

Music

Notable New Recordings

THIS business of supply and demand has always been pretty much of a mystery to me. This in spite of the fact that while in college I specialized in economics—and now look at the darned thing! The problem has been lately still further complicated by what is known as the depression. And in the midst of it all, what has the Columbia Company gone and done? They have issued a complete *Il Trovatore* in two albums and on fourteen double-sided twelve-inch disks—price \$21.50¹. Of its class, of course, *Il Trovatore* is of the best and Columbia has recorded it very well indeed, with soloists and chorus of La Scala Theatre, Milan, and the Milan Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Lorenzo Molajoli. I'm just wondering who, among those who want the whole of the Verdi warhorse on records, have the requisite.

Occasionally German has a word for something which less robust tongues cannot hope to rival. *Schwanda, der Dudelsack-pfeifer* has to be translated as *Schwanda, the Bagpipe-player*. It is the German name of an opera, supposedly Czecho-Slovakian in the manner of Smetana, by a gentleman called Jaromir Weinberger. It is to be performed this coming season by our Metropolitan Opera Company and if you want a competently played sample of it in advance you could do far worse than get the *Fantasia* based on its themes as recorded by the Charlottenburg Opera Orchestra under Alois Melichar². Not having heard the complete opera, I nevertheless rashly predict that it will have more success than *Jonny Spielt auf*. There seems to be a good deal more reason for its existence.

Victor, as is their wont, again play safe in the operatic field, but this time give us a couple of Wagnerian records that are not only inexpensive (compared to the above *Il Trovatore*), but which are uncommonly worth-while listening to. On one the dependable Chicago Symphony Orchestra, directed by Frederick Stock, plays the *Tannhäuser—Fest Marsch* and the *Prelude to Act 3* from *Lohengrin*³. On the other Elisabeth Rethberg and Friedrich Schorr sing *Hat Mann mit dem Schuhwerk* and *Sieh' Ev'chen i dacht' ich doch* from the third act of *Die Meistersinger*⁴. Both are as good short Wagnerian selections as you are likely to find.

O. C.-T.

1. Columbia Operatic Series No. 9-A.
2. Brunswick 90196.
3. Victor 7386.
4. Victor 8195.

Prose and Worse

IN A LETTER upholding her brother-in-law's claim to poetic talent, Mrs. Sapphira Hooker writes: "As to his remark about the bottle, perhaps I can shed some light. He was always catching flies and caterpillars and things and keeping them in a bottle. When he got mad, as he often did, he let them out to annoy people—in school, I mean. He'd rent the bottle out to the other boys, but when he wanted it, they always had to pass it back. That's probably what he means. He remembers his old way of revenging himself."

This seemed reasonable enough to us, but when we showed the letter to the Capt., he denied all knowledge of any such bottle. "I've had a lot to do with bottles in my time," he said. "Man and boy, I've probably dreened millions of 'em—and let me tell you right now, when I take one up, I don't put it down until it's empty. But bugs! No bug could live in any bottle I carry! Well, Sapphira's a good girl—though a little on the silly side, if you take me—and I don't like to say anything against her, but she's got her stories mixed up. It was her husband, Ananias, the bug-and-bottle story was about. He was a bootlegger in a small way—light wines he made from his own grapes, and he kept a lot of spiders to spin cobwebs over the bottles so they'd look old. Sometimes more of the wine got into 'Nias than into the bottles, and there was a good many complaints. 'Nias died of a spider bite, so they say, though all there was to prove it was that he went ravin' crazy and died mutterin' about red and blue spiders.

"He was something of a poet himself, too, in his day, though bein' an illiterate sort of a country feller, his verses weren't anything to print on handmade van Gelder paper. One of 'em, I remember, went like this:

She's went! She's went! She's gone and went!
With tears my eyes is wet.
No more upon them parlor chairs
Beside me she will set.

Ah, never more will her and me
Be lovers,—yet I yearn
But once to gaze with soulful looks
Into them eyes of her'n.

Last night I takes her out to one
Of them there picture shows;
I asks her if she'd marry me,
(I wears my Sunday clothes.)

"Oh leave me wear your ring," she says;
"Your watch and chain also;
And pass me out them diamond studs
To prove you love me so!"

"What's mine is your'n," I says, and give
Them to her then and there.
There isn't nothing in the world
I'd not have did for her.

She's went away: she done me dirt;—
I mean to cast no slur—
Yet something tells me now that I
Have saw the last of her.

O, leave me weep, and leave me cry,
And leave me sob and moan!
No more, my hand in her'n, we'll set
Where now I set alone!

WALTER R. BROOKS.



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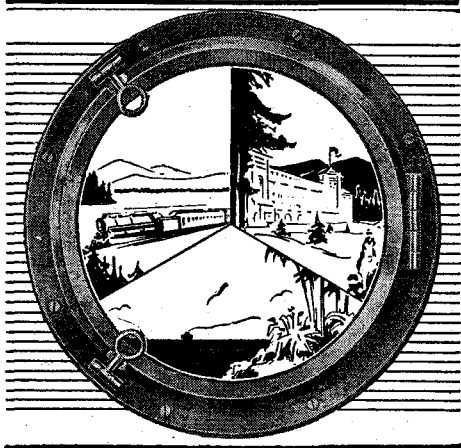


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◀ OUTLOOK TRAVEL BUREAU
120 E. 16TH ST. NEW YORK

The New Wild West

(Continued from Page 273)

ing community over a period of years, the good people being discouraged and scattered, the riffraff and the low I. Q.'s remaining. If American cattle and wheat-raising go on for a hundred years without profit and without hope, they will be left eventually in the hands of an inferior and a dull-witted race, as they are in Europe—the too-dull-witted to get out. And as much of the political power will remain in rural hands—oh, well, things to worry about at a rodeo.

One thing has to be said for rodeos. As they are conducted today under Rodeo Association of America rules, the talk about their being brutal is pure bosh. Because I was curious about a few matters, I hunted up the S. P. C. A. man who was at the chutes all through the performance, overlooking the saddling.

"What about this story of tacks under the saddle?" I asked him. "Every one in the East has heard that they put tacks under the saddle to make the horses buck."

"Not any more," he said, grinning slightly. A strap, well-protected with sheep skin and passing under the rear half of the body where it tightens with the horse's movements, is the device in use today.

The R. A. A. rules speak for themselves. In the steer-roping contest the rider is required to stop the steer from his horse, but is disqualified if he throws it. "Bulldogging" has been done away with, and a modification known as "steer decorating" has been substituted. Formerly the rider galloped out of the chutes neck and neck with the steer, leaped from his horse to the animal's horns and twisted its head, bringing it to the ground. In ninety-nine per cent of the cases the steer rose undamaged, but in the hundredth it broke a horn or its neck, and there was a good deal of justifiable criticism. Today the rider makes a jump for the horns and stops the steer as before, but instead of throwing it he snaps an elastic band on its nose. In the bronc riding, the rider has to "scratch" his mount fore and aft in the traditional manner, but his spurs have to be taped so that the points are not exposed. As with horseshows, however, some rodeos are not under the Association, and the case then may be very different.

The later events of the afternoon were being started from the other end of the arena, and the crowd had moved down there, but I stayed behind talking with one of the chute men. He wore overalls, of course, and the usual wide-brimmed hat, which showed hard service. He was

shy at first, though he quickly unbent. The rodeo management pays five dollars an afternoon to the chute men, who do the saddling and starting, and it pays the same to the arena men or "hazers," who work on horseback in the ring and drive the animals out at the end.

We climbed up and stood on the top rail of the chute to get a better view of the calf roping. This is probably the most complicated and technical event on the rodeo program, and the one providing the least thrill for the spectators. More than any other, it is a test of a good cowhand. The man has to rope his calf from horseback without throwing it, dismount, throw the calf by hand, and tie its feet, but the spectators at a rodeo are not aware of the fine points. At Salinas the purse offered for calf roping was \$360 as against \$885 for bull-riding, for example, which is a stunt, spectacular but not useful. We watched one man having a hard struggle to throw his calf. He wrestled with it while his time went on and on. The spectators laughed; the chute man did not.

"That's an awful big calf," he said.

More seconds passed, and the crowd snickered while the voice from the loud speaker drawled: "He's been an hour and five minutes so far."

"Look at the size of that calf," the chute man said indignantly. "Why didn't they give him a bull?"

The contest ended.

Out on the track which ran round the arena some sort of race was going on and girls in jockey costumes were flashing by. The chute man said: "Wait here a minute. I'm going to get my wife."

HE RETURNED presently with a small brown woman in knickerbockers who climbed up with us. She was not as pretty as the wives of the important men; her skin showed the effects of too much sun and too little cold cream. We all stood precariously on the top rail of the chute and talked about rodeos and other matters. Her husband was not following rodeos from choice; he would much rather work on a ranch, but work on ranches was hard to find. They hoped to be on a ranch near Livermore this winter. The announcer's voice kept floating into our talk:

"—For the trophy given by the J. C. Penney Company, of Salinas—" "—announcing system was donated by the Standard Oil Company of California."

But work on ranches was hard to find. I said good-bye to the chute man and his wife and wished them luck about the