

As the picture now stands, it is an excellent introduction to the subject. A sequel should deal with the cropper's historic background, and relate the fact that he has organized to overcome his miseries. It should place the proper share of the blame for his difficulties on the economic system of the South.

Jean Renoir, the sensitive French director who came to this country to escape the Nazis, co-adapted the script from the George Perry Sessions novel, *Hold Autumn in Your Hand*. He also directed the film in masterly fashion, keeping unerring control of his subject all the way. The acting of Beulah Bondy as the crotchety grandmother, Zachary Scott as the farmer and Betty Field as his wife, profit much from his fine work.

It is not to be wondered at that this film was banned (temporarily) by the state of Tennessee and that there is talk of other Southern communities taking similar action. The official excuse is that *The Southerner* misrepresented the Southern farmer. I suspect that the real reason lies in their shame (or, perhaps, embarrassment) over having the conditions of their farm communities exposed so frankly to the world.

Records

Now that the war emergencies are over it is to be hoped that the recording companies will prove more responsible to their public than they have in the past few years and will produce again recorded music of worth and originality. The amount of duplication which goes on is really unconscionable; while new compositions by younger composers rarely obtain the hearing they would get if the recording companies were more enterprising and had any serious interest in art.

Take Gershwin, for example. Gershwin was a talented composer; but is it necessary, despite the festival fanfare, to have so much of him recorded, and all at once? You can get your Gershwin in any form you want; you can even get *Porgy and Bess* as a pretentious *Symphonic Picture for Orchestra* by Russell Bennett, recorded by the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra under Fabien Sevitzky (Victor DM-999, three twelve-inch records). But I prefer the selections Charlie Spivak gives us—especially his brilliant trumpet playing (Victor SP-6, two ten-inch records)—or Dinah Shore's sweet-throated and unassuming performance of four Gershwin Show Hits (Victor SP-5, two ten-inch

records): *Do it Again*, *Someone to Watch Over Me*, *The Man I Love*, and *Love Walked In*. Arthur Fiedler, the Boston "Pops" Orchestra and Jesus Sanroma, pianist, do a good job with the *Rhapsody in Blue* (Victor SP-3, two twelve-inch records).

Or take the so-called Vladimir Horowitz Program (Victor DM-1001, three twelve-inch records). Whatever prompted either Victor or Mr. Horowitz to waste good materials and talent on such trifles as Saint-Saens' *Danse Macabre*, Tchaikovsky's *Dumka*, and Czerny's *Variations on the Aria "La Ricordanza"*—prettily played though they are—when the brilliant new Prokofieff sonata, which Horowitz performs in such a masterly way, remains unrecorded?

Of the recordings of the last few weeks, Arthur Rubinstein's performances are to be recommended. He is represented by two albums: *The Piano Music of Debussy* (Victor DM-998, three twelve-inch records), which includes *Soiree dans Grenade*, *Jardin Sous la Pluie*, *Reflets Dans l'Eau*, *Hommage a Rameau*, *Poissons d'Or*, and *La Plus Que Lente Valse*. These are played with intelligence and delicacy and, happily, without over-refinement. The other work, Cesar Franck's *Prelude, Choral and Fugue* (Victor DM-1004, two twelve-inch records) is excellent in every respect. It is distinguished by dignity and restraint, without being pedantic—and avoids the sentimentalism with which Franck is so often performed.

For some reason that arch-lickspittle of the Nazis, Richard Strauss (for whose early talents, nevertheless, I have a nostalgic regard) is found deserving of two albums. Stokowski and the New York City Symphony Orchestra give us *Death and Transfiguration*, a lush and now faded piece of orchestration. Considering the youth of the orchestra, the performance is very good indeed. The start is a little uncertain, but the work improves as it goes along. The string section, though rich, is not forced unduly, in the usual Stokowski manner, and the general tone balance is excellent. The *Rosenkavalier Suite*, arranged by Antal Dorati and performed by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra under Eugene Goossens, though scarcely representative of the entire opera, is a beautiful job. The lovely waltz-themes, which still form the most gracious portion of the work, are cleverly combined by the arranger, and beautifully played by the orchestra. And they sound as sweetly decadent as ever.

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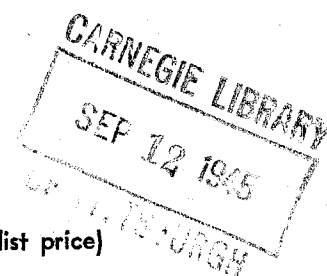
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