

"little knowledge." It is surely to be questioned whether the mere statement of certain facts can be counted on to convey the significance of those facts. At innumerable points the reader wishes Moore had gone a little farther than he has, or illustrated his introductions by the analysis of pertinent musical examples, but his purpose is clear and he would be the first to admit that these introductions best serve their purpose when they provoke the student to further explorations.

"Each period is represented at its height by compositions which mark its culminating achievements and by works which are performed most frequently today." The choosing of examples which fulfilled the requirements of the two statements in that sentence undoubtedly caused Professor Moore some anxious moments. But in a volume of this size his choice had to fall on a limited number and he admits that "no two musicians could possibly agree on the best fugue of Bach, the best Beethoven quartet or symphony or the one indispensable Wagner opera." A unanimity about some of these "bests" would not seem, to many of us, so difficult to obtain as it does to Moore. There can, however, be no doubt that with any choice there would be many who would disagree.

Most of the examples are briefly discussed and the principal themes of the greater part are adduced. It is in this

analysis of examples that the chief purpose of the book is asserted to lie. Unfortunately these analyses are also meager. Not a single work is thoroughly analyzed, nor is any work followed through from beginning to end with provocative comment or indications to show how the continuity is achieved and where the salient and demonstrable interests are to be encountered. This is extremely unfortunate. What such students as are presumably addressed by this book need is not so much a simple statement of thematic material as initiation into harmonic, contrapuntal, formal treatments which make of those themes a sustained work of art. Space considerations doubtless had much to do with determining this brevity, but whatever the reason, this scantiness of comment tends to defeat the main purpose.

The defect, however, is easily overcome where the book is used as a text for lectures and demonstrations. For such purposes the choice of examples, the lists of recordings, the suggestions of ways and means of approaching music should prove invaluable. The book will help teachers and students not only to a method of study but also in their search for music of the best quality on which to spend their efforts; and if rightly used it cannot fail to facilitate as well as to stimulate further explorations in the music of the periods here described and in others.

*Roy Welch*

## NOSTALGIC GUIDE TO JAZZ

THE bibliography of Jazz is still limited in many respects. To date only one book, Winthrop Sargent's *Jazz Hot and Hybrid*, has made an intelligent tech-

nical approach to the subject. The new *Jazz Record Book* by Charles Edward Smith, with Frederick Ramsey, Jr., William Russell and Charles Payne Rogers,

(Smith and Durell) makes a useful addition to the works on which a novice may draw for enlightenment. One quarter of it is devoted to a historical survey of jazz, with a heavy emphasis on New Orleans origins. The rest consists of a selection of recordings, briefly reviewed, together with details of personnel, date of origin and other relevant facts. The records purport to be a representative cross-section of jazz as a whole and are subdivided in sections under such titles as: *Chicago Breakdown*, *New York and Harlem*, *Blues and Boogie-Woogie*, *Seven Brass and Four Reed*, *They Still Play Jazz*.

Since the only other such guide is Charles Delaunay's *Hot Discography*, compiled in France and by now almost completely out-of-date, this book should serve an important purpose. Unfortunately, it has a serious shortcoming. The average reader with a limited knowledge of the subject would be led to infer from the selection of records that all the greatest jazz was made between 1890 and 1930, and that everything important contributed to its annals since then has merely been a reflection of past glories. Nothing could be further from the truth. The anti-intellectualism of Mr. Smith and his collaborators is a form of snobbery which manifests itself in every field of art. Its adherents find an esoteric delight in asserting that an obscure clari-

netist who played for starvation wages in a New Orleans dive in 1910 is a purer, more sincere artist than the Benny Goodmans and Artie Shaws who have attained commercial success. The patronizing implication of a chapter title like *They Still Play Jazz*, is characteristic of this attitude. In that respect the *Jazz Record Book* is misproportioned. It devotes page after page to obscure blues singers and to such false gods as Johnny Dodds and Sidney Bechet and omits almost entirely the recent and great jazz produced by big bands such as Goodman's and a score of others. It lives in the past and surveys the present with obvious misgivings.

No musical form has evolved faster, or produced a more rapidly increasing number of important individual exponents than has jazz in the past thirty years. Practically nothing that was recorded before about 1926 can measure up to the requirements of 1942. It's not clear to me why the emergence of jazz from the pale of the honky-tonk and barrelhouse into national prominence through radio, hotels, records, jam sessions and concerts, should not be applauded rather than resented. Bearing this reservation constantly in mind, a reader can use the *Jazz Record Book* as a point of departure from which to form his own opinions. He will find it also a stimulating and provocative work.

Leonard Feather