

## LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

(continued from page 5)

### HITLER'S TASTE IN FILMS

Sir,—Was G.M. really serious in the remarks he made in a recent issue of *The Listener* about Hitler's taste in films—and in particular his reaction to that wretched effort, *Mission to Moscow*? Or was he merely indulging in one of his little whimsies in resurrecting the film from its pauper's grave?

G.M., apparently in all seriousness, asks the "extreme Leftists" to reflect on the curious company they are keeping when they criticise his review of *Mission to Moscow*, because Hitler "heartily recommended" the film. Hitler liked it: Stalin didn't like it: therefore G.M.'s criticism must have been along the right lines. Quod erat demonstrandum. G.M. is on the side of the Gods and the "Leftists" are in league with the devil.

Honestly, all this is sheer infantilism. If, in fact, Hitler said what he is alleged to have said about the film, G.M. himself told us the only possible reason—that it was an American film giving a sympathetic picture of the Soviet Union, and could be used to illustrate Hitler's thesis regarding the tie-up of American plutocracy and Russian bolshevism. There is nothing else to "make one wonder" at all, and G.M.'s startling disclosure has not the slightest relevance to the criticism of his review made by the "Leftists."

Of course, G.M. might think that there is another possible explanation of Hitler's attitude—that he thought the film was so overdone that the Herrenvolk would see through the obvious propaganda and laugh at it. But if this were so, it would mean that Hitler agreed with G.M. on this point, and that would never do.

By the way, I note with interest and alarm that "Westerns left Hitler cold." I think most of them leave G.M. cold also. Something sinister here, boys.

RONALD L. MEEK (Wellington).

G.M. says: Mr. Meek appears to have forgotten a letter he wrote in *The Listener* of December 8, 1944, in which, far from referring to *Mission to Moscow* as a "wretched effort" deserving of a "pauper's grave," he expressed surprise that I did not applaud it. I can assure Mr. Meek that there is a very warm spot in my heart for Westerns—provided they are good ones.

### MAJOR WORKS

Sir,—Surely the commentator who wrote the note "Major Works" in the January 18 issue is a trifle over-conscientious. To condemn the "1812" Overture as "flamboyant; a vulgar trifle" is to offend a large audience of music lovers who undoubtedly enjoyed the performance, as I did. Your commentator asks "What is a Major Work?" then drops the subject. Perhaps this will help him. In a letter to Nadezhda Filaretovna, Tchaikovski expressed his habitually frank opinion of the overture, which, he said, he had composed very rapidly. "The overture will be very loud and noisy, but I wrote it with little warmth of love; therefore it will probably have small artistic worth."

I think we can take it from this that the "1812" Overture is not a major work.

HUGH WRIGHT (Auckland).

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