

(continued from previous page)

on the U.S.A. by one of her countrymen (Alexander Johnston, Professor of Jurisprudence and Political Economy at Princeton University) in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, she will find it made perfectly clear that the primary and overruling aim of the Civil War was the preservation of the Union, and that the issue of slavery was incidental. "At the beginning of the war the people and leaders of the North had not desired to interfere with slavery," says this writer. "Lincoln had declared that he meant to save the Union as best he could—by preserving slavery, by destroying it, or by destroying part and preserving part."

But circumstances were too strong, and one of the factors that most influenced the situation was the likelihood that the English and French might intervene on the Southern side because of the locking-up of the world's cotton supply. The conversion of the struggle into a crusade against slavery made such intervention impossible.

Mrs. Shire's summary dismissal of *Time*, from which I quoted a favourable opinion of the film, is typical. I am, however, no more prepared to accept her sweeping denunciation of this magazine than I am to accept as gospel Ilya Ehrenburg's altogether-too-subtle distinction between malice and hatred, revenge and justice. Equally far-fetched is her attempt to connect "G.M." with "M-G-M." Any regular *Listener* reader—not to mention anybody in M-G-M—would know how silly this is. Indeed, in the issue of December 31, 1942, another correspondent was complaining because I so "ruthlessly condemned" the films of this studio.

Having asserted that I have "smeared her" by associating her with the D.A.R. and the K.K.K. (which she knows I didn't do), Mrs Shire then tries to do exactly the same thing to me by implying that I am anti-Negro and pro-Fascist. She even drags in the Mosleys by the scruff of their necks to help her. This is so absurd that it doesn't worry me. Indeed, when it comes to sympathy for the Negroes and dislike of Fascism, I think she would find that, far from being still in my political diapers, I am actually occupying the left leg of the same suit of political dungarees as herself.

But I would not be there long if it meant discarding my critical faculty and my sense of proportion. Indeed, the thing that interests me most about this whole controversy is that it so clearly illustrates what is the great intellectual disease of our time—the decay of the liberal spirit and the growth of that violent, uncritical outlook which demands that everything must be presented as either white or black, regardless of the fact that the predominating colour in the world is grey; which brands every prominent person as either an outright rogue (e.g., Johnson, who "lost the peace") or as a saint (e.g., Stevens, "one of the noblest, etc."); which insists that if anything is only 90 per cent right according to your ideological outlook it must be 100 per cent wrong. Hollywood in particular suffers from this disease: take the case of *Mission to Moscow*. But whether the subject is Russia, Lincoln, Tennessee Johnson, or equality for the Negroes, I prefer to maintain an attitude of critical enthusiasm.

Items From The ZB's

FOR one sort of picture of "backwoods America," listeners should tune in to 12B on Sunday, February 20, at 7.0 p.m. The programmes they will hear first slid into favour 19 years ago, and it has been a steady favourite in America ever since. Creating the proper rural atmosphere for the show is "Arkie, the Arkansas Woodchopper." When he calls for a square dance, a square dance actually takes place on the studio stage, which has a haystack in one corner. No less atmospheric are the mountain ballad singers, Lulu Belle and Scotty. Noisiest of the cast are the Hoosier Hot Shots. Their most important equipment is a washboard (they've worn out 12 since they joined the show in 1933), four bulb horns, and a hand-pushed klaxon.

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THERE have been many stories about the way in which artists have "arrived" on the stage, the films, and the air. Now there is one about two young Air Force men who walked in to 22B recently without any knowledge of broadcasting, but with an idea of trying themselves out. An audition was arranged on the spot, with the result that listeners will hear them in their initial broadcast from 22B this Sunday, February 13, at 6.30 p.m. The artists are D. G. Dyer and R. Gilbert, the first-named being a pianist of the Billy Mayerl type, while the second is a baritone. They combine in a presentation of light music.

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AN unusual broadcast will be presented from 22B this Sunday, February 13, at 3.15 p.m., when listeners will hear the Mexican Official Police Marimba Band in a selection of numbers. The marimba is an instrument of great antiquity, and in its early stage was made from gourds. However, with the passing of time improvements have been effected, resulting in an instrument which, while unusual, is very pleasant to listen to.

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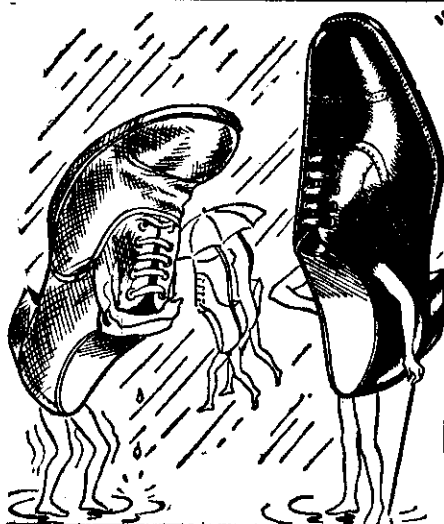
The CHARLES BEGG Annual Music Composers' Contest, 1943

The Prize of Ten Guineas for the best Composition in accordance with the rules, has been awarded to Mr. Ernest Jenner, of Christchurch.

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