

tributing to the tenuousness of Dr. Sachs' argument. But then, if we know so little about ancient music, can the experimental composers maintain their position any more confidently than the traditionalists? It may also be pertinent to add that even after arguments have

been presented for both sides, neither of them may have much validity, since the formal methods of a music subservient to ritual may indeed be properly distinct from those of our own music which is self-subsistent.

Arthur Berger

ONE MORE FOR THE RECORD

IN 1930 Robert Goffin, famous criminal lawyer of Brussels and a man of varied interests (surrealist poet, authority on rats and eels, amateur cook, amateur trumpet-player, author of a volume tracing the Belgian ancestry of the Roosevelts) wrote the first critical book on jazz, *Aux Frontières du Jazz*. Panassié soon followed with *Le Jazz Hot*, and a school of flossy criticism was thus founded, in the best Continental manner. In America the sensitive but rhapsodic appraisals of Panassié had a profound influence on the forming of younger tastes. But today criticism, more often than not, turns into a sort of jam-session; and an American lad can find in some rather rickety piano solos by Johnson "poignant blues exquisite with fingered intervals and rich passing harmonies."

Goffin's new book, *Jazz, from the Congo to the Metropolitan* (Doubleday Doran), is ecstatic and anecdotal. It is also a bit stale. The usual survey, from New Orleans to the present, hits most of the accepted high-spots. But a new book on jazz is nothing without a new angle, and so Goffin now turns to the forgotten white bands, (there is "miraculous polyphony" in the Original Dixieland Band, which "reached the summit of all beauty"), thereby taking the ball away from Panassié, who recently shifted all *his* emphasis to the Negro.

Goffin's romantic overemphasis is the penalty for his emotional approach. Real jazz cometh from the heart, is unrehearsed and moveth to tears; all else is swing. Of Armstrong's playing in London he writes: "Young chaps sank to their knees; young girls wept." On another occasion "I opened my eyes, and there was Ysaye (Jr.) standing on his chair, shouting, stamping, weeping." The theme modulates. The highest lyrical peaks have been scaled by only the frenzied poets. There can be no jazz without frenzy. Trance, natural or dope-induced, is the very base for all jazz. Jazz is the world of the unconscious; it is up-to-date, surrealist.

A sharper appreciation of the kinesthetics of jazz would have spared us much of Goffin's literature. But for him its functional role is discounted; it becomes (God help us) a sort of chamber music. The dance-hall of today may rock to a more urgent rhythmic impulse, but it is Mr. Goffin's jazz that is "the great art of democracy, on its way to conquering the world."

On the credit side is a six-page bibliography that ranges from African Origins to Hot Jazz. There is also a plea that a library be founded for recorded jazz. Considering the sadly depleted catalogues of today I should say the sooner this were done the better.

Colin McPhee