

Forum evening of George Boyle with (among other things) his splendid *Violin and Piano Sonata*, and the Ballet evening which gave the world premiere of Evelyn Berckman's splendid score, *County Fair*.

Arthur Cohn

THIRD SERVICE FOR THE TEMPLE

THE *Sacred Service* of Mr. Isadore Freed is the third of a series for the Liturgy of the Reformed Synagogue to be introduced by Mr. Lazare Saminsky at his Three Choir Festival (the first two were by Frederick Jacobi and Ernest Bloch). Mr. Freed's work unquestionably deserves to be classified as important music. To this reviewer such music must have both social value, which may be translated in terms of service to society, and artistic value, expressed in terms of mastery of technic and crystallization of style and idea. Mr. Freed's *Service* is both useful and masterful. The music has its own life and integrity quite apart from the text. The tone of lofty religious meditation seems to come from an inner compulsion. A text is, after all, only the outer garment. It serves to uncover the realm of music that imbues the thought and feeling of the creative musician. If the form is religious, as in the present instance, then inevitably the music will rise, flood that form, be molded by it, and in turn make its own mold.

Mr. Freed's *Service* consists of eighteen separate but related anthems, responses, and laudations, grouped into five large sections: Invocation, Sanctification, Reading of the Law, Adoration, and Conclusion. The work rests, harmonically, on a modal base of ancient tonalities whose ingenious use gives the *Service* its archaic flavor. Mr. Freed achieves the very desirable end of producing Jewish music without ever once being pseudo-oriental. This is an esthetic *tour de force* which only the rigorously disciplined artist can effect. Mr. Freed's discipline in handling the various sections of the *Service* is what makes it significant to the musician and interesting to the layman.

The work is scored, generally, for four part chorus, baritone solo and organ. At times, as in the inspired *Lift Up Your Heads*,

O Ye Gates, there is a broadening of the contrapuntal web for which a six part chorus is employed; and in the Fugato of the Sanctification section there is some masterly eight part writing. One does not easily forget the brilliant quality of this Fugato, or the fine, energetic pulse of the *Who Is Like Unto Thee*. In the prayer for peace, *Etz Chayim*, the music rises to noble heights. The melodic line is simple and pure, superbly supported by rich and poignant harmonies. Woven into these large choral patterns are several moving solos for baritone, which were sung with magistral dignity by Moses Rudinow.

Pauline Konstantin

BOSTON CARRIES ON

BOSTON has just recovered from a second attack of Prokofieff. That incredible man, winding up his brilliant American tour in this city, conducted the Boston Symphony Orchestra in an all-Prokofieff concert which compared rather favorably with the Prokofieff works done in January by Koussevitzky. The concert opened brilliantly with a suite from his ballet *Chout*, which strains the word "cleverness" to a snapping-point. It is a very well written work, with geniality to spare. One is thankful these days for a concertpiece that has a finale one can whistle while leaving the hall. The *First Piano Concerto*, played by the composer, showed up wretchedly in the light of its predecessor. Truthfully, it is not a good piece. It is full of difficult and brilliant piano passages which can really be heard because of the unpretentious size of the orchestra; but its one real tune is worked to death (especially, it seemed, since it was in D-flat); it lacks continuity, and it sounded like the student work that it is. When it was over, you asked, "Why?"

But then he redeemed himself. His orchestral fairy tale, *Peter and the Wolf*, is a masterpiece of its kind. It purports to teach the instruments of the orchestra to little Russian children by having each animal in the story (and animals abound in this story) represented by a particular instrument which followed the duck or bird or wolf through its complicated wanderings. There is a narrator who serves to forward the plot; he is at least a better