

Messrs. Hodža and Beneš have. If it is so, make no mistake: this lettered bourgeois, who knows how to speak to the simple folk, whose warm greetings quickly correct the first impression of austerity he gives, who speaks slowly, with his eyes half closed, as though he were pursuing some inner thought behind his glasses—this man is not only the chief of an honorable Protestant family. Nor is he only a party member whom a political movement has unexpectedly carried to the top. Tomorrow he may very well be one of the new men of the new Europe.

ALBERT SARRAUT

By ODETTE PANNETIER

Translated from *Candide*, Paris Conservative Weekly

HE MAKES one think of a Buddhist monk in an educational film, or a provincial notary who has come incognito to Paris to perform a marriage. He has the flat nose and the slanting eyes of the one, and of the other, the pompous air, the solemn bearing, and the passionate attachment to a bowler hat and a cane with a silver knob.

He speaks slowly, weighing and reweighing his words, savoring them as he utters them. He has not yet exhausted the pride he experiences at feeling himself so discreet, so sensible, so intelligent.

His great power lies in having a brother whom no one ever sees. You have to have a radical convention, rife with threats and hidden traps, before you finally see him appear, tall, slender, round-shouldered, with cheeks that are too hollow, cheekbones that are too pink, a moustache like a lightning-rod. Clemenceau used to say:—

‘Albert Sarraut? Oh, yes, that’s the one with the intelligent brother.’

It is true that Maurice Sarraut is intelligent. Intelligent like all those who advise much and never act. Albert Sarraut is not particularly stupid either. And he is brave enough, too. He has proved this by fighting several duels. That was a long time ago. He has doubtless become more discreet since then. But in the trade of the musketeer one does not wait until sixty to retire.

By a strange phenomenon this man, so brave in life, is in politics submissive and vacillating. His brother, who guesses all his sentiments with an almost feminine intuition, has become for this weakling in search of support a sort of tender, intellectual Nanny. Whatever Maurice advises him to do, Albert does. One has the power and the other exercises it.

The two of them are great feudal lords, Radical and anti-clerical, whose domain comprises the entire countryside of Carcassonne and Toulouse. They rule their lands amiably but firmly.

From time to time they notice among their 'vassals' and 'serfs' a child, an adolescent, who deserves to 'be somebody.' They ravish him away from the disconsolate mother, from the resigned, but proud, father. They make a Radical out of him. Whereupon the youngster betrays their hopes, and they feel lost, like a mother hen whose brood has run away to who knows what hazardous destiny.

WHILE Maurice reasons and treats politics like a game of chess, Albert tends to make everything concrete in phrases which are destined, according to him, to survive for posterity. Everybody knows the most famous one, which dates from the time of the Poincaré ministry, when Mr. Albert Sarraut was Minister of the Interior:—

'Communism—that's the enemy.'

That was the time when he dreamed all night of plots, bombs, attacks on Paris led by a Cachin or a Berthon, with their knives clenched in their teeth.

From time to time some needy rascal, knowing about the innocent hobby of the Minister of the Interior, would come to see him, and on being announced would assume a reticent air, heavy with mystery:—

'I know where "they" meet. . . .'

From behind gold-rimmed glasses the somber eyes of a mandarin gleamed with a million sparks.

'Where? . . . Come, talk . . . I'll reward you . . .'

The drawer of the desk would slide open, and the enchanted visitor would perceive a magic heap of crumpled banknotes, ready to be given, and good to take.

Can Mr. Sarraut have signed a secret peace treaty with the Communists? The *Humanité* has taken his return to power very nicely. Nothing remains of the violent hatred of old. Doubtless it has ceased to be a good electoral plank. For either side.

But has Mr. Sarraut also renounced the yellow peril? Have those two perils, the red and the yellow, disappeared, gone, taken flight like nightmares at dawn? From his long and useful stays in Asia, Albert Sarraut had brought back a haunting memory of the furtive, hidden hatred of the yellow-skinned man, obsequiously stirred up against the whites. If one went to see him during Poincaré's régime at the soft hour of twilight, at the hour when the ministers take their sober recreation, one would find him bent over a map of Asia like a clairvoyant over her cards:

He would smile sadly, sigh a little, take off his glasses, put them on again, turn aside to spit, and predict with a monotonous voice the end of European civilization.

Mr. Sarraut has renounced these preoccupations, which people create

for themselves in a period of prosperity in order to mollify fate by not being wholly happy.

Now he has again taken up his residence in the Place Beauvau. He has recovered his office with a small unconfessed joy, and the logs that smolder in the fireplace, and even the doorman, who had once crushed his fingers in the door of his carriage as he closed it.

Again the canvases and the frames will be heaped everywhere in the Minister's room: against the walls and the armchairs, and in the little retreat where a Minister anxious to be clean even in the physical sense has the right to wash his hands.

For painting is Mr. Sarraut's great passion. There is not an exhibition to which he does not hurry. He will not leave Breughel except for Chagall, and only Derain can console him for the sad spectacle of a Renoir returning to America after having been sent over solely for the purpose of an exhibition. He loves painting with the lugubrious hunger of the poor devils standing with empty stomachs before a butcher's shop. This cold, formal, meticulous and bored man when you speak to him about painting displays the lyricism of a schoolboy let out on his spring vacation. And how touching and beautiful it is to hear him say almost piously:—

'I, who am a connoisseur of painting . . .'

Let his ministers betray him: Modigliani will console him. Let Mr. Marcel Régnier object that there are only a few demonetized pennies in the treasury: he will find himself an obscure little painter of St. Denis with canvases which, it seems, would give a king courage on the eve of a revolution.

NOW that he is the head of the Government he has become a sort of Grand Cham. He behaves like a man used to the bodyguards, to the reporters, to the magnesium lights, and to the crowd which shouts things which luckily one does not understand. He smiles a little; he does '*Bonjour, bonjour*' with his hand; he does not see anybody; he marches on in his glory. People to right and to left are like two yielding gray walls in which one has neither the time nor the wish to recognize a friendly face or an affectionate look. He passes and is gone. The State claims him, for he is the State.

During the intermissions in his power, he has contracted a great love for the Côte d'Azur. One year he was seen at Juan-les-Pins—when that place was not yet a perpetually turbulent and vulgar country fair. He was noticed because nobody could help noticing him. Coming from the north, from Toulouse, he was not familiar with the latest fashions. So one day the astonished public saw a man rushing into the casino, dressed in black, with a bowler hat on his head, carrying a cane with a silver knob

as a beadle would carry a halberd. The tritons and naiads who were sunning their skin and hair almost died with laughter. Mr. Sarraut became purple in the face. They saw him disappear by a hidden staircase and then reappear on the beach where all alone at that hour he ran and stumbled, a baffled fugitive, silhouetted black against the yellow sand.

The next year he took his revenge; as they say, 'I remember it as if it were yesterday.' It was the sacred hour at the Miramar. Arrived a sea-wolf whose jersey shirt left his arms bare, and whose shorts revealed his shaggy legs. Around his neck was the red handkerchief of the locomotive driver. It was Mr. Albert Sarraut.

LET US go back to the serious things: for example, the fate of France. Mr. Sarraut did not want to form his ministry. Three days before posing for the cameras of the whole world, he declared to his most intimate friends:—

'I don't know if Lebrun will call me, but I know one thing: under no circumstances will I form a ministry.'

And then people intervened. Maurice, the brother-governess, Mr. Mandel, the little friends who wanted to get portfolios, Mr. Jacques Stern, who had adopted Mr. Sarraut's doormat as a place to sleep, Mr. Camille Chautemps, who wanted to extend his railroad ventures, and perhaps even Mr. Lebrun, who is quite capable of having a personal opinion if the circumstances demand it.

Thus solicited Mr. Sarraut passed his hand across his brow several times with the gesture of a man with a headache whom five young ladies are begging to dance a polka with them. Then he said:—

'Yes.'

But by that time all the press agencies had already spread the news. The next thing to do was to form the ministry in question. Mr. Sarraut had exhausted all his strength in that 'Yes,' which had so relieved Mr. Lebrun.

Whereupon Mr. Mandel very obligingly put himself at Mr. Sarraut's disposal. He called upon Messrs. Jean Zay and Guernut and General Maurin; he relegated Mr. Paul-Boncour to a soft job of which, however, nothing was left but the shell. Without realizing it he played the rôle of Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Mr. Sarraut, upon learning that his ministry was formed, was very happy indeed.

'Have all the portfolios been distributed? All of them? Really?' he asked Mr. Mandel.

For he is a very conscientious man.

Mr. Mandel reassured him. Whereupon Mr. Sarraut went on his way. That very day a new exhibition was opening!

## DARIUS MILHAUD

By M. D. CALVOCORESSI

From the *Listener*, Weekly Organ of the British Broadcasting Corporation

MILHAUD has always been regarded as the stormy petrel of contemporary French music. He owes this reputation partly to the disturbances created by certain of his works: the *Études* for piano and orchestra in Paris in 1921; the final scenes of *Christophe Colomb* nine years later in Berlin. But he owes it also to his loudly proclaimed anti-Wagnerism, his anti-impressionism, his interest in ragtime and jazz, his love for the grotesque, the farcical and the *outré*, the part he played as an exponent of polytonality and as leader of the short-lived group known as *Les Six*. In actual fact, he is a remarkably alert, impulsive, industrious and versatile composer, who knows exactly what he wants, however bewildering a diversity of means he may have tried in order to achieve his aim.

He was born in Provence, and is of Jewish parentage. In him the surface quickness and exuberance of the southern French works in association with the deep sensitiveness, the thoroughness, the enquiring mind, that are characteristic of the Jewish race at its best. His career began in one stormy period and continued, after the War, in another even stormier. When in 1910, at the age of eighteen, he started his professional studies at the Paris *Conservatoire*, Debussy was asserting his influence in spite of violent opposition, and Schönberg and Stravinsky were looming on the horizon. All three made their impression upon him. So did Albéric Magnard, a composer whose music, informed by austere idealism, is not generally appreciated in France and remains practically unknown elsewhere.

But more than any music, the writings of Francis Jammes and of Paul Claudel contributed to the forming of his outlook. Jammes' poems (of which he set many to music between 1910 and 1918) confirmed his instinctive dislike for 'the languid misty atmosphere of musical impressionism,' and revealed to him the poetry of everyday life, the charm of humble persons and familiar objects.

He started on his creed unostentatiously enough, with a violin concerto, a string quartet, a piano suite, an orchestral suite and settings of poems by Claudel to which Jammes had called his attention. In 1910 he began setting Jammes' play *La Brebis égarée*, which he finished in 1915. It is a simple and a genuinely expressive work. Then he met Claudel, and out of their collaboration came a long series of works for the stage—the satiric drama, *Protée*, *Orestie* (Claudel's French translation of the Æschylus trilogy), the ballet *L'Homme et son Désir* and *Christophe Co-*