

dull but constant. The Webber and Krenek pieces seemed fragmentary, busy and nervous. Over all this work and its introversion, there seems to be a pall, and hearing it one can fancy himself at some sort of a shroud ritual. The New Music Group also presented Louis Krasner and Jacques de Menasce in a sonata program for violin and piano. A first performance was given of a work by de Menasce, and sonatas by Hindemith and Bartók were played. The *Sonata Number 1 for Violin and Piano* by Bartók was good to hear. In this work ideas seem to be suggested but never grasped, every moment passes just as one begins to realize its presence. It makes for dreams and visions.

Harry Partch who has been wandering around and between two continents for the last twenty years, always with only one idea in mind, has finally succeeded in Chicago in getting his Chromolodian constructed. This is an instrument which looks like an old-fashioned Harmonium, has the ordinary keyboard, but which produces Partch's overtone-inspired forty-three tone scale. Heretofore, Partch has performed his work using stringed instruments with special frets and a particular form of speech with exaggerated inflections and intonations. The Chromolodian gives a welcome definiteness to his work.

John Cage

## IMPROVING PAN-AMERICAN MUSIC RELATIONS

**D**URING the past two or three years the concentrated effort of our government has brought about a greatly increased interest in the arts of the Latin American countries. The group which follows international events in new music had long known the works of such composers as Villa-Lobos and Chavez, but the picture as a whole was, until recently, rather vague.

Today radio chains and orchestras give us a large number of Latin-American works and now publishers are beginning to bring out great quantities of them. Some of this music has high quality; but in a great many cases editorial judgment has been lacking in the selection and many inferior works have been performed and published. This has brought much dissatisfaction to the best musicians of Latin America, who quite rightly feel that their countries' achievements are unnecessarily misrepresented. Due to a lack of response to publishers' communications, unfor-

tunately typical in some cases, there have also been printed in the United States editions which, carelessly proof-read, contain a number of serious errors. Worse still, confusion about the application of international copyright laws to the various Latin American countries appears to have led some of our publishers to reprint works without payment of royalties to the composers or original publishers, without permission for such publication. In retaliation, one or two South American firms have begun to reprint North American copyright works without permission or royalty payments. The result is a certain lack of what one might call cooperation in the field of inter-American musical relations.

To combat this haphazard situation, and to effect a dissemination of the best Latin American works, the Music Division of the Pan American Union, of which Charles Seeger is chief, has sponsored the Editorial Project for Latin American Music. This Project, now cooperating with all the principal publishing houses of the United States, has already made a great deal of progress. As a first step, Pan American Union consultants of the Project – consisting of Pedro Sanjuan, Luis Heitor Correa de Azevedo, Richard Goldman and myself – examined, collected and classified all available music from Latin American sources in the Library of the Pan American Union, the Library of Congress, the libraries of the Navy, Army and Marine Bands in Washington, the Music Division of the New York Public Library, and works in such private collections as those of William Berrien and Carleton Sprague Smith.

Out of all the serious music examined, the Project first concentrated on Latin American works suitable for use in the public schools. It obtained the cooperation of the Music Educators' National Conference for this selection. Of roughly four thousand contemporary Latin American works originally examined, about one hundred fifty were shown to a committee of the MENC as "educational" possibilities; and of these, a goodly portion were accepted. After the Latin American composers and publishers had been consulted, the approved works were then recommended to various United States publishers. As a result, five orchestral works, nine pieces for symphonic or concert band, six instrumental ensembles, thirteen mixed choruses, five women's choruses, one men's chorus, two piano solos and four solos for various instruments with piano accompaniment and two books of ninety-nine songs have been accepted for publication here. They have been edited with special care (final proofs are

examined by consultants of the Pan American Union's Music Division), and where special arrangement has proved necessary (as in the case of band works) the most skilled men in the country have been brought into the picture. Twenty Latin American composers are included in this first activity and all twenty-one republics are represented either by composed music or adaptations of folk melodies. The United States publishers are G. Schirmer, Boosey-Hawkes-Belwin, E. B. Marks, H. W. Gray, G. Ricordi, Mills Music, Sam Fox Music Co., Mercury Music Corporation, Associated Music Publishers, C. C. Birchard Co., J. Fischer and Bro., Theodore Presser and Co., Clayton Summy and Co., New Music Edition, Gundy-Bettoney Co., Broadcast Music Inc., Boston Music Co., Carl Fischer, Inc. Elkan-Vogel, Axelrod Edition, Harold Flammer, Silver-Burdette, and Ginn and Co.

It is worth noting that only a small percentage of our North American modern composers have interested themselves in writing for school use, but virtually every famous name among the modern Latin Americans is represented among those whose works will now be a part of the music program of the public schools of America. I think it may safely be said that nowhere can better modern material be found for this purpose than in the best of what has been written by these Latin Americans.

The Editorial Project is now making a careful selection of Latin American works in the symphonic and chamber music field, for concert use. Although interest in performing music of this sort has been high during the past season, there is continual complaint that it is hard to find good material available with instrumental parts as well as scores. Lesser works are often chosen merely because they are completely at hand. It is the plan of the Project to select, with the aid of representative committees, the music best suited for performance and to make it readily accessible through duplication of the scores and parts which may be needed.

One important point to bear in mind in any effort at hemisphere collaboration is that music plays a more important part in the life of the average person living in Latin America than in the United States. If our music is not very well understood in those countries, it may not seem important to the average United States citizen. Music however is one product by which the Latin Americans judge us. And, inversely, it is of great moment to a large, cultivated section of the Latin American population to have their music liked and accepted here.

*Henry Cowell*