933.	EMBASSY DANCE PALACE, WHALLEY RANGE, MANCHESTER.	Mr. LEW BUCKLEY, 323, Middleton Road, Royton, Oldham, Lancs.	SEMI-PRO (Up to 8 pieces.)	Closed.
WEST-LANCASHIRE CONTEST	Tuesday, Mar. 28th, 1933.	EMPERESS BALLROOM, WIGAN.	Mr. LEW BUCKLEY, 323, Middleton Road, Royton, Oldham, Lancs.	SEMI-PRO (Up to 8 pieces.)	Mar. 14th, 1933.
SECOND ANNUAL LIVERPOOL OPEN (Semi-Pro) CONTEST	Thursday, Mar. 30th, 1933.	RIALTO BALLROOM, LIVERPOOL.	THE MANAGER, Rialto Ballroom, Berkeley St., Liverpool.	SEMI-PRO (Up to 8 pieces.)	Mar. 18th, 1933.
EIGHTH ANNUAL EASTERN DISTRICT CONTEST.	Friday, Mar. 31st, 1933.	TOWN HALL, EAST HAM.	Mr. E. RUTT, "Cartref," 54, Sandford Road, East Ham, E.6.	SEMI-PRO (Up to 8 pieces.)	Mar. 17th, 1933.
READING AND LOCAL COUNTIES CONTEST	Monday, April 3rd, 1933	TOWN HALL, READING.	MR. J. B. PROSSER, 41, Okus Road, Swindon	SEMI-PRO (Up to 8 pieces.)	Mar. 17th, 1933.
FIRST ANNUAL SOUTH-WEST LANCS CONTEST	Tuesday, April 4th, 1933.	FLORAL HALL, SOUTHPORT.	Mr. L. WRIGHT, The Collegian Dance Organisers, 37, Claremont Rd., Birkdale, Southport.	SEMI-PRO (Up to 8 pieces.)	Mar. 23rd, 1933.
NORTH WEST OF ENGLAND CHAMPIONSHIP	Friday, April 7th, 1933.	DRILL HALL, BURY.	Mr. H. NEWTON LANE, Oak Villa, Wilmslow Road, Fallowfield, Manchester.	SEMI-PRO (Up to 8 pieces.)	Mar. 27th, 1933.
SOUTH EAST LONDON CONTEST	Monday, April 10th, 1933.	PLUMSTEAD BATHS.	Mr. R. HATFIELD, 241, High Street, Plumstead, S.E.18.	SEMI-PRO (Up to 8 pieces.)	Mar. 30th, 1933.
THE SOUTH MIDLAND DANCE BAND CONTEST	Thursday, April 27th, 1933.	TOWN HALL, OXFORD.	Mr. E. BOND, Carnival House, 14, Cross Street, Oxford.	SEMI-PRO (Up to 8 pieces.)	April 15th, 1933.
SECOND ANNUAL ALL-ENGLAND DANCE BAND CHAMPIONSHIP.	Friday, May 5th, 1933.	PALAIS DE DANSE, NOTTINGHAM.	Mr. H. FELLOWS, 64, Ilkeston Road, Nottingham.	SEMI-PRO (Up to 8 pieces.)	By arrangement.

Words of Wisdom

They cost little and they are at your convenience,
yet Solomon in all his wisdom was not so helpful
as one of these

If you happen to encounter an unusually difficult word, what do you do (if you are sufficiently interested to find out)? Ask the nearest person to you, don't you?

And if he doesn't know, and there's nobody handy who does, you look it up in the dictionary, don't you?

If there's an argument going on about whether the River Po is in France or Spain, again what do you do? Failing verbal information (which, unless it comes from an acknowledged expert, is usually unaccepted), you turn to an atlas or gazetteer.

If you are having trouble with the landlord over a question of the lease, again what do you do? Either dash round to the solicitor

or look up the contentious point in a layman's law book.

If you're doing a spot of home-carpentry and you are not quite sure of the method of dovetailing at a sixty degrees angle, what's the wise procedure? Look it up in "Every Man His Own Carpenter," or some such volume.

But—if you happen to be a musician and a knotty point arises, what do you do? As a rule you ask the bloke next to you. He isn't quite sure, but he thinks it's so-and-so. You then proceed to point out why he's quite wrong.

He, in his turn, with a certain amount of logic and a good deal more irascibility, asks you why the devil you asked him if you're so sure?

Then the pianist leans over, and says you're both wrong and, as a matter of fact, the true facts are so-and-so.

The three of you get together and argue, none listening, all talking. The drummer, who is Irish, scents a row and comes over to see if he can join in. He does.

The discussion is carried on in the band room (or the Corner House) until 4 a.m. and you know considerably less than when you started.

Why not be like the men with the difficult word, the geographical question, the amateur lawyer or the home carpenter? Look it up in a book.

What book? Below, laddie, below! Millions of 'em!

Bas.	...	...	Besson & Co., Ltd., 198, Euston Road, London, N.W.1.
B. & H.	...	...	Boosey & Hawkes, Ltd., 295, Regent Street, London, W.1.
C.E.	...	...	Clifford Essex & Son, 15a, Grafton Street, London, W.1.
Feld.	...	...	B. Feldman & Co., 125, Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.C.2.
F. & D.	...	...	Francis, Day & Hunter, Ltd., 138-140, Charing Cross Road, London, W.C.2.
Hohn	...	...	Hohner Concessionaires, Ltd. 21 Bedford Street, London W.C.2.

ARRANGING.			
A. Lange's Arr. for Mod. Dance Orch.	...	20/4	(L.W.)
F. Skinner's Simplified Mod. Method	...	11/-	(L.W.)

BANJO.			
Black's Orchestral Banjoist	...	10/-	(K.P.)
Black's Chord Method for Tenor	...	3/-	(K.P.)
Black's Method for Tenor	...	6/-	(K.P.)
Black's Ch. Meth. for Plec. Banjo	...	3/-	(K.P.)
Black's Meth. for Plec. Banjo	...	6/-	(K.P.)
Eliazer's Method for Tenor	...	4/2	(L.)
Eliazer's Plec. Banjo at Sight	...	2/2	(L.)
Grimshaw's Banjo & How to Play It	...	6/3	(C.E.)
Grimshaw's Banjo & How to Play It	...	6/3	(L.W.)
Grimshaw's How to Excel on the Banjo	...	6/3	(C.E.)
Grimshaw's How to Excel on the Banjo	...	6/3	(L.W.)
Grimshaw's How to Master the Tenor	...	6/3	(C.E.)
Grimshaw's How to Master the Tenor	...	6/3	(L.W.)
Grimshaw's Modern Plec. Playing	...	6/3	(C.E.)
Grimshaw's Modern Plec. Playing	...	6/3	(L.W.)
Langey's Tenor Banjo Tutor	...	5/6	(B. & H.)
McNeil Chord System for G	...	12/6	(F. & D.)
Shevill's 28 Chord Exercises for Tenor	...	5/4	(L.)
Simplicity Tutor (Rudiments)	...	2/2	(B. & H.)
Weber's Modern Dance Banjoist	...	6/4	(L.)
Wheeler's Self Instructor for Tenor	...	2/2	(L.W.)

'CELLO.			
Bye's Foundations of 'Cello Playing	...	3/4	(B. & H.)
Grummer's Adv. Exercises	...	7/7	(Feld.)

CLARINET.			
Berr's Complete Method	...	20/9	(B. & H.)
Klosé Method	...	20/9	(B. & H.)
Schad's Famous Clarinet Cadenzas	...	3/2	(L.)
Weber's Modern Dance Clarinetist	...	6/4	(L.)
Weber's Studies in Dance Rhythms	...	4/2	(L.)
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Weber's Scales in Mod. Dance Rhythms	...	4/2	(L.)

DRUMS.			
E. Little's Rhythmic Drumming	...	3/6	(B. & H.)
E. Little's Rhythmic Reminder	...	1/1	(P.)
E. Little's Modern Tutor	...	4/9	(P.)
E. Clark's Modern Method	...	20/9	(L.)

FLUTE.			
Prill's 24 Studies	...	4/4	(Feld.)
Soussman's Method	...	6/6	(Feld.)

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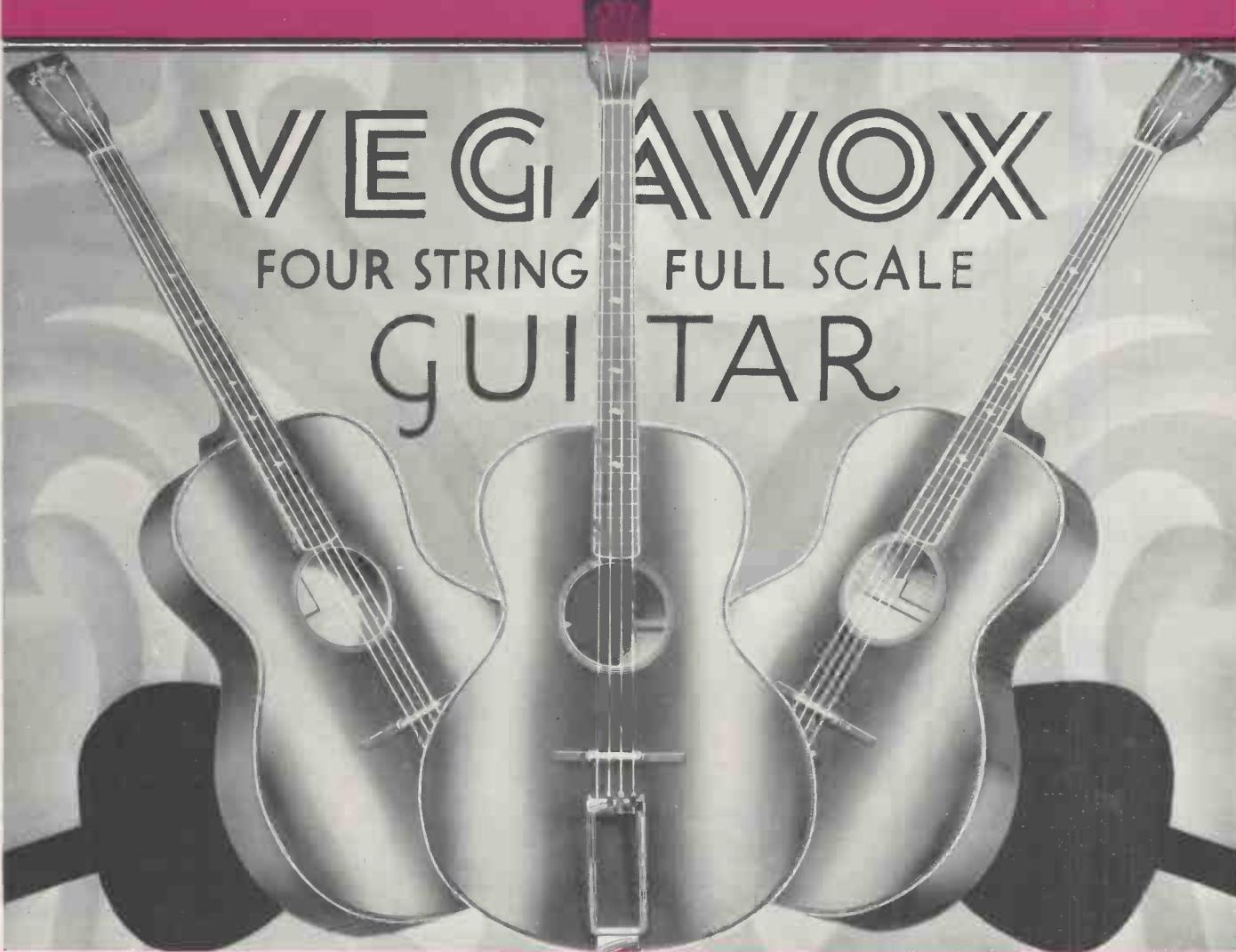
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In both America and England I spent many years practising the tenor-banjo. It is in no boastful spirit that I say I attained a considerable technique — anyone could do that who was as keen as I was and who was prepared to devote to practice the hours a day that I did.

Then came the vogue for the six-string Spanish guitar. The tenor-banjo, said the experts, was too tinny and plonky, and terribly difficult to control—it was either too soft or too loud, mostly the latter.

The six-string guitar, they said, was "thicker," deeper-pitched, less twangy, and added a fullness that the tenor-banjo could never hope to do. Rapidly the tenor-banjo was supplanted by the Spanish guitar all over the dance-band world. A handful of big-timers in the star bands stuck firmly to the tenor-banjo. They could afford to, for they had a mastery of that instrument which the average player could never hope to attain. They could do anything they liked with it, and make it sound just as they wanted it to sound.

But the vast majority of small-timers (including me!) had to make the change, and spent many heart-breaking hours learning an entirely new instrument.

This waste of all my previous hard work worried me; and, in addition, I wasn't altogether sure that the six-string guitar was the ideal instrument for dance-band playing. That it was an improvement on the tenor-banjo was undeniable, but it seemed to have many drawbacks.

Experiments

So I set to work to see if I could combine the advantages of both with the disadvantages of neither—a tall order, but I was enthusiastic and had plenty of time on my hands.

Now, as every banjoist knows, the modern tenor-banjo was evolved from the old G banjo, by the way of the mandoline, banjolin and viola. Thus it arrived at its present state through a series of small steps, each "new" instrument an improvement on the last.

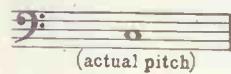
The tuning of the tenor-banjo is the same as that of the viola, C, G, D, A—that is, ascending in fifths. The viola is

strung this way to facilitate the fingering of running or scalic passages. The tenor-banjo was originally a melody instrument, and this tuning, therefore, was most effective.

But when, on the tenor-banjo, single-note melody was discarded in favour of chords the advantages of this tuning were not so many.

Owing to the strings being tuned in fifths the chords cover a spread of two octaves—and this is one of the main disadvantages of the tenor-banjo. The lowest string, C—

Ex. 1



is too short to have, at the pitch to which it is tuned, enough volume. It does not carry sufficiently.

The top string, A, is, on the other hand, pitched very high, and is twangy, and carries too much—it penetrates without having "body." In fact, it is probably the A string which induces opponents of "jazz" to speak of "the monotonous plonk-plonk of the banjo." It is really only the two middle strings of the tenor-banjo which are effective.

Much the same applies to the six-string guitar. The lowest string, E, which, at actual pitch is—

Ex. 2



suffers from the same fault as the C string of the tenor-banjo—pitched too low for its length to have any carrying power. The truth of this can be realised when one considers the comparative length of the D string of the double bass, which sounds a note of almost the same pitch (Ex. 3) and which comes through

(Continued Overleaf.)



EDDIE FREEMAN learned the fiddle eleven years ago. When he attained sufficient skill he used to play in small cinemas, such as The Picture House, Leytonstone. At this particular place the leader bought a saxophone and Eddie bought a G banjo, on which he used to play two-string chords in the cinema's fox-trot "interludes."

Came to the conclusion that if he were going to do any good he'd have to learn a lot more, and decided that America was the place to learn it.

Landed as a stranger in a strange land. Somehow managed to get a small job four days after he arrived, at the Swanee Club in Harlem. After the first number the leader turned round and said sorrowfully, "Boy, do you smell bad!" And they laughed also at Eddie's English accent.

Adaptability overcame the second "fault" (he still speaks with a faintly American accent) and hard work the former. His tenor-banjo playing became as good as the next man's. He found it necessary to discard his tenor-banjo in favour of the six-string guitar, which he did sorrowfully, for he had achieved an enviable technique of the former instrument.

Then came a long illness in Baltimore, and during the months of convalescence he pondered the problem of how to adapt his tenor-banjo technique to the guitar. Eventually he evolved a method.

At the Summit Roadhouse in Baltimore, at the New Kenmore Hotel in Albany, New York, and other places of note, Eddie tried out and proved his new method. So successful was it that many of the leading lights of America took it up.

Then Eddie, for domestic reasons, returned to England. Soon he was playing with Harry Roy at the Pavilion. Al Collins heard the tales of a phenomenal "new" guitarist, listened to him, and immediately signed him up for the Savoy.

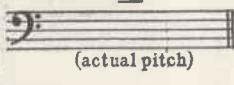
quite clearly, which the Spanish guitar E certainly does not.

Ex. 3



Again, a similar argument applies to the top string of the six-string guitar. In order to make a string of that length sound this note—

Ex. 4



it has to be made of thin, uncovered wire and raised to a high tension, with the result that although its tone is penetrating it has no "body" or depth.

Thus, by this reasoning, the first and sixth strings of the Spanish guitar are of little value for chord work. It is readily admitted that the middle four are far more effective—they are of the right thickness, length and tension to produce fullness, tone and volume. But it is virtually impossible to play only on these strings, because if the other two are left on the instrument it is impossible to avoid striking them. If they are taken off, it is impossible to obtain certain chords, and, moreover, fingering of scalic passages would become impossibly difficult.

My composite problem, therefore, was to evolve an instrument and tuning which would condense the two-octave chord spread of the tenor-banjo to one octave, and also have the benefits and advantages of the close harmony and depth of tone of the Spanish guitar. I experimented at great length and with all sorts of strings and instruments.

It eventually occurred to me that if I wanted to utilise my tenor-banjo technique I would have to tune the strings to the *notes* of the tenor-banjo, although not necessarily of the same pitch—an obvious point, but it is these obvious points which elude one longest.

Since it was a guitar tone I wanted, I experimented first with an ordinary tenor-guitar, tuned in the normal way, *i.e.*, tenor-banjo tuning. Then I lowered the top two strings an octave. I could not, of course, tune down the ordinary tenor-banjo 1st and 2nd, for they are too thin. So I used *two* 3rds and *two* 4ths. The bottom two remained at their ordinary tuning—

Ex. 5



and the two top strings, instead of being tuned thus—

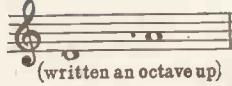
Ex. 6



were, by virtue of the fact that they were

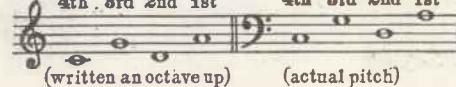
thicker than normal 1sts and 2nds, tuned down an octave to—

Ex. 7



The actual tuning, therefore, of the four strings was—

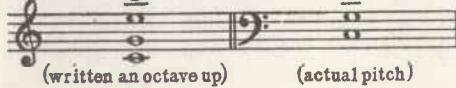
Ex. 8



This immediately solved part of my problem—that of reducing the two-octave chord-spread of the tenor-banjo to one octave.

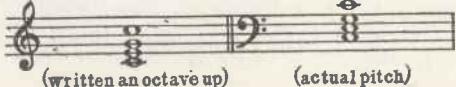
For instance, the ordinary chord of C major, which, with normal tenor-banjo tuning, sounded thus—

Ex. 9



now sounded, with the new tuning, like this—

Ex. 10

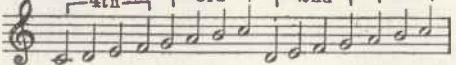


The advantages of this close harmony are obvious—the whole tone is thicker and more solid, and there is no monotonous "plonking" on the top string.

The only disadvantage that I could discover was that the fingering of scales (and, consequently, melody passages over a large range) was changed in *pitch*, though not in *fingering*.

For instance, if it were necessary to play, say, a two-octave scale of C major, and the player used his ordinary tenor-banjo fingering with the new stringing, he would produce this effect—

Ex. 11



But this, after all, is very unimportant. In the first place, dance guitarists are very seldom called upon to play more than a few melody notes, and, secondly, it really doesn't matter if they are up or down an octave. To play the scale in continual ascension is only a matter of a very slight change of fingering. I will explain this fully later.

Further Experimenting

Having tried this "down-an-octave" tuning, I was greatly impressed with the improvement in tone and carrying power of the tenor-guitar. But it was still far from being ideal. The strings were not long enough to give that "fatness" of tone which the middle four strings of the Spanish guitar have, and which they possess, of course, by (a) being longer, and

(b) being mounted on an instrument which was larger and consequently more resonant, and consequently more capable of developing the vibrations of the strings and throwing them out.

The next thing to do, therefore, was to try my new tuning on a Spanish guitar body. This I tried with the ordinary tenor-banjo strings (which I had used on the tenor-guitar), but these were no good, although the new tuning proved conclusively that this was the type of guitar-body to use. I was greatly encouraged, however, by the fact that, even with these unsatisfactory strings, the new tuning greatly increased the normal volume of the Spanish guitar. I began, therefore, experimenting with various strings.

The Fourth String

Now, strings are built to be tuned to a certain pitch in relation to their thickness and length. Therefore, since I was using a Spanish guitar body, I had to find strings which could be tuned to the notes I required. This I accomplished by using a Spanish guitar 4th (D) and tuning it up to C. A thinner string would be too "clangy" and a thicker one couldn't be brought up to pitch.

The Third String

For the next I used a Spanish guitar 3rd (G) and tuned it to G. A Spanish guitar 3rd is much thicker than a tenor-banjo 3rd, although they both sound the same note. It is the extra length which necessitates this thicker gauge, of course, and it suited me down to the ground and gave me more volume.

The Second String

For the next I used a tenor-banjo 4th (C), which is a covered string, and tuned it up to D. This gave me the advantage of being able to use a covered string, instead of the usual wire banjo D, which is an octave higher, and to obtain, consequently, more volume and a fatter tone.

The First String

Much the same applied to the next string. Instead of using the ordinary tenor-banjo A, I used a tenor-banjo covered 3rd (normally G) and tuned it to the A, an octave below the normal wire tenor-banjo A.

The completed stringing and tuning, therefore, was thus—

Ex. 12



The tone produced was, to my firm conviction, a great advance on either the standard six-string guitar or the

tenor banjo (or tenor-guitar), with which, of course, my tuning has no connection whatever. It had volume, carrying power, "colour," and depth. In addition to this I could utilise my tenor-banjo technique with practically no adaptation.

A Snag

There was, however, one snag. I was using, as I have said, a Spanish guitar body. The neck, I found, was too thick to permit of entire comfort for tenor-banjo chord-playing.

The barre, in particular, was very difficult, and on the many occasions when it was necessary to stretch over the strings, I found myself handicapped by the width of the neck.

The obvious thing to do, it seemed, was to shave the neck down, and this I essayed to do.

I contemplated the ways and means for a long time. Being nothing of a carpenter or instrument maker, all sorts of methods passed through my mind. Saw, spokeshave, chisel, plane, glass-paper and so on were all considered and (I blush to admit it!) most of them were tried.

The first difficulty was, of course, the metal frets. These had to be prised out before the wood could be cut.

Eventually this was accomplished, with, I fear, much disaster to the metal strips and the finger board.

Then I proceeded to shave down the neck—and what a job it was! At last, after completely ruining the old instrument on which I had been experimenting

and starting afresh on a new one, I managed to produce a thin-neck guitar, although the thinness extended only as far as the body! Frankly, it looked dreadful—all ragged and uneven! It was, in fact, almost unplayable.

So I realised what I should have realised at first—that it was a job for an instrument maker. I took along one of my pet guitars to a fiddle maker, gave him the dimensions and told him to go ahead.

When the job was finished it certainly looked marvellous, and it was in excited anticipation that I put on the strings.

To say that I was disappointed is to put it mildly. Most of the tone, volume, and resonance had disappeared from the instrument, which, before, the neck-cutting, had possessed these features in abundance. The depth, instead of coming from the inside of the instrument, seemed to be riding on top of the belly.

I experimented with all sorts of bridges and strings, but still failed to get the right effect. The cutting, although skilfully carried out, had completely ruined the instrument.

I decided to seek the advice of a guitar expert (which wouldn't have been a bad idea in the first place!), and took my instrument and idea to a famous firm in America.

The experts listened attentively to my tale.

"Did you compensate for the wood you cut off?" they asked.

"No," I replied, looking blank, and the experts smiled at each other in a superior way.

"Guitars are not built only to shape," they said, in effect, "the thickness of the woods, and type of woods, and, in particular, the amount of resistance supplied by the wood in the neck, all go to make up the tone of the instrument. If you cut something off the neck, the whole instrument must be reconstructed to compensate for the lost weight."

Which was a new one on me, but they proved their contention by making me a guitar which had the right size neck, and also all the qualities in tone and volume that I wanted.

Having got the ideal instrument at last, the next step was to play it. It was easy enough, as I have said, to play it with tenor-banjo fingering, but I wasn't satisfied with that—I felt that my new method of stringing deserved some new ideas from the playing end.

Any tenor-banjoist can immediately play this new hybrid instrument in the band, without in any way changing his fingering and produce an effect which, in my opinion, is infinitely superior not only to the tenor-banjo and tenor-guitar, but to the standard Spanish guitar as well.

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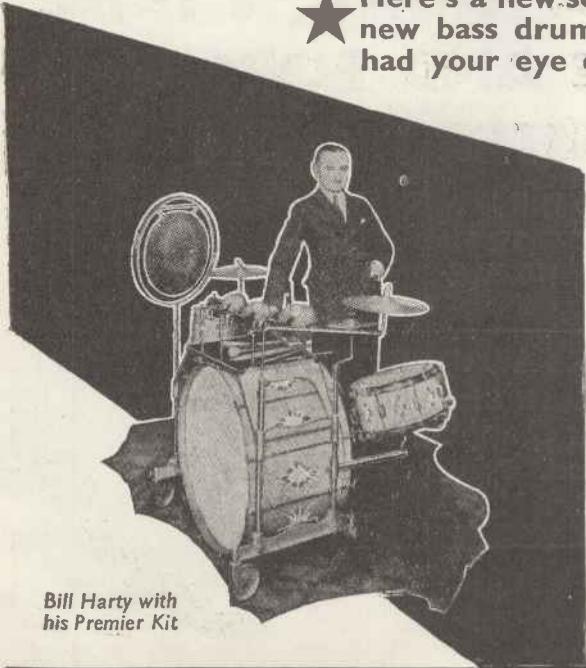
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WHAT is the best way to clean the inside of a trombone? (asks H. J., of Odense, Denmark). How is the tiger roar in "Tiger Rag" to be played? (I mean the one which is written on E above the stave, C below, A below, E below and A minim in the first space of the bass clef.) All the notes are lying on the same position on the trombone, so I can't see how they can be played with a glissando. I play it on the same position with flutter-tongue. Is this right?

I have made up my mind to pay London a visit this summer. Is there any dance band which I can join as a member to study English dance music?

Lew Davis replies:—

The best method of cleaning a trombone is first to draw a clean rag through the instrument, and then rinse it out with hot soda water.

The tiger roar is played on the same position, the lip performing the glissando, and not the slide. Do not flutter-tongue.

You will have great difficulty in joining an English dance band because of Labour Permits. In any case, you would not be able to join the really star bands, and would therefore not be learning English dance music at its best. You would learn far more in a week by spending each evening sitting in the best restaurants and hotels listening carefully to the bands.

* * *

L. V., of Liverpool, asks:—

I am writing to ask you if you will kindly settle an argument I have in hand with regard to an H.M.V. record, No. B6068, the waltz, "For You," played by Ambrose and his Band. The argument is whether the first chorus is played by a muted trumpet or alto sax. I should consider it a special favour if you would enlighten this point for me.

The Technical Editor replies:—

The first chorus of the record is played by the trumpet, played *ppp* and very close to the microphone, using a Hush-hush mute—a favourite and highly successful trick of Max Goldberg's.

* * *

L. C., of Stamford Hill, asks:—

I have been studying the clarinet for the past five months.

Could you tell me how to prevent a pool of water collecting on the floor after an hour's practice?

Rudolph Dunbar replies:—

A certain amount of condensation of moisture from the breath is unavoidable. If, however, the quantity is excessive, it would seem that your embouchure is faulty. Probably it is



Tiny Stock

Rudolph Dunbar

The Technical Editor

too weak. It may also be due to incorrect tongueing.

I would refer you to my series on the clarinet which appeared in THE MELODY MAKER during last year.

* * *

L. H. T., of Langholm, asks:—

Three of my friends and myself are thinking of getting a dance band up. The instruments we can play are two mouth-organs, one banjo and a piano.

Do you think that would be all right? You see, we can't play any other instruments, and we were anxious to know if they would harmonise together. The mouth-organs are both in the same key.

Will you please give me your opinion of it? I should be very pleased if you could give me some information. Will you please let me know as soon as possible as we want to get on with our band.

The Technical Editor replies:—

I find it difficult to imagine that you are serious. The combination of piano, banjo and two mouth-organs is quite useless for any purpose except that of amusing yourselves at home. Why not do the job thoroughly and persuade your two mouth-organs to take up alto and tenor saxophones? With this combination not only could you get a great deal more entertainment for yourselves, but you would have the beginnings of a first-class little four-piece band.

The saxophone is not a terribly difficult instrument to learn, nor, if second-hand, is it very costly.

Alternatively, one of your mouth-organs might take up the drums.

If you want any further advice on these matters I shall be only too pleased to give it to you, but it is really impossible to make any tangible suggestions to use the instruments you mention.

* * *

T. A. of Homerton, asks:—

I have just purchased a string bass, which seems a fairly good instrument, although it was not expensive. Recently I have been

learning to pick and slap, and find that slapping causes the strings to mark the keyboard rather noticeably.

Is this usual? Or does it indicate that the slapping is being done wrongly? Or would it mean that the keyboard is constructed of inferior material?

I might mention that three strings are gut, and the fourth (lowest open string) is wire covered. Is this right? It is the section of the keyboard under the wire-covered string which sustains the most marking.

Tiny Stock replies:—

Slapping always makes a slight groove in the fingerboard, but this can always be re-shot (re-planed) by any instrument maker for a few pence. Many fingerboards on cheap instruments are constructed of American whitewood, stained black, and therefore have not the hardness of ebony, of which the fingerboard should be made. Grooves are bound to appear more under the lower strings because these two are slapped more than the top two. Three gut and the lowest one wire is the usual combination used to-day.

When slapping, don't strike the fingerboard too much towards the end, as this will tend to loosen it.

If the grooves are not re-shot (re-planed) you might get a buzz from the string.

* * *

"Alto," of Oldham, asks:—

What is the best method of producing a good, luminous tone on the clarinet from E to B flat immediately below the break?

What is the best way to get a good sub-tone?

What is the best method to slap-tongue on the sax? I find the way explained in THE MELODY MAKER almost impossible, and am told that there are easier methods.

Occasionally, I crack into a kind of fuzz on G sharp. Is this lip pressure, or the fault of the instrument? I get a good tone on all other notes, and the instrument seems in perfect condition.

What is the best method of producing a good equal vibrato on sax and violin?

I have heard on the radio several tango bands which have an instrument new to me. I am told it is an organette, and the tone of it is rather like that of an American organ. Could you describe this instrument to me, and explain if it is in any way like the piano accordion?

Rudolph Dunbar replies:—

The best method of tone culture on the clarinet (or on any other instrument) is to practise, every day, long notes in chromatic ascension and descension. Commence each note as softly as possible, swell up to *fff*, and diminuendo to *ppp*, without break.

The above-mentioned method of practice should give you a good sub-tone, as this effect is only very, very soft playing of the clarinet in its low register.

Slap-tonguing is caused by a violent stroke of the tongue on the back of the reed, and the method described in THE MELODY MAKER is the best way to accomplish

it. Why worry, anyway? Slap-tongueing is right out of date.

The cracking on G sharp suggests an embouchure fault. It might also be caused by the hole of the G sharp being filled with dirt.

Vibrato is produced on reed instruments by a controlled movement of the lower jaw. The only way I can suggest obtaining an equal vibrato on both instruments is to listen to yourself and see that you do.

I am afraid that I know nothing about the organette. It is probably some large kind of piano-accordion or bandoleon.

B.G., of Bournemouth, asks:—

I am taking up the banjo and subsequently the guitar, meanwhile continuing to play the piano.

I find that it makes my hands and fingers very stiff; will it affect my piano playing in the future as it does now?

I possess an excellent guitar, but the fingerboard is not bevelled. Would it be possible to have it altered?

I have to slant the bridge, making the

bass string a full quarter of an inch longer than the sixth string, in order to prevent the former playing sharp. Surely this is excessive? Might it be the fault of too high a bridge? There is room for three pennies between the twelfth fret and the strings.

Len Shevill replies:—

You will find your fingers stiff at first. When trying anything new one is apt to use too much effort, and



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aim at using a loose wrist, just as for piano, and as little finger pressure as possible. Remember that the strings have only to make safe contact with the fret wires—it is not necessary to force the string down to the actual keyboard.

It is also possible, of course, that your fretting may be too high. The first string should be at a distance of the thickness of two pennies from the fingerboard, and the sixth string slightly more. Your height seems to be excessive. At the same time, if the bridge is lower, the sixth string may buzz on the fret wires.

Your slanting of the bridge also seems to be excessive, but this is undoubtedly due in part to the excessive height of the string.

A few foreign makers fit bevelled fingerboards, and personally I rather like them, but they are neither general nor necessary to comfort.

Any of the guitar makers who advertise in THE MELODY MAKER would be glad to carry out any alterations to your instrument.

* * *

W. R. S., of Chichester, asks:—

I have had lessons on trumpet and saxophone, but have had two teeth out in the front upper jaw. Will this stop me playing the trumpet?

I have had to stand off for twelve months and have now got as far on the sax as I was on the trumpet. I don't want to study two instruments, so which would you advise me to persevere with?

The first finger of my left hand is bruised, and is not so active as the others.

The Technical Editor replies:—

Many of our famous brass players have artificial teeth, and, in fact, there is one virtuoso who takes his teeth out to play! If you are using the correct no-pressure system it does not matter whether your teeth are real or artificial. If you feel you could do well on the trumpet I would advise you to persevere with it as there is more scope for trumpeters than saxophonists.

Your damaged first finger, since it is on your left hand, seems to suggest definitely that the trumpet is your instrument.

* * *

Amateur Pianist, of Edinburgh, asks:—

As a regular reader of THE MELODY MAKER I would be greatly obliged if you could advise me as to the following:—

When playing the piano for an hour or so my arms and wrists become tired and sore. Could you recommend any exercises, or perhaps a little massaging, to work off this weakness?

What qualifications does one require to

have to obtain a position as a pianist in a small orchestra?

Is it difficult playing? What actually is the work of a pianist?

Gerald Moore replies:—

The reason that the wrists and arms become tired is probably due to "downwards exertion" of the whole arm. One may play as loudly as one desires, but it is essential to ease off the downward movement as soon as a note or chord is played.

If a note is held it must be with the small muscles of the hand. An important work on this subject is "The Epitome of Pianoforte Technique," by Tobias Matthay, published by Oxford University Press, at 3s. 6d.

The first qualifications of a dance pianist are good sight reading, and a sense of rhythm.

Your last question is so large that it would take a dozen MELODY MAKERS to answer it. However, the work of a pianist can be summed up as "that essential solidarity which gives the other members of the orchestra confidence in his playing."

* * *

L. C., of Tadcaster, asks:—

I propose forming a small five-piece band with the following combination: piano, drums, guitar, trumpet and clarinet. I will be glad of your remarks and suggestions.

The Technical Editor replies:—

The only suggestion I have to make in regard to the rhythm section is that you might substitute a string bass for a guitar. This, however, is largely a matter of opinion. If your clarinet does not double saxophone you are either going to have to busk all your numbers, or have special parts written for him, since the clarinet parts in dance orchestrations will not give you what you want.

When it comes to the lay-out of the band I would suggest the piano and drums at the back, and clarinet, guitar and trumpet (in that order) in front.

With a combination of this type it seems to me that you have to concentrate on hot numbers, and, if you do this well, it will certainly be a change from the tiresome attempts of small bands to play big band arrangements.

* * *

T. S., of Landsmeer, asks:—

I find that vibrato injures my tone on the trombone. May I play without vibrato?

When using a hush-hush mute, may I hold the trombone by bell and slide only, pressing it slightly against my lips, or would this interfere with the non-pressure embouchure?

How high must I be able to play in an occasional hot solo?

I am very fond of playing obbligati to our vocalist. What kind of mute do you advise?

Lew Davis replies:—

Vibrato should not spoil your tone, but improve it. Perhaps you are using too heavy or too fast a vibrato, or possibly you are obtaining it in the wrong way. Vibrato should be produced by moving the slide, and you should listen to the best artists on radio and records to learn just how much vibrato should be used.

You may hold the instrument as you suggest, providing you don't press too hard. It should not be necessary, however, with the hush-hush mute.

If you can reach top B flat or C this should be sufficient for most purposes.

Any kind of whispering mute would be suitable for accompanying vocals, such as the wow-wow with cup out, hush-hush, or Altatone.

* * *

A. C., of Ireland, asks:—

Is the bass accompaniment for a piano accordion played in exactly the same way as a piano bass arrangement?

Are all piano accordion bass arrangements the same, e.g., if I practise on a certain type would I have difficulty in playing another?

Is there music written expressly for a piano accordion or is it just the piano solo conductor part that is used?

The Technical Editor replies:—

The bass accompaniment for the piano accordion usually consists of a single bass note, either tonic or 3rd of the chord on the first and third beats, and the complete chord on the second and fourth beats. This is more or less the same as the piano, but it would not be possible to play the left hand of the piano part exactly as written, unless it were very simple.

The arrangements of piano accordion basses are practically standard, and you would have no difficulty in changing from one to another. The main difference lies in the number of stops, but this is for convenience more than anything else, as there are only a certain number of stops which are duplicated several times according to the size of the instrument.

There is music specially written for the piano accordion, but it is mostly of the straight solo type. Parts for this instrument are not included in commercial orchestrations. Accordionists almost invariably read from piano conductor parts.

I advise you to get any one of the tutors mentioned in our tutor list (page 209) where you will find the whole method explained to you in detail.

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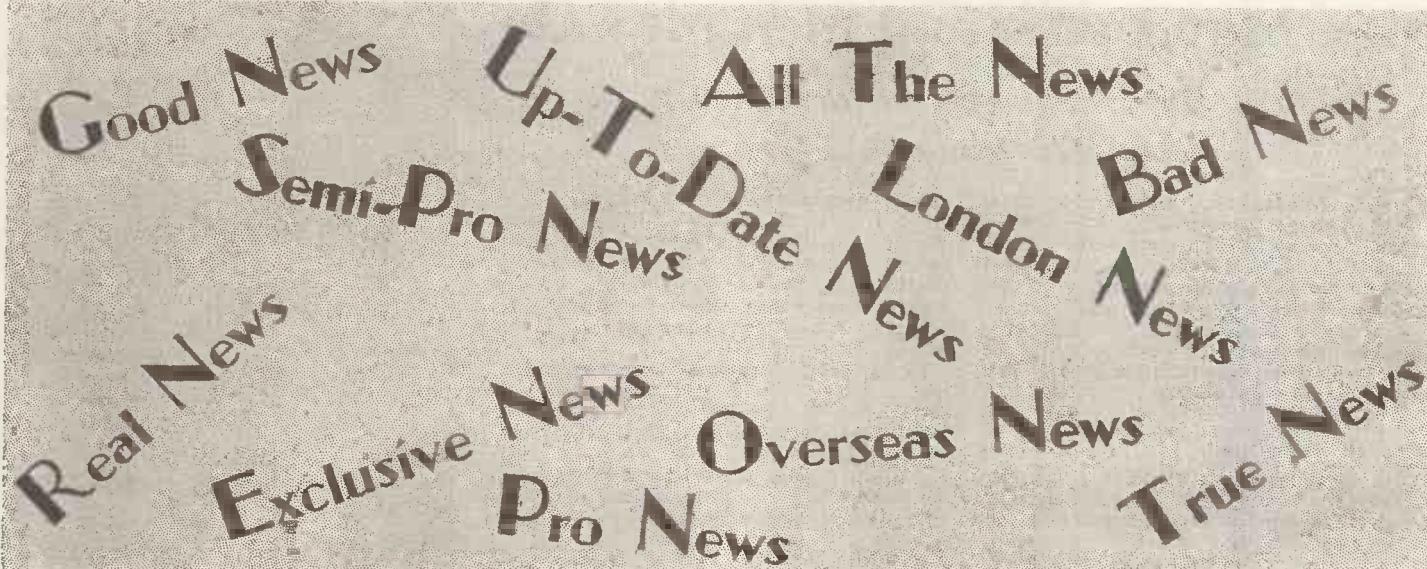
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The Best Kept Secret on Record

Jack Payne's Band suffers some sensational losses, but recovers with some notable gains

THERE has probably never been a better kept secret than the plans of Jack Jackson, "who was once with Jack Payne."

That's how J. J. now humorously describes his departure! There's always good fun behind Jack's outlook in life. It has made of him the outstanding "personality" musician in the business. It enabled him to relinquish the highest paid job in the profession without batting an eyelid. It has attracted around him a host of other celebrities, all of whom might quite easily fix themselves up profitably elsewhere but prefer to row in with Jackson, even though it means several weeks of hard rehearsals and payless waiting.

The Inseparables

Chief of these is E. O. Pogson—"Poggy," of course. He, too, surrendered an astonishingly lucrative job with Jack Payne when he left with Jackson, and there aren't another two in England which make such a wonderful pair of foils.

Both, of course, are cast-iron technicians on their instruments, both are out-and-out stylists, and both are showmen of the first water.

The trinity is completed by another electric personality in Chappie d'Amato, who, for the last thirteen years, has been with Jack Hylton, both as guitarist and saxophonist, but more particularly as deputy conductor, announcer, compère or "what have you?"

Chappie has charm; a voice full of "it" and a "regular way with him." He would have made the ideal B.B.C. announcer, or leader of a small band in an intimate club.

Mystery Men

These boys are together for a purpose, of course, and, obviously, none other than to form a super band for some first-class job, the nature of which cannot be even hinted at the moment.

Nor is the combination yet completed, though there have been secret comings and goings of famous stars which would give their present leaders a terrible shock if they heard about it.

There is no mystery about the pianist, however, for this is to be none other than George

Scott-Wood, King-Pin of the piano and Parlophone house bands. George is a giant of the ivories and piano accordion, orchestrates like a good 'un, and sings in fine style.

There, for the rest, the matter must be left, for though rehearsals have been in full swing for quite a time, and though certain offers have come through, the announcement of details might prove both premature and certainly disconcerting to some of those behind the scenes.

Jack Jackson has a thousand well-wishers, among whom none is more earnest than THE MELODY MAKER. We hope and believe he

will fix up just the kind of job after his own heart, and that none will suffer in the process.

With the departure of Jackson, Jack Payne has decided to augment his brass section and has filled the vacancy by engaging two trumpet players, namely, Harry Owen from Harry Roy's Band, and Bert Bullimore, ex Hal Swain's Band. The percussion section has also increased and, to a certain extent, has become a family affair, in that Bob Manning's drum department is now being shared by his brother Bert.

Aberdonians' London Experiences

Sheer Musical Policy Not Enough

When the Isle's Nine Band took over the job at Romano's on the departure of Arthur Rosebery and his Band, THE MELODY MAKER reported the fact and gave the information that it was on a month's trial.

After publication, Romano's manager wrote asking us to announce that he hoped to be able to employ the band for at least six months.

Herculean Task

Less than four months from the date it started, however, the band was replaced by Eddie Gross-Bart's outfit from Murray's Club.

The Isle's Band came from Aberdeen, and its job at Romano's was not an easy one, for Arthur Rosebery's weird methods, though singularly successful there on the whole, were unique, if not positively inimitable.

The newcomers, therefore, adopted a policy of soft, sweet music, but within a few days they changed deliberately to a more boisterous style.

Some weeks after that they again returned to the original style, but none of these changes seemed to mean much in the absence of some marked system of showmanship, and finally the boys' engagement was brought

to an end two months earlier than was the original intention.

Not Enough Show

They worked hard on the job, played really well as a dance band, and were singularly unfortunate not to succeed on their merits.

Romano's patrons, however, expected to be entertained by the band as well, a responsibility for which the boys had not prepared themselves.

Whether they will now return to Scotland or find another chance to make good in a sphere where their obvious musical ability will be accepted at its full value is a question which can only be answered within the next few days.

Still Optimistic

Their experience in London, however, has been invaluable to them, and the leader of the band informed us that he had no regrets on having come South.

In any case, they are not without hope of severally or collectively fixing up something in the Metropolis.

Men May Come and Men May Go

*But Hylton goes on for ever,
from Strength to Strength*

W. L. Williamson, the Leeds song writer who has literally burst into London publishing circles with his successful number "This is the Rhythm for Me," has now brought off a further coup which completely eclipses his previous efforts at achieving rapid fame.

This time W. L. has aspired to nothing less than the honoured and much-coveted chair reserved for those who have the good fortune to play second piano in Jack Hylton's band.

All of a Sudden.

The engagement was veritably a lightning one in every way. Apparently Jack Hylton, for whom Williamson had already done a successful arrangement, thought that he would excellently fill the vacancy which had occurred for a second pianist, if only he could manage to familiarise himself with the act in time. Williamson rose quite nobly to the occasion, and grasped his great chance by actually learning the whole show, consisting of about a dozen numbers, in a little over twenty-four hours. He is now one of the combination's regular members, and is occupying himself between the vigorous programme of the band and the feverish production of still further new numbers.

His latest conception is "Gentlemen of the Chorus," which he describes as something quite startlingly out of the ordinary.

Williamson writes in collaboration with Dr. Ralph Baker, a well-known Midland practitioner with a song-writing complex, against which his medical skill is powerless.

In the meantime, several other new faces have cropped up in the Hyltonian ranks. One is Freddy Schweitzer, a notable German saxophonist whom Jack discovered in Berlin. Besides being a fine instrumentalist, he is a good comedy man, and is already putting over some first-rate cod instrumental stuff in the show.

Freddy has had his own bands in Germany, and is reckoned Berlin's premier saxophonist. Several English musicians have worked for him from time to time, including Don Barrigo and Tommy Marshall.

Schweitzer takes the place vacated by Chappie D'Amato, who has at last terminated his very long association with Hylton, as reported elsewhere.

Maurice Loban, the violinist, has also left the band, likewise Eddie Hooper, the dancer. The terpsichorean extravagancies formerly indulged in by Eddie are now carried on by Eric Percival, the new eccentric dancer and violinist.

Clem Lawton is about to leave the band at the time of closing for press, and his successor has not been named. Contrary to rumour, Sonny Farrar is remaining in the ranks after all.

Departures and Deputies.

Despite these various changes and disruptions, the show continues to go from strength to strength, and has probably never been better in an entertainment sense than it is at the moment. The palm for versatility must still go to Billy Munn, who regularly stops the show with his great Armstrong burlesque.



Billy Cotton.

Cotton Finishes with Non-Stop

Back on the Road

BILLY COTTON finishes his long and successful sojourn at the London Pavilion on March 4th, and is immediately embarking upon a lengthy series of variety dates, both in town and out. The first of this new series of engagements is at the Gaumont Palace, Hammersmith.

The Pavilion job, if somewhat arduous, has not been without its value from the point of view of experience, and the boys' new stage act should be even stronger as a result of the complete change which their prolonged non-stop variety venture has engendered.

Bill's successor at the London Pavilion has not been settled at the time of closing for press, when auditions are still taking place.

Sorrell and Son

Vic Filmer—Proud Father

Prospects of a visit to these shores by Cab Calloway are unfortunately completely remote. Nevertheless Calloway reigned here in spirit on February 23, and although the figure which sought to assume his mantle was a diminutive one, and the voice sounding the famous "hi-di-hi" immature, the impersonation was an obvious study from life.

Master Vic Filmer, thirteen years of actual age, but thirty or even three hundred in rhythmic perceptions, was the performer, and his carefully made up person occupied an honoured position in the bumper cabaret arranged for that evening at the Casa Nuova Restaurant in Trafalgar Square.

Filmer, junior, can sing, sing hot, sing scat, dance, and has a good grasp of showmanship—all at the tender age of thirteen.

In addition to cabaret work, he has a long run in "Casanova" to his credit, and in this mammoth show he was the youngest of nearly three hundred performers, and on matinée days had to have his lessons in the dressing room with a specially imported governess. He has been filmed several times, of which his appearance at the Casa Nuova Restaurant formed one, for a record of the occasion was taken by the Pathé people for their Pathéton Weekly. Filmer, junior, has also figured in the broadcast lists on more than one date, and there is no doubt that he is destined to go a long way.

Charlie Kunz Unfixes Himself

And makes an exit from "Chez Henri" at long last

A bombshell exploding in the heart of danceland could hardly have caused more surprise than the news that Charlie Kunz was at last relinquishing his position at the Chez Henri Club after over eight years uninterrupted run there.

The chief reason for this unexpected happening has been the fact that Charlie received a first-class offer from Santos Casani, the famous dance-emperor, to open at his super new dancing club in Regent Street.

This resort, which is known as Casani's Club, is situated in Imperial House, just off Piccadilly Circus, and has been designed as the last word in first-class establishments catering entirely for the real dancing enthusiast.

New Job, New Band.

Charlie Kunz has not taken his "Chez Henri" band with him to the new resort, and the make-up of the combination which he is featuring there is a further surprise, for it consists of practically the entire "Melodians" band from the Astoria Ballroom in Charing Cross Road, including Frankie Davies, their erstwhile leader.

This outfit, which has experienced a lengthy and most successful run at the Astoria, chanced to finish its contract at exactly the same time that Charlie Kunz was looking for fresh talent for Casani's Club. In it Charlie's experienced eye detected just the combination which he sought, and finding Frankie Davies willing to enter wholeheartedly with him into his new venture, he

made arrangements to transfer practically the whole outfit to Casani's.

The Melodians have always been an extremely good dancing band, and have naturally had a very extensive experience of playing strict tempos. Charlie Kunz, on the other hand, probably knows more about the intricacies of club life from the musical angle than anyone in town, so that his combination with Frankie Davies should be able to produce an ideal band for such a resort as this new Regent Street mecca.

An Eight Piece.

Charlie opened up on March 2nd. He is playing piano himself, as ever, and has seven other performers with him, including Frankie Davies and five of his men, and one newcomer in the person of Tommy Blades, the well-known drummer and xylophonist from Debroy Somers' band.

Tommy left Debroy Somers and joined up with Charlie Kunz several weeks ago, and is now contracted for a considerable period.

FOR LATE NEWS.

The latest news of dance bands is frequently to be found in the Wednesday "Gramophone Notes" of the "Daily Herald," contributed by the editor of THE MELODY MAKER, MATHISON BROOKS.

Weir Here!

Knowledge is Power

YET another song publisher's sign went up on the front of a Denmark Street building when Llew M. Weir, one of the most knowledgeable men in the trade, started off on his own account recently.

Llew was, for many years, General Manager to the Lawrence Wright Music Co., during which time he saw the house rise from one small office to a vast concern, with ramifications all over the world, which it is to-day.

From L.W.'s, Llew Weir went to the Peter Maurice Music Co., opening its present up-to-the-minute building in Denmark Street and organising things on "the grand scale." When he left P.M.'s he joined the Sylvester Music Co., but, shortly after, took the big plunge and is now running solely on his own behalf.

Many of his friends think he should have done this when he first left the "Wright" house, for he has the game at his finger tips, is full of the lore of the trade, and has developed a judgment for material which should make him a dead cert. for getting and putting over his share of the hits.

Llew is "at home" at his office any day and every day to anyone in the business sufficiently wise to leave no stone unturned to unearth all the songs which mean something.

Feathers Upset

Buddy Nearly Does It!

OUTSTANDING amongst the handful of sports car enthusiasts and embryo Malcolm Campbells of the musical profession is Buddy Featherstonhaugh, who has already won whole plantations of laurels at Brooklands with his racing Alfa-Romeo. Buddy is sojourning for the winter at Monte Carlo with Bert Firman's band, but his car-keenness is evidently continuing unabated over there, for lately we have received a thrilling account of how he very nearly lost his life during the recent competitions which have been taking place in Monte.

Apparently Buddy, accompanied by Bert Firman, went out one day to watch an important hill-climb. Stationing themselves about half-way up the hill, they witnessed some hair-raising ascents, until one competitor landed himself in a mighty skid and finished up broadside across the road.

His sporting instincts aroused, Buddy dashed out to assist in righting the car, which was in danger from other ascending vehicles. Officials gave the order for the competitor to descend and commence the climb again, and as Bert Firman noticed just then that it was nearly time for their tea-dance, he and Buddy decided to return to the foot of the declivity in this car, and stood upon the running board whilst it descended.

The Right Spirit!

In the meantime an excited official neglected to stop the ascent of the next competing car, with the result that a terrific collision took place between the car going down and the one coming up, Buddy and Bert being flung into the road with tremendous force.

Both sustained quite considerable injury, necessitating removal to hospital and an absence of some little time from the band.

However, things might have been vastly worse, and the latest news from the Mediterranean resort is that Buddy is now in top form again, enjoying the Monte Carlo season, but looking forward to racing in England once more, and dreaming of the railway straight at Brooklands.



Jack Viner's Band, winners of the recent Swindon Contest.

Howard Jacobs' Band Finishes

Insufficient Opportunity to keep Berkeley Band busy leads to its departure

ON March 3, Howard Jacobs, the famous American saxophonist, terminated his contract with the Berkeley Hotel, and the forward activities of this well-known leader are not known at the time of writing.

The Savoy Hotel management—who also control the affairs of the Berkeley Hotel—were unable to give us any definite information as to whether there was a possibility of Jacobs being re-engaged at a later date, to appear at either the Berkeley or Savoy. Apparently they were of opinion that as things are just now there was not sufficient work for two bands at the Berkeley.

Arrangements were such that Howard Jacobs and his outfit appeared for less than two hours each evening, and this they considered too short an appearance for a leader of Jacobs' notability and naturally large salary.

Interviewed by our representative, Howard Jacobs said: "I cannot say anything definite just now, but I have several very interesting things in view, and may launch a real surprise quite shortly."

On several past occasions Howard Jacobs has terminated his contracts with the Savoy firm and departed with an air of finality, but invariably he has been back again within a short time at one of his old resorts. A repetition of this procedure is, of course, not out of the realms of possibility.

In the meanwhile it looks as if several exceptionally useful men will be available for other engagements, and considerable conjecture is taking place as to the direction in which the members of the Jacobs' band will gravitate.

Romany Players Good Luck

Good work leads to further extension of Astoria Contract

What looks like being an absolutely record run is that of Oscar Rabin and his band at the Astoria Ballroom in Charing Cross Road.

After three consistently successful years, the outfit has just been signed up by the firm for another two and a half years' contract, with options to follow.

In these days of rapid changes this record is rather a wonderful one, and proves up to the hilt how absolutely invincible an outfit which sticks together through thick and thin and works as one man can become.

Few people will deny that the Romany Band is the most versatile and thoroughly entertaining of all our palais bands, and it is its policy of giving plenty of diversion in addition to competent musicianship which has placed it where it is.

Oscar Rabin's success hasn't altogether stopped with his eminently satisfactory Astoria record, for recently he has also signed up a new and lengthy contract with the Stern record people, who are featuring the Romany Band upon their noted "Four-in-One" discs.

As mentioned elsewhere, Frankie Davies and his Melodians have finished at the Astoria. Their place has been taken by Joe Shuter and

his band, a combination which is quite a new one on us, and which is said to hail from Brighton.

Gerry Moore's Break

Joins "Chez Henri"

Into the breach left at the Chez Henri Club by the departure of Charlie Kunz has stepped Gerry Moore, who, as head of the stylish club pianists of the metropolis, should fill the position to a T.

The Chez Henri band is otherwise unchanged, and consists of all the old members, plus Gerry, working under the watchful eye of Dave Zafer, the old-time drummer, who has been at the club ever since the job was created, over eight years ago.

Gerry Moore has of course relinquished his position at the tropical "Bag o' Nails" Club to take over at the Chez Henri. His successor at the "Bag" is likely to be Norman Yarlett.

Sid Hieger continues on drums at the "Bag," and Johnny Walker, the modern saxophonist who was with Roy Fox, is the third member of the trio. Johnny, by the way, has lately been to hospital with severe tonsilitis, and Don Barrigo has been playing at the club in the interim.

Showing The Way To Show

Mammoth Methods at the Elephant put over the resident band on the stage

If there are two cleverer showmen than the Hyams brothers in the British Isles, in so far as kinemas are concerned, then we have not met them.

Not only have they the greatest theatre in the country, namely the new Trocadero at the Elephant and Castle, and several other well-conducted lesser theatres, but they are nearly the last, and certainly the most powerful, of the "independent" exhibitors.

Nevertheless, they give a show to the public, at the Elephant, from prices varying from as little as sevenpence up to the modest maximum of 2s. 5d., which defies comparison.

At least two full-length features, usually three, and sometimes four, are always supported by a first-rate stage show, presented in a way that would tax the resources of any legitimate theatre in London.

They have even produced operas in this way, playing for an hour and a quarter, with a company of as many as one hundred and forty performers.

The visitors to the Trocadero get four hours' tip-top entertainment, and every comfort and luxury in the auditorium, for their money.

During the last week in February, Mick Hyams produced his own band act, and, entrusted his own resident conductor, the experienced and willing-for-anything Van Dam, with the augmenting of the pit orchestra and the task of turning it into a full-sized dance band.

Only three additions were necessary, indeed, but Mick Hyams engaged two singers to co-operate with the band, one of whom, Tully Stuart, proved an absolute sensation.

The band act was definitely a great triumph for all concerned. It was beautifully staged, had some excellent show arrangements, played with confidence and precision, and its comedy stuff was on right good Hyltonian lines.

For a double-style band it was, in fact, staggeringly good. The vocalists worked with "mikes" through the theatre's Western Electric sound-film amplifiers, and so good was the reproduction that not a syllable was lost, while a whispered crescendo reached the audience with amazing power and clarity.

We do not expect to hear Tully Stuart's "Brother, Can you Spare a Dime?" sung with more dramatic conviction and better voice by anybody else in the country.

Van Dam built up his show to the right sort of climax, taking an extra curtain with a burlesque comedy version of "Fire! Fire! Fire!"

All in all, a very workmanlike orchestra, used in absolutely the right way, and presented by a directing intelligence which is probably incomparable in this particular field.

We are officially informed, however, that the house record for box-office takings is still held by Jack Hylton and, if anybody is to break it, it will probably be Jack himself.

phones and violin; George Oliver, saxophones, oboe and violin; Sid Fearn, trumpet, and Bill Weeks, trombone.

The band is to be an entertaining unit as well as a purely dance combination, and Hal's vocalisms will be well in evidence together with a neat vocal trio and his notable "saxofive."

The boys are wearing blue mess jackets in place of the conventional dinner suits.

In between times Hal has been putting in a certain amount of stage work, and at Croydon, amongst other places, produced a very successful show.

Peter Rush Indisposed

After several uneventful but progressive weeks Bert Ambrose's "Blue Lyres" band, at Dorchester House, has come into the news again, this time in less happy circumstances than when it was last under discussion.

Misfortune of a serious kind has overtaken the band's leader, Peter Rush, who, as a result of overwork, has suffered a severe breakdown, necessitating a long holiday.

In addition to all his musical work it will be remembered that Peter has also been busy for a long time with photographic activities in connection with the establishment of Houston Rogers, in which he is a partner. It is undoubtedly the strain of his many undertakings which has caused his health to give way.

To recuperate, Peter has taken himself off to Spain, where it is to be hoped he will rapidly regain his old vitality.

In the meantime Ernie Lewis, the well-known London violinist, who has had a long association with Bert Ambrose, has taken over the leadership of the "Blue Lyres." The band is slightly smaller these days, and, besides Ernie, now consists of Harry Hayes and Eric Lindon, saxophones; Ernest Wilson, piano; and Maurice Zafer, drums.

Holiday Inspiration Notable Penmanship

Most people, when they go away for a holiday, try to forget business matters, and usually occupy the time lounging about and spending all the hard-earned which has accumulated during the last fifty weeks.

Not so Ray Noble, however. Ray is so wrapped up in his profession that he is never happy away from it, which is probably one of the chief reasons for his constant success.

Last year, at Jersey, for instance, Ray certainly put in plenty of lounging in the sunshine, but whilst he was resting his mind was roving over those channels of inspiration which are his own peculiar perquisite, with the result that he produced as a vacation task those two notable numbers which have become one of the biggest features of the new film "The Little Damozel."

The numbers "What More Can I Ask?" and "Brighter Than the Sun," have a very prominent place in the film, and in addition are being played and sung by everybody.

Anna Neagle, the star of the film, has recorded both for H.M.V., and the discs have turned out extremely well, confirming impressions that the numbers will be amongst the biggest successes of the season.

A Trump Trumpet Bert Wilton's Latest

The transfer of Harry Owen to Jack Payne's band has had a doubly good effect, for whilst it has enabled Harry to attain a position which he well deserved, it has also put Bert Wilton in an ideal environment by making him a member of Harry Roy's band in the place which Harry Owen vacated.

"Pep and Personality"

Nina Mae MacKinney, American coloured blues-singer, scores in London Variety

A petite, intensely virile figure, slightly lost on an enormous stage, and obviously a trifle scared at the size of her audience—that's Nina Mae MacKinney, the young coloured rhythm singer and star of the film "Hallelujah," who is appearing in London at the Leicester Square Theatre.

Nina is one of those bright young personalities who had the good fortune to be born with rhythm in her blood, in addition to the proverbial silver spoon in her mouth, and those people who like their music the modern way are flocking to Leicester Square to see her.

Nina has had some quite understandable difficulty in getting the average orchestra to put over just the accompaniment which she requires for the somewhat complicated rhythms which she adopts, and at the time of writing, Bob Williams, the well-known coloured pianist, is playing for her.

A surprise is in store for enthusiasts, however, for just before going to press we learn that there is every likelihood of Garland Wilson, the famous coloured pianoman from New York, coming over to do Miss MacKinney's future accompanying. He should have arrived by now, all being well.

"I love working with Garland Wilson," said Nina to our representative, "He is the perfect accompanist, and when he plays for me I'm not afraid any more."

"I am enjoying London," she continued, "but I only wish I could have been here when Louis Armstrong was over. He is my great

inspiration, and came to see me off on the boat, telling me that I'd have a wonderful time here. So far he's right, and I'm enjoying myself no end, although sometimes the audience does terrify me a bit, because I naturally can't expect everyone to like rhythm music."

Nina is charming, and natural to a degree, like her singing. "Fans" have been thoroughly enjoying her show, and so will you.

Swain at Murray's Re-action from Romano's

MOST people who patronise the night resorts of London are aware that Murray's Club and Romano's Restaurant are under the same management. As reported elsewhere, Romano's now has a fresh band attraction in the form of Eddie Gross-Bart's band, which has been transferred from Murray's Club, Eddie actually commencing at the Strand resort on March 1. He has the same crowd as at Murray's, with the exception of a fresh trumpet player, whose name has not come to hand at the time of closing for press.

To fill his vacant place at Murray's no less a celebrity than Hal Swain has been engaged.

The Boys

Hal, as ever, has a workmanlike band, with which he made his debut at Murray's on February 27. Under Hal are Dennis Hedges, piano; Ran Garrison, bass; Bernard Miller, drums; Ivan Wolkowsky, guitar; Martin Smuts, saxo-

Developing a Personal Style

by Cab Calloway

In which the famous coloured leader points out that whereas in "straight" music, instrumental virtuosity is a prime consideration, in dance music it is the leader's individuality which is of more account

DEVELOPMENT of an individual style is generally conceded to be one of the most important steps in an artist's advance toward success. As entertainers we sing, or we dance, or we play an instrument with varying degrees of technique.

After we have attained a reasonable proficiency in whatever specialty we have selected as our forte, we discover that many others are doing the same thing just as proficiently, in some instances even more so.

That is the point where the development of an individual style becomes essential to lift you out of the ranks. You must be different, even at a sacrifice of technique. There must be some one quality about your work to set you apart from all others of similar talent.

Alternatives

If it is your ambition to become a legitimate artist, to be a violin virtuoso, a concert pianist or a great opera singer, that is another story. Then it is well to apply yourself until you have mastered every intricacy of your art, to study, to be coached, to practise and train consistently until you have reached your goal.

But if you seek laurels in the field of so-called popular entertainment, it is wisdom to resort to tricks of "Hi-de-Hi!" style that will appeal to the imagination. It is more a matter of showmanship than of actual talent which makes a popular star. Not that the one will succeed without the other, however!

Hall-Marks

It is not necessary for me to tell you what things have brought to me any success I may have enjoyed. I believe that I am fairly well identified with the "hi-de-hi's" and the "ho-de-ho's," as well as the jazz spirit which these represent. It has been my "riff" in singing, my disregard for tempo and for melody in the ordinary sense which have helped win for me a reputation as an exponent of jazz. But I can try to tell you how I developed some of these things.

In the beginning of the struggle I had certain advantages. A natural feeling for rhythm and melody was one of these. It is much easier to express emotions that you feel,

than those which you do not feel. A strong voice with a wide range was another natural advantage.

I have instinctively mastered much of the technique of singing without being coached or instructed. No one told me, for example, about the necessity for a relaxed tongue. I discovered that it enables me to sing naturally and without effort. So I almost unconsciously obeyed one of the inflexible rules for professional singers.

It was at the Sunset Café in Chicago, where I was acting as master of ceremonies, that I began the development of my present singing style. In addition to my own work on the floor I invariably sang one chorus in every band number.

That was a great orchestra at the old Sunset! Louie Armstrong played trumpet in that band, and Earl Hines was at one of the two pianos. They had no leader. I frequently sat in at the drums, and as I stated above, sang with the band at every opportunity.

It seemed natural for me to get away from the straight melody on these choruses, singing in harmony, however, and usually within the same chords. I also discovered the effective trick of sliding into minors on numbers that were being played in a major key. I had no fixed rules for treatment of songs, just learned the lyrics, listened to the band play them then sang as I felt.

Beginnings

It was this stunt that brought about my later association with the Alabamians, with whom I worked as singer for several months. Finally the men in the orchestra suggested that I become their leader, singing and dancing while wielding the baton. In this fashion I acquired my first band.

My reputation as a hot singer spread from Chicago to New York and I was invited to come east and lead the Missourians, an orchestra then playing at the Savoy ballroom in Harlem. From there I stepped into the Cotton Club with my band and radio did the rest.

"Minnie"

It was my association with Irving Mills, my present manager, which brought me my first special material, songs such as "Minnie the Moocher," that were particularly adapted to my style of singing and with which I quickly became identified.

This was extremely important, because there were so few numbers available which I could successfully treat in my own peculiar fashion. I required songs of a certain type. As my style became popular, however, it resulted in an avalanche of songs along these lines and I now have a wide selection of material.



Cab Calloway and his war-cries!

THE MELODY MAKER

& British Metronome

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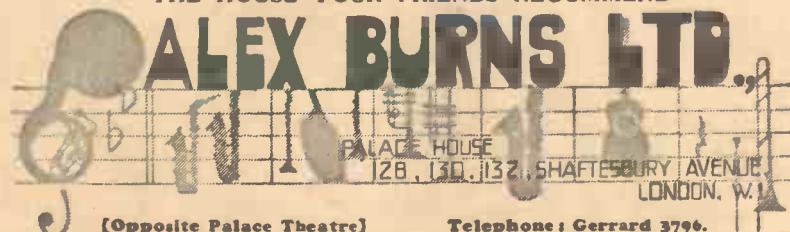
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