

Any child knows by now that there is no money in it, and little enough glory. But young people do it just the same,

with the obstinate generosity that does keep turning up in our species.

OVER THE AIR

By CHARLES MILLS

WAR propaganda, as was to be expected, has found its way into almost every type of program on the air. Surprising however, is the sparse use of music. Every network now runs a number of these war shows, but only Mutual's *This Is Our Enemy* goes in much for musical effect beyond routine introductory march themes or occasional fanfares. *This Is Our Enemy* is an average radio mystery thriller; music highlights striking moments, offers background material and serves as connecting link between the dialogues and the commentary. This well regulated accompaniment makes for sure-fire technic. It can be adequately effective when music of good quality is used intelligently and to the point, which unfortunately is not the way it works out on Mutual's series. The general idea here is to engender hate for Nazi Germany. But first the program itself must learn to make fewer enemies and attract more listeners. Bloodthirsty over-written plots fairly bristle with the old nickelodeon villains who twirl their mustaches and utter sneaky, confidential asides to hissing audiences. The music is in keeping — unashamedly bombastic, with loud trombones blasting a descending major seventh to give us the vicious arrogance of a Nazi chief, or screaming tremolo strings, à la Strauss, for the agony of suffering victims. Surely radio has something smarter to show than this — and now is the time to produce it.

Mutual also offered its version of the Shostakovich *Seventh*, an industrious performance by Eugene Ormandy with the Philadelphia Orchestra. Ormandy and his men appear to have rehearsed this tedious opus with righteous enthusiasm, which is certainly not what they did to the *Third Symphony* of Roy Harris. The unfortunate rendering of Harris' work, incidentally its thirty-sixth, was marred by unprofessional false entrances and poor dynamic balances. Chalk up on the credit side, however, Mutual's performance of Harold Morris' *Suite for Orchestra*, cleanly played by Alfred Wallenstein's ensemble. This is an interesting and colorful work, somewhat curious in form and in the general emotional layout. The opening fugal overture seems to have a dramatic aim, but it is scored in a manner more suitable to burlesque; neither atmosphere is fully achieved. A melancholy intermezzo seems authentic, orchestrated in a style brilliantly effective for radio. The concluding humoresque is delightful and amusing although the pretentious ending falls flat.

Bernard Van Dieren's rarely heard *Sonnet Amoretti* was beautifully played by Bernard Hermann and the C.B.S. orchestra. This fine little work shows a skillful treatment of dissonance which is completely natural in its rich sonorities. There is a perverse artistry in its subtle harmony, its cunning expertness of re-

solutions; a simplicity almost virginal in effect is created out of extraordinarily complex material. C.B.S. also presented a little piano piece by Roger Sessions, *Pages From a Diary, Number 1*, a sane, reflective work with order and pattern very much in evidence. A fragment sentimental in mood, it shows, nevertheless, careful workmanship and an intelligent though somewhat conventional taste.

The Cleveland Orchestra, under Rudolph Ringwall, gave a balanced performance of Charles Martin Loeffler's *Pagan Poem* (C.B.S.). This elegant, sensual impressionism doesn't hold up too well in the more severe contemporary light, yet it remains in its way a charming and indolent kind of music, gratifying perhaps for those who like a little narcotic with their radio fare. For listeners with romantic inclinations, the C.B.S. broadcast of Howard Hanson's *Second Symphony* should prove satisfactory. This work is scored effectively enough in the nineteenth century style, comfortably, and even juicily in color and texture. C.B.S. also gave us Erich Korngold's *Little Love Letter* for tenor, voice and orchestra, a sentimental trifle, about as profound as Carrie Jacob Bond's more heart-searching utterances. The program also presented Korngold's hornpipe from his *Much Ado About Nothing*, a well scored piece effectively rustic with especially fine brass treatment throughout. C.B.S. continues its Sunday afternoon broadcasts by the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. A very disappointing item offered on that series was the performance of Ernst Krenek's *Variations on a South Carolina Folk Song, "I Wonder as I Wander,"* which, from the standpoint of radio entertainment, seemed grey and ineffective.

N.B.C. produced some interesting concerts with Stokowski, whose experience in managing orchestral sonorities is a boon to radio. His performance of *The Bright Land* by Harold Triggs was especially notable, but much credit for its brilliant effect goes, as it should, to the composer. This well orchestrated piece is especially fresh in its exploitation of high register violins, in divisi harmony, and in striking mixtures of arco and pizzicato treatments. Although the instrumental interest in the work is superior to the musical content, the music is nevertheless projected with a strong and positive character. Another offering by Stokowski with the N.B.C. orchestra was a program of two American works, *Exile Symphony* by Alan Hovanes and *Symphonic Rumba* by Paul Lavallo. The Hovanes work was somewhat stale in idiom and weak in substance but showed vitality in the scoring. The only thing symphonic in Lavallo's attempt was the size of the orchestra; the whole piece was one large dose of overstuffed corn.

The much heralded performance of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* by the N.B.C. under Toscanini was only mildly entertaining, and much less authentic in effect than the old Paul Whiteman recording with Gershwin as pianist. Toscanini also offered two premieres, *Choric Dance Number 2* by Paul Creston and Morton Gould's *Lincoln Legend*. Both were disappointing in quality. Creston's piece showed some enthusiasm in its technical preparation but an utter lack of distinction and freshness made it musically uneventful. And judging by the pretentious and bombastic effect of his epic efforts, Gould does better when he sticks to his knitting; his jazz is at least convincing and amusing.

WNYC gave a program of piano music played by Andor Foldes. One of the pianist's own works was performed, a simple distinctive prelude, small in size but beautifully fashioned. Foldes gets around too, and he did himself proud over WQXR with an interesting per-

formance of Aaron Copland's *Piano Sonata* (1939-1941). Although the Foldes conception of its dynamics somehow lacked power, his control and intensity gave us a fresh perspective on this noble work.