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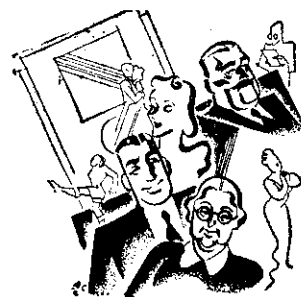
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The Fire-Watcher's First

IF every New Russian composer who sets out to write the monster symphony of the century has a name that offers as many spelling possibilities as that of the Fire-watcher of Leningrad, linotype operators are in for a hard time in the coming years of cemented relations with the U.S.S.R. You are permitted to call him Shostakovitch, or you may delete two letters on the grounds that they are superfluous and call him Shostakovich. Alternatively you may follow the style of one recording company's label and call him Szostakowicz. In any of these cases you are still at liberty to vary the pronunciation at will, placing one strong accent on the second syllable only, or making two trochees, with accents on the two O's. There are still further possibilities, according to the station you tune your set to: for instance, Sostovitsky (3YA, with confidence), or Shokatoffovitch (2YA, with diffidence).

BUT if you hold out for democratic individualism in the uttering of his surname, regimentation will claim you when you come to uttering your opinion of Shostakovich's music. For if it is permissible to hold any one of a dozen views of Schubert, Schumann, or Szymanowski, only two views of Shostakovich are permitted in the best musical circles. You must adore or abhor. You may regard him as the Saviour of Modern Music, and be greeted with indulgence and gentle tolerance by Those Who Know. Or you may side with Khaikosru Sorabji, music critic to the *New English Weekly*, who calls him "the inordinately boomed Russian musical nonentity." But when I listened for the first time to the

RADIO VIEWSREEL

What Our Commentators Say

new recording of the Symphony No. 1 in F (from 2YA), as one of a group representing both camps, I nodded appreciatively when told "Of course he was 19 when he wrote it"; and afterwards, being expected to venture an opinion, sought escape in that haven of the diffident, "Well, I'd like to hear it again, you know."

Alice at the BBC

STATION 3YA had a five-minute recording recently based on the Tweedledum-Tweedledee and Humpty-Dumpty episodes of *Through the Looking Glass*. It was an interesting experiment, hard to judge because of its brevity, to make Tweedledum speak BBC and Tweedledee a rich Lancashire accent; but Alice, I regret to say, was a brat, falling short of the unfailing courtesy and sweet reasonableness of her great original. However, the voice of the small girl must be about the hardest thing imaginable to broadcast; and how many small girls are equal to Alice, anyway?



contrast and complement to "The Fox" and "Sleep," the Peter Warlock songs; for Warlock's unique talent had deep roots in the madrigal era, however modern his technique. It would be a pleasant change if more singers would include more modern British songs in their repertoires—more Parry and Stanford, less d'Hardelot and Sanderson,

Beautiful and Exciting

ON November 10, 1YA broadcast the much-discussed recording of Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast*. I would suggest that 9.30 on a Friday night is not the best hour for an introduction to a work that makes such demands on the critical faculties, and is to most of us astonishing and stimulating; at that time of the week we are usually to be found groping around for something familiar from the 18th century to soothe our nerves before sleep. Personally I found this work of Walton's beautiful and exciting and hope to hear it many times more. It is reported that special pains have been taken over this recording and that it is a technical triumph. A proof of this is the fact that the words were plainly audible. Perhaps some credit for this is due to the singers themselves, for one often hears vocalists who would seem to be defying armies of technicians and lip-readers to distinguish even the tongue in which they are singing.

Golden-Voiced Professor

IF he broadcast in America, that land of the apotheosis, 4YA's Professor Adams would probably have acquired some such title as the Man with the Golden Voice. Since this is Dunedin, let's say conservatively that most of us could listen with pleasure even if he read nothing but the fat stock prices. And what could be a lovelier introduction to "Readings from Tennyson" than the Delius "Summer Night on the River"?—after which I rather expected Professor Adams to drowse his way into the "Lotus-Eaters." Instead, we had an abbreviated reading from "Enoch Arden." Parts of this poem I remember "doing" at school, a painful process which left me with a prejudice against it. I was surprised, then, to find it come alive for me under Professor Adams's treatment. The scenes on the island, where the shipwrecked Enoch watches his two friends die, yet lives on amid scenes of abhorred grandeur, are the most vivid part of the poem. Enoch's homecoming, to find his wife happy though bigamous, and his subsequent renunciation and death, seem a little Victorian in sentiment nowadays, but I found myself surprised when Professor Adams gave a lengthy list of familiar lines from Tennyson, whom he described as having fed the language by stealth. Tennyson may seem "dated" to many a modern ear, but there is no doubt about it, he is one of the best poets to select for the Gentle Art of Reading Aloud.

Conjuring Up Music

ON a recent Tuesday afternoon the Auckland Primary Schools held their third musical festival, Mr. Luscombe

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Parody is a Fine Art

TWO of William Walton's orchestral works were included in 4YA's recent Modern British programme. *Portsmouth Point* was a delight, expressing in trim and jaunty style a subtly nautical mood. The *Facade* Suite, described by the announcer as "witty," deserves a more vivid adjective; it's not so much witty as wickedly satirical, with its caricatures of saccharine melodies borrowed from the pseudo-classics, orchestrated with vitriolic sarcasm. One expects it to burst at any moment into full-throated plagiarism, which it never quite does. *Facade* was originally performed as accompaniment to Edith Sitwell's poems, but while the musical mind retains an appreciation of parody as a fine art, the music will continue to be performed for its own sake long after the Sitwell poems are forgotten.

Artist v. Record

FOR those interested in the "artist versus record" argument, an opportunity of testing their theories was given from 4YA when two similar groups of songs were included in the same programme, one group a recording by Parry Jones of two Peter Warlock songs, the other group sung from the studio by Meda Paine. Parry Jones's voice seems to have a burdensome quality which obscures his words and makes listening to him an anxious matter, more especially in this particular record, Meda Paine, however, made her group of Modern British Songs sound effortlessly beautiful. Two of them, "Heffle Cuckoo Fair" and the Ploughing Song, have a fresh folk-song quality, in interesting



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