Tibor Harsanyi's dazzlingly instrumentated *Hungarian Suite* for orchestra was conducted by Pierre Monteux; it is only regrettable that no use was made of trombones, which could have supported the accent of this strongly rhythmic music.

The Grand Opera has announced a series of interesting ballets. Lifar, who according to his new dance theory would free himself from music, regarding it merely as a rhythmic support for his choreography, has apparently already abandoned the most negative extreme of this experiment. Because of the complete blotting out of the music, the ballet *Icare,* despite the liveliness of its dance groups, was static in effect. He has now announced a new ballet, *David,* with music by Rieti. In this the percussion is expected as before to play an important part, but apart from the purely rhythmic elements, the dance action will be further supported by a melodic line.

Especially welcome at this time is radio activity in Paris. Only a few years ago we had a standing repertoire for morning, noon and evening of the *Tannhäuser* overture, generally followed by the *Danse Macabre.* Gradually, through the phonograph record of Ravel's *Bolero,* which was heard for months in every corner, a way to the new generation was found. Now almost daily the young and even the youngest composers are getting attention on the French radio. This situation has a certain danger; because the time for rehearsals is short the works often suffer from insufficient preparation. And with so much contemporary music being played, quite unimportant works appear casually beside more imposing ones. But the fact that the general public is growing to know the production of recent years is significant. Time, which has always been the best judge of art, will of itself bring order and a more careful selection into the concert programs.

Jerzy Fitelberg

CHAVEZ ON MUSIC AND ELECTRICITY

IT is no event in the world of music if a scientist, however notable, points out that music may be produced by electrical means, as well as by the mechanical devices which are in current use. An engineer announcing such a thesis might be suspected of special pleading. The musical world would look askance at his analysis

and entertain grave doubts as to his competence in the field of music.

But when a musician of world-wide and established reputation studies sympathetically the possibilities of new modes of musical production and considers in friendly and frank fashion the past development of music in relation to its future tasks and possibilities, his act is an event of the first importance.

As a leader of individual and governmental projects for the cultivation of musical talent and the stimulation of composition, the work of Carlos Chavez in Mexico City has received broad recognition. As one whose original compositions blend brave originality and the spirit of the people he knows best, he has established a secure place for himself in the musical world. As conductor of the Symphony Orchestra of Mexico, and as guest conductor of some of the greatest symphony orchestras in the United States, he has displayed consummate interpretive skill and musical feeling of the highest type. When such a man is ready to issue a confession of faith in other methods of music than those now generally used and develops a plan for the future successful development of electrically-produced music, the event commands attention.

Musicians, as well as artists in general, have always had their doubts as to the contribution which science might make to their activities. Remote in his ivory tower, the scientist works out his fine-spun and seemingly incomprehensible theories. In closer touch with the factory, the engineer applies these theories to the needs of everyday life. But, it has been asked, how can either of these calmly unemotional figures contribute to the arts? More specifically, can music be streamlined? This viewpoint is quite understandable since many a scientific dabbler in music has committed tonal atrocities.

And yet science can contribute to music, as Chavez has clearly proven in chapter after chapter of his book *Toward a New Music* (W. W. Norton) which, in fact, bears the sub-title: "Music and Electricity." The tools of science are musical devices, electrical agencies, equipment of various sorts for the production or control of sound, light, or heat, and the laws which underlie and govern the construction or use of all such agencies. Music has

leaned heavily upon mechanical aids and these have been developed, in the main, by purely empirical means. In common with the scientists, Chavez believes that the era of "cut and try" may soon be over and that it may be replaced by orderly progress wherein the musician guides the scientist to produce the implements for greater music with broader capability of expression.

After all, blowing air through pipes or scraping hair over strings is mechanical enough; sending exquisitely modulated currents through suitable loud speakers may in time produce new modes of accepted musical expression. Even today no mean semblance of music is obtainable from the technical reproduction devices as, for example, the motion picture film equipment. In common with his co-worker and friend Stokowski, it is the viewpoint of Chavez that the serious-minded musician who desires to expand his art will avail himself of these possibilities.

In *Toward A New Music,* Chavez is historical, analytical, and occasionally almost encyclopedic. Every method explored for the production of music in the past and present is considered broadly and in detail. Its possibilities in the future are studied with a combination of careful reasoning and inspired prediction. The sound film, radio, the phonograph, and various specific electrical musical instruments are in turn analyzed.

It is fortunate that Chavez is a man of thorough musical training, of good scientific and musical associations, and of creative and occasionally rebellious temperament. No other type of man could have been so successful in producing so informative a contribution to musical knowledge as is his book. It is of extraordinary scope, ranging from an analysis of wire transmission of orchestral music and its possibilities on the one hand to a consideration of scales, melody and harmony in their broader aspects on the other. To me, as a scientist who loves music, it will be interesting to discover the reaction of the musical world to so epochal a publication. It is my hope, as it is my belief, that it will receive a friendly and understanding response and that it will serve as a guide and inspiration alike to future musicians and their scientific collaborators in the creation of the music of the future.

Alfred N. Goldsmith