

the Munich opera.

Richard Strauss is being treated with consideration by the Allies, probably because of his age. He was, however, a pillar of Nazi cultural propaganda, and his collaboration was exploited as a spur to lesser-known musicians. In 1941 he wrote *Japanische Festmusik* and in 1942 he received – just as Pfitzner did one year later – the Beethoven Prize offered by Gauleiter Baldur von Schirach. *Die Weltwoche*, the Swiss weekly, has published an interview with Strauss which is very revealing about his state of mind. He declares that he saw no reason to shun the Nazis as long as they continued to play his works. He refused several offers to go abroad, giving as a reason the fact that eighty opera houses in Germany and Austria were giving him performances, and that he had very few outside of Germany. His only complaint about the Nazi regime was in reference to Goebbels' order to close the theatres. "Imagine!" he exclaimed. "Since the first of September 1944 I haven't received a pfennig in royalties!" . . . He was all praise for the former governor of Poland, Hans Frank, who, according to him, had proved his artistic understanding by prohibiting victims of bombings from settling in his villa.

Opera programs, as is natural under the circumstances, are rather restricted in interest, for works are given which are easy to put on and which appeal to the public. When the Sadlers Wells troupe of London undertakes a two month tour through Germany some novelties can be expected. On the other hand, concert programs offer innumerable scores which have not been heard for a decade. The favorite composer, especially beloved by musicians suspected of pro-Nazi feelings, is Mendelssohn. Over Radio Munich German musicians actually played Bloch's *Schelomo*.

In Austria, concerts and plays can again be enjoyed, though here too there could be purges of former salesmen of Nazi propaganda who continue to occupy important posts. The Salzburg Festival does not of course compare with past ones, yet it is still a sign of renaissance. . . . The Vienna Opera, having moved from its destroyed quarters, gives its performances in the Volksoper or in the Redouten Saal. . . . As a tribute to Gustav Mahler, whose works were of course forbidden by the Nazis, his *First Symphony* was included on the first Vienna Philharmonic program. A commemorative plaque was installed at the concert hall, and the old Gustav Mahler Street has reassumed its name.

Arno Huth

INTERNATIONALISM AGAIN IN VIENNA

Vienna, December 1945

THE end of the war in Europe was not two months past when the Austrian section of the International Society for Contemporary Music

gave its first concert in twelve years. The program included Hindemith's *Clarinet Sonata*, Prokofiev's *Overture on Yiddish Themes*, Hanns Eisler's *Two Cantatas* for voice, two clarinets, viola and cello, Falla's *Harpsichord Concerto* and Schönberg's *String Quartet*, Opus 10. The Viennese like to call attention to this concert. It reflects the initiative that has marked artistic activity of all kinds in Vienna since the war and which has resulted in a degree of artistic recovery probably beyond that of any other city in the former area of the Third Reich. But it also reveals the eagerness of Viennese musicians to re-establish contact with the outside world after seven years of absolute isolation and four more years in which activities like those of the I.S.C.M. were, if not forbidden, at least effectively discouraged.

The concert is also interesting as an example of how much the Austrian capital is still dominated by the Schönberg school. Other concerts show a similar leaning, probably inevitable in view of the number of Schönberg pupils and grand-pupils among the composers active here. But this may not continue for long, since Berg died in 1935 and now Webern is also gone. None of the other representatives appears to be of comparable stature; with foreign contact again restored new influences should make themselves felt.

The only account of Webern's death I have seen was in the U.S.-sponsored German language *Wiener Kurier*. Here are the details as they were given there: "On September fifteenth in Mittersill in the Pinzgau, near Salzburg, Dr. Anton von Webern, while visiting his son-in-law, Benno Mattel, met a tragic and as yet not fully explained death. About ten o'clock in the evening he was standing in front of his son-in-law's house enjoying a last cigarette before retiring when there was a sudden series of shots. Dr. Webern staggered into the house and said to his wife, 'I've been hit.' He died soon afterwards. His son-in-law was arrested. The motive for the attack remains a complete mystery."

Nothing more has appeared about the matter beyond an article by Webern's friend, Friedrich Wildgans. This threw no further light on his death but did reveal that Webern, at the time, had been working on his first large composition, a sacred oratorio, which apparently remains unfinished. Webern had already been named to the presidency of the Austrian section of the I.S.C.M. No successor has as yet been appointed.

Yet the society has given three more concerts since the introductory one in June. Included on a September program were Hindemith's *Horn Sonata*, Janacek's *Tagebuch eines Verschollenen*, Anton Heiller's *Toccata* for two pianos – a premiere – and Stravinsky's *Concerto* for the same combination. The Heiller work was very well spoken of both by the critics and by informed individuals. The composer, a former pupil of Florent Schmidt,



REVELING WITH HARLOTS

THE PRODIGAL SON

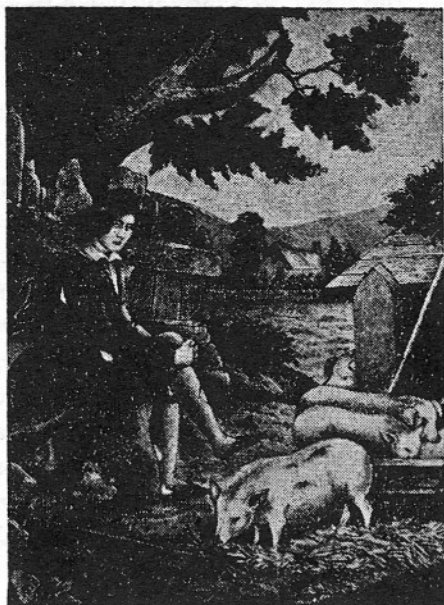
America, 1800

Original prints that suggested the theme and locale of the new opera awarded the David E. Bispham prize. Music by

FREDERICK JACOBI



RECEIVING HIS PATRIMONY



IN MISERY



RETURNING TO HIS FATHER

is active in Vienna as a composer and pianist.

A song recital by the admired Lieder singer, Elizabeth Höngen, was devoted to songs by Berg, Webern, Apostel and Schönberg – in other words a Schönberg evening, since Apostel is also a disciple. (Perish the pun!) Another event, a concert of music for winds and harp, included Hindemith's *Kleine Kammermusik* and wind quintets by Leon Kauffmann and Alexander Moyzes. Kauffmann was an Alsatian who lost his life at the age of forty, in a bombing attack on Strassburg. Among his works are a *Symphony*, a *Concertino* for contrabass and chamber orchestra and a *Concert Suite* in one movement based on the opera, *Die Geschichte vom schönen Annarl*. His quintet was skilful, bright and inventive, if not remarkably original.

A Bartok commemorative program immediately in prospect will include the *Sixth String Quartet*, the *Sonata* for two pianos and percussion, *Contrasts* and some songs. A concert celebrating the tenth anniversary of the death of Berg will at last bring the Viennese premiere of the *Violin Concerto*. A concert of music for two pianos is planned for January, with works by Reger, Copland and Milhaud; in February a chamber music program will be devoted to Schönberg and Messiaen, who is still completely unknown in Austria. In the course of the season we will also hear works by Stravinsky (*Les Noces* and *L'Histoire d'un soldat*), Petrassi (*Coro dei Morti*), Webern (*Das Augenlicht*) Casella (*Missa Solemnis pro Pace*) and Frank Martin (*Der Zaubertrank*). Almost all these will be new to Vienna except the Stravinsky pieces, of course. The activities of American composers during the past ten years are, as a matter of course, almost completely unknown here; not even the names are familiar. There is however great curiosity. Once the music becomes available there will be a ready public and willing performers.

Henry Pleasants

POLAND YESTERDAY AND TODAY

FROM the outbreak of the war until the end of 1945 no news from Poland, my native land, had come through to me. But now finally I have received several letters and a number of copies of the Cracow bi-monthly *Ruch Muzyczny* (Musical Activities), which is being published regularly, and it is at last possible to reconstruct something of what went on during the occupation.

The German invader spared Poland's musical life no more than the rest. Musicians were tortured in scores of concentration camps, executed in the streets of the cities. Roman Padlewski, one of the young composers, and Edward Bender, the Polish bass, died as soldiers in the Warsaw uprising. The Gestapo was responsible for the death of Dr. Josef Koffler—