

Writer Praises 'Song of Faith' as Work of Dignity

BY EDWARD MOORE.

John Alden Carpenter's "Song of Faith" was performed twice by the Chicago A Cappella choir and the Chicago Symphony orchestra yesterday afternoon, once at the beginning and once at the end of the program.

There were several reasons why this was a fitting thing to do. There have been cases where conductors gave their audiences a chance to get acquainted with a new piece of music by playing it twice on one program, though Mr. Stock has not been in the habit of yielding to that temptation. But this was something more than just a new piece of music. Mr. Carpenter wrote both text and music at the commission of the George Washington Bicentennial commission for nation-wide performance this week. As such it is an expression of high-minded patriotism in music, and well deserving one's better acquaintance.

It will be given two more double performances this week, on Thursday night and Friday afternoon. Those who hear it for the first time will not be taken by any facile tunefulness. Mr. Carpenter seems to have had little intention of getting tuneful over it. But the better one knows it the more impressive it becomes by its spacious dignity and poise. It is an aristocrat among choral compositions.

It was given a great performance. The A Cappella choir is a specialist in fine singing; the Chicago Symphony and Mr. Stock were earnest even beyond their wont. The "Washington recitative," a few excerpts from Washington's own writings, to be spoken by a concealed narrator near the end of the work, came over in a tone sounding quite startlingly like the composer's own. In fact no one would have been surprised had there been a public announcement to that effect.

The rest of the program belonged in considerable part to the A Cappella choir. Noble Cain, its director, took the baton and carried his singers through their breath taking performance of the Bach motet, "Sing to the Lord," and later a group of songs, all unaccompanied. The high spots in the group were Eric De Lamarter's charming "June Moonrise," and "Fire, Fire, My Heart," by the sixteenth century Thomas Morley, a marvel of lightly enunciated musical humor.

Then, too, Gregor Platigorsky, who plays the cello as easily as other persons play the violin, came as soloist, with a brilliant performance of Saint-Saens' Concerto in A minor and Bloch's earnest if somewhat laborious "Schelomb." All in all, it was a program of unusual construction, but a highly enjoyable one.

The second item in the Tipton concert series at the Blackstone hotel yesterday morning presented Louise Bernhardt, contralto of the Civic Opera company, and Phyllis Elleene Barry, a young cellist. Miss Bernhardt, who has a good voice as well as a knowledge of song literature, was highly effective in a series of French songs, hampered only by the fact that they were in much the same uncontrasting mood. Miss Barry played works by Eccles and Faure.