

its opening key, a blues with ostinato accompaniment, a nicely expressive adagio, a tarantella that seemed out of place and a fugue which had the correct number of stretti and cadences. Mr. Kaplan's assets are good melodies, an understanding of the capacities of the instruments he is using, and a sense of form. The program closed with Gruenberg's *Daniel Jazz*. The second concert included the Villa-Lobos *Bachianas Brasileiras* for eight cellos (played earlier this season in New York) and went on to the first performance of Amadeo de Fillippi's *Concerto for Chamber Orchestra*, a bright and nervous piece which hasn't much to say but says it very well. The first and last movements go along at a tremendous pace and make you wish that Fillippi would sometimes slow down for the audience to grasp the line of the work. The closing number was the first performance of my oratorio *Susanna and the Elders* set to a text by John Latouche. The work, meant as an entertainment piece for chorus and orchestra, utilizes the style of revivalist meetings. Alfred Newman gave it an excellent performance.

Jerome Moross

## JUBILEE WIND-UP

THE one piece to lift its head above the rank and file of new works heard recently in Chicago came to Orchestra Hall by way of England. Its distinction lies partly in workmanship, principally in daring and amusing insolence, and not at all in originality. The full title is *Scapino, A Comedy Overture for Full Orchestra, after an Etching from Jacques Callot's "Balli Sfessania," 1622*. The composer is William Walton, who is now serving with the British forces. From the appearance of the pencil manuscript sent "To Frederick Stock and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, in commemoration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of its foundation," he completed the work under very difficult circumstances during 1940.

The music itself is in no discernible way influenced by garish night bombings. It is extraordinarily fresh, gay, pithy, superficially clever, and makes its appeal almost immediately. As a consequence Stock played it six times during the last two weeks of the season and it began to look as if it would join the category of von Reznicek's *Donna Diana*, though the music does not nearly fit its mold so snugly. Walton's orchestra is cheap in effect, styleless in its surface hardness, puerile in its cock-a-doodle-doo percussive impressionism. There is, too, an obvious insistence on saying

something clever. It is reminiscent of Oscar Wilde in a poorer moment, though it is not *l'art pour l'art*; merely *l'humeur pour l'humeur*.

Alfredo Casella's gargantuan *Symphony No. 3* is perhaps one of the more sterile examples of the genre. It has scarcely a moment, except perhaps in the *Scherzo*, where the material justifies the use of so large a canvas. It is in fact so poor in invention that it is even doubtful whether a much smaller canvas would have served effectively. There is very little interest, still less individuality; and although it is replete with a kind of technical resourcefulness, it presents nothing more than the spectacle of a strained development.

Leo Sowerby's *Third Symphony*, on the other hand, revealed a certain eloquence and impersonal charm. Its derivative elements were not too evident; if they had been more successfully treated, the musical expressiveness of their substance would undoubtedly have gained as well. But there is too great a chasm between Sowerby's romanticism and his attempts at formalism. Each movement, especially the slow middle one, is spread out to a point where boredom becomes no longer mere negative acquiescence. The best is perhaps the last movement which, owing to its unpredictable rhythms, achieves a certain formal completeness, as well as an agreeable primitivism of expression. But even here the principal theme, though attractive rhythmically, is somewhat ineffectual; overburdened with an impotent chromaticism, it is confined to repetitious meanderings of slight melodic force.

*Remi Gassmann*

## MUSEUM PIECES

**M**USIC in a museum is, like any exhibit, on show and calls for display. Showmanship would improve an evening at Carnegie Hall or the Metropolitan, too, but there it matters less since the radio saves most of us the trouble of attendance. For the small musical retreat, however, dedicated to the new, the exotic, the esoteric, a producer is imperative if only to prevent the generally grim walls, bleak light and poor acoustics from crushing one's spirit and wiping out the very anticipation of pleasure.

This spring the Museum of Modern Art is giving New York a series of brilliant, intimate, musical evenings called Coffee Concerts. The museum has certain obvious facilities. Its building is handsome and the