

chestra, have become classics before even reaching the age of twenty-five.

Eugene Goossens as guest conductor in Cleveland produced the two middle movements of his *First Symphony*, conducting this well-made, even exciting music with great distinction. For all his skill, however, the slow movement refused to grow into a concentrated utterance. The scherzo had an agreeable wit and brilliance, a good omen for the first and last movements, which I have not yet heard. Mr. Goossens also conducted three of the series of fanfares he commissioned for use at the Cincinnati concerts, on a Cleveland Orchestra broadcast. The fanfares for *Paratroopers* and *The Common Man*, by Paul Creston and Aaron Copland, respectively, both proved arresting music. Mr. Goossens' own *Fanfare for the Merchant Marine* was weakened by its attempt to be over-picturesque.

Robert Russell Bennett's "*Four Freedoms*" *Symphony* has received such cordial panning in these pages that I need not add further commentary on its tasteless pomposities, which, after all, have no less to do with President Roosevelt's formulation of the "four essential human freedoms" than Norman Rockwell's obvious paintings that inspired them. Mr. Bennett's creative ability has not yet caught up with his great skill as an orchestrator and arranger.

George H. Lovett Smith

PISTON'S NEW SYMPHONY IN WASHINGTON

PRIORITY among Washington premieres – all of them American – presented by Hans Kindler with the National Orchestra this season belongs to Walter Piston's *Symphony Number 2* performed March 5. The time-gap between this work and the symphony first introduced by the Boston Orchestra in 1938 proves Piston's consistency in placing quality before quantity. The new work, in three movements, maintains his strict standard of neoclassic style. It has a masterly and logical catenation of ideas. The writing is terse and avoids ambient phrases that merely adorn. Every stroke of instrumentation makes its point. There are some pages of dissonant counterpoint; they are essential to the exposition of themes. Those who consider Piston more academic than emotional will be pleasantly surprised by the marked lyrical feeling in the adagio movement. The symphony is highly vitalized, lucid and persuasive, and was warmly applauded by the public.

Another premiere on Dr. Kindler's list was John Alden Carpenter's

Dance Suite, a brilliantly scored re-working of three piano pieces: *American Polonaise*, *Tango* and *Danza*. Paul Creston's *Chant* 1942 carries out well enough the title's implication; the music is both troubled and optimistic. Dai-Keong Lee of Honolulu, now an army corporal in the South Pacific, was represented by a *Hawaiian Festival Overture* in which native themes color modernistic technic. There was also a gay, and successful *Tolentine Overture* by Robert W. Wilkes and *Penguin Island* (movement from a symphonic suite) by Darrell W. Calker of Hollywood.

Most impressive of the American works given first local performances by Dr. Kindler was Robert E. Ward's *Symphony Number 1* which is remarkably mature and confident. There is intellectual power in this work, expressed with alternate austerity and poetic imagination. The first movement has an elemental force rarely felt in young composers; the andante is nocturnal in mood, and the scherzo-finale has a breezy motivation. Other American works heard here for the first time were Gardner Read's *Prelude and Toccata*, Henry Gilbert's *Riders to the Sea*, Morton Gould's *American Salute* and his *American Concertette Number 1*, with Percy Grainger as soloist. First local performances were also given to Milhaud's *Suite Provençale*, Kabelevski's *Second Symphony*, the Bartok and Elgar violin concerti and the Busoni piano concerto.

Ray Brown

ARGENTINE SEASON

BEFORE commenting on the recent music season in Buenos Aires, it would be well to devote a few words to our unfamiliar ways. Argentina's musical life is confined almost exclusively to the capital, a situation for which some solution must still be found. Beyond Rosario, Cordoba, and a few towns near Buenos Aires, and Mendoza, home of the National Conservatory which is part of the University of Cuyo, organized musical activity ceases to exist.

Buenos Aires has much lyrical drama, ballet, and a heavy "standard" concert program. But contemporary music, local or foreign, plays a minor role. Traditional repertory prevails in the opera as in our song and piano recitals. Artists are more than usually prone to intellectual sluggishness. Except for two or three specialized groups, the only way to hear music of our day is via the phonograph.

Most remarkable for a country of such wealth, size and importance,