

monic idiom trip him up. Elsewhere the program included a romantic tone-poem by Adolf Brune of Chicago entitled *At the Bernina Falls*; a repetition of Leo Sowerby's *Prairie*, with its ingenious, 7½/4 threshing-machine rhythm; and two uncommonly cheap effusions, Henry Hadley's *Scherzo Diabolique* and Deems Taylor's *Circus Day*, which latter piece has had the unwarranted distinction of seven performances in Chicago this year.

In the subscription series as a whole the Chicago Symphony Orchestra has presented four big-time novelties: Prokofieff's *Third Symphony*; Stravinsky's *Divertimento* from *Le Baiser de la Fée*; Miaskowsky's *Symphony No. 13*, in Bb-Minor; Malipiero's *Violin Concerto*. The Stravinsky and Malipiero works I have spoken about elsewhere in this issue. The Prokofieff symphony, a *succès d'estime* in Chicago, while lacking in power, is thoroughly engaging. The Miaskowsky symphony (given its American premiere) was so economical and restrained that there seemed, somehow, nothing left to enjoy.

C. E.

## TENTH ROCHESTER CELEBRATION

ROCHESTER'S tenth annual festival, celebrated last April, offered us eighteen American works, nine of them new. The first evening saw a truly remarkable performance by the Eastman School Orchestra and Chorus under Howard Hanson's baton. The program included the *Rondo* from Wagenaar's charming, sophisticated *Divertimento*, two movements from William Grant Still's nostalgic *African Suite*, Paul White's *Voyage of the Mayflower* for chorus and orchestra, a new descriptive work using the Pilgrim's old hymns, and Hanson's *Romantic Symphony*. When Koussevitzky first played this symphony its languorous melodies and obvious sentiment appalled those used to the tonal eccentricities of the last ten years. It now appears to have stood in the vanguard in a year when even Stravinsky pays homage to Tchaikovsky's muse. The opening *Adagio* never sounded better than on this occasion.

The second concert—by the Eastman School Little Symphony and chamber music combinations under Karl Van Hoesen's lead-

ership—was directed to a more sophisticated audience. Three new works and Aaron Copland's *Prelude* from his *First Symphony* were most rewarding. Copland has recently arranged this symphony from his *Organ Concerto*, played by Nadia Boulanger in her American debut under Damrosch in 1925. It is youthful and lyric and shows the characteristic command of his craft which sets this modernist apart from other experimenters. Burrill Phillips' *Symphony Concertante* is a delectably lively and fluent suite in three movements which could bear frequent performance. The *Adagio* has sustained mood and unified form, rare in contemporary music. Two other effective works were a *Suite* by the young, talented David Diamond, containing a charming but rugged fanfare, and Herbert Inch's irrepressible *Divertimento*. With simple means Inch has contrived a refreshing and finished work. A short excerpt from Still's new opera, *Blue Steel*, cannot be judged without its context, and the remaining music seemed to this reviewer undistinguished.

Outstanding on the third evening—Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra under Hanson—was the first performance of Bernard Rogers' *Once Upon a Time*, a fairy tale suite after Andrew Lang. Rogers' mastery of orchestral effects, from the most delicate tints to those of oriental savagery, is again evident in these exquisite miniatures. His vivid musical imagination has recreated, with a slightly Russian tang, our childhood memories of *The Tinder Box*, *Soldier, Koschei the Deathless*, *The Darning Needle*, *The Seven Princesses*, and *Rapunzel*. Gustave Soderlund's *Symphonic Interlude* uses Spanish rhythms effectively, and shows growth. Dr. Mason's familiar *Suite after English Folk-Songs*, and a lengthy N. B. C. prize work, Karl Eppert's *Symphony of a City*, completed the program.

The Rochester Civic Orchestra, the vocal soloists and chorus of the Eastman School, and local dancing pupils, combined for the last evening, under Hanson, in the presentation of Robert Russell Bennett's ballet-opera, *Endymion*, and a ballet version of Deems Taylor's *Circus Days*. The Bennett work was written in 1926, to a two-hundred-year-old poem of De Fontenelle, translated by Robert Simon and the composer. It treats of Diana, Pan, Endymion and their loves, in a remote neo-classic manner

lacking the red-blooded quality that we today expect from Bennett. In its original form the opera seemed unwieldy, but it was deftly rearranged to make the most of every choreographic possibility, by Nicholas Konraty, the dramatic director, and Thelma Biracree, who devised the dances. The music is rhythmically well adapted to the dance, there are two charming pastoral choruses, and the production was exceedingly able. However the score has the French mannerisms of ten years ago, and lacks the dramatic force of other ballets presented at these festivals.

From a festival of this kind there emerge works that are good, bad and indifferent. The essential importance is the constant turnover. The Berlin opera houses yearly produce ten or more native operas and ballets. Hardly more than one a year is ever heard of again. But things are kept moving, and so are they here in Rochester.

*Adelaide V. Hooker*

## DANCERS, FOREIGN AND HOME-GROWN

A FAIRLY poor dance month only served to emphasize again the superiority of the best native artists over those whom Europe sends us as its best. Ruth Sorel-Abramovich and George Groke were given distinguished dancing awards abroad. We would all agree that they are authentic dancers who stand securely on their feet as seasoned professionals, but what they selected for their New York performances was stale and anything but interesting. There were so few ideas worth bothering about (granting that they could have given ideas life), and nothing that we had not seen Kreutzberg at least execute better time and again. Abramovich showed by her *Salome* dance that her life in the Berlin opera houses had been interesting as such, and both artists together in the slow movement of a peasant dance demonstrated that they could be technically enjoyable when they could be drawn fifteen degrees away from pure decadence.

Some of the most significant dancing of the season was exhibited within the final weeks. Whatever Martha Graham has to say is important and arresting. Her new compositions find her again on new paths. This time she has her ear to the ground,