

Books and Men

Brilliant Ballets and Music Of The Tzarist Regime

Igor Stravinsky's Chronicles of His Life

A YEAR ago Victor Gollancz published the story of Diaghileff's life, one of the most interesting histories of the modern Russian ballet to come from an English publisher. A parade of famous names trailed itself across the pages of the book—Diaghileff himself, probably the greatest creator of ballets the world has ever known, Rimsky Korsakov, Bakst, Pavlova, Nijinsky, Benois—but there was one that occurred again and again; that of Igor Stravinsky.

To-day Gollancz has published "Chronicles of My Life," by this same Stravinsky—a book that adds to the interesting impressions gathered be-

lasted for 20 years, right up to his death. Having heard "Scherzo Fantastique" and "Feu d'Artifice," he commissioned me, among certain other Russian composers, to orchestrate two pieces by Chopin for the ballet, "Les Sylphides," to be given in Paris in the spring of 1909. They were the Nocturne with which the ballet begins and the Valse Brillante.

"Les Sylphides," one of the most brilliant ballets ever conceived, will serve as a lasting monument to Stravinsky's skill. (It was revived with enormous success by Colonel de Basil's company in London only last month.) Diaghileff, pleased beyond measure, commissioned him to write the music for "L'Oiseau de Feu" for the Russian ballet season at the Paris Opera House in the spring of 1910. There is no need to stress the success of this work.

To-day Stravinsky is world-famous, as much sought after in America as he is in Europe. And his book—a little untidy in places, perhaps—should find avid readers not only among musicians and balletomanes, but among laymen as well.

"Chronicle of My Life." Igor Stravinsky. Victor Gollancz. Our copy from the publishers.



IGOR STRAVINSKY

Pupil of Rimsky Korsakov, friend of Diaghileff.

tween the covers of the Diaghileff story. It takes one back to the Russia of Czarist days, the mad days of reckless luxury in St. Petersburg and the brooding poverty of the people living on the huge land masses stretching away from the capital. It talks of Tehehov and Tolstoi, the first glittering days of the Russian ballet as we know it now, the music of Rimsky Korsakov—and the beginnings of the brilliant career of Stravinsky himself (although the author, naturally, claims nothing for his own work).

It seems, from a close reading of the book, that the most important phase of Stravinsky's career began shortly after the death, in 1909, of his old master, Rimsky Korsakov. He says:

It was at this point that I began the close relations with Diaghileff, which

SHERRIFF NOT A "ONE-GUN MAN"

With "Green Gates" He Confounds His Critics

R. C. SHERRIFF has confounded those critics who described him as a one-gun man—that one gun being his immensely successful play, "Journey's End." Since then he has written that little gem of English rural life, "Badger's End," collaborated brilliantly with Auriol Lee over "St. Helena" and now written a novel, "Green Gates" which the English papers are hailing as one of the most delightful in years. "Green Gates" draws a wonderful picture of the everyday life of a very nondescript little business man.

The story is woven round the cashier of a branch of an insurance company who retires after forty years' service. In his mind he has worked out quite clearly what he intends to do with his leisure, but somehow everything goes wrong. He finds that he cannot settle down to his gardening, and his books on archaeology (a subject which he had decided to study) do not hold him. In addition he is always irritating his wife; and some very amusing domestic troubles arise. However, the situation is saved when Mr. and Mrs. Baldwin

DIS-SOCIAL Child IS NO MYTH

THE dis-social child is no myth.

This modern life, which we are pleased to call civilisation, is reproducing his kind in ever-increasing numbers—take a look for yourself at the youngsters of 21 years and less who have been keeping New Zealand judges busy this last year or so. Something can be done about it—something must be done—and it would be a wise move on the part of those persons who would like to see something achieved in the way of assisting New Zealand juvenile delinquents to read a new publication, "Wayward Youth," by August Eichhorn.

The author is the head of a world-famous clinic in Vienna and, in his experimental school, he used methods of psycho-analysis to get at the roots of the trouble. His pursuit of the elusive conflicts which cause maladjustment has brought amazing results. The book combines a straightforward account of his theories with actual case histories that are revealing human documents. It is written, not for trained psychologists, but for the intelligent layman—parents, teachers, social workers—who concern themselves with the problems of the growing generation, and who would like to avail themselves of the new technique.

A plea for the giving of a freer hand to the responsible person who is anxious to get at the root of the trouble in individual cases of maladjustment is embodied in the foreword, written by Sigmund Freud. He says: "If a teacher has learned analysis by experimenting it himself and is capable of applying his knowledge as a supplementary aid in his work with borderline and mixed cases, he should obviously be allowed the practice of analysis and should not be hindered in it for narrow-minded reasons."

"Wayward Youth." August Eichhorn. Putnam. Our copy from the publishers.

decide to sell their home and all its contents and start afresh by building a modern bungalow with modern furniture on a brand-new housing estate. This complete break from his old environment works wonders with Mr. Baldwin, who finds complete happiness as the indefatigable secretary of the club which is founded by the residents on the estate.

Mr. Sherriff shows in this story an almost uncanny understanding of the little things in life. His characters are so vividly painted and so real that, once started, you cannot put his book down until you reach the very last line.

"Green Gates." R. C. Sherriff. Victor Gollancz. Our copy from the publishers.