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help thinking of the evacuees we had billeted on us in the country. But in this case foster-parents can to some extent choose their child, and will at any rate have complete control of the child when they get it. But I hope people here won't expect little Margaret O'Briens and little Roddy McDowells; they'll probably be less photogenic than that, and perhaps nuts too tough for their own parents to crack."

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(5) The general opinion was that the children could not fail to benefit physically and materially. They would have a "better chance" than they were likely to get at home. Young children because of their adaptability were the second best type of New Zealand immigrant (assuming that the New Zealand baby is still the best) and the 'teen-agers would in a few years be a very valuable economic asset.

"But," said one Englishwoman who has just returned from a trip to her relatives in England, "I rather hate to think of these children leaving England when England needs them herself for her own economic recovery. And though I know the children will be well looked after here you mustn't think they were starved in England. Special provision was always made for them under rationing, and last year when I was home they all looked well and rosy. And I think there's a danger in bringing them out in groups that they will tend to be set apart, and perhaps even looked down upon as charity children." (I explained that the children were to travel in batches of 20, and that these small groups would be rapidly absorbed into the life of the community.)

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(6) Most of the people I spoke to had many questions to ask about the actual working of the scheme, but not all were as full of misgivings as the woman with whom I had the following conversation.

"Sounds a bit fishy to me, this business of 'orphans and semi-orphans.' Why can't they just empty Dr. Barnardo's Homes and have done with it? (She had read D.M.M.'s recent *Listener* article.) What sort of parents do you think they'd be who'd be willing to hand over their own children to people they've never seen? And what sort of children are such parents likely to have? And I don't like that phrase about 'legal custody' of the foster-parents. How do you know these 'semi-parents' in Britain aren't merely taking advantage of the scheme to get their children a free passage and are intending to come themselves later? In which case the foster-parents won't have a legal leg to stand on.

"And all this business of matching child to foster-parent in England sounds unbelievably cumbrous. By the time the foster-parent in New Zealand has got his photo of the child and decided he'd prefer something a little wider between the eyes the parents in England have probably rejected foster-parent because of his nut-cracker jaw, and by the time both parties are satisfied foster-parent has perhaps two more of his own and no further interest."

"Then you don't think we'll get a very good response?" I asked.

"I didn't say that," replied the cynic. "I should think you'll have lots of requests from farmers for husky lads from 15 to 17."

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Among the many people I consulted the one who spoke with most authority

# MUSIC FROM MEXICO

## Aztec Reconstruction Piece Included

WHEN the American Museum of Modern Art was planning its 1940 exhibition of Mexican art, it asked the Mexican composer and conductor Carlos Chavez to prepare a programme of characteristic music of his country to be performed in conjunction with the exhibition. From the concert which resulted, six works were chosen for recording and these will be played from 1YC at 10 p.m. on Saturday, October 30.

The first recording, *Sones Mariachi*, arranged by Blas Galindo, will give listeners some idea of the music native to the central Pacific states of Mexico. The title means musical pieces played by a mariachi or ensemble consisting, classically, of two violins, a large five-stringed guitar, a small guitar, and a five-octave harp to which are now added a clarinet and trumpet. The men making up a mariachi play, dance, and sing (often in a falsetto and usually with the voices a third apart).

This work will be followed by a love song *La Paloma Azul*, arranged by Chavez. Its origins are disputed, one theory being that it is the Mexicanised version of a Spanish song and the other that it is descended from Italian operatic music, which was highly popular in Mexico in the 19th Century. The words of the recurring refrain, freely translated, are, "What a lovely blue dove, which flies on its wings where it wishes! What a lovely blue dove! Do not have much to do with anyone. Open your wings. I am the keeper of your love." After the last climactic singing of this refrain, the

on the scheme was a lady who had a British war evacuee for five years.

"Peter came from the Glasgow dockside. He was a weedy six-year-old when he came to us and a husky 11-year-old New Zealander when he went back. He was a dear little boy and we all loved him. After he went I sent letters and parcels but I have had only two letters from him. We were all heartbroken when he left us, and I hate to think of him in that third floor tenement, and not getting the right sort of food, or having enough space to play in. What I like about this scheme is its permanence. You will be able to finish the job of bringing up the child, and you will at any rate have the satisfaction of knowing how your work turned out."

### Report from a Ghost

FINALLY we interviewed a ghost. We rang a farmer and his wife who had taken one of the dispersed children during the bad days of the British blitz. We wanted them to tell our readers what the experience had meant to them both, but the telephone failed us. We are sure however that they would have repeated something like this if we had found them at home. It is as near a reproduction as we can give of the report they made to us eighteen months ago. We have changed the name.

"It is a little too late to start again, but we can never be grateful enough for the arrival of George. We have no children



CARLOS CHAVEZ

arrangement continues with a four-line verse saying, "And with this I bid you good-bye, my dear, by tipping the brim of my sombrero. And here I stop singing, my love, the little verses of Laredo." The lover is about to depart for Texas and the arrangement ends with the refrain "I come to tell you good-bye."

In the third work, which has the formidable title of *Xochipili-Macuilxochitl*, after the Aztec god of music, dance, flowers and love, Chavez has attempted to reconstruct the general sound of a pre-Conquest Aztec instrumental ensemble, the instruments used being

of our own, and when George came, pale-faced, nervous, and obviously under-nourished, we felt a little nervous too.

"George was twelve. Until he left Scotland he had never been out of Glasgow, and our sheep as well as our cows were objects of terror to him. Now he owns the home-cows and supplies us with milk and cream. He has a little bank account, and several trophies that he has won with his calves. If we don't stop him he will work the tractor after tea on moonlight nights, and there is nothing on the farm in which he is not interested.

"We have not adopted him, or tried to adopt him. His father is still living, and it touched us that letters came during the very worst days for Scotland and that they usually ended with an exhortation not to neglect his homework. He never did. We sent him to secondary school, and his record there was admirable. Now he goes to W.E.A. classes and studies farming scientifically.

"We are not sure whether he thinks of us as father and mother or as an older brother and sister. He calls us Bill and May. We are not quite sure how we regard him. We know that his coming has proved wholly good for us, and we think it has been satisfying to him. He still writes to his father, and looks forward to returning to Scotland to visit him. But New Zealand is now his home, and has gained in him a most worth-while citizen."

copies of Aztec instruments discovered by archeologists or their nearest modern equivalents. The ensemble includes flutes, which play only the notes that can be produced on surviving archeological flutes, a trombone (taking the place of a sea snail's shell instrument), two types of primitive drums, wooden and bone rasps, and various rattles. No record of pre-Conquest music survives, but study of instruments discovered by archeologists and of pictorial representations of musicians playing provides a reliable basis for both the scale used—pentatonic—and the make-up of the orchestra.

*Dance to Centeotl*, a ritual adoration of the goddess of maize, which is the fourth item in the series, is from a ballet with chorus by Chavez based on a legendary Mexican explanation of pre-history. For *Dance to Centeotl* Chavez used ancient Indian melodies while the words are those of a traditional hymn to the goddess and are sung in Aztec.

Probably the least Europeanised music surviving into contemporary times in Mexico is that of the Yaquis, who have for centuries lived on the east shore of the Gulf of Lower California, and this with the music of their neighbours, the fast-disappearing Seris, has been used for the fifth recording, which contains both instrumental and vocal music arranged by Luis Sandi.

Another group again—found in the Gulf Coast Mexican states—has been drawn upon for the final number, the music being arranged by Gerónimo Baqueiro Fóster. Violins and large guitars are used to provide this rhythmic music which had its origin in communal fiestas native to this part of Mexico. A similarity with Cuban dance music will probably be noted and this is not surprising for the tropical climate and Negro influence are as important factors in the art of these Mexican states as they are in Cuba.

Besides providing three of the works heard in this programme, Chavez conducts the orchestra and chorus, the former consisting of American and Mexican musicians, and the chorus being a specially trained group from the National Music League.

Chavez was born near Mexico City in 1899 and therefore grew from youth to manhood during the prolonged Mexican Revolution. His early compositions were of conventional European style, but the spirit of Mexican renaissance which first manifested itself in painting and literature, soon affected him and he learnt to draw upon the folk material of his own country for inspiration. For a time he was director of the Mexican National Conservatory of Music and chief of the Department of Fine Arts of the Secretariat of Public Education, and in 1928 he became conductor of the Orchestra of the Mexico City Musicians' Union, which was later re-named the Orquesta Sinfonia de Mexico. He has paid a number of visits to the United States and has been guest conductor of most of the leading symphony orchestras in that country.