

*Symphony* of Miascowsky, a work of great dignity and power compacted into extraordinarily small space. There was also a pleasantly good humored *Overture to Colas Breugnon* by Dimitri Kabalevsky, Robert Russell Bennett's horribly pompous "symphonic picture" from Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, and Jerome Kern's *Scenario for Orchestra on Themes from Show Boat*.

Stokowski introduced Glière's *Ilya Mourometz* to San Francisco audiences, a symphony which seemed a masterpiece when Stock brought it to this country in 1918, and which today seems a desperate, inflated pastiche of Wagner, Strauss, Rimsky-Korsakov and Moussorgsky. One hopes one will not be similarly disillusioned on future hearings of the sparkling, tuneful and gracious suite from Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* which figured on Monteux's opening program.

*Alfred Frankenstein*

## MUSIC BOOM IN WAR-TIME PITTSBURGH

WITH the clouds over Pittsburgh reflecting in flaming red and yellow hues an all-time high of war production, the musical organizations of this industrial city are better protected from the financial insecurities of former years. Yet, modern music, as always, is the last to benefit from such prosperity. Whereas we now hear more music and certain important innovations, the majority of concert groups and sponsors still give us the hackneyed and conventional repertoires. And so exceptions are doubly appreciated. Fritz Reiner, musical director of the Pittsburgh Symphony has promised us this season works of truly modern character.

Schönberg, Bartok, Kodaly, Stravinsky, Prokofiev, Shostakovitch, Martinu and Villa-Lobos, along with Debussy, Ravel, Elgar, Delius, McDowell, Gilbert and a series of American premieres have been the twentieth century features of these concerts, but since the Pittsburgh programs start late, only a few performances have taken place at this writing.

Scores imported from the Soviet Union and all-Russian programs enjoy growing popularity here as everywhere else, with Shostakovitch still in the symphonic lead, this year with the *Fifth* and *First* (the latter contributed by Serge Koussevitsky and the visiting Boston Orchestra). We heard Kabalevsky's *Overture to Colas Breugnon* and will hear Kalinnikov's *G-minor Symphony* (the latter under the baton of Assistant Conductor Vladimir Bakaleinikoff), Prokofiev's *First Violin* and *Third Piano Concerto* and his symphonic suite, *Lieutenant Kije*.

Stravinsky, of Russia, if not of the Soviets, is to be represented by his *Piano Concerto*.

Pittsburgh performances of American scores emphasize folklore usage from McDowell's *Indian Suite*, the Negro tunes in Gilbert's *Comedy Overture*, to Morton Gould's *American Salute based on "When Johnny Comes Marching Home"* or his *Red Cavalry March*. But Paul Bowles' *Pastorela*, the *Symphony Jeremiah* by Leonard Bernstein (to be conducted by the composer himself), and the *Concerto for Two Pianos* by Harl McDonald, display a dissimilarity of trends, standards, spirit and technic.

Recently some lesser known names have come to the fore: Daniel Amfitheatrof with his *Prelude* and the Khachaturian *Piano Concerto* with Artur Rubinstein as soloist. New revisions of modern standard works such as Schönberg's *Verklärte Nacht* and Bartok's *Second Suite* will be given. We are also anticipating Martinu's *Second Symphony*.

Shifting to the choral groups in town, we see that their choice of works is necessarily conditioned by the manpower shortage in the tenor and bass sections. Dr. Reiner's solution for his symphony orchestra, where eighteen women substitute for men in various sections (including horn and double bass), can not be attained by the choral director who may only rescore or supplement and reinforce the voices with the help of accompanying instruments of the organ register. Performances go on, however, in spite of such handicaps. The Mendelssohn Chorus under Dr. Ernest Lunt opened its season with Horatio Parker's oratorio, *Hora Novissima*. The Bach Choir, under J. Julius Baird, featured *Out of the Night* by T. Carl Whitmer at its initial concert and will present later in the season Eli Siegmeister's *Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight*, Shostakovitch's *United Nations* and Shimmerling's *The Golden Threshold*.

The chorus and orchestra of the Carnegie Institute of Technology will perform (under this writer) Virgil Thomson's *Seven Choruses from the Medea of Euripides*, Douglas Moore's *Prayer for the United Nations*, Adolph Busch's *Madrigals on Negro Spirituals* and a new work by Roy Harris based on a poem by Archibald MacLeish. Planned also are repeat performances of Schönberg's *Peace on Earth*, Randall Thompson's *Alleluia* and Debussy's *Sirens*.

Off the path of the civic center, in the smoking districts of the factories, new musical groups are springing up. Performers are the workers themselves. They sing and play for their own recreation and that of their fellow workers. They bring music, not canned but self-made, right into the heart of the plants where they turn out the guns and other war materials. The post-war world will not break up this enthusiasm.

Frederick Dorian