

classic spirit, best in its lyrical adagio and the imaginative close of its finale . . . The Orchestrette of New York performed Aaron Copland's *Quiet City* and Peter Warlock's *The Curlew*, a personal and lovely song cycle . . . Sergei Radamsky's two recitals of Russian songs revealed little in the contemporary repertory that was striking. Most Soviet composers seem content to re-create the moods of Russian folkmusic with rudimentary simplicity. The moods, though beautiful, are hardly new, and neither is the treatment.

There have been several duo-piano recitals recently. That the repertory is limited is no news, but one may object to the way the gaps are being filled. Anything and everything is appropriated and given a sort of super-de-luxe treatment that will justify the use of two instruments. The words "two-piano music" may come to have the rather lowly significance that is now at times attached to the term "salon music." The medium is a most distinguished one, and writing for it must be more inventive if a whole two-piano program is not to appear slick and monotonous. Even works originally written for performance this way, such as those of Britten and Lennox Berkeley performed by Bartlett and Robinson, seem to take no pains to stand out from the general run. A short piece can be as striking as a more extended one. Ernst Bacon's *Sourwood Hens*, performed by Loesser and Rubinstein, is at least engaging and written with cleverness. Whittmore and Lowe's contemporary works were slight and received especially swank café treatment. Dougherty and Ruzicka exhibited great taste in selecting material of Casella and Milhaud which is rather suitable for transcription. But I can imagine no more extraordinary choice for such display than the suite from Alban Berg's *Lulu*. With but one piano at his disposal Stravinsky made a transcription of *Petrouchka* (performed by Artur Rubinstein) with a distinction and sonorous inventiveness far above all this. Is he also to be one of the few to write a valuable two-piano work?

Donald Fuller

CHILDREN'S DAY AT THE CAMP MEETING

THIS sonata* is the fourth for violin and piano. It is called *Children's Day at the Camp Meeting*. It is shorter than the other violin sonatas. A few of its parts and suggested themes were used in organ and other earlier

*Chosen as the second in the League of Composers' contemporary series, the work is being recorded by New Music Recordings with Josef Szigeti as violinist and Andor Foldes as pianist. The score will shortly be published by the Arrow Music Press.—Ed.

pieces. The subject matter is a kind of reflection, remembrance, expression, etc. of the children's services at the out-door Summer camp meetings held around Danbury and in many of the farm towns in Connecticut, in the seventies, eighties and nineties. There was usually only one Children's Day in these Summer meetings, and the children made the most of it – often the best of it. They would at times get stirred up, excited and even boisterous, but underneath there was usually something serious, though Deacon Grey would occasionally have to "Sing a Caution."

The First Movement (which was sometimes played last and the last first) – was suggested by an actual happening at one of these services. The children, especially the boys, liked to get up and join in the marching kind of hymns. And as these meetings were "out-door," the "march" sometimes became a real one. One day Lowell Mason's *Work For The Night Is Coming* got the boys going and keeping on between services, when the boy who played the melodeon was practicing his "organicks of canonicks, fugaticks harmonicks and melodicks." In this movement, as is remembered, they – the postlude organ practice (real and improvised, sometimes both) – and the boys' fast march – got to going together, even joining in each other's sounds, and the loudest singers and also those with the best voices, as is often the case, would sing most of the wrong notes. They started this tune on "ME" so the boy organist's father made him play "SOH" hard even if sometimes it had to be in a key that the postlude was not in just then. The boys sometimes got almost as far off from Lowell M. as they did from the melodeon. The organ would be uncovering "covered 5ths" breaking "good resolutions" faster and faster and the boys' march reaching almost a "Main Street Quick-Step" when Parson Hubbell would beat the "Gong" on the oaktree for the next service to begin. Or if it is growing dark, the boys' march would die away, as they marched down to their tents, the barn doors, or over the "1770 Bridge" between the Stone Pillars to the Station.

The Second Movement is quieter and more serious except when Deacon Stonemason Bell and Farmer John would get up and get the boys excited. But most of the Movement moves quietly around a sombre but old favorite Hymn of the children, while mostly in the accompaniment is heard something trying to reflect the outdoor sounds of nature on those Summer days – the west wind in the pines and oaks, the running brook – sometimes quite loudly and maybe towards evening the distant voices of the farmers across the hill getting in their cows and sheep.

But as usual even in the quiet services, some of the deacon-enthusiasts

would get up and sing, roar, pray and shout but always fervently, seriously, reverently – perhaps not “artistically” – (perhaps the better for it) – “We’re men of the fields and rocks, not artists,” Farmer John would say. At times these “confurorants” would give the boys a chance to run out and throw stones down on the rocks in the brook! (*Allegro conslugarocko!*) – but this was only momentary and the quiet Children’s Hymn is sung again, perhaps some of the evening sounds are with it – and as this Movement ends, sometimes a distant Amen is heard – if the mood of the Day calls for it – though the Methodists and Baptists seldom called for it, at the end of their hymns, yet often, during the sermon, an “Amen” would ring out as a trumpet call from a pew or from an old “Amen-Seat.” The Congregationalists sometimes leaned towards one, and the Episcopalians often.

The Third Movement is more of the nature of the First. As the boys get marching again some of the old men would join in and march as fast (sometimes) as the boys and sing what they felt, regardless – and – thanks to Robert Lowry – “Gather at the River.”*

Charles Ives

BRITAIN CALLS MUSIC TO THE COLORS

A LONG with their fellow artists in other spheres, British composers of military age have gradually been absorbed into the workings of the voracious war-machine. Alan Rawsthorne (now a bandmaster), Edmund Rubbra and Alan Bush have joined the Army; Howard Ferguson is in the Central Band of the Air Force; and Lennox Berkeley is in the Overseas department of the B.B.C. William Walton is on the advisory music council of ENSA, the official body organizing entertainment for the troops.

Up to the present, none of our composers has produced anything that might be described as an important “war” work. Vaughan Williams, it is true, has written *Six Choral Songs to be Sung in Time of War*, to words by Shelley, and John Ireland is just now finishing a stirring march intended to express the spirit of freedom and democracy; but these are in the nature of occasional pieces. If it is as yet too early to define with any degree of certainty the reasons for this, it may at least be noted that in music – most abstract of all the arts – the digestive and assimilatory processes are as slow as they are selective; and it is perhaps not unlikely that if anything of value

*The above is mostly from remarks written on the back of some of the old music manuscripts. (1892-1914). C. I.