

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 Birgere 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

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

is ruthless. Cultural life has been profoundly affected. During the last few weeks practically every theatre director of importance, every conductor of international reputation has been restricted in the performance of his duties. Everyone who has ever declared his sympathies in any fashion for modern art, has been removed from office. Those whose surpassing gifts seemed to make them irremovably secure now swell the lists of the proscribed. Bruno Walter is forbidden to further conduct his concerts in the Leipzig Gewandhaus and in the Berlin Philharmonic. Horenstein has fled from Düsseldorf, the city which was the center of his influence. Fritz Busch, an unchallengeably true German, has been prevented from conducting because he did not join the National Socialist party. Brecher, Szenkar, Steinberg, Rosenstock, Stiedry and many others have been given a "leave of absence." And now Klemperer is gone.

The theatre directors have suffered the same fate as the conductors. Only a few have been retained at their posts. To these have been assigned men who, for the most part, are members of the Storm Troops; their duty is to act as overseers of production plans and engagements from the party standpoint. Any independent artistic direction is of course no longer possible. Among the stage directors involuntarily going into retirement are all those to whom the modern theatre of Germany is indebted. Men like Kartung of Darmstadt, Reucker of Dresden, Kehm of Stuttgart, Turnau of Frankfort, Harmann of Chemnitz, to mention only a few, have been frozen out. And, as was self-understood, such a man as Carl Ebert, who created a model opera stage at the State Opera in Berlin has been removed from office, for the present.

The chief responsibility and direction for art in new Germany rests with the Reichsminister for the People's Enlightenment and Propaganda. Art as a means to an end, art as a weapon—these are also the slogans of the communists. But the goal is different. For what German art must struggle toward is undisguised reaction. Dr. Joseph Goebbels for whom the Ministry for People's Enlightenment and Propaganda was specially created, long ago formulated his program and point of view about art and made them known through his newspaper *The Search-*

*light.* Regarding modern art he has said: "What passes today openly as 'modern art' is to a large degree only fashionable art, the swamp bloom of a democratic sidewalk culture which must be rejected; it does not train our people and lead them on to higher things, but on the contrary poisons their will and their knowledge and alienates them from the common thought and activity of the race. This modern street-culture shows strong Jewish influences etc." Goebbels sees however "in art which is the expression of the highest creative activity a kind of race community (*Blutsgemeinschaft*).". And further: "Only a national political art is truly creative and is the only kind of art for which there is justifiable existence. . . . International art is a term which is self-contradictory." These are the phrases by which the illusion of the existence of modern national art is to be created. Requests for examples of such art meet with embarrassed evasions even from the National Socialists. They hide under the past.

And even the contemporary living composers who now represent German music belong to the past. Paul Graener, a solid, honest composer has at last achieved success with his opera *Friedman Bach*. Hans Pfitzner who was the best qualified to carry the banner of German music, keeps aloof from the official movement.

The organization with the most defined cultural point of view is "The Fighting Union for German Culture" (*Kampfbund für Deutsche Kultur*). The leader of the music division is Gustav Havemann, a mediocre fiddler and a miserable conductor. Nevertheless, he feels himself chosen to direct German music in a German fashion for the German people. And around him is gathered a group, mostly of composers, whose only claim as leaders of art rests on their ancestor's certificates of baptism.

Artistically the National Socialist Party has become an official party for the German Philistine. Listening to the battle songs of their storm troops we hear popular ditties often with the sentimental touch of the pseudo folk-song, soldier songs, marches and ever more marches. It may be that the leaders appeal in this fashion to the so-called "folk-soul."

It is now apparent that even if the hardships of the first

period of change are ameliorated in the future, the new rulers do not have the remotest intention of supporting the movement toward modern art, but, on the contrary, of taking every means in their power to uproot it.

This is all the more important because we have just lived through a crisis in artistic production from which it was obvious that one of the most promising ways out was in the direction of proletarian music. But the renewal of musical life from this source is no longer possible. For the entire range of proletarian cultural organizations have been completely crippled.

Let us glance briefly at the development of this artistic movement of the last years. Since the first appearance of the large proletarian choral work, the *Massnahme* of Hanns Eisler, there has grown up in Germany a form of political oratorio. *Die Massnahme*, to words by Bert Brecht, sets forth in most concentrated form an episode out of the Chinese class-war. Four comrades discuss the measures taken during a revolutionary war. The dramatic scenes are worked out by means of songs, and the judgments, or texts are announced in the form of choruses. Eisler, a former Schönberg disciple had developed from his first purely atonal compositions toward a powerful simplicity. To-day he knows how to write choruses and songs which have great musical solidity and achieve a maximum of precision in their structure and rhythmical power. This music withstands the most rigid tests of esthetic criticism, yet has all the prerequisites for popularity. In the workers' circles of Russia and Germany Eisler has won such popularity with the choruses and songs, which have also proved successful in the concert halls. Recently he has become a sound-film composer. He wrote the music for the film *No Man's Land* (now forbidden in Germany), and *Kuhle Wampe* (Brecht-Dudow) and he had undertaken further work with several Soviet-Russian movies. At the present time he is working in Paris on a new Trivas film.

Eisler has already created a school. Talented young composers have gone further along the road he has opened. From the many attempts toward a proletarian theatre-and-concert form, let us single out for passing mention *Mann in Beton*, music by Gronostay, and the *Big Plan* by Johannes R. Becher,

for which G. Vollmer has written interesting and gripping choruses. The German Workers' Singing Union cultivated this revolutionary music with the greatest diligence, publishing it in most part themselves.

The model of proletarian theatre productions was presented in Berlin by the "Troupe 1931" in the form of three pieces, the result of activity among a circle of workers. For these sketches which in a pure form represented the best theatre of recent years, Stefan Wolpe wrote songs, choruses and interludes which are in themselves a new form of theatre music.

All these beginnings, which pointed to such a bright future are now destroyed. Not only the new political music, but the works of modern leaders, Schönberg, Weill, Stravinsky may no longer be performed. Even if it is to be hoped that the people will not endure the boredom imposed on it by racial exclusion, it will be difficult again to build up what barbarism has destroyed.

X. T.

## CONCERTS, OPERA, BALLET IN RUSSIA TODAY

THE musical life of Moscow and Leningrad during the past season was one of extraordinary activity. It has of course many features which mark it off from other countries. Over-refined and intimate music is avoided, while large scale, monumental works are favored. That is why the newest music is slower to appear here than in Western Europe. The large auditorium is the constant thought. Audiences are mostly organized, attending in groups.

This dependence on organized audiences to some extent shapes programs. There is an attempt at systematic development, an effort to assimilate "the heritage from the past," to quote Goethe, in an order determined by historical and sequential considerations. This year the plan centered about the observance of great memorial days; Wagner and Brahms were exhaustively commemorated. The fifteenth anniversary of the October Revolution and the founding of the Red Army were also musically celebrated.

The formation of the Soviet Composers' League in 1932 accelerated productive activity, so that a number of great sym-