

MUSTANG MUSIC

By Kyle Crichton

When a football crowd stays long after the final whistle just to listen to a college band, that band is worth investigating. The horn tooters of Southern Methodist pass in review

WELL, sir, as Tex Rickard used to say, you never seed such a thing. The Southern Methodist football team is plodding diligently along and the cheering section is in a state of apparent decay when suddenly there is a break in the game, a score for S.M.U. seems possible and a trumpeter in the band lifts his horn, goes br-r-r-r-r in a long preliminary ta-ran-tatta and the band bursts into Peruna. The effect is exactly as if a long, sharp pin had obtruded itself directly under the seat of each member in the cheering section. There is a wild, insane, delighted scream which soars over the field and reaches a peak of intensity that is frightening.

Whether it is Peruna that makes the S.M.U. band or the band that makes Peruna, there is no doubt that the band is in a class by itself among college tooters. Boy, they swing it! Just to make it more complicated, it may be said that Peruna is merely a rowdy Texas version of She'll Be Comin' 'Round the Mountain When She Comes. What had originally been a fine, decent song assumes in the hands of Frank Malone and his bandsmen the aspect of a bacchanalian rite.

In short, the Southern Methodist band was the first to bring the technique of swing to the old-fashioned college band and it is still the prime exemplar of this modern disease. When it played at Notre Dame last year the crowd, which had just seen Notre Dame trim S.M.U. 20-19, sat eagerly in the stands for an hour after the game, threatening disaster if the S.M.U. band dared go away without playing another number. It played dozens and the Monday-morning quarterbacks of South Bend were aghast.

"But this is a football town," they kept saying plaintively. "Who wants to hang around listening to a goofy band?"

The football maniacs at Notre Dame did want to hear it and the equally football-conscious denizens of Pittsburgh the year before reacted the same way. College bands had hitherto been something that filled in the time between halves and nobody took them seriously. What the fans of Pittsburgh and South Bend wanted was football and lots of football. When the game was over they went home. But not when the S.M.U. boys started hitting hot licks. The crowds hung around until it was too dark to see the bass drummer.

In Tune with History

In its way this was a revolutionary thing because before this the ordinary college band was a set of instruments surrounded by a group of young men who were not on hand originally when physiques were given out. Those who could play football did; the others played in the band. Of course there was always a long-legged gent who wore a shako and walked like a penguin, but he was only the drum major and didn't count. In fact, he soon had to share his glory with beautiful coeds who shook their beautiful nekkid legs in the direction of the multitudes and brought a slight but desperate touch of novelty to a badly standardized American form.

Nobody could deny that college bands were getting larger but there were increasing hints that they were getting duller. They had pretty uniforms and they marched with precision and they

spelled out nice letters on the sward before the stands between the halves, but it was quite clear that hundreds of young men blowing their ears off in concert on the gridiron were intrinsically little better than the smaller outfits that had formerly done it.

And then along came the S.M.U. band to ruin this dull spectacle. It may be that the customary military bands will still be operating when the S.M.U. killer dillers are only a memory, but the fact remains that practically alone in this broad land the Methodist maniacs are today in tune with history. It started from necessity back in the days when S.M.U. had trouble rustling up as many as twenty-five men for the band. Since this made it ridiculous in comparison with other outfits the young man who was later to be the Reverend Mr. Cyrus Barcus decided that his band should be a different band.

"Cy started to put a little zoomph in the old marches," they recall now around Dallas.

This was progressing suitably when a member of the band went over to east Texas and observed the natives in the act of drinking Peruna, a bottled tonic. He also brought back the east-Texas version of "They'll be Loaded with Peruna When They Come," which he surreptitiously taught to the other band members. They began playing it, the students began singing it and S.M.U. soon had its theme song.

The band was led by student directors in those days and after Cy Barcus came the famous Bob Goodrich, now pastor of a church in Houston. Barcus had set the style and Goodrich carried it into

(Continued on page 24)

PHOTOGRAPH FOR COLLIER'S BY PAUL PETERS

The Southern Methodist band with its wild swing has brought new life to Saturday's gridiron spectacles



The Girl with the Blonde

By Frederick Nebel

ILLUSTRATED BY MARIO COOPER

The path of true love is not an easy one, especially when it's complicated by an unpleasant problem brother

THE first time Dave spoke to her was a couple of months after he moved into Mrs. Hendricksen's boardinghouse on Cherokee Street. It was after work, on a Friday evening in the middle of summer, and he was sitting on the porch. He'd seen her about half a dozen times before, always in the evening, and after a while he'd got to thinking about her; she'd come strolling along with the other girl, the tall blonde, and he'd watch her until she was out of sight. The evenings she didn't come by, Dave felt a vague disappointment. She was pretty as a picture, he thought.

When he saw her turn the corner and come along down the street, arm in arm with the blonde, Dave took his feet off the porch railing and leaned forward. He put his elbows on his knees, leaning on them, and clasped his broad, strong-fingered hands together. He smiled at the way she moved along. Her slender body seemed restless as marsh grass in a fitful breeze and the hem of her dress gave an insolent little swirl every time she set her foot down. A little music, Dave thought, and she'd go into a dance.

All at once he stood up and leaned straight-armed on the railing. His smile broadened out along his lips and a twinkle flicked in and out of his eyes. And it was then, just at that moment, that she glanced up. Dave's mouth opened in a soundless laugh and the warp of his upper lip across his hard white teeth was full of good humor.

"Nice evening for strolling," he said.

A SMILE started on her lips, but almost instantly she cut it short and looked straight ahead. He saw the color rise and spread on her cheeks. The blonde looked up at him out of large, sultry eyes and her mouth, full and soft and very red, twisted derisively.

"Nice evening for minding your own business, too," she said.

Dave chuckled. "All right, all right."

"So all right," the blonde said. "So mind it."

"Sure," Dave said, grinning. "Only I was speaking to your friend, sister."

"Oh, a wise guy, too."

"Not me, sister."

"Oh, come on, Thelma; come on," the other girl said, tugging her along.

They moved on, quickening their pace, and Dave stood watching them, pulling on his cigarette, until they were out of sight. Then he shot the butt far out into the street. When he turned around, Mrs. Hendricksen was standing in the doorway fanning herself with the evening newspaper.

"They sure grow up fast," she said reminiscently. "You see them in diapers and before you know it they're in high heels and using make-up."



On Sunday they went swimming at the beach. They swam and lay in the sun and tossed a ball back and forth

Dave said, "You know them?" and felt uneasy.

"Since I can't remember how long." She was a large woman, quite stout, and always suffered from the heat. "Spoiled, Thelma is. Always was. Lena was always a sweet child. She's the little one. A sweet child. Well, so is her mother, poor woman." She wagged her head. "I always said it was good riddance when her husband died, for all he ever did for her."

"Sisters, huh? They don't look like sisters."

"Oh, no, not sisters. That's Thelma Burnside, and if you ask me, I think she's kind of sweet on Lena's brother. Well, I don't think he's so much better than his old man was, though he did make the cops."

"Well," Dave said, a little embarrassed, "I'm sorry."

Mrs. Hendricksen stared at him. "Sorry? Sorry for what?"

Dave said, "Well, for speaking out to her—to them that way. I didn't know you knew them."

She gave a short laugh and plumped

herself into the near-by rocking chair.

Dave said, seriously, "You see, I'm kind of strange here in town," just as if she didn't know it. "I learned my trade in a small town, and it was a good garage too, but mostly summer trade. So in winter it was slack, and I didn't get full time. So when my brother Joe got me the chance to work here in the city, I jumped at it. We had two rooms over on McClellan Street, but then Joe got this chance to go to the factory and he went."

(Continued on page 69)