Conductor Straksky, of New York Philharmonic, Believes War Will End Period of Experimentalism and Spiritual Stagnation

THOSE who know Josef Straksky's tenor voices are consequently acquainted with his gentility and beauty of charm of manner will find it hard to believe him to President Wilson's adoration of neutrality when they confront the affable conductor of the New York Philharmonic in those days—that is, provided their sympathies do not happen to point in a Teutonic direction. For Mr. Straksky, just as much as any German, is a Germanic spectacles and with all that passionate conviction that inspires almost every living German to brave without fear the pitfalls of logic and—well it is simply impossible to fail out with so warm-hearted and engaging a personality over the "divine combustion and confused eventiments." Hence, once having received his earnestly expressed contentions in urbane and neutral silence, and at the first opportunity one changes the subject. To be sure, the warmth and the gentility may presently get back into the original tonality to disillusion anyone who had run a word on the Philharmonic, his plans for the future, his official sanction. Such reactions quickly effects the desired transition.

It will be recalled that, at the outbreak of the war, Mr. Straksky and his wife were known to be in Marienbad. In fact, the erroneous suspicion must be the name of the Philharmonic conductor with those of a host of other musicians whom they deemed fated to engage in the trade of war. The conductors, in fact, began suddenly given over the Philharmonic sea-scape to a sense of the sublime.

Meanwhile Mr. Straksky and his wife were engaged in the business of life. They left Marienbad and achieved Berlin. They spent ten profitable days there, whereupon they made their way to Norway. The officials at the German border immediately directed their course to Christiania, and ultimately to Bergen, and from the Norwegian port they set sail for America.

Myrna Hinton's news account of the trip is handsomely in it. Poor Mr. Leffel had already engaged him for me, Mr. Kramer, our concertmaster, and Mr. Parme, our bass-cellist, will not be lost to America for many seasons. No orchestra in America has fared more modestly than the Philharmonic with respect to the integrity of its personnel.

Novelties that the Philharmonic Will Offer—Straksky Particularly Hopeful as to New Works by Stravinsky and Erich Korngold

"One wonder that I heard in Paris went far to offset the disappointment I felt over "Joseph." That was Stravinsky's "Fireworks," which I have seen grow more and more astounded when I went to hear it. We have been paid Stravinsky in this country. His "The Rake's Progress," his "The Soldier's Tale," a brilliant piece of workmanship and of great difficulty. But I cannot sufficiently express my admiration for the work of Richard Strauss I should unhesitatingly have exclaimed of some of the works of "indescribable inspiration!" The splendor of this creation is incredible.

There is a suggestion in devising the program of our first concert to satisfy my own favorite composer. As well as simultaneously to do tribute to America. So I have chosen to play Mr. Stravinsky's "Fireworks" and three Berlin numbers from the "Bannishment of Pan," which are, I think, not too familiar yet. Mr. Straksky, our conductor, has already engaged this for me. Mr. Kramer, our concertmaster, and Mr. Parme, our bass-cellist, will not be lost to America for many seasons. No orchestra in America has fared more modestly than the Philharmonic with respect to the integrity of its personnel.

Joseph Straksky, Conductor New York Philharmonic Orches.

"For some decades we have suffered from spiritual stagnation. Composers have encountered their time in experimentation. They have not voiced great messages. I have felt that in the case of Strauss as I have with many others. Allan "Salome" and "Elektra" his work has been purely experimental. I heard his "Joseph" in Paris this Summer. I did not like it at all, though the composer himself, whom I lunches with in Munich, is amply satisfied that he has succeeded handsomely in it. Poor Strauss is greatly upset by the tax matters have taken! You see he had just been made an Officer of the Legion of Honor in Paris. And on top of the necessary repletion of this honor comes the loss of his copyright, which has large royalties because of the cancellation of English and French performances of "Salome" and 'Elektra' that had been scheduled.

The Wonderful Stravinsky"