

The Discus-Thrower

George Gershwin, genius of musical decadence, has written a concerto in F major, released by Columbia in a modern music album (3 records) played by Paul Whiteman and his orchestra, with Roy Bargy featuring at the piano. Extremely modern, using the whole-tone system throughout, it has the humor, shock, and super-syncopation necessary to be psychologiste malgre lui. Things to note: the constant piano major, of course, some good team work by a flute and a piccolo, a touch of macabre with two pianos, and who else but a malicious bassoon! If you've heard the man pre-facing Gunnar Johannsen over KGW on Sunday nights, telling you to think of cows on a windy mountain during the next number, it might amuse you to figure out what he'd do about this. Good, one might add, for several kinds of dancing.

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Paul Tremaine, assisted by his orchestra, has an idea of digging up negro spirituals and emphasizing that ardent syncopation that makes the neighbors complain. Columbia release 2229 is the first, and more to come. "Steam-Boat Bill" is mostly baritone solo, with a rousing chorus. Narrative interest with calliope strains. "When the Day's Work's All Been Done"—baritone, piano, saxophone—all crooning. The genuine black despair, but how cheering it is.

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"So Beats My Heart for You" or The Relapse of the Broken-Hearted Saxophone. Will Osborne sings the chorus full of wows. A good reminder of that romance at the beach. And on the other side: "When I Close My Eyes and Dream." Will sings these things well—so well. Just the voice one would expect from the tall dark stranger.

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Santa Claus has something, too, for the wise boys and girls who oil their portables and stay home on rainy nights. From Act II of Mozart's "The Magic Flute," Michael Bohnen sings in German "In Diesen Heil' gen Hallen" (Within this hallowed dwelling). A really magnificent baritone, and you can hear him again in the dramatic splendor of "Abendlich Strahl der Sonne Auge" (Golden at eve the Sunlight Gleams), from Scene IV of Wagner's "Das Rheingold."

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In "Nola," a brand-new Columbia record, Paul Whiteman again features the trombone solo, reminiscent of Henry Busse's fine work in the still-popular "When Day is Done." On the other side, "New Tiger Rag," a chorus of saxophones sends that faithful old beast into a new stripe-shivering frenzy. This will probably be the outstanding dance record of the term.

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The native Californians, or the Webfoots who summered in or about Los Angeles, will welcome the first record broadcast of Sebastian's New Cotton Club band. They're all negroes, this supper-club gang, and they can play: "If I Could be With You One Hour Tonight" and "Confessin' That I Love You."

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If one feels that he must suspect the moral integrity of modern music, he will enjoy the classic beauty of Toccata in A-flat, played by Edouard Commette on the St. Jean's Cathedral organ in Lyon's, France.

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Brunswick offers a novelty organ arrangement—Lew White playing "The Whistler and His Dog" with interesting stop arrangements, and "Down South."

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Dvorak's Symphony No. 5 in E minor, "The New World," done by Sir Hamilton Harty and the Halle orchestra (Columbia release) is tremendous and really worth having.

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Another imported recording by Columbia is Rachmaninoff's Prelude in G minor, a great crashing thing, of which it is said that Rachmaninoff once broke a piano in its performance. Victor Sholler, the recording artist, adds the finish necessary to such strength.

Sholler plays again Chopin's Etude in G-flat, op. 25, no. 9, an interesting octave study.—Martha Wading-Duck.

The Paderewski Arrives

On October 7 Paderewski arrived in New York ready to embark on another American concert tour, a tour of equal proportions to his previous ones, a small matter of some seventy-five concerts. According to rumors the demand to hear this titan of the piano-forte is as insistent as heretofore—that is to say as insistent as any season during the past several years, since the advent of the radio and the decline of the concert going public, which by the way, say the New York impresarios, has shown an increase in life or curiosity of about twenty per cent for the ensuing season. Mr. Paderewski's last concert tour was cancelled owing to a serious illness, it is two years since he played in New York. It is easy to prophesy that the programs will be of the same meaty quality, and proportions as in past seasons.

Of late years there has been a criticism of Paderewski's technique and tone, in fact he has always been known to pick up quite a number of "blue notes" during one of his recitals, his technical performance has always been uneven. By many he has never been regarded pre-eminently a technician, even in the zenith of his powers. He belongs to that school of workers—toilers if you will, who developed a technical prowess more than adequate for their particular needs and expression, to that school who worshipped at the shrine of sheer magnificence of tone and color and orchestral splendor, to the school of artists who sincerely strove to carry the banner of the highest ideals of tonal art to the four corners of the earth. There is no doubt that this season he will play an assortment of numbers which will demand velocity, power and tonal effects that would lay low many a younger player, but a colossal technician he never was, any number of pianists his technical superiors could be named. This all leads us to the logical conclusion, that it was not and is not the technique of Paderewski that has brought him everlasting fame, but the intelligent attack of his problem, the rich and fiery temperament, his artistic and poetic conceptions, in short, the Paderewski individuality. Like any leader, perhaps his great success and following can be traced to his heroic capacity to sense, fascinate and command a public gathering, his dramatic vein not merely of self and life, but of art.

Paderewski has always been a full grown and unblushing romanticist who first used the piano for the projection of his ideas, then the premiership of Poland to give vent to his talent as a statesman, further carrying forth his romanticism. Practically all experienced artists take into consideration the limits of their particular instrument, they play with a degree of calculation and discretion, Paderewski lately has not been content with a piano as a piano, he demanded of the instrument the resources of an orchestra, he paints his picture with a broad brush and many many colours. His name has become a by-word in practically every home in every clime. There have always been contrasting opinions about his playing, but of one thing they all agree, "he plays greatly," with an insight that is not given to many, perhaps in this very thing lies his greatness. He belongs to that race of rapidly vanishing artists who worked for the love of their calling, who were not afraid of making a few baubles, whose art—the message they had to deliver was greater than any slip of the fingers, in short, the age of pre-mechanical virtuosity.

—By Yvon.

Away From Russia

DAVID GOLDER. By Irene Nemirovsky. New York: Horace Liveright.

FORGETTING those others, those ex-patriated Russians who live in France, in England, in Italy, in the United States, the only question asked of Russian letters is: "Will the Soviet regime cripple creative activity among the Russians?" But those exiled ones who sip their steaming glasses of tea together in alien countries—what about their creative activities?

An example of what they are doing is the novel "David Golder," by Irene Nemirovsky, and published by Horace

Liveright. Four years ago, after watching the fantastic parade at Biarritz, she conceived the idea for her novel. Using Turgenev's method, she first wrote his biography. When she had finished it, she felt that no longer had he any secrets from her and proceeded with the novel.

Diminished Seventh

(Continued from Page One) room down-town, the broken furniture to a junk-man for a dollar twenty-five, and the two old soaks to the morgue. And Hughie, left alone in the dark early morn to be called for later, had made the one mistake of his life. He'd wandered away. He'd meant to find her, but the tracks were all he knew and he got lost or killed.

One day when Mazie had coughed all the night before and her head was hot and cold in turn and her eyes were witches that cast blurry enchantments on every object she would be seeing, the elevator stopped and winter came out, hanging on a rack. Winter was mostly black this year, and heavily furred.

"I would suggest, Miss, that you go into the stock-room and absorb a few details of the season's styles," said the floor-manager. Then because a customer came around the corner he added: "We might make a saleswoman of you one of these days."

So she went inside. And there, on a ticket dangling out of a cuff, she read: "Collar of Manchurian wolf."

Now what would be Manchurian wolf? She looked and there was Hughie. Oh, no—it was just that she hadn't slept.

"Hughie!" she cried, burying her face in his thick fur. He put his paws on her shoulders.

"Listen," he said. "I'm here. I'll kill everybody if you say so. And we'll walk away then to a dusty road and I'll gallop ahead and bark at birds and you'll run too, and then we'll find cows and white geese and an apple orchard. All you've got to do is keep someone from buying me."

But if Hughie was fine as a dog, he was fine and elegant as a Manchurian wolf. And Mazie, defending them both, stopped at nothing. She chewed gum, and jostled customers and sang off key too loudly and tapped purses with a pretense of clumsiness and jeered when there was neither a jingle nor a rustle. Hughie was always set back again, lying in Manchurian serenity across the shoulders of the black coat.

One day, all the coats were sold for half their original price. The customers swarmed and fought and salesladies lost their books and darted into fitting rooms to scream hysterically for a moment. Three coats were stolen from back doors that should have been locked and a laden iron costumer fell on Mazie, bruising her terribly and nearly smothering her to boot, and Mr. Downing strided quickly across the floor and said: "Really, Miss, if you can't work faster —"

The floor was strewn with buttons and hangers. Hughie was crushed on a rack with a hundred ill-smelling fur-collars and twisted sleeves. Again and again voices screamed, "Mazie! Mazie!" and called her away from him.

When it was all over, she was so tired that she slept through the night and the next day and the next night; woke with a startled sinking feeling at 6 in the morning of the second day. When she got to work, Hughie was gone.

At 10 o'clock the assistant buyer sent her down after a morning newspaper. She found herself in the street. Rain had fallen the night before and bands of mist were getting up, meticulously straight, from the gutters. She ran down the street. Three blocks and the river flowed along, all murky, as though it thought night was still in the world. The feeble sun stretched out clammy invalid fingers to touch circles of grease, moving on slow ripples.

Sixty dollars of grease and monkeys, and terror at the end, no matter how you look at it.

So Mazie climbed down the muddy slope until the mud slid her into the water. And just as there was only a greasy bubble, a car rumbled over the bridge and in it was sitting a poor patient lady who just couldn't make up her mind. She was bringing back Hughie to exchange him for the brown one with the princess flare.—Marjorie Shane.

Verse of the Times

NEW FOUND LAND. By Archibald MacLeish. Paris: Black Sun Press; Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

CERTAIN of the fourteen poems which comprise this volume have appeared in periodicals, some so long ago as to have reappeared in recent anthologies. The pieces included are thus somewhat miscellaneous in character.

The reader will immediately note a distinctly modernistic tone, or an experimental technique, in the expression of each of these poems. It is not the least apparent in the older, "You, Andrew Marvel." MacLeish's experimental language of poetry has been likened to Hemingway's expression in prose, and it is true that the two manners are not unlike. MacLeish has dropped punctuation altogether and, like Hemingway, presents his observations and sensations colloquially in simple primer-style sentences with an abundance of coordinating conjunctions.

And over Sicily the air
Still flashing with the landward gulls
And loom and slowly disappear
The sails above the shadowy hulls
And Spain go under and the shore
Of Africa the gilded sand
And evening vanish and no more
The low pale light across the land

Where the poet has the advantage of the novelist is that the scope of a poem will not ordinarily extend his style to the point of flatness as the length of the novel almost inevitably does.

In this book MacLeish celebrates again, as in "The Hamlet," the life of primitive man and his toil, migration, superstition and heroism. About half of the poems in the volume are of this type. Of these the best is the longest, "Land's End." Of the more directly lyrical poems, "Memory Green" and "Not Marble Not the Gilded Monuments" show an individual expression in handling more conventional subjects. But the miscellaneity of the contents of this book weaken it, and, in the aggregate, it is a retrogression after "The Hamlet."

THE GLORY OF THE NIGHTINGALES. By Edwin Arlington Robinson. The Macmillan Company.

A STRAIGHT chronological sequence in relating a narrative does not appeal to Mr. Robinson. He aims, it would seem, to arouse in his readers a double curiosity, a curiosity as to what will occur in the future, and, also, a curiosity as to what has occurred in the past.

Thus in this poet's latest work, "The Glory of the Nightingales," Malory, the derelict, but, with the weapon in his pocket "a richer man than Nightingale," has passed through Sharon, the city of his boyhood, to Nightingale's mansion by the sea and has confronted Nightingale, whom he means to kill, before we learn the motives for his hate, and before we learn also the circumstances that make it impossible for him to kill Nightingale. From there on to the end which discloses how

"What Malory had once considered his only wealth
Had given him wealth to serve, and without waiting."

the story moves with more narrative directness.

The plot element in this blank-verse piece of eighty-odd pages is enough to suffice a long novel. But Robinson chooses to condense the drama of two lives into the action and dialogue of four days, subordinating the story to that psychological probing of character which gives him, perhaps, his chief distinction as a poet.

The Robinson mannerisms, the cryptic statement, the aphorisms, the long monologues are here. What one chiefly misses is that which one cannot legitimately demand from the subject matter of this poem—the emotional beat and lyrical speed that heightened passages in "Tristram."

But Malory, "patient and sustained in his malevolence" and who "was right, or nothing was right," and especially Nightingale who "had lost, like many in winning, more than he had won," are worthy of places in Robinson's gallery of characters among Avon, Bartholow, Flammonde and Cavender.—By John Scheffer.