

NEW LEAVES

Turntable Topics

by Mickey Rouse

While strolling through the Arboretum on an afternoon, why not end your walk at Abernethy's? Whata haven. The place is bursting with song!

New releases are stacked everywhere and some are climbing the walls. You really ought to view the extensive collection of L.P.s. Since Columbia Records launched the long playing discs in June of 1948, the popularity of this highly practical method of recording has steadily grown until just about everyone has been forced to convert.

Wednesday, I was talking to the boys at Ab's about my first love—Richard Addinsell's "Warsaw Concerto". My attention was called to the music from "Bithe Spirit," also by Addinsell. Columbia has recorded the "Prelude" and "Waltz" from this Noel Coward movie on a single twelve inch 78 r.p.m. platter.

Both pieces are definitely Addinsell. The "Prelude" is at once gay, light, airy, then suddenly with the swift changes of mood so characteristic of addinsell, the mysterious element steals in, builds up, bursts forth into extreme gaiety, somewhat suggestive of a crowd before the curtain on opening night.

In the "Waltz," the dance quality is always there—filtering, digging, plunging. The rippling ethereal, mysterious element gains gusto as it swirls forth—fully paving the way for the magnificent termination. The London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Muir Mathieson, does the honors.

If you are one of those exponents of using the jazz idiom symphonically, Darius Milhaud is your man. While on a visit to the U. S., he acquired his inspiration for "La Creation du Monde." He frequented the Harlem jazz cen-

ters, talked with the jazz artists and consequently founded his plot on a Negro legend of the creation of the world. If you were unfamiliar with Milhaud's ballet, you would immediately conclude that it was a Gershwin composition. The similarity is striking; actually, "La Creation du Monde" was composed four months before "Rhapsody in Blue."

Milhaud crashes the heights in his torrid interpretation of man's initial meeting with woman. The listener appreciates this moving portrayal with all his faculties—physical, mental, spiritual. Leonard Bernstein conducts the Columbia Chamber Orchestra in this composition and its companion piece, Aaron Copland's "El Solon Mexico." Both are available on Columbia L.P. Records. In a very natural unaffected manner, Copland gives the impression of Mexico solely from the eyes of a tourist. "El Solon Mexico" was a dance hall—a very distinctive one—and from this setting the music unfolds. Warmth and gaiety are the dominant musical impressions of this highly spirited, impressionistic view of Mexico. One is startled by the authenticity of a foreigner's grasping insight. Copland's use of the drums is interesting and intensely believable.

Decca has a single ten inch disc of unusual merit—Victor Young's "A Place in the Sun" and "Spellbound," from the movies of the same titles. "A Place in the Sun" is good music of a type that the general public caters to, but it falls short of interpreting the emotional turmoil of the movie. Miklos Rozsa's "Spellbound" is exceptional; its full interpretation is a credit to the movie, the composer, and the performers.

though it were a routine thriller involving pirates on the Spanish Main. She has endowed her characters with all the sinewy, rock-jawed traits of the standard heroes and omitted in them any suggestion whatsoever of reality or life. She has cast their dialogue on a level which at times sounds like nothing so much as a poor parody of Winston Churchill warming up before Parliament, and has let all her individualization of the Brutons and their cohorts depend on the varying shades of their hair.

The plot through which the pasteboard figures move is almost absurdly predictable and pat, with the villain and villainess departing this life at the same convenient instant as the result of an automobile accident caused by a bump in the road. The significance of the bump, by the way, is

pointed up earlier in the story with foreshadowing as subtle as a kick in the solar plexus. All of this is related in a style leaning heavily to lush clusters of adjectives, coy similes, and endless symbols in which flowers and birds somehow become mill workers and strike breakers. But the most distressing aspect of this novel is its apparent thesis that labor-management difficulties may be settled once and for all by the simple expedient of placing the worker's name on a gay little sign above his machine. This solution is, however, in perfect keeping with the novel as a whole which has reduced every phase of the lives and problems which it seeks to convey to to kindergarten terms and has, by so doing, forfeited any impact which it might otherwise have claimed.

Mary Ellen Jones

Wild Then, Too

Wild Men In The Middle Ages by Richard Bernheimer. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 1952. 224pp. \$4.00

Yes, the Middle Ages had its wild men too. If you are interested (purely from an academic angle) in the habits and everyday life of the Middle Age mythological wild man you would get your four dollars worth out of this book by the very capable Richard Bernheimer.

"Wild Men In The Middle Ages" (as the title might suggest) does not read like a Mickey Spillane thriller, but it is humorous in parts and interestingly informative.

For the layman whose hobby is history and for the wild men of the campus who think they have a priority on freedom this book is perfect.

J. R.

'Peacock' Loses Luster

"The Day of the Peacock" by Elizabeth Boatwright Coker 320 pp. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc. \$3.

The decade of the Thirties was the era of the Social Crusade, the swing from Scott Fitzgerald and the Stock Market Boom to John Dos Passos and the Great Depression. It was the era of the laboring man and his cause held high by the New Deal and the literature with a message.

The tensions created as a result of a rising and demanding urban population have in no way lessened during the war years and into the Fifties but have, with the increased industrialization of the South, rather become more pressing. This is a problem that did not fade away with the WPA and the CCC but has remained very much with us, unsolved as yet.

It is this very problem which Mrs. Coker has chosen to attack in her second novel. The South Carolina mill town of Devon is her locale—the ruling family of Bruton—her chief characters. In 1932, Royal Jay Bruton the Second was firmly convinced that by holding to the methods of generations of mill-owning Brutons he could keep his workers in hand. Not for him the innovations of recreational facilities and

share-the-profits schemes of his son and favorite, Royal Jay Bruton the Third.

When young Jay bought Peacock Hill as a site for a new mill without his father's consent, the incensed Royal Second sent the young one packing in no uncertain terms. Whereupon young Jay joined forces by way of a drunken marriage with Annie Shamrock the tobacco heiress, and with her funds built The Peacock, a sleek, modern rayon mill with all the best labor conditions. Young Jay was so successful that, in 1936, he was able to extricate his father from mishaps involving union trouble, a four alarm strike, and Communist agitators and to provide that all the Brutons, himself included, lived happily ever after, adored and dearly loved by every mill worker for miles around. In the process, he was also able to dispose of Annie Shamrock, by the kind intervention of fate, and marry his reformed Communist dream girl, Katherine Kippura. In fact, everything turned out as nicely as you please.

It is unfortunate that Mrs. Coker has been forced, either by the demands of our book-club literary standards or by her own limitations as a writer, to deal with what should be a complex and extremely serious situation as

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No. 41...THE MAGPIE



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