



## There is no Substitute for 'Ovaltine' Quality

*When you buy your 'Ovaltine' remember these very important facts*

THAT IS WHY  
EVERY THINKING  
WOMAN BUYS  
'OVALTINE'  
FOR HEALTH



1. 'Ovaltine' is all pure nourishment . . . it is made from rich, creamy milk, plus malt, plus new-laid eggs.
2. 'Ovaltine' possesses special properties which make it the best bed-time beverage for ensuring natural, restorative sleep.
3. 'Ovaltine' does not contain bulky household sugar. Furthermore it does not contain starch, nor does it contain a high percentage of cocoa.
4. 'Ovaltine' is of supreme quality, and quality always tells. Moreover 'Ovaltine' is most economical in use.

For the Health of the Whole Family

# OVALTINE

TONIC FOOD BEVERAGE

A. WANDER LTD., LONDON,

N.Z. FACTORY: NORTH ROAD, PAPANUI, CHRISTCHURCH.

18.7

## A MIXED GRILL

**THE PROMISE, Pearl Buck. 11/6 posted.** A heroic novel of the Orient, peopled with living characters drawn from the author's intimate knowledge of Eastern life and ways.

**ROUALT: PAINTINGS AND PRINTS. James Thrall Soby, 22/9 posted.** All the significant works of the greatest religious painter of our time and one of the few major 20th century artists in a superb volume.

**THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH, Ian A. Gordon. 8/- posted.** A critical commentary which is of interest to all who are concerned with the use of good English in everyday life, by a leading New Zealand authority.

**ABOUT BOOKS FOR CHILDREN. Dorothy Neal White. 11/- posted.** An outstanding New Zealand publication of value to parents, teachers, librarians, and all interested in books for children.

WELLINGTON CO-OPERATIVE BOOK SOCIETY LIMITED

**MODERN BOOKS** 48A MANNERS STREET, WELLINGTON, C.1., N.Z.

# SHOSTAKOVICH RECANTS AGAIN

## Ninth Symphony Offends The Party

**D**MITRI SHOSTAKOVICH, the famed Soviet composer, has been in trouble with the Communist Party again. And once more he has promised to be a good boy from now on. The first time was in 1936; when his opera *Lady Macbeth of Mzensk* was denounced in *Pravda* (in an article reputed to have been written by an important Soviet official) as theatrically vulgar and musically formalistic; a general campaign against formalism in art began at once, and for a while it looked as if Shostakovich's career had been cut short. He withdrew his Fourth Symphony from a scheduled performance, and began another to vindicate himself, staking everything upon it. This was his Fifth. Everyone extolled its power. Alexei Tolstoy glowed. The aviator Gromoff, hero of the transpolar flight to America, published his opinion of it. Shostakovich was allowed to come out of the corner.

But it has happened again. Our source of information is the annual music issue of the *Saturday Review of Literature*, of which Paul Henry Lang is once more a guest editor. The *SRL* prints an article by Shostakovich, sent by cable from Moscow (the issue is dated January 25, 1947), entitled "Soviet Music Today," presumably commissioned for the special number. And Dr. Lang, in an article printed on the same page, shakes his head sadly at the spectacle. *Here first of all is Dr. Lang's article, which he headed "A Spiritual Rebirth":*

A FEW months ago the Agitation and Propaganda Committee of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, through its official journal, *Culture and Life*, hailed Dmitri Shostakovich, amid much publicity, before the tribunal of conscience. This cable is one of the results. It is not the first time the famed composer of the Leningrad Symphony has been forced to eat crow; a few years ago he was roundly denounced for his opera *Lady Macbeth of Mzensk*, and he humbly recanted, promising never again to offend party sensibilities. The cause of his present predicament is, however, as surprising as it is hard to understand. His Ninth Symphony which called forth all the official indignation, is, like most other symphonies, made up of tunes, rhythms, harmonies, oboes, drums, and fiddles; there are no words in it, no allusions, no titles. Yet the above-mentioned committee read in the musical staff many things which the rest of us would never be able to discover.

The symphony, it says, merely imitates archaic, classical models, thereby cowardly abandoning the "warm ideological conviction" of the Russia of our time; it merely toys with sounds when it should be out converting the rest of the world; the composer is "taking a vacation to rest from modern problems" when he should bend every effort to render in music the post-war heroism of his people as he depicted their legendary defence of the ancient city of Peter the Great.

All this, of course, is patent nonsense. It is very easy to make a lot of noise with a big orchestra and call it a Battle Symphony. Many a composer has done it, among them Beethoven, and not one of these works lived beyond the respective peace treaties which followed in the wake of the battle. Shostakovich's Battle Symphony is a more seriously planned affair than Beethoven's, but it too suffers from the fact that if music follows a train of thought imposed upon it from without it is bound to suffer. But in the Ninth, Shostakovich wrote just plain music in which the in-



DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH  
"We all like to keep our heads"

struments simply play something that may be good music or bad music, but which is proper meat only for a central committee of musical sensibilities.

If the Shostakovich of the eight symphonies was thoroughly acceptable to the guardians of Soviet morals, the Ninth could not by any stretch of the imagination be called out of line. Though the cat-o'-nine tails is cracked over our poor symphonic sinner, the reason eludes our comprehension. It is nevertheless somewhat shocking to see such an abject surrender as this cable represents. Shostakovich can no more carry out the directives that were obviously put into his mouth than an American composer could reflect in his symphony the current change in our political climate by hewing closer to the G.O.P. line. But unlike his American colleague he has no choice in the matter. Well, we all like to keep our heads."

*And now here is the text of Shostakovich's article for the "Saturday Review of Literature":*

WE are fighting for spiritual culture in abundance. At an extended plenary session of the Organisational Committee and active members of the Soviet Composers' Union, held in October of

(continued on next page)