

That's the man who wrote the superlatively saccharine "Ave Maria," one of the few pieces of music that moved me to wrathful indignation. He also wrote *Faust*. These songs are neither like the "Ave Maria" nor the famous opera. They are what the French might call *charmant*. As sung by Gérard Souzay (baritone), with pianist Jacqueline Bonneau (Decca LW5097) they leave the impression that Gounod had more to him than some of his more popular compositions suggest.

A recital of Russian songs sung by the bass Raphael Arie (Decca LW 5087) is also well worth looking into. Raphael Arie has rich, resonant tone and his singing with the accompanying of Wilfred Parry makes fine music. You will know Moussorgsky's "Song of the Flea" and "The Midnight Review," by Glinka. If you enjoy these, you will also like the other songs by Moussorgsky, Glinka, Lishin and Gretchaninov.

Contemporary Music

If you're ready, we'll talk about contemporary music; but, first of all, something not very contemporary—Sibelius. Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 43. For anyone just making the acquaintance of Sibelius, this Second Symphony is about the best introduction. If you're already a friend of Sibelius, it can be added that this performance by the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anthony Collins (Decca LXT 2815) is first-rate, played with a fine feeling for the subtleties of the music and vividly recorded.

Moving along the path of contemporary music we come to Vaughan Williams's Symphony No. 5 in D Major, after the "London" Symphony, the easiest of Vaughan Williams to get to know. It is given a lovely performance by Sir Adrian Boult and the London Philharmonic Orchestra (Decca LXT 2910). It is not a big step from here to Delius—I'm not altogether sure whether it's a step forwards or backwards. The work is *Paris: The Song of a Great City*, with *In a Summer Gar-*

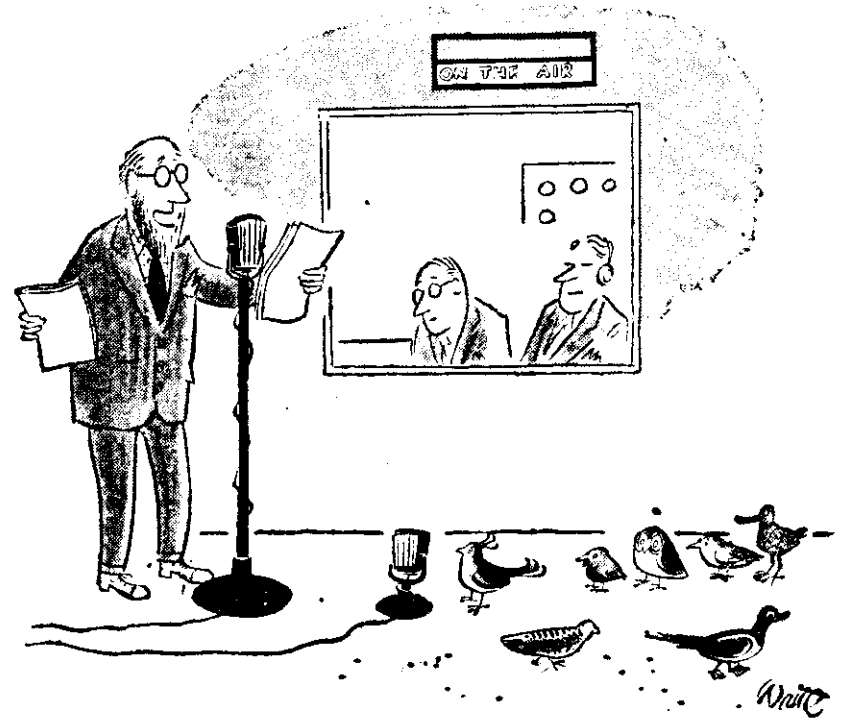
den and *Summer Night on the River* on the reverse side (Decca LXT 2899). I'm old-fashioned enough to believe that Sir Thomas Beecham is still the ideal interpreter of Delius, but Anthony Collins and the London Symphony Orchestra certainly give a good account of the music.

If you're feeling a little adventurous, there's a Divertimento, Op. 43, and a Sinfonietta, Op. 5-48, by Prokofieff, played by the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda (Westminster WL 5031). This is Prokofieff in classical mood, classicism diverted, as it were, to modern ends. It's a musically schizophrenic state that I find rather exasperating, but maybe it would be a suitable introduction to the more piquant side of modernism.

Coda

Here is some prospecting which might pan out quite a bit of gold. Brahms's Serenade No. 1 in D Major was written more or less as an exercise in orchestral composition in preparation for his first symphony. As played by Thomas Scherman and the Little Orchestral Society (Brunswick AXTL 1026) it becomes a lively piece of work and by no means an exercise. Four Concertinos attributed to G. B. Pergolesi might quite well be by that celebrated composer, which means they shine with a bright 18th Century glow. They are played by L'Orchestra de Chambre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Pierre Colombo (L'Oiseau Lyre OL 50010).

After all this, you may decide to give up listening and take on playing. Well, then, you could do worse than acquire "The Saxophone" (Decca LX 3130), a disc on which Marcel Mule with some incomparable saxophone playing points out that there is more in his instrument than tooting in a dance band. This is one of a series of records devoted to various instruments, another of which is "The Clarinet" (Decca LX 3129), on which Ulysse Delecluse demonstrates his instrument in a variety of compositions with equal artistry. You can take your pick.



Write
(C) Punch

"... and now, the sweet haunting notes of the crested flaptail"

October Choice

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MOZART: Sinfonia Concertante in E Flat Major, K.364, played by Joseph Fuchs (violin) and Lillian Fuchs (viola), with the Zimble Sinfonietta. . . As full of delight as Mozart can be—BRUNSWICK, AXTL 1018.

SIBELIUS: Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 43, played by the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anthony Collins. . . A fine, live performance—DECCA LXT 2815.

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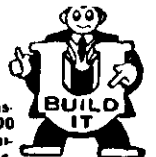
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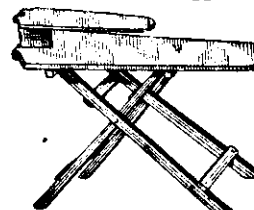
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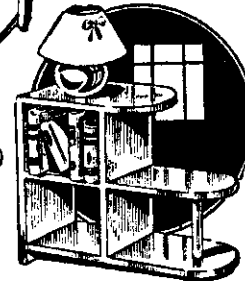
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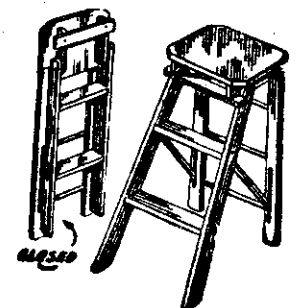


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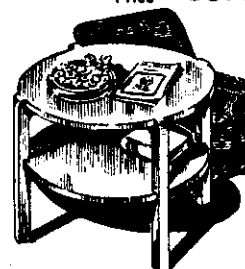
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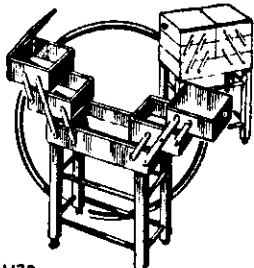
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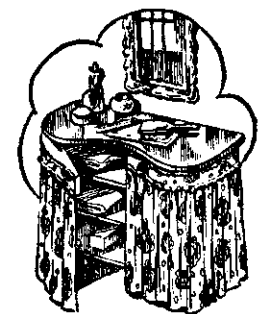
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