

not on the same level are *Chmielek*, a noisy Polish wedding dance by Stanislaw Wiechowicz, Weinberger's flashy variations on *Under the Spreading Chestnut Tree*, and Tansman's feeble jazz piece, *Sonatine Transatlantique*. Hardly mentionable at all was a *Suite* which Michel Brusselmans built around the *Twenty-four Caprices* of Paganini. I suggest it be given back to the Indians or possibly the violinists.

Herbert Elwell

## BOSTON LOOKS WEST

NEWS from this city centers around the recent announcement by the Boston Symphony Orchestra of the Berkshire Music Center which is to have its first season this summer in connection with the nine concerts of the Festival at "Tanglewood," between Stockbridge and Lenox, Massachusetts. The Music Center will be in operation for six weeks beginning the early part of July, and is to have its culmination in the three final weeks when the full personnel of the Boston Symphony will be on the grounds rehearsing and presenting the festival concerts. An orchestra made up of advanced students of instrumental technic, assisted by thirty members of the Boston Symphony, will be available during the entire six week term for Dr. Koussevitzky's students in the art of conducting as well as for the preparation of new scores submitted by students in the composition and theatrical courses to be given by Aaron Copland and Paul Hindemith. The meetings of the orchestra, of these courses and one in "opera dramatics" under Dr. Herbert Graf of the Metropolitan, will make up the major activities of the "Institute for Advanced Study." There will also be an "Academy" for general students who will either sing in the chorus which will perform Bach's Mass in B-minor with the Orchestra during the final week of the Festival, or play in a practice orchestra.

In looking beyond the Connecticut River into country unknown by many Bostonians, the Orchestra takes a bold step. It is not weakening its case by encroaching on the field of any existing institutions. I doubt if a similar one can be found in the United States or even abroad. The proximity of the great ensemble, its conductor and members, will of course be an advantage to the students, but the principal point, I think, is that here will be an opportunity for students of instruments to devote a reasonably brief, concentrated term to the study of actual orchestral works in performance under the guidance of practical and experienced orchestral musicians. Dr.

Koussevitzky writes that "the Music Center is designed to lay special emphasis upon those aspects of musical education concerned with collective performance. Active participation will offer the means of acquiring a working knowledge of music as it is written, conducted, played and sung."

Looking through the list of works to be studied by the Institute Orchestra one notes Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du Soldat*, Hindemith's *Concerto for String and Wind Choirs* and Copland's *Music for the Theatre*. Obviously Dr. Koussevitzky's flair for the music of his time is to make itself a characteristic part of the undertaking. Berkshire County, Massachusetts (closer to New York than Boston, by the way) may find that it has established a music center for the growing school of American composition.

While Symphony Hall has been buzzing with plans for next summer, several new scores have come to light and a flurry of chamber music has swept the town due principally to the presence of the Stradivarius Quartet, now in residence at Harvard. Stravinsky completed the first three of his series of six Charles Eliot Norton lectures at the University, amid much enthusiasm and debate between the followers of Bellini and Wagner whom the vitriolic composer respectively praised and damned. As guest conductor of the Boston Symphony, he introduced the charming *Jeu de Cartes* suite to Boston, and gave a strangely unbalanced and over-lengthy performance of the *Symphonie de Psalmes*.

Richard Burgin tossed off Ernst Toch's slight but thoroughly successful *Pinocchio, a Merry Overture*, and Dr. Koussevitzky ran through two excessively unimportant pieces of Harl MacDonald, called *San Juan Capistrano*; Walter Piston's *Piano Concertino* appeared again with as much verve and sparkle as ever, and a suite, *In Praise of Winter*, was brought out by the talented Boston composer George Foote. While not a work of great originality, it exhibited many interesting ideas and a kind of sound musicianship that ought to be more encouraged.

The important premieres, however, have been only three. Howard Hanson's *Third Symphony* has been reviewed from New York, so I shall be spared the difficulty of discussing the confusing problem it presents. Nicolai Lopatnikoff's *Second Symphony* was a curious disappointment. Although it contains much brilliant writing, especially for woodwind, it resolves itself into a restatement of the traditional material of the Russian "Five" with their familiar Oriental mannerisms. The symphony is also weakened by an inconsequential slow movement which never becomes definitely contemplative or eloquent; its *allegretto*, however, is a scherzo-

like movement of much charm.

Bloch's new *Violin Concerto*, which was given its first performances in the East with the assistance of Mr. Szigeti, proved to be one of the most rewarding new scores the season has produced to date. Let it be said at once that it is of the best Bloch. Here is music to stand beside *Schelomo* and the *Three Jewish Poems*; in spite of its length and difficulty it should find its way swiftly to a general recognition. It is based, as the composer asserts, on a motive of American-Indian suggestions which is interestingly enough never at variance with the Hebraic character of the work as a whole. More extensive comment appears elsewhere in this issue of MODERN MUSIC.

George Henry Lovett Smith

## BRITISH PICK-UP

London, January 5

THOUGH musical activity here has greatly increased during the last two months, one can hardly say it is back to normal. That strictly new development, the short, lunch-time concerts for those who will not venture out during the black-out, has had curious results. Inaugurated by Myra Hess at the National Gallery (now almost completely emptied of pictures) they present well-known chamber music performers who appear there daily except Saturdays and Sundays, facing an audience at a shilling a ticket. But leisured people, arriving early, buy up all the seats; and the office workers for whom the scheme was primarily intended, are kept out. The programs have been strictly classical and popular so far; practically nothing modern has been included. Many other similar schemes have been launched in different parts of London, but most have died prematurely because of lack of support. The Incorporated Society of Musicians, however has organized a fairly ambitious program of chamber concerts at various times and places, which at any rate provide employment for musicians. In fact there are almost too many such concerts of a rather stereotyped character. Artists seem to be making up for cut fees by crowding in as many engagements as possible.

Orchestrally there have been practically no novelties of importance. Beecham, who has now returned to the concert platform, brought out Weinberger's not very exciting *Variations and Fugue on "Under the Spreading Chestnut Tree"* (the work has also just been recorded by Constant Lambert and the London Philharmonic, with Louis Kestner playing