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MUSICAL EXPRESS

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 1946

No. 6

PRICE FOURPENCE

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TUITION - MODERN
SWING-STYLE SERIES
10/6
Each

THE HEATH RETURNS UNION MAY ENQUIRE

Reciprocal Move to bring Rasmussen Band over to England

(Musical Express Staff Reporter)

ON the night of Sunday, November 7, Ted Heath and his Band arrived home in London after their Scandinavian tour. Stuart Allen, our correspondent, was with them. We had expected regular cables from Allen on the progress of the tour during the absence of the Heath Band but, as Allen puts it, nothing extraordinary happened during the entire trip, and Allen knows his job better than to try making news out of nothing at all. As he says, it was a perfectly straightforward concert tour, with nothing out of the ordinary happening, except that the Scandinavians were tremendously impressed. It is further stated that Heath raised the prestige of British Dance Music in those countries to a height never reached before.

To begin with, the audiences were not packed and houses were not filled to capacity. But when they did arrive they appeared to be amazed at the Heath performances. The standard must have been something of a surprise to them. The Don Rodman band had already played everywhere, and it is a well-known fact that the Scandinavians have a strong negro bias. They would have tolerated from Rodman what they do not tolerate from a British white orchestra. But in any case, the band Rodman had over there was a new one got together specially for the tour. It was not what we should call good. There was, according to reports, nothing to warrant any excitement outside the excellent solo playing of one or two famous coloured artists like Don Black, tenor work and the trumpet playing of Pennants Holland, who were with the outfit.

So we find a rather remarkable situation. Heath arrives after the first coloured band since the war had made its appearance in a country which professes its dance music in the negro idiom. They had not been impressed by the British product to date until they began to hear the Heath band play. Then the tide turned. The audiences were wild with enthusiasm. Except after encore was played. They would not let the band leave the stage.

In addition, the Scandinavians were tremendously impressed by the behaviour and general demeanour of the band, both on and off the stage. It left an indelible impression on the people. Heath has created a new interest in British popular music over there. He has, it is generally agreed, paved the way for any British orchestra in the Scandinavian countries, providing they are up to the Heath standard. Although Sweden had already heard the Heath records over there, the Swedes were, if anything, a little suspicious. Heath and the band broke down by giving them the best Britain has to offer and, in the Heath moment, this is comparable with anything the rest of the world has to give. In Denmark and Norway the Heath band was an unknown quantity. The name meant nothing to them. In fact the only records of the Heath unit in Denmark were owned by the promoter of the tour.

So Heath has entered and conquered territory which, up till now, was not favourable towards the British product. The people were so tremendously impressed that, to quote Stuart Allen, it was not just another success, but a triumph for British Dance Music.

Heath told "Musical Express" he is exceptional. In view of the marvellous hospitality extended to him during his stay he feels he would like to reciprocate by bringing to England a special combination he heard while he was in Sweden. He feels that his choice of the Pete Rasmussen band is the finest possible. He is now making the necessary arrangements to bring them over here as soon as it can be arranged, as their style, although they are a small outfit, gives the impression that they are a large band and their arrangements are some of the finest he has heard. The British public ought to be given the chance of hearing them.

Mr. Allen also requests the Executive Committee to make representations to the B.B.C. that a man be appointed as head of the Dance Band Department, one who has spent several years as a professional musician, and been a member of the Union. Examples of these are the appointments of "Musical White Noise" organisers, Wynford Reynolds and Ken Baines, both of whom have spent years earning their living as musicians; Ken Baines is an ex-Serviceman.

Well, then we quote Mr. Allen, not without suggestion. As far as "Musical Express" is concerned, it is only a motion picture. It is not a motion picture, and as this issue was going to press, it had reached the stage of a proposal on the agenda. To-day is the date on which it is to be put forward to the meeting. It is hoped that the meeting will be unanimous in accepting the proposal and that representations will be made to the B.B.C. to allow an open and public hearing of the proposals. Nobody in the music industry wants to make enemies in the B.B.C. What we want is co-operation from the B.B.C. There are two sides to the argument. Readers should realise that if they are in favour of the B.B.C. they were to unite with his contemporaries and all were to decide that the B.B.C. should have no right to broadcast ANY popular music, and if the Musicians' Union were to decide that no dance musician member of the Union broadcast until this controversy is cleared up to the satisfaction of all concerned, then the brightest music listeners would hear on the air would be Stravinsky's delight on occasions, but falling in line of the daily popular music broadcasts.

ROYAL COMMAND DANCE ORCHESTRA



Musical Express picture of the Skyrockets at the actual rehearsal for the Command Performance

Bob Berridge Broadcasts from Torquay

Since the 400 Ballroom of the James Hotel, Torquay, was de-regulated, Bob Berridge and his Orchestra have established themselves as the leading dance outfit in the South West. Bob leads the band on guitar and bass, and with him are Alan Shepherd on drums and vibraphone, Chas. Sykes on clarinet, Bill Rayner, piano, Tommie Dunlop, a/g, Tom Eastwood, tenor, and Stan Sykes, trumpet. This outfit will be heard on the West of England and Home Service programme on Saturday, December 14, from 8.35 p.m. when they will be broadcasting from the Hotel Ballroom.

SONG PEDLARS FOR NAVY MIXTURE

The recently re-organised Song Pedlars co-operative vocal quartette, have just signed for a series on Navy Mixture. This very fine singing outfit, now consisting of Alan Dean, Helen Macfarlane, Bob Winnetta and Johnny Johnson, did their last programme with Ted Heath in Listen To My Music, and they will be seen on December 1 at the London Coliseum in the Tribute to Swing Concert.

CHARLIE SHORT DAMAGES BASS

Charlie Short, who was approached by a Scandinavian company to use their new bass which is to be presented to a world market, sold his bass in Sweden and bought from the company concerned a brand new white livingstone model. Unfortunately the portage on the journey back was too heavy and the instrument was damaged, but we are glad to say not irreparably.

GERALDO MEETS ELLINGTON



The two famous bandleaders, photographed with members of the band of the Queen Elizabeth, at the Aquarium Restaurant, New York.

SAVILLE BROADCAST RENEWED

Harry Saville, who has to rise every Sunday morning at 4 o'clock for his 8-9 a.m. transmission in Sunday Breakfast Club, has just signed for the month of December. Harry will be losing quite a lot of sleep as the B.B.C. have given him additional programmes on Christmas Day and Boxing Day. During the month of November he will be taking his band to Worcester to play at the Cromie Hunt Ball on the 27th, and on November 28 he will take a band of 30 men to the Albert Hall for a big social function.

Jam Session at Feldman's

Swing enthusiasts will be pleased to hear that Jackie Bonser's Bouncers will be playing a Jam Session with Carlo Krahmer's resident outfit at Feldman's, November 17. This group was formed by Jackie in May of this year and consists of himself on clarinet, Bobby Benstead, trumpet, Eddie Palmer, piano, Art Learner, bass, and Frank King on drums. For their broadcast last Saturday the arrangements for the Rhythm in Reeds were done by Bernelle Fenton.

Band Leader Turns Photographer

Former dance-band leader, Wilson Wood, has joined the cast of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's musical drama, THE UNFINISHED DANCE—not as a musician, but as a photographer. Wood, who last appeared in THE SHOW-OFF, was signed to an M.G.M. contract when his orchestra played a Hollywood engagement. Originally engaged to play in TWO SISTERS FROM BOSTON that all his roles have been comedy ones rather than musical.

OSCAR RABIN FOR STOKES NEWINGTON

Currently in the middle of its two months' residence at the B.B.C. Oscar Rabin and his Band with Harry Davis finished a successful month at Muswells Hill Pains on Saturday, November 2. They have been booked to appear every Wednesday evening during November at Stoke Newington Town Hall, and commenced there last Wednesday featuring their well-known Bands within the Bands. Among these is Jackie Bonser's Bouncers and the Reeds in English, with vocalists Bob Dale, Annabelle Lee and Don Smith, with Eddie Palmer featured on the Novachord. Following their B.B.C. commitments the band will be doing concerts and one-night stands until their appearance at Golders Green Hippodrome, December 9.

Film Review

DANNY KAYE IN "THE KID FROM BROOKLYN"

In spite of the colour, the glamour and a fine cast, this is not the funniest of Danny Kaye's films. There is definitely not enough of Danny's own inimitable, double-talk, his "Pavlova" scene is brilliant, but somehow or other the writer feels it too short. The story of local boy making good runs true to form but main honours must surely go to Vera-Ellen who dances and sings her way into everybody's heart. This young artist is brilliant, for not only does she do ballet and every other form of dancing from step to acrobatic, but she sings well too, which is indeed a rare achievement for a dancer. Her rendering of "Hey What's Your Name" is a high spot in a gay and amusing film.

"THREE LITTLE GIRLS IN BLUE"

Vera-Ellen once again this week comes to the fore in this new Twentieth Century Fox release. In a pleasant story of three sisters who leave the farm to find wealthy husbands and amid music and technicolor eventually find the right men. June Haver, Vivian Hane and Vera-Ellen as the sisters are all well suited to their respective parts. Celeste Holm's rendering of "Always Lady" has a naughty French flavour and Vera-Ellen's dance scene in a dream fantasy entitled "You Make Me Feel So Young" are well worth seeing.

Radio Rhythm Club on G.O.S.

Jazz lovers who are able to pick up the General Overseas Service of the B.B.C. will be glad to know that Radio Rhythm Club continues its established policy on the 20-metre band during its temporary "rest" on the Light Programme. It can be heard every Monday at 2 p.m. G.M.T., with a repeat on Saturday at 11.15 a.m. G.M.T.

Don Enrico and his Cuban Orchestra



Don Enrico and his Cuban Orchestra

Don Enrico for Paramount

IMPORTANT MOVE BY MECCA

On Saturday, November 2, Don Enrico and his Rumba Band commenced playing for dancing at the Paramount Dance Hall. This is a great innovation, for the Paramount Dance Hall has engaged a rumba band in their halls, and this is another example of the general dancing public with the popular Don Enrico playing for the South American seasons.

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Silvertone, Spanish, white with amplifier	£23/10	£46/10	£34/10
Hawaiian, wood, super magnets, with amp. etc.	£20	£40/0	£30/0
THOMAS OPTIC	£20	£40/0	£30/0
Steno, 6 string, steel case, full range, as new	£25/10	£50/10	£37/10
EPSON, 6 string, steel case, full range, as new	£25/10	£50/10	£37/10

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THE VOICE

MUSIC IS INTERNATIONAL The writer of this column is still adamant in his view expressed many years ago that Music, like Art, is international.

RECIPROCIITY The business of popular music in this country owes much to the influence of America, the country of its birth.

ETHICS OF RECIPROCIITY With the decision of the Musicians' Union in this matter "Musical Express" finds no dissatisfaction.

ONE SIDED But no, the Americans have so far shown no practical signs of co-operation.

AMERICAN COMMENTARY The influence of the American side of the business on our music is being judged by the popularity in this country of an American news commentary.

AMINOULLAH HOSSEIN (Iranian Symphonist) Mr. Hossein, who was born in Shiraz, Iran, is conducting the Calonne Orchestra.

JACK HEY WORTH The Recognised Authority on REEDS and MOUTHPIECES THE MANUFACTURER OF THE PARAFONT MUSICAL PRODUCTS.

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"THE EASY" says Eugene Cruft Brian's Greatest Bassist (Principal Bass, B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra)

THE obvious fact to meet my B.B.C. So it did not come as a surprise when I suggested a dreamy reminiscence column to him.

"Today it is a commonplace to hear of young players commanding anything over £20 per week with little or no real experience."

"Oh, I don't know," Cruft replied, "the enthusiasm was there just the same, but it is a pity that so few people realise what a fantastically difficult instrument to master the bass really is."

QUARTET OR QUORUM? By Television Bandleader NATALIE

I AM often asked by both leaders and musicians of dance orchestras who have come to the front during the past six weeks.

HAS jazz got snob appeal? Well, it has been the root-cause of so much snobbery, both within and outside the own circle, that the answer seems to be "yes-it has" in an inverted sort of way.

"At one time E. J. Moeran was seriously considering writing a book on jazz for me, but for the above reasons I persuaded him to drop the idea."

UNDERTONES GLENN MILLER ENSEMBLE Heard the Skyrokers one afternoon last week.

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DENIS PRESTON CONTINUES WITH "THE EASY" says Eugene Cruft

What is a dance band? It seems to me dance bands are of three different kinds. First you have the big-time bands which only occasionally play for dancing.

Second is the so-called radio dance band which has never seen the light of day. These are usually found at the musical stage or concert platform.

These Palms bands may lack finesse, may play quite crudely to some things, but they are fulfilling their function.

Let's face it, the collector is necessary, indeed an indispensable, figure on the jazz scene. But collector's standards aren't by any means the yardstick whereby we should measure our appreciation of jazz.

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COMMAND PERFORMANCE THE SKYROCKERS with GEORGE FIERSTONE Premier FROM PLAYER TO PLAYER "They say Eddie plays electric now"

PATIENCE and FORTITUDE

A discussion on the controversial topic of "labelling" the various types of jazz music by
GEORGE CHISHOLM

I often wonder just how many more categories music can be placed into, or how many more "labels" (if any) will be conjured out of this air by the various individuals concerned who seem to take a delight in stirring up panic and confusion in the breasts of us poor solo instrumentalists. Let us see now — we have had "ragtime" — "jazz" — "swing" and the more recent "re-bop." What next?

In touring around the various districts with the Squadrinaires, I hear the same comments and arguments going on amongst the disciples of dance music, particularly after the band has finished a number, or a soloist has "poured his all" into an ad lib chorus or two. "That's not swing, it's re-bop," says one. "Don't be silly, it's jazz," says another. Then the third member, with a very disdainful air and complete contempt for the "ignorance" of his fellow disciples says:—"Utter rubbish! That had the distinct flavour of ragtime about it." Ye gods! If one would only listen to it all, one would climb straight up the nearest wall, and faint mutterings would be heard through one's beard moustache. "Bop-swing, be-time, and jazz-rag!" — the time drooling at the lips and foolishly grinning at everyone.

I read with interest the Denis Preston article, "Is This Jazz" in the October 28th issue of this newspaper, and I quote one phrase which to my mind sums up the whole gory mess. He says, "It is impossible to set arbitrary boundaries to any specific school of music and say here this ends" and "there that begins."

Good for you, Denis! Of course, the man's right. The whole thing is simply music and I shudder to think of the mess created if any more of these "labels" are invented for what is simply music in one's ear. Don't misunderstand me. There is nothing I like better than to hear, or take part in a sensible discussion on music in general.

KEN CROSSLEY MARRIES

Ex-Jap Prisoner of War "Re-captured"



Ken Crossley and his Bride with Mr. & Mrs. Dave Toff. (Musical Express Photo)

ACCORDION TIMES

Edited by J. J. BLACK

THE RIGHT SPIRIT

I AM particularly impressed by the tremendous enthusiasm displayed by a large proportion of my correspondents. I assume not only for what I am presenting, but also for the speedy revival and reconstruction of the various accordion movements.

Many of them have just returned to civilian life after years in the Forces, and they are straight away getting down to the job of finding an accordion club, or if that is impossible, making preparations to form one themselves.

Here are some extracts from typical letters. From a girl at Watford: "I would very much like to join an accordion club or get in touch with other accordions in my district. I have lost touch with things during my four years in the W.A.A.F.s. From Birmingham: "Could you please let me have particulars of any accordion clubs in Birmingham as I have been in the Forces for six years and have lost touch."

CLUBS COMMENCING

News of the commencement of new clubs comes this week from Ipswich and Birmingham. At Ipswich the accordionists, orchestra, well-known duettists, are making preparations to form a new club. They are, of course, certainly able to keep their fingers in the district. Intervals by playing selections from their extensive repertoire, which includes "The Marriage of Figaro," Bach's "Prelude No. 1," Beethoven's "Sonata," and "The Klavierspiel" of "Two Guitars."

News of a new approved teacher of the British College of Accordionists, already runs in the district. He is Birmingham, and he will be pleased to co-operate in any club movement in the district.

In response to numerous requests, we have arranged for a series of articles on the formation and organisation of clubs to be written by Henry King, who is an acknowledged authority on the subject.

DANCING TIME

by Maurice Smart (Berkeley Hotel London)

I have always considered that the accordion is admirably adapted for the accompaniment of modern dance music, and for

the past fifteen years I have been studying the various methods of fitting the instrument into the line-up of the present-day dance band. It is essential that the instruments used in any orchestra should blend properly. If the accordion comes out of place in any combination it is simply because the other instruments are playing at the same time have not been properly coordinated.

My own combination consists of guitar (Peter Sloan), bass (Bernie Woods), clarinet (Douglas), tenor saxophone (Harry Conn), and myself on accordion.

As the outfit is needed only for dance music I am using the bass and guitar as the rhythm section; bass playing fairly low down on the instrument, and guitar playing in the inversion of each chord, to make the accompaniment sound "thick," and producing the most pleasant "noise."

Accordions and clarinet play most of the arrangements in "duet" form, but, of course, it is essential that the clarinet should play every tune as it is treated. The tenor sax is interchanged with clarinet to provide some relief. I firmly believe that every piece of music has to be individually treated; the arrangement must be in sympathy with the melody, in keeping with the harmony.

Numerous other combinations of instruments, including an accordion, would, of course, be possible, but in every case it would be essential that the tones of the various instruments should be in "balance." Otherwise, as I said above, the accordion will sound "out of place."

In my opinion, however, there is another and a far more serious reason why the accordion is not more commonly used in the modern orchestra. It is my belief that the few outstanding players have been so engrossed in their own "name" by neglecting to consider the other instruments of the band. For example, when playing with sax, clarinet, or brass, they either will not or cannot play in the same manner, and as a result they produce a "hard" and "corny" sound.

If more accordionists would play the best dance bands, and change from their "jerky-cum-robotic" style to a more fluid, playing, the instrument would soon take a much more important part in the modern dance music.



THE COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE B.B.C. MUSIC DEPT.

Statements Reaching us Every Day

By THE EDITOR OF MUSICAL EXPRESS

POURING into these offices daily, by letter and by telephone, from bandleaders and musicians of greater and lesser magnitude alike, come the complaints about the B.B.C. system governing the transmission of dance music. Having made some allowances for all the psychoses which musicians are prone when things are not going according to plan, and having discounted the element of the proverbial "sour grapes," we have come to the conclusion that most of the profession cannot all be entirely wrong. If the allegations reaching us are true, then it would appear that the entire system controlling the broadcasting of dance music is in need of a little spot cleaning.

In the main certain band leaders are willing to allow us to publish their names in connection with the following protests. Others, who have provided us with their statements in a more guarded manner, treat the list of our correspondents as confidential and place them all in the category of the anonymous for the time being.

One very famous band leader, whose name is a household word, and who is currently playing in an equally famous theatre, writes to me to treat the list of our correspondents as confidential and place them all in the category of the anonymous for the time being.

Another cry is "Gerald's back!" Not from one band leader but from many. We heard the report that somebody in the Dance Music Department was trying to get the status quo changed. Assuming he has nine men at £3 per week, this leaves him with £27 per week. He must pay for arrangements for his ten musicians at there does the latter, he hasn't got a chance.

to start doing the enquiring in." Well, that's the way the reports are reaching this office. One leader's views, endorsed by two or three others, are taken and other bandleaders, preventing them from announcing their own terms, the law is conveniently flexible for the privileged few. In general all complain that the regulations are made for some to be broken by others.

One bandleader even goes so far as to say that without the necessary influence he has not got an earthly chance of putting a really decent band number in the programme which will make his band sound really good if the B.B.C. has the slightest suspicion that it is a plug number. But here follows an indictment which beats them all.

One bandleader, who has a regular weekly "spot" has just had his contract renewed for several more weeks. He has applied for a broadcast at a more advantageous time than the one allotted to him. He was told that he would have to wait. He pointed out that they only had to come to the studio to play for an hour as a regular feature already. They told him they had not heard it and that the only way to get another spot was to do a separate broadcast. Can you believe it possible that the mighty B.B.C. could indulge in such bureaucratic, futile time-wasting as this? You can't? Well, the writer of this column has proof

positive of this incident and one exactly the same in connection with another regular broadcast bandleader.

These are only part of the allegations reaching us in connection with a Department which, it would appear, hasn't a friend in the music industry. If only part of these allegations are true, then it is the duty of the musical press to draw attention to the matter in the hope that if the situation is without foundation, then it will be denied; or, conversely, if there is any truth in what the musical profession is saying about the B.B.C. Music Department, then let the B.B.C. put its house in order. Anomalies affecting the music business and its multiple operations, whether they have origin in the B.B.C. or anywhere else, must be uprooted.

Liverpool Philharmonic

On Sunday last Malcolm Sargent conducted a broadcast performance of the B.B.C. Christmas Oratorio "The Childhood of Christ." He took the performance far too speedily, and the exquisite tenor aria "Lejos de la Santa Familia" was played almost in wait time. Most effective was the choral work, as it was in the Third Programme performance by the B.B.C. Choir and soloist under Sir Thomas Beecham in "Dramatic de Faust" a fortnight previously.

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WHADDYA KNOW?

A Musical Quiz

Answers on page 11

- Name the composer whose music it has been said—was written for Sir Thomas Beecham and who has a musical theatre named after him? (a) Gustav Mahler, (b) Richard Strauss, (c) Franz Schubert, (d) Joseph Haydn.
- Who composed (a) Faust, (b) The Marriage of Figaro, (c) Don Juan, (d) The Marriage of Figaro?
- With whom do you associate (a) the "Swing Song," (b) English Folk Song, (c) The Blues?

Name their instruments—Stokowski, Jack Payne, Eric Coates, Larry Adler, and Andrew Segovia. (a) The Marriage of Figaro, (b) Complete the following line: "The Marriage of Figaro" (c) Spanish, (d) In a little "Town," "Walk to the..."

SCOTS' CORNER (Musical Express Scottish Correspondent)

All right—all right! Here's the answer to the constant question — Matt Watson played the excellent first tenor part in "Paper Moon" in Bill Lambert's broadcast, and Jacky Murray's return to the stage in "The Gaidybirds," directed by Billy McGregor, put on another atmosphere ailing bagpipes, cheering crowd, etc. and the record section deserve fullest credit. — Bill Pollard's "Versailles" take over the Bobby Jones Air Ballroom; new manager is Andy McNeve replacing Charles Stewart. The new manager is again "on the Tron" job for Booker Chalmers Wood, Poland's band won first place in Joe Laidlaw's recent broadcast at Ardrossan. — Alex Hunter, leader at Berkeley Ballroom, reports good response to Bobby Craig's B.B.C. could well afford to broadcast this very musician, cheering crowd, etc. and the record section deserve fullest credit. — Bill Pollard's "Versailles" take over the Bobby Jones Air Ballroom; new manager is Andy McNeve replacing Charles Stewart. The new manager is again "on the Tron" job for Booker Chalmers Wood, Poland's band won first place in Joe Laidlaw's recent broadcast at Ardrossan. — Alex Hunter, leader at Berkeley Ballroom, reports good response to Bobby Craig's B.B.C. could well afford to broadcast this very musician, cheering crowd, etc. and the record section deserve fullest credit.

MEET THE TEACHERS—I

Geo. S. Harris

George S. Harris, Associate of the British College of Accordionists, was brought up at four years of age in the Chorister at the age of nine, soloist in Manchester Cathedral at fourteen, studied on violin, cello and piano. He commenced teaching the accordion in 1926, and has had twenty diploma successes since 1930; he is entering third class in the examinations of the B.B.C.A. in the examinations this month.

His band took first prize in the Lancashire and District Contest in 1939, and first, second and third solo prizes were carried off by his pupils. Many of his pupils have done good work in entertainments, forces... even in prisoner-of-war camps in Germany.

Apart from teaching, Mr. Harris devotes much of his spare time to composing music for the accordion. His latest compositions are "The Ploughman's Serenade," and "Largo," the latter of which will be published shortly.

THE HOUSE OF HITS

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CLASSIFIED ANNOUNCEMENTS... BRITISH College of Accordionists still has a few vacancies...

"JAZZ" by ROBERT GOFFIN... I MADE a preliminary announcement last week in the "Musical Express"...

CONCERT COLUMN By ALFRED E. HENDERSON... LAST Monday at 7.0 p.m. the second of the series of HOLBROOKE-HAMMOND Concerts...

THE POST BAG Owing to the indisposition of our Art Editor, this letter was, through an oversight, omitted from our last week's issue.

Dear Sir, The Editor, low musician of an opportunity to play in the orchestra...

ANSWERS TO QUIZ 1. Dallas, (a) Gounod, (b) Busoni, (c) Wagner, (d) W. C. Handy, (e) Organ, Piano, Viola, Harmonica, Guitar, Flute, (f) Parallels, (g) Farallels, (h) Old Stanley Dunes, (i) Walter Gropius, (j) Haydn Symphony, (k) Chopin Nocturne, (l) Schubert Song.

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