

MUSIC OF THE WEEK

*There is no art without life,
There is no life without growth,
There is no growth without change,
There is no change without controversy.*—Frank Rutten.

IT was my good fortune to be at the Town Hall in Wellington for the second Kipnis concert.

All I can say is it was even more enjoyable than the first. It would be hard to imagine more delightful singing than that in the Brahms group. The delivery of "Sonntag" and "Standchen" and the polished performance of "Vergebliches Standchen" with a most artistic term at the end must have won the Brahms songs many new devotees. It is easy to understand why Kipnis was selected by the Brahms Society to record the songs. There could have been no better choice.

THE concert opened with the well-known "Magic Flute" aria, "In Diesen Heiligen Hellen" ("Within This Hallowed Dwelling"), and to say that this was sung with supreme reverence would be praising it too little. "The Magic Flute" is a masonic opera and the symbolism of that order is supposed to be concealed in it. Mozart has most certainly supplied the very music required by the libretto. Sarasastro, High Priest of Isis, sings the superb cavatina to two lovers in the Temple.

IN the Schumann group we had more magnificent singing. The anguish in "Ich Hab in Traum Gewebet" ("I Wept as I Lay Dreaming") and the gloriously subdued work in "Mondnacht" ("Moonlight") will long be remembered. I cannot recollect hear-

ing a more peaceful close to a song than Kipnis gave us at the end of "Moonlight."

The "Two Grenadiers"—so often attempted by baritones—was a revelation. One did not expect to find so much pianissimo work in this song, and it is to be hoped that New Zealand singers will profit by the performance.

It is interesting to note that Kipnis sang Hageman's "Do Not Go, My Love" as his first English song. This was an encore number to the Schumann, and followed the "Faust" serenade. The Hageman song was beautifully sung, and the way Kipnis treated the word "sleeping" was an excellent example of his sheer artistry.

"Leporello's Aria" from Mozart's "Don Giovanni" was portrayed with the same artistic effect as the other operatic numbers.

IT was pleasing to notice that the Wellington Town Hall had more seats filled on this occasion, but I still feel as if the so-called music enthusiasts of the capital have let Kipnis down. He is worthy of far more respect than he received from the professional and amateur musicians of this country. Kipnis is without question a superb artist, and his musical dignity alone should command the prestige.

NEEDLESS to say, Noel Newson, who played the accompaniments, was a most sympathetic and artistic performer.

NEW ZEALAND artists were ambitious during the week—Dorothy Buckingham gave us some Brahms and Schubert early in the week; the Dunedin main National station had the Max Scherek Trio playing a Mozart Trio, followed by Olive Campbell (piano), playing a Rhapsody by Dohnanyi. Then we had more Schubert and Schumann from IYA by Reva Edwards, more Schubert still from Christchurch on Wednesday by Anita Ledshaw; Frederick Page played some Brahms and Liszt the same night.

To complete the Schubert "dose" IYA had May Mitchell on Friday. This artist performed Brahms also in the same recital. Kathleen O'Leary, an Auckland pianist, played the Debussy "Bergamasque" Suite also during the same week.

IT is in a way gratifying to find so much ambition in local artists. At the same time all the vocal efforts at least sounded so much to me like the comparison of a full symphonic orchestra playing a Beethoven Symphony and the same work being attempted by an orchestra of about twenty. Perhaps Kipnis has spoiled me—still, I do think that there should be more understanding by local performers of how to treat a composer before they begin to branch out into the field of lieder and so-called "art songs."

It is not an easy matter to depict the mood of many different composers in a short recital of approximately fifteen minutes, and I feel it would be much better for local artists to specialise in the songs of one composer, at least for a term, and sing the songs of that composer exclusively on any one programme, until such time as we can find that composer and his songs are perfectly understood by the performer.

Most of the New Zealand singers I have heard, and pianists too, are inclined to become too technical in their performances. There is a definite lack of what one may term natural interpretive powers, and this leads me to suppose that the performers are not playing or singing with that understanding and feeling one should expect from musicians who sing and play from the soul.

REAL music often is an expression of emotion, and if the heart is not willing the performance must suffer.

When you perform, learn your work thoroughly, get into the atmosphere of your music and, above all, give everything you have to your art.

MAREK WEBER, Viennese, orchestra conductor, who is now on radio contract in America, adds an American slang expression to his vocabulary almost every day, even though he doesn't always get its meaning clear. When I heard his first trumpet player say, "Aw nertz," to his arranger during rehearsal. "What does that mean?" Weber asked his first violinist in German. The fellow was momentarily nonplussed, then he explained that "aw nertz" meant—well—it just meant that it was of no importance—that it was of little consequence. At the performance later on in the evening, Weber, impeccable in evening clothes, was about to enter the studio when one of his musicians accosted him, apologising for something that had gone wrong with his playing during rehearsal. Smiling pleasantly, Weber stepped to the podium, then turned to reassure the worried fellow . . . "Aw nertz," he said earnestly!

A COMBINED PARTY Of

New Zealand and Australian
FARMERS

Leaves N.Z. April Next, 1939.

Great Britain, France, Switzerland,
Holland, Belgium, Germany, Denmark from a Farmers' point of view.
Send for Particulars Immediately,
as berths are being booked already.

COOKS Dept. 191 Featherston
R., St., Wellington.

BY "SCHERZO"