

and while in this transitory stage can with skill and care be rewardingly trained to sing part songs and big choruses as 'Alto-Tenors' or 'Counter-Tenors.' This has in fact been done, he claims, with complete success, in America.

Inasmuch that the book is a conscientious, sincere attempt to further the educational value of music in schools it is interestingly worth reading. But it is doubtful whether the author's specialized plans and knowledge resulting from his arduous research could be utilized in this country where the educational set-up is so different.

Shortage of tenors and haphazard use of forced altos in our public schools, the loss of choirboys in church choirs when their voices change, are all ever-present familiar problems in this country which the author assures us could be overcome by adopting his methods. He declares that the old-fashioned idea of resting boys' voices in adolescence to avoid impairing them later is unnecessary if we adopt his teaching. Moreover, he claims that if boys can be trained to sing in adolescence it will fill a musical vacuum in their lives.

Yet in this country opportunities exist for young persons to enjoy music instrumentally rather than vocally and much great under-publicised work goes on in our summer schools, school orchestras, national youth orchestras, to all of which our younger people turn in adolescence; would they or their musical mentors have time to embark on the specialized training advocated? The organist, who has to undertake so many other commitments elsewhere, musical and/or otherwise, in order to earn a living, would be unable to further the aims described, although 'working conditions, under which each plan is carried out' are concedingly referred to.

Most public schools successfully produce large-scale choral works involving many 'changing' voices and the spirit of the interpretations makes the performances worthwhile without the additional ill-afforded labour of new plans. Some would say it is hard enough to capture a boy's interest in music let alone succeed in interesting him in his voice at such a self-conscious age.

Since the author's approach to the boy's voice would seem to be highly scientific rather than human (viz: 'boys in their units') it is to be wondered how boys at a sensitive age react to constant voice-testing during voice-changing, and to documentation of the state and behaviour of their voices. Will it not result in even more self-consciousness here, where boys are less uninhibited?

GUY HARLAND

## CORRESPONDENCE

THE EDITOR, *TEMPO*

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DEAR SIR,

Being myself the author of several books on Mexican music, I read with great interest Mr. Chase's account of *Latin American Music*, published in *Tempo* 50 (1959). I admire Mr. Chase's comprehensive approach to this subject, as he is one of the few authors in the States who go beyond the merely picturesque surface of the music 'South of the border.'

It is unfortunate, and could arouse doubts of his sound scholarship, that several inaccuracies are to be found in his article. The strangest of them is the year of birth of Carlos Chávez, stated by Mr. Chase as 1898. It is, in fact, 1899 (June 13). As Mexico will celebrate the 60th anniversary of its outstanding composer this year, and possibly the U.S.A., where he is now teaching at Harvard University, will also pay its tribute to the maestro, the wrong date which appeared in your magazine could be somewhat conspicuous.

One of Chávez's most gifted pupils, José Pablo Moncayo is listed as being born in 1912, which gives the impression that he is still among the living. He died on June 16, 1958. Even when our National Symphony Orchestra last year had a great success in London with Moncayo's *Huapango* and the same piece appeared on an H.M.V. disc, as *Mexican Rhapsody*, the composer was already dead.

A very serious omission is that of the name of Luis Herrera de la Fuente (b. 1916), the only really outstanding composer among the new generation. Another is that of Rodolfo Halffter (b. 1900, in Madrid), who was the teacher of de la Fuente and has been a leading force in our musical life since he settled in Mexico City in 1939. His position in Mexico is very similar to that of José Ardévol in Cuba, who like Halffter was Spanish born, but was lucky enough to be mentioned by Mr. Chase among the Cuban composers.

Revueltas's *Homage to García Lorca* was written and performed for the first time in 1936 (not in 1935); Chávez's *Tocatta* dates from 1942 (not from 1943), etc.

I am not pedantic enough to check all the dates given in Mr. Chase's article—enough publications are to hand so that you yourselves may check the facts.

Very sincerely yours,

OTTO MAYER-SERRA