

id, "miserable shrimp." He dreaded to handle a gun or work with casualties, yet under attack he was transformed into a heroic, self-sacrificing individual. He had three remarkable escapes from severe bombings, one in a shelter, another in his home and a third in his second home. He saw his parents badly cut up. He proved a successful warden and he welcomed air raids. "It is me against them. I'll show them I'm quicker." He unconsciously explained the reason

for his bravery thus: "When an air raid comes, the girls look up to me, and they cling to me and I look after them." His work helped him overcome failure and frustration.

War thus removes many of the causes of suicide, especially loneliness and the sense of personal failure. It makes the mentally unbalanced feel important and reluctant to let go of life. This explains the decline in the rate of self-destruction.

Music

THE GOLDEN AGE OF THE VIOLIN

BY PAUL ROSENFELD

THE most important as well as the most cheerful of recent events in music is the introduction among us of the instrumental music of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries in Italy—the music of the golden age of the violin. In other respects, our musical culture dangerously resembles the air in the subways, which is to say, it is fairly stale.

Two little abuses, on the part of

orchestral conductors and radio-directors, prettily have been vitiating this almost best of the possessions of contemporary man's for us. One of them is our leaders' touching fidelity to a limited number of compositions. Their constant rotation of the well-tried and established has been impairing the power of Beethoven, Brahms, Tchaikowsky and the other standard symphonists. Not even the most heroic substance can stand such over-use. The other abuse flows from their equally touching passion for the indiscriminate in-

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troductioin of second-rate novelties, such as the complete output of Shostakovich the brittle and Sibelius the bourgeois—in the word's pre-Marxian sense.

The saving introduction of the unhackneyed masterpieces of the violin's golden age, to be sure, is a revival, and the business of revival, in Romain Rolland's celebrated phrase, ever is tantamount to "opening a window—on a courtyard." Still, the musical public is indebted, more possibly than it knows, to the artists, interpreters, recorders, directors, who are responsible for the dissemination. It is no mean delight to hear the suave and simple and aristocratically sober accents of the sonatas, concerti, symphonies of Corelli, Vivaldi, Leonardo Leo and the rest of the old Italian galaxy; and today we are hearing them with increasing frequency, and over the air no less frequently than in the concert rooms. A generation since, the sumptuous work of these old composers was pretty well unknown outside conservatories, and even there known only most fragmentarily. Covered with the dust of two centuries, it lay in MS. and rare editions on the dark shelves in musty libraries.

Its rediscovery has been a consequence of the Bach and Händel

renaissances. Excited by the treasures uncovered in these revivals, interest began directing itself towards the works of the predecessors of these mid-eighteenth century titans, among whom the Italian masters of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries prominently figured. Scholars began a systematic re-examination of their rare old editions and MSS.

Musicians at first were attracted to the choral rather more than the instrumental compositions. With the appearance of new editions of the instrumental music, their interest embraced this, also, with alacrity.

II

Back there, in Italy 250 years ago, Stradivarius of Cremona at length had succeeded in perfecting a type of musical instrument which for over a century had been attaining ever greater favor. This was the violin.

Originally it and the members of its family such as the viola and the 'cello had been considered vulgar instruments, suitable for taverns and inferior to the medieval viols. People had found the violin's tone disagreeably piercing. There is no doubt that the original speci-

mens of the species were uncouth and uncontrollable. Because of the power, the continuity and the humanity of its tone, the lutemakers of Northern Italy, however, during the seventeenth century, had been refining the instrument; and musicians simultaneously had been acquiring the technique which taught it to sing.

All during the century the business of composition for the new instrument also was progressing; to a large extent at the instigation of the Church, as ever eager to employ every means able to increase the splendor of her ritual. Pieces for string-ensembles were written for performance immediately before and after High Mass. Violin solos were introduced at the moment of the elevation of the Host. Naturally dignified, noble in style, these ritualistic compositions were called church-sonatas in contrast to pieces intended for social occasions, made up of movements built on ancient dance rhythms and called chamber-sonatas. New schemes of composition also were in process of evolution: that of the concerto grosso, which artfully juxtaposes the sonorities of large and small instrumental groups; that of the concerto, which provides conspicuous rôles for solo instruments; and finally, even

though rudimentarily enough, the symphony.

Huge string orchestras began coming into use. At a concert in the palace of ex-Queen Christina of Sweden, in Rome in 1682, Corelli conducted a band of 150 strings. Contemporaneously, Lully, conducting the orchestra of the opera in Paris, regularly disposed of eighty-five "violins."

The violin's golden age, or first great period of artistic prosperity, itself was brought about by the appearance of the men of genius who, bewitched by its perfected tone, in the decades about 1700 poured magnificent music into the forms appropriate to the instrument. Many of these individuals became European celebrities.

The leader of them all was Guiseppi Torelli of Bologna, to-day little more than a name to the musical world. The most famous probably was Archangelo Corelli, the chief musician in Rome to Cardinal Ottoboni, an enthusiastic musical amateur who entertained ambassadors, visiting royalty and other notabilities for his uncle, Pope Innocent XII. Corelli, amusingly, was extremely parsimonious and a lover of fine paintings. Händel who knew him said that his chief delight consisted in obtaining admissions to picture collections

without paying entrance-fees. He was also extremely sensitive. Stories of the anguish caused him by artistic humiliations are famous among musicologists.

Probably the greatest of these composers, however, was Antonio Vivaldi, a Venetian priest, called "the red," because of the color of his hair, not his politics. What manner of priest he was can be gathered from the fact that, on an occasion, a cardinal forbade the production of one of his operas on the grounds that Vivaldi never said mass and openly was living with the prima donna. He conducted an all-girl orchestra in an *Ospedale*, a conservatory where impecunious females received musical educations. That his orchestra approached H. Leopold Spitalny's in point of feminine pulchritude is not to be presumed. Doubtless, however, it played well. What really is important is that for its benefit Vivaldi composed his majestic concerti, largely the models of those of J. S. Bach. Another Venetian, the patrician Benedetto Marcello, ranks highly in this galaxy.

Together, these men finally fused the hitherto distinct spirits of the rich and elaborate religious sonatas and the earthy, jocund secular pieces, and so initiated in music-

making the unity and universality of spirit which beautifully came to characterize the ensuing classical music of Europe. Therein lies not a little of their glory. That their compositions haven't quite the warmth of those of their great German successors cannot be denied. Corelli's, for example, are wonderfully limpid, polished, correct in point of harmony, unerringly tasteful. But Corelli dwelt in Rome, and the Roman note, though often grand, ever is a trifle chill. Mainly it is in Vivaldi that we encounter abundance, audacity, a plenitude of sonority.

Again, all these masters' compositions are program music to an extent which may well prevent their complete reception. Yet their music is unfailingly fresh and spontaneous in substance and feeling. Its melodies are delightful, its rhythms emancipated, and the nice proportionateness of its contrasts of sonorities remains amazing.

The style is quiet, healthily realistic in mood, reserved in the expression of melancholy, sane and simple in that of gayety. Its naturalization among us must appear the deed of benign powers, calling in something of the fine spirit of the Old World, to redress the balance of the New.

When the stork



DURING this year, close to three and one quarter million babies will have been born to American mothers—an all-time record. About the same number may be expected during the coming year.

Every mother-to-be wants, above everything, a healthy, happy baby. The wisest step she can take is to see the doc-

tor *early*—especially in these days of wartime worries and emotional stress.

Such a visit helps the doctor keep both mother and baby in the best possible health . . . helps them avoid complications while medical and hospital facilities are under great strain.

An early visit also enables the doctor

arrives in wartime

to schedule later visits to conserve his and the mother's time . . . to make hospital reservations or necessary home arrangements including, perhaps, available nursing service.

For expectant mothers who are employed, it is *doubly* advisable to seek the doctor's early advice about the suitability of the work and how long it may continue.

The health program outlined by the doctor will vary with the individual. Wartime conditions, including rationing, make individual advice especially helpful. Here are some things the doctor usually emphasizes . . .

A nourishing diet. The mother needs the basic foods essential to the health of both herself and her baby. The right diet also helps keep the mother's teeth in sound condition. A visit to the dentist may be advised.

Exercise, sunshine, and fresh air. Proper exercise helps the body's muscles make necessary adjustments. Violent effort—especially reaching—should be avoided.

Sleep and rest. Eight hours each night is the minimum. Daily rest periods and an afternoon nap are beneficial. It is wise to perform as many household tasks as possible while seated—preparing vege-

tables, for example.

Clothing. In general, clothing should be light in weight, comfortably warm, attractive and, for economy's sake, easy to alter. Shoes of the type most comfortable to you are important.

A booklet of facts—free

Your doctor's advice can do much to keep you comfortable and in good spirits during the months before your baby is born. Upon request, Metropolitan will mail you a 48-page booklet, 123-L, entitled, "Information for Expectant Mothers," containing information which doctors usually want their patients to have for ready reference.

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► *What and how much will
we eat this winter?*

THE FOOD OUTLOOK

BY VANCE JOHNSON

THIS is the winter we were to go hungry. Food shortages "approaching famine" would grip us, we were told — in February, when meat and butter had practically disappeared from market counters; in April, when a poll of county agricultural agents foretold a 20 per cent decline in production; in June and July, when meat and butter shortages reappeared. A new "crisis," we were told, threatened every thirty days. Governors, mayors, congressmen and a host of others joined in the chorus. President Roosevelt replaced two food administrators in a period of less than four months.

Winter has come. What has happened? Meat still is scarce, but abundant compared to what the average city shopper found in February, the month before rationing began. Butter still is precious even if you have the points required to buy a pound, but margarine is

plentiful and point-cheap. Other foods are rare, but no shortages "approaching famine" have developed.

American farmers this year have put the calamity howlers to shame. The harvest now being completed is the second largest in this country's history — second only to 1942, which was an almost perfect year for farming. When this year's farm production is added to an unprecedented livestock population of 80,000,000 head, it amounts to the largest food supply in American history — 5 per cent above 1942; 32 per cent above the average of the last five pre-war years; about 46 per cent above the peak supply in World War I.

Except for fresh fruits and vegetables, we eat this year food which was produced last year. Food produced in 1943 will carry us through the harvest of 1944. A fourth of this supply has been set aside by the

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