## Century Notes

Now that the composer- of the whole. drmatist duo of "Lord of Al aska" is back from creative sessions in San Francisco, there is much that is exciting to ponder in the developing musical drama.

Willard Straight, whom Alaskans can soon claim as their own, points out that the music of the work has many 'flavoristic elements." There is Russian liturgy, Russian dancing of many types, a minuet, five different pieces which rely on IndianAleut musical tradition, an Irish ballad and lullaby and an English drinking song of the period just before Napoleon.

But in spite of this obvious disparity in mood, Straight feels that he has kept any deviation to a minimum from his own basic style which ties it all together.

The mi nuet, for example, is 'as Mozartian as you can get," and although it represents the farthest departure from his style, nevertheless is still his own and thus part

All the Indian-Aleut numbers are based on one of the predominant Aleut Scales. The one Straight has chosen is basically of seven tones with the octave above the lowest tone. He reasons it is more workable musically in terms of "Western music" and more cogen to the theatre-going public.

The scale is roughly equivalent to the Phrygian an cient church mode. Musicians will appreciate the quality of this music with Straight's further comments: 'Instead of the tonic being on the first note, it is on the fifth-thus giving a 'hypo-Phrygi an inversion."

In writing these songs, Straight made the odd discovery that when this scale is used in the correct manner, it is the same as used by the Balinese. Hence in the midst of the Chief Storyteller's song he plays up this aspect subtly as the character tells of earth and air. The accompaniment here is "very light and airy."

