



## MUSIC TO MY EARS

## Maggie Teyte, Philharmonic. Other Events

**T**HIS year's seminar in the art of the French *chanson* came and went in the space of two hours recently when Maggie Teyte returned to the stage of Town Hall for the first time in four years, but those who heard it will long cherish the memory. Working with a surety of touch and a certainty of purpose which almost any singer of the day might envy, Miss Teyte absorbed the attention of her audience from her entrance and held it all evening long in the hollow of her hand (and voice).

According to which source book one consults, Miss Teyte is between sixty-five and seventy years of age (were the former fact true, it would mean that the great Jean de Reszke accepted her as a pupil at the age of fourteen), but the present evidences of long background are more than complimentary. I have no way of knowing how carefully Miss Teyte prepared for this event, but she sang every note of the portion I heard (two-thirds of the whole) on pitch, in time, and with a variety of vocal colorations that elude classification. Power, of course, was in short supply, and an occasional F or G marked the upper limits of range, but she sought no effects but virtuous ones and missed very few of those she sought. On the other hand, she utilized low A's and G's with a thorough sense of the contrast they conveyed.

To these physical factors—which are merely cited as proofs that Miss Teyte was trading with solid vocal currency rather than merely on the reputation that brought her a long salvo of applause when she entered—the singer added verve, a spirit, a malleability of mood that made her one kind of figure in the first group, mostly of *chansons* from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and another in the brooding measures of Debussy's "Fêtes Galantes" and "Chansons de Bilitis."

The evening began somewhat unconventionally when Miss Teyte, speaking up to thank her audience for its greeting, added that she would like to preface the printed program with Berlioz's "L'Absence," "dedicated to the Telephone Hour." The juxtaposition of the song's title and the radio program brought some laughter, as well as general mystification. It turned out later that Miss Teyte was recalling the beginning of what she considers her "second ca-

reer" in this country when her first broadcast on the Telephone Hour opened with this same Berlioz song. In any case, she sang it with remarkable precision and complete expressiveness. Then she went on to the first item of the printed program, the "Letter Scene" from "Werther" (only a part of it) which was more intent than accomplishment, rather strident in sound but very artistic. The remainder was as noted above. Let us hope that if she returns she will be as able to do herself justice, while utilizing the able George Reeves at the piano again.

The Piano Concerto of Everett Helm, which Dimitri Mitropoulos presented for the first time in America at a recent concert of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony in Carnegie Hall, had the kind of reception that is, perhaps, traditional with new concertos. It didn't often sound enough like anything else in the literature to be immediately welcomed, and where it did it was thrust aside as being derivative.

For me, it conveyed a sense of honest intent, serious purpose, and substantial musical craftsmanship, while lacking the tendency to shock-effect all too common in most writing of the sort. I can't say that Helm commands a particularly distinctive melodic line, but he has some interesting ideas of harmonic coloration within a discipline of tonality that promises well for his future. Also he writes persuasively for the piano, in pianistic terms, and weaves his instruments together in a way to make a pattern rather than a conflict.

Helm was more than fortunate in his interpreters, for Leonid Hambro was a thoroughly assured performer of the solo part, and the Mitropoulos direction of the orchestral score was typical of his special abilities. It seemed, too, that there was more of warmth and vibrato in the playing of the strings than is customary with this conductor, but this may have been only an illusion. In any case, Hambro's precise, well-shaded performance won an approving round of applause from his orchestral colleagues.

The Philadelphia Orchestra concluded its year's work in New York earlier in the same week with a Brahms program directed by Eugene Ormandy. It is something of a question, under such circumstances, whether one is hearing Brahms played

by the virtuoso orchestra or the virtuoso orchestra showing off its manifold attributes in terms of a series of difficulties—acoustical only, since this group knows no technical terrors—arranged by Brahms. The colorations were, in every respect, impressive. I am not convinced, however, that all belonged where they were applied.

The soloist of this program was William Warfield, singing the four "Serious Songs," orchestrally accompanied. This, too, made for a wonderful texture of sound and a degree of musical purpose that did credit to all involved. Warfield's powers are all to the advantage of such a work, which he may, one day, sing very well. On this day, it all seemed too much a part of a chess player's pattern of gambits and moves, lacking the free flow of impulse that makes a real musical experience. There are, however, few male singers now active who could have surpassed Warfield's accomplishment.

Lured, perhaps, by the likeness of the name to that of Severin Eisenberg, a pianist of admirable abilities but no particular celebrity in the late Thirties, I went recently to hear the Carnegie Hall debut of Severin Turel, a Polish pianist who now makes his home in Detroit. Turel is a man of middle years with considerable concert experience in Europe. His playing of Chopin (the B minor sonata, Opus 35, as well as various short pieces) attested to the experience but also to some peculiarities of tempo, accent, and of accuracy which were not musically rewarding. The program also included various compositions of his own ("Sketches," "Preludes," and a "Polish Rhapsody").

—IRVING KOLODIN.



—SR Drawing by Sotomayor.

Dimitri Mitropoulos.

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## BOOKED FOR TRAVEL

### Some Plans for Sodas, Money, and Rolling Your Own

**BEFORE YOU CAN SPELL** Constantinople the Hilton people will have a tidy new inn tucked away among the mosques on a site overlooking the Bosphorus, and we have had a chat with some of the Turks who will run the place.

Assistant managers, executive housekeepers, telephone supervisors, and laundry managers have all been bouncing around the United States learning how things are done in Hilton hotels. Many of them speak fluent English, we were assured, and firm in this belief we went to see Ahmet Edman, who will run the soda fountain in the new Istanbul Hilton.

"Sodass very nice, beautiful also," Ahmet told us with clarity if not fluency. Now a Turkish citizen, Ahmet was born in Yugoslavia, studied in Vienna, which has many institutes of learning, and at Howard Johnson's, which has twenty-eight flavors of ice cream. The soda fountain in the Hilton will be the first in Turkey. "This is something in Europe no have it like that," Ahmet explained.

"Have ice cream, but no for each people different flavor, like peppermints ice cream, botta pecanss, moka cheep, chocolate cheep. You make it coffee ice cream also, maybe walnuts ice cream." After working in several American cities and at New York's Waldorf and Roosevelt Hotels, not to mention the Howard Johnson chain, Ahmet has come to suspect a regional difference in American soda tastes. "You have in Chicago the people that they like it the Coke and the ice cream soda. In Washington the people who like the root beer soda. Everyone who likes different. Even chocolate syrup and in the meantime the Coke syrup together." The adherents of this latter amalgam generally come from Washington or New York, Ahmet has noticed. When the Istanbul Hilton opens this fall and Ahmet is behind the gleaming fountain dispensing sodas to American tourists, he will match guests with regional preferences. It's part of the Hilton service.

The Istanbul Hilton will be a modern rectangle, ten stories high, with 300 rooms, most with terraces. It is high on a promontory, and from the pavilion on its roof there is a view of the mosques and the water. In the fifteen-acre estate in which it stands there will be tennis courts, an open-air pool, and a terrace for dancing under the Turkish crescent.

Almost all members of the execu-

tive staff have college educations, and Faik Bercavi, the night-manager-to-be is the author of ten books, including four novels and two studies of the Islamic religion. What has astounded Bercavi about the United States is the number of people who work in each hotel. While manager of the Ipek-Palace, which he assured us was not the best in Istanbul although well inside the luxury category, Bercavi employed one dexterous individual who handled registrations, reservations, accounts, spoke ten languages and was also captain of the bellboys. "Now at Hilton we have special man for ice cream sodass," he said taking a long look at Ahmet.

"When I go Istanbul I make exactly same food as American," Ahmet said smiling. "You have hamburger, grilled cheese sandwich. Also Broadway soda. For breakwast, scrambled eggs, turn-over eggs. Everyone he feels over there like in the home."

Bercavi, the scholar, reminded Ahmet that there were also Turkish delights. Some travelers might like to try such local dishes as *shish kebab* and *döner kebab*. We asked about *döner kebab* and Ahmet said, "Turn meat over carbon fire. When is ready one part, cut with knife very din. Turn some more. Is so good taste everybody like that and is very light for stomach." Bercavi was pleased. He reminded Ahmet that there was also *yogurtlu kebab*. Ahmet said, "Bread comes down first. Then comes down this meat. Then comes down the yogurt. Then on top, what kind of sauce they like, the people."

The favorite Turkish dessert is *tavuk göğsü*, we learned, which is breast of chicken. Now, admittedly breast of chicken seems like a peculiar thing for dessert, especially in Turkey, but the boys explained that the chicken is pulverized until it is like thread. Ahmet took over, "You make it like to make some custard, but is not custard, is different thing. Mix together with milk. Make very din. Is taste beautiful. When you taste this you feel so happy. Is something new. Is so beautiful. Is look like custard. Is look so nice. Some people put on top the ice cream. I think Americans like too much the milk dessert. Americans like the rice pudding. Also pudding without the rice."

The combination of Turkish and American ideas is expected to create a new standard for hotels in Turkey.