

TIN PUN ALLEY

In our last issue (v.9 no.3) I reported on The Groves Dictionary of Music. Since then The New Grove Dictionary finally arrived, and with it came a lot of ecstatic reviews, fast and thick. Tin Pun Alley feels it must go out on a limb, embark upon a different course, and take a stand in opposition to the otherwise universal approbation. Let no one say that Tin Pun Alley copse out whenever it comes up against stiff opposition and only takes the popular point of view.

Foremost and foremost to be mentioned is the appalling lack of articles on "Musical humour" (see also "Anecdotes," "Facetiae," "Jokes," "Satire," etc.). And of the more important musical humourists checked Gerhard Hoffnung and Peter Schickele are included whereas Victor Borge, Spike Jones, and Fritz Spiegl are not. You would have thought that the editors would have covered this important topic better than this. But it is possible I missed something; the way this work is organized, you cannot always find what you would for the entries.

Secondly, cute is cute, but did you catch the catchy title for volume two? A sequel to The Boys from Brazil, perhaps?

And thirdly, that they left several important articles out by mistake is bad enough but for them to be printed in a periodical which just happens to be edited by the same person who edited The New Grove is simply beyond belief (see Musical Times, Feb., 1981). The whole thing is perfectly transparent: it's a sad state of affairs. Do they take us for a bunch of saplings? I guess you can say I saw dust about enough.

Merwin Lewis