

composers. He seemed to have forty foot trumpets and eighty foot trombones in his orchestra, while the rest of the instruments remained of normal size.

Alfred V. Frankenstein

CRUSADING FOR AMERICANS AT ROCHESTER

WITH the projected performance of *Emperor Jones* in Berlin last winter cancelled (even before the Hitler regime) "because whatever the merits of the work, the German government feels it unfair to use public funds in these difficult times to promote the work of foreigners instead of native composers," a reciprocal feeling is inevitable that a little chauvinism, discreet or even slightly indiscreet, might not be inappropriate in America. The most concentrated effort in this direction during the last six or seven years has been at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, inspired by the crusading spirit of Howard Hanson, whose platform it is that all-American programs are necessary and desirable in order to give promising talents a hearing which will promote their development.

The festival this season (held May 2nd to May 5th), like its two predecessors aimed to present a cross-section of American music. The programs revealed a range of styles from that of Horatio Parker to Lazare Saminsky's. The first concert, presented by the School Chorus and orchestra, was made up of works too well known to need comment here—*Keltic Legend* by Lawrence Powell, the *Evocation* of Loeffler, *Harold Harfager* by Parker, and the Suite from Carpenter's *Birthday of the Infanta*.

The second program, given by the School's highly proficient chamber orchestra under Karl van Haesen, was made up of ten works. Bernard Rogers' *Rhapsody Nocturne* is sensitive music, emotional and exquisite with that orchestral color-sense which is characteristic of all his work. Roy Harris' *Andantino* for strings and woodwinds, romantic in feeling, has a chorale-like beginning and end, and a middle section which whips up speed in Russian-folk manner—a strange inconsistency of style for so short a piece. But it is interesting, nevertheless. Samin-

sky's *Litanies of Women* are somber, super-romantic in spirit and successful on the whole, though the composer's feeling for the orchestra is surer than his sense of the possibilities of the English language. Charles Loeffler's *Cornemuse*, a rhapsody for oboe, viola and piano, started off fresh and unconfused, but lost its impetus later on. George McKay's *Fantasie* on "Oh bury me not on the Lone Prairie" is a delightful work, slow quiet, unclimactic, always compelling. The basses' pizzicato and an off-stage oboe are effectively mysterious. The *Deep Forest* of Mabel Daniels is clear experienced writing in an old-fashioned idiom. The orchestral suite *From the Black Belt* by William Grant Still is a thoroughly ingratiating series of character sketches—"a mischievous little pickaninny, a lightly treading lot of dancers, an aged rheumatic," and others. Still has great orchestral subtlety and a knack for the effective ending. To this writer Deems Taylor's *Portrait of a Lady* and Daniel Gregory Mason's *Country Pictures* seemed frankly undistinguished.

At the first of two brilliantly attended evenings in the Eastman Theatre, Dr. Hanson led the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra and the Eastman School Chorus. The program opened with Douglas Moore's *Babbitt*. This well-known work, deliciously satirical in content, is sincere in the right places, banal in the right places, skillful and spirited. *Theme and Variations* by Irving Landau, is the work of a very young composer of extreme promise. Though the theme was not particularly interesting, the execution was excellent. Considerably too long it was nevertheless almost continuously expressive. A refreshing flow of emotion, the absence of sophistication and a real orchestral flare mark Landau out as one who will bear watching. Robert Russell Bennett's *Concerto Grosso*, for small dance band and symphony orchestra is an unusual departure in a classical form. Its five movements reek of "show business" atmosphere. Mr. Bennett's skill is unquestioned, his music is clever. It is a fine work if one's tastes run to symphonic jazz. Edward Burlingame Hill's *Concertino* for piano and orchestra, though it offers no addition to our musical vocabulary has clarity and directness that justify it completely as music.

The chief work of the evening was Bernard Rogers' cantata, *The Exodus*, a production of great power. Mr. Rogers is merciless to the voice and any occasional lack of effectiveness in spots was due to the human limitations of the well trained chorus. Nevertheless the cantata was impressive, vigorous and gripping. It has more emotional variety than earlier works of the same composer which have inclined toward the somber. Hebraic color in melody and orchestral material effectively pervade the work. It is a distinct contribution to modern choral literature.

The stage presentation of two new ballets, *The Princess and the Puppet*, by Burrill Phillips, a student in the school, and *La Guiblessé* by William Grant Still, composed the last program of the festival. Dr. Hanson conducted the Rochester Civic Orchestra and Thelma Birgerree arranged the choreography. The Phillips' ballet, set to an Oriental fairy tale, has many a touch of *Schéhérazade* peeping from its score. The story, from the Bengalese, is rather trite but the music is polished, and, if lacking perhaps in dramatic form, thoroughly successful in relation to the plot. It had a few inconsistencies of style but several moments of extreme musical charm—the fan dance, the lyric finale, and the second inter-mezzo in particular. The grotesque dance has already been performed in New York by the Manhattan Symphony.

Mr. Still's ballet concerns a legendary sorceress of Martinique who appears in the guise of a beautiful woman to lure men to the mountains to their destruction. The story was condensed and forcefully projected with a dramatic genuineness rarely found in the ballet form. Mr. Still's music drives relentlessly to its climax. It is an earlier work than the *Sadji*, produced two years ago, is simpler musically, but has the same accurate timing, stage sense, and sure-fire effectiveness. *Adelaide Hooker*

KULTUR - TERROR

IN the Hitler-Deutschland of today the Nazi leaders have entrenched themselves in the firmest fashion and their advance