

cussion reveals a very original and characteristic way of developing a simple melodic germ; and the percussion, which includes gongs, made a surprisingly emotional background for the intricate melodic weaving. *Divertimento*, for flute and piano, by Richard Franko Goldman (in three movements: *Aperitif*, *Icy Pastoral* and *Fado*) is in thinned lines of sophisticated simplicity, well written for the flute but as a whole, it does not stick together, nor is it sufficiently contrasted. The song *Ousel-Cock*, by Herbert Elwell, is in pseudo-classic manner, pert and singable; the audience liked it. *Meeting at Night* and *Parting at Morning*, by Edwin Gerschefski, are two songs with discords rampant in the piano part and difficult, wide leaps for the voice. Such handicaps usually create a very unsatisfactory effect because they are so much in opposition to the nature of song, but this set gave off the conviction that the words were enhanced by the strange intervals. Almost impossible to sing, they were, nevertheless a success when heard. Piston's *Sonata for Flute and Piano* is too well known to need detailed mention here. Louis Horst's *Change*, in chromatic romantic vein, was written many years ago in what the composer protested was a forgotten style; *That Soothin' Song*, by John Alden Carpenter, is a commonplace attempt to incorporate Negro feeling into a white man's song and its Negro folk-like tune dwindles off into a curious, French-impressionistic, vague close; John Barrow's *Song* is dirge-like and rather ordinary-sounding, obviously influenced by Schubert's *Doppelgänger*. David Van Vactor's *I Know a Maiden Fair*, one of those sure-fire hits with a lilting tune tied to slightly naughty words, would be in early-English style, were it not for some high-power and rather shocking modulations, which, however, lead safely back to the original key.

Henry Cowell

SWISS NEWS

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FROM the international point of view Switzerland is in an extraordinary situation in relation to the arts as to all other activities. Entirely surrounded by countries that are either belligerents or occupied, she attempts to carry on her cultural life exactly as in times of peace, and so remains a Continental "oasis in the midst of torment."

Last winter there seemed to be a general, voluntary inclination toward national, one might even say, cantonal expression. But for the coming season, for the winter of 1941-42, there is a renewed interest in contempo-

rary and international production. The next few months will see the return to this country of a number of foreign virtuosi – among others, Casals, Thibaut, Alma Moodie, Landowska, Giesecking, Leider, Weingartner, Furtwängler, Mengelberg and the Frenchmen Charles Münch and Paul Paray. Moreover the programs already scheduled are such as to renew the ties of this small country with the present and with the world beyond.

Last season the uncertainty of conditions in Europe seemed to hold the concert promoters at a point of equilibrium, satisfied merely to keep the ball rolling. Basle was perhaps the one exception, for there Paul Sacher and his chamber orchestra gave performances of such contemporary works as Alban Berg's *Violin Concerto*, John Ireland's *Concertino Pastorale* for string orchestra (1939), Conrad Beck's *Concerto* for violin and small orchestra (1940) and Kodaly's *Psalmus Hungaricus*.

The coming of spring and the beginning of fine weather auspiciously ushered in the festival of the 650th anniversary of the Swiss Confederation. Music lovers could hear long and rich programs, indoors and out, in Basle, Zurich, Geneva, Lucerne, and even in the Engadine, in the spectacular towns of Sils, Silverplane and Fex. Modern music was completely neglected, the only exception being a performance of a *Sinfonia Italiana* by one Giovanni Salviucci, a young pupil of Casella and Respighi, whose score was unfortunately devoid of any true value, an artificial dynamism and a great show of pomp being used to veil the absence of intuition and personality. The outstanding innovation of these festivals was the combination of lecture and performance given at the "summer school" of the Winterthur under Hermann Scherchen, who in six sessions traced the evolution of the orchestra and orchestral music from the Middle Ages to the present day. This demonstration opened with Bach's *Kunst der Fuge* and closed with a stage performance of Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du Soldat*.

The present season promises to be far more notable. The Orchestra de la Suisse Romand, the Basle Kammerorchester and the Berne Quatuor have announced a large number of premieres such as Kodaly's *Variations for Orchestra*, Casella's *Symphony*, Opus 63, composed in the winter of 1939-40, the new *Symphony* for string orchestra by Honegger, A. F. Marescotti's *Concerto Carougeois*, Roberto Obussier's *Concerto* for orchestra and strings, and a *Symphonie des Psaumes* for soprano and strings by Paul Müller. Other new scores for solo instruments and orchestra scheduled for a hearing during the Swiss winter include an unpublished *Concerto for Piano* by Respighi, a *Concerto for Flute* by Conrad Beck (written for the

Basle virtuoso Joseph Bopp), the *Concerto for Violin* (1941) by Bohuslav Martinu, whose *Concerto for Strings* and *Third Quartet* will be heard again this season. Also Honegger's *Quartet, Number 3*, Paul Hindemith's *Quartet* for clarinet, violin, violoncello, and piano (1939), and Philipp Jarnach's *Quintet for Strings*, Opus 10. Several works by Vladimir Vogel favorite pupil of Busoni, have been announced; some piano pieces, the *Dix Variétés sur une série de douze tons non transposée* for violin, flute, clarinet and violoncello; some madrigals a capella on texts by Adine Vallengin, and some fragments from *Till Eulenspiegel*, a work of great breadth for a speaking chorus, which Scherchen is scheduled to premiere, in its entirety, next summer. Finally there is to be the first hearing at Basle, of an imposing new oratorio by Willy Burkhard, *Das Jahr*, Opus 62 (1940-41).

With the assistance of the Orchestre Romand and of the choruses of the Société Symphonique, Ernest Ansermet will present in Geneva, Debussy's *Martyre de Saint-Sebastien* and Honegger's cantata, *La Danse des Morts*, whose premiere has already been discussed in MODERN MUSIC.

The Swiss sections of the International Society for Contemporary Music plan to carry on their own lively season. The Zurich branch, known as Pro-Musica, will present not less than ten concerts with the co-operation of outstanding soloists and of the city's Kammerorchester and Madrigalchor. One of these soirées is to be given over to Arnold Schönberg, another to Paul Hindemith, a third to modern French music on which program there will be included Darius Milhaud's *Sixth Symphony* and Marcel Delannoy's *Rhapsodie* for trumpet, saxophone, alto, violoncello and piano. Special interest also attaches to the forthcoming complete production of the chamber oratorio of Frank Martin, *Le Vin Herbé*, of which the second and third parts have just been finished. The I.S.C.M. section of Basle, under the leadership of Paul Sacher is about to resume its concerts which also promise a full set of interesting new programs.

Finally, Radio-Genève, which was active last year in the production of contemporary works, is preparing the premiere of an original piece written specially to be broadcast – *Naiades* by the French author, Pierre Girard and the young Genevese composer, Pierre Wissmer, a young man of great talent.

Arno Huth