

week postponement if Erhard would agree to a public endorsement of their demands at the end of the period. Dr. Erhard indignantly refused, and left the building in such a rage that for once he forgot to stick a cigar in his mouth.

In a press conference staged to rub salt in Dr. Erhard's political wounds, one of the biggest mineowners, Dr. Ferdinand Marx, made an interesting slip of the tongue. "I don't see any reason why the new prices shouldn't start today," he said. "Now that we have the confidence of our voters—I'm sorry, I mean of our stockholders—we cannot disappoint them." As if to underscore their defiance of the federal government, the mineowners released to the press the text of a letter to other industrial organizations in West Germany, advising them likewise to raise prices at this time despite government efforts to hold the line against inflation.

Some observers see this demonstration as bringing into the open the real nature of the relationship that has been growing in the Federal Republic between its political institutions and the holders of its economic power. Others believe that this view is too pessimistic and underestimates both the character of Dr. Erhard and the political power he can mobilize.

Apart from the immense moral and political authority of Chancellor Adenauer which backs up his own considerable popularity, Erhard has recently gained a formidable if unexpected ally: organized labor. At a conference here with the chancellor the other day, in which the minister of economics participated, representatives of the major West German labor unions pledged support to the fight against price increases. The gratitude with which Dr. Erhard accepted their offer underlines the gravity of the crisis.

IT IS NOT ONLY national economic policy or Dr. Erhard's own political future that is at stake in his struggle with the mineowners. It is whether the federal government in West Germany is to become the servant of big enterprise or whether business exists, as Dr. Erhard has often proclaimed, to serve the needs of the national community.



VIEWS & REVIEWS

Homage

To the Master of Prades

JOSEPH SZIGETI

PABLO CASALS' firmness in denying himself things he considers harmful to his playing must have helped to speed his recovery from a recent heart attack. Long before he was threatened, he would deny himself a glass of wine at meals, which for a Catalan is a greater sacrifice than we may imagine. When, in Prades in 1950, he offered my wife and me a glass of the sweet Malaga-like wine of the region without partaking of it himself, he made it clear that it was a sacrifice at the altar of the unrelenting taskmaster perfection.

IT WAS as a Catalan patriot that Casals spoke to me during a crossing to America in the late 1920's. The subject was not music but rather the artist's need in the midst of his uprooted existence for a feeling of belonging to some spot, preferably his native soil. (He knew that I had lived in England, in Switzerland, in France—everywhere but in the country of my birth—without belonging anywhere.) He told me of his birthplace, Vendrell, and of the heartbreak and joys of the founding of

his Barcelona orchestra, the Orquesta Pau Casals, of San Salvador in Catalonia, of his house there, and of the sentiment that binds him to the people of his homeland.

This conversation came back to me vividly when during one of my visits in Prades Casals suddenly turned to an old engraved map of Catalonia on the wall and—finger on the glass—outlined to me the boundaries of his Catalonia in former centuries, and told me of its repeated occupations by the French and of its specifically Catalan culture.

His substitution of the native "Pau" for the Castilian "Pablo" is part of this pattern, proof of his preoccupation with the question of the right to use the Catalan language, the identity of Catalonia as a distinct entity of western Europe. Casals and his entourage speak only Catalan at home.

His composing of *sardanas* is an expression of this same preoccupation; the *sardana* is a favorite folk dance of the Catalonians, which "They cherish with patriotic fervor as an expression of the people and their

common democratic feeling." "The *sardana* is our flag," Casals often explains. A saying like this is characteristic of the habit Casals has of giving a personal, symbolic meaning to natural phenomena. So, for instance, he can talk about the rugged, majestic height of the Matterhorn and compare the mountain to Bach—especially during the months of teaching in Zermatt at the foot of the mountain. From the endless variety that he knows is in nature, from the individuality in every leaf and every grain of sand, he draws the metaphors he incessantly uses to urge young cellists to express the uniqueness of some melodic or rhythmic fragment.

His well-known reluctance to rehearse chamber music with colleagues he really respects probably stems from this same faith—faith in the rightness of reactions.

"Rehearse? Let's improvise!" he has been heard to exclaim. And on the "bootleg" recording of a rehearsal made in Prades unknown to him, he was heard to say that he had never been able to find the right tempo for the movement they were about to play but he hoped they would find it that morning.

When Casals, Myra Hess, and I recorded the Brahms C-Major Trio at the 1952 Prades Festival we suggested listening to the playbacks in the usual way before going on to the next movement, but Casals would have none of it. Perhaps it is this absence of fussiness that gives his recordings their immediacy and spontaneity.

A Man Becomes a Legend

It is not surprising that those who have been in the "original" band of the faithful around Casals should sometimes regret the passing of their hero into the realm of celebrity—as celebrity is understood these days. The early enthusiasts now find themselves lost in the mob.

I am thinking of the past and of the present—of that 1957 horse-racing event in San Juan, Puerto Rico, which was named after Don Pablo Casals, with its flower show dedicated to him, the tortoise-shell Casals cutouts for the *souvenir* trade, and other such by-products of celebrity. I wish I had sat down to write this piece thirty years ago.

Not that the potent magic of Casals' art acts on me any the less. But the current in the crowds around Casals naturally cannot have the same origins now. It is inevitable



that adulation of the wrong sort and for the wrong reasons should creep in.

The understanding that met the precious offerings of Casals in those days, the thrill of discovery that was ours when he played Bach gamba sonatas with the harpsichordist Violet Gordon Woodhouse in a small hall on London's New Bond Street or when we had the cello transcription of the César Franck violin sonata revealed to us at Town Hall, New York, those feverish evenings in the Budapest "Redoute" concert hall—all this we must no longer seek or hanker after. Those were the days when Casals could be heard in the red-plush intimacy of the tiny *Kursaal* theater in Montreux under a young conductor named Ernest Ansermet.

I realize now how much there is in Casals' art and personality that I have come to take for granted: the short, stocky, earthy master with the probing, youthfully clear, and twinkling eyes, with those economical movements when he is playing his cello, conducting the orches-

tra, or simply stopping in the street of Zermatt on his way to miniature golf, or walking under the enormous parasol he always carries, arm in arm with his lovely pupil Martita (now his wife), while he stops to receive the homage of some unknown admirer or expressions of friendship and love from someone in his entourage.

At a rehearsal of the first Prades Festival in 1950, when he stopped the orchestra in order to give me a welcoming embrace, he seemed then to me essentially the same Casals I had heard and spoken to as an adolescent in Brussels in 1909. When I came to rehearse my concerto under his baton and looked up at him, I felt just the same as if forty-one years had not passed.

He Created His Successors

We should never forget what is due to Casals for the emergence in our time of such superb cellists as the late, ever-regretted Emanuel Feuermann, or Gregor Piatigorsky, or Pierre Fournier. These men did not actually sit at Casals' feet, but it was Casals who made room for them, established standards, and created a demand in the public conscience for cellistic perfection. I still remember what a distinguished representative of the older German school, Hugo Becker, told me in 1914 or 1915: that it had been Casals who had put the cello where it belongs, and that all cellists should rejoice in Casals' unmatched prestige. An example like Casals' brought powerful pressure, the impact of which was felt even in the most obscure conservatories and in the cello sections of modest provincial orchestras. Casals must have caused countless cellists and their teachers to submit themselves to a searching *examen de conscience*, to revise their antiquated methods, to aim higher, and to eliminate play-



ing habits that on the so-called "unwieldy" instrument were once considered—but are no longer—necessary evils.

The Casals standard of exquisite harmonic intonation, his ideas on bow technique and fingering, which did away with compromises such as "auxiliary notes" that had been tolerated in connecting notes that were far apart (one could call them "emergency landings")—all these are achievements that time will never destroy. Casals has given the public unforgettable moments of musical experience, unmatched in eloquence, poignancy, elegance, and characterization. There has only been one Casals in the history of the cello, yet in the years to come his role will not be left unfilled.

HIS DISCIPLINE, steeled in the lifelong study of the masters, his faculty for drawing benefit from the accidents of his life, must have been of help to him during these recent months of convalescence. He must have applied the same rigor to himself that all we musicians must observe in the disciplined hours of training in our studios. In a letter to a friend from Prades some three or four years ago he wrote of the hours he spent practicing and said: "*Je pense encore faire des progrès.*"

Only Casals could speak of progress at his age. But who knows? As the late Eugène Ysaye has said, "Where Casals is concerned, anything is possible."

The following are Mr. Szigeti's personal favorites among the many Casals performances that are available on records:

Bach's Suite No. 1 in C; Prades Festival Orchestra on Columbia ML-4348

Brahms's Trio No. 2 in C for Violin, Cello, and Piano; Szigeti, Casals, and Myra Hess on Columbia ML-4720

Dvorak's Concerto in B Minor for Cello; George Szell conducting the Czech Philharmonic on Victor LCT-1026

Schumann's Concerto in A Minor for Cello and Orchestra; Prades Festival Orchestra on Columbia ML-4926

THEATER:

A Question of Timing

MARYA MANNES

IF TALENT and timing are the two major ingredients of success in all forms of art, I suspect that in theater timing is the more important of the two. It is *when* a play is produced that counts, for if the audience is not ready for it talent will not save it. And this is what makes producers shudder before an opening: Is it too late or too soon? Is it right for now?

The two most solid hits so far in the young season are clearly right for now: *West Side Story* and *Look Back in Anger*. And it is no accident



that they are both sharply contemporaneous, brutal, and angry. A people as swaddled and petted as we have been seem to be ready now for shock. What may well have offended us in our heyday of induced tranquillity (ebbing, praise God) now excites us. Maybe Little Rock and Sputnik have taken off some of the wraps.

NOTHING could be more violent, more disturbing, and in some ways uglier than the structure of *West Side Story*: a story of delinquents, of the battle for the streets between the Puerto Rican "Sharks" and the indigenous "Jets," of the ferocious tensions of slum life in a jungle society. The miracle is the creative use of this material toward the improbable end of beauty. This Jerome Robbins and Arthur Laurents and Leonard Bernstein have

done, achieving, with the inspired settings of Oliver Smith, a most powerful work of art.

Robbins, director and choreographer, was the presiding magician, for he has turned the ritual hatreds of desperate kids into patterns of astounding beauty. Their raw movements have been clarified and translated into dance: their strut, their insolent languor, their jive looseness, their dope-tightness, their brazen calm, their instantly triggered ferocity. It is hard to see how a gang war on a racial basis can be anything but repellent and frightening. *West Side Story* is both, and yet it is also a classical ballet of death.

What might have been as mawkish as it is contrived—the Capulet-Montague love between the Puerto Rican girl and the "Jet" boy—is, miraculously again, neither. Instead it achieves moments of genuine purity. Mr. Bernstein's versatility is such that his music can be tender and melodic as well as frenzied and contrapuntal, and the musical would be unbearable if the relentless tension of the score were not relieved from time to time by simple song.

West Side Story is a tough evening in any case. But this exercise in violence is not an exploitation of sensation, pegged on delinquency headlines. It says something. It says that these young people are cramped, stifled, crazed by the walls around them. It says that they want out but can get out only through the temporary relief of violence. It says that even this violence has code and ritual. And it says, finally, that racial hatreds are nothing but the outward expression of terrible inadequacies within the haters.

Puteo, Ergo Sum

Look Back in Anger is, of course, something else again, although it deals with the revolt of youth, specifically British middle-class youth, against the times. The play was re-