

Chord and Discord



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GUSTAV MAHLER—SONG SYMPHONIST

By GABRIEL ENGEL

Gabriel Engel's biographical sketch of Gustav Mahler is an illuminating study of this controversial figure in music. The first book on the subject that has appeared in English . . . a valuable beginning and another practical evidence of the activity and devotion to artistic ideals of the Bruckner Society.

—KARLETON HACKETT, *Chicago Evening Post*

The book shows Mahler, as the author himself says in the preface, to be "a more human and fascinating figure than the halos of sentiment cast over him by his German biographers will admit." The book is also the first on the subject to be written in the English language. Nevertheless it shows Mahler in a new light both from the musical and the human angles. As such, it is a valuable addition, especially to English-speaking persons, to the Mahler literature.

—S. L. LACIAR, *Philadelphia Public Ledger*

The present volume, like its predecessor (*The Life of Anton Bruckner*) entertainingly presents historical facts and critical opinions concerning a composer of whom the ordinary concert-goer knows all too little. Towards Mahler as toward Bruckner Mr. Engel is sympathetic but not idolatrous.

—WARREN STOREY SMITH, *Boston Post*

It is perhaps the best life of Mahler extant. . . . The reading public owes a debt of gratitude to the Bruckner Society for issuing this comprehensive brochure, it tells all that is necessary and it is informative.

—HARVEY GAUL, *Pittsburgh Post Gazette*

The Gustav Mahler biography is based on the composer's collected letters and is written as a narrative without intent of throwing a halo of sentiment over a figure which, in reading, is very human and fascinating.

—GEORGE A. LEIGHTON, *Cincinnati Enquirer*

For this reason, the conscientious doubter closes Mr. Engel's book hopeful that the author will expand his volume into a larger one that will deal, in extenso, with the Mahler works, in happy combination with the engaging and, we repeat, valuable chapters he has given to us on the composer's character and his life.

—OSCAR THOMPSON, *Musical America*

(Price \$1.00 plus 6 cents postage)

THE BRUCKNER SOCIETY OF AMERICA

R. G. GREY, *Executive Secretary*, 222 W. 83 St., N. Y. C.

The famous silhouette of Bruckner at the organ by Hans Schliessmann appears on the cover of this Journal by kind permission of Mrs. Schliessmann.

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BACK TO ROMANTICISM!

"Back to romanticism!" The slogan requires some qualification, for despite all modern revolutionary tendencies romanticism has never departed from art, and especially from music. All art is inextricably interwoven with romance. Yes, more than that: art and romance are basically identical conceptions. Even the one who merely takes pleasure in art experiences "romantically," so to speak, the intensity of this "romantic" experience, of course, differing with the individual. In one completely taken up with business and every-day cares the spirit of romanticism lies dormant. The more readily a man responds to the voices of his inner being the more vivid is his romantic experience. The last human being will be the last romanticist.

In music romanticism is the art of the spiritual recluse. Without inner solitude, in my opinion, there can be no art and, particularly, no music. Gustav Mahler, whose *Song of the Earth* stirs the hearts of the people more every day, was one of the world's great lonely souls. Out of his solitude he created those immortal works in which that romantic-*daemonic* nature of his, so completely severed from the outer world, finds overwhelming expression.

There is, in contra-distinction to this manner of creating out of the inmost soul, another, the inspiration of which is the reality of everyday life. This kind of creation might be compared to a photographic plate and is not art in the higher sense of the word. It is necessary therefore to differentiate between two kinds of musical art, the work of the spiritual recluse, a contribution offering something new and unknown to the world, and the work of the mere tonal chronicler or photographer of everyday experience. Some composers, unaware that they are at heart romanticists, and some, who are romanticists against their will, labor under the delusion that they are musical photographers of reality, but the apparent drabness of their achievement is elevated to the higher plane of art by their imaginative power and individuality. Igor Stravinsky, dubbed a foe of romanticism, a thoroughly creative being who considers himself anything but a romanticist, betrays romantic traits in many of his works. I need only mention his *Sacre du Printemps*, that ecstatic hymn to the primal power of nature.

How a purely commonplace incident may be metamorphosed into romance by the creative artist is evident from the following example. The *cudgel-scene* in Wagner's *Meistersinger* is a realistic, musical setting of an extremely ordinary happening. Yet the delicate humor of the composer raises the whole incident to a higher sphere. Thus everything

can be a subject for musical art if it is made—"inexact."¹ There is, in music, no such thing as "exactness," a term that has aroused so much controversy. I demand "exactness" from an architect, for I want to live in a house, pray in a church, etc. But music fulfils no such "exact" need—how then is exactness to be associated with it? Music is, was, and will remain a confession of the soul! The more individual, unworldly, and solitary a soul is, the more timeless the music created out of it. From the soul alone come the loftier revelations in their purest form, as the composer knows, and only the composer! In this respect every true artist is of necessity a romanticist.

One often hears the claim that many a musical work of decidedly romantic character has dated. This view neglects the fact that in such cases it is not the romantic nature of the music but its lack of vitality that is to blame. Weber, for instance, was a confessed romanticist. He always emphasized this disposition of his, which of course harmonized with the artistic atmosphere of his age. His music possesses the lasting charm characteristic of a genuinely creative being alone. The perishable element of his *Oberon*, that woe-begotten creation of a deathly sick man who composed an opera for London in order to keep his family from starving, is not to be found in the extremely fine musical setting but in the defective web of the text. His *Freischütz*, on the other hand, is, thanks to its superior libretto, still much alive today, as are all romantic works of perfection. Verdi, whom many for a time wished to set up as the spiritual opposite of Wagner, is also to a great degree a romanticist. To prove this I need only mention the unforgettable nature-painting of the fourth act of *Rigoletto*, the enchantment of the Egyptian night in the Nile-act of *Aida*, or the poetic scene of the elves in *Falstaff*.

Thus we see that all music that was the expression of genuine, vivid experience remains timeless and is still convincing today. Take, for instance, the music of Mendelssohn, that composer banned as a "mere romanticist." His wonderful *Midsummer-Night's Dream* music is still as radiantly enchanting as ever with all its wealth of color. If a musical work has lost its appeal the reason is not its romantic character but some real deficiency such as may be found even in some of the compositions of the greatest masters.

There is apparent in the audiences of today an inclination towards true art, towards the genuine things in music. Adverse criticism has sought in vain to strike a death-blow at romanticism, but it is destined to survive because the heart of man is ever the same and will not be suppressed.²

—BRUNO WALTER

¹The original German words "sachlich," "unsachlich," and "Sachlichkeit" possess a connotational nuance (when connected with music) that makes an ideal translation impossible.

²Translated by the Editor and published with the kind permission of the *N. Y. Staats-Zeitung und Herold*. (Zurück zur Romantik, Staats-Zeitung und Herold, d. 4. Dez. 1932.)

THE NEW AUDIENCE

Although our method of musical training has been and still is rather conservative the growing generation is being given more and more opportunity of hearing modern as well as so-called "accepted" masterpieces. One need only call particular attention to the broadcasts of the concerts of the Philadelphia Orchestra, of the Philharmonic Symphony Society of New York, of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and of the Metropolitan Opera Company. In addition children and adults throughout the U. S. are being given the opportunity to hear broadcasts of the Damrosch Music Appreciation Hour and Schelling's Children's Concerts.

As usually happens when progressive suggestions are made, the ultra-reactionaries, unmindful that they may have been championing composers who in their day were not included in the "non-debatable" category, protested vigorously when that apostle of progress in music, Leopold Stokowski, suggested that listening in on the Philadelphia Orchestra concerts be made part of the curriculum of our schools. According to the conservatives children should hear only masterpieces "tried and true." They lose sight of the fact that only yesterday Wagner, Brahms, and Strauss would have been kept from the delicate ears of these helpless children. Just what is good music? How do they, or how could any masterpiece originally considered mere cacophony have become "tried and true" if the opponents of progress in music had succeeded in silencing the pioneers?

Certainly the awe-inspiring score, *Elektra*, could not have created a furor in Philadelphia when it was given a memorable performance under Fritz Reiner in October, 1932, nor could it have drawn large crowds in New York the following season (six performances have already been given at the Metropolitan at this writing) had the original verdict of the press been sustained by modern audiences and modern reviewers.¹

The immediate triumph of this "monstrum horrendum" brought forth speculation as to the reasons for this complete change of attitude. No one reason seems to explain the phenomenon. The movies, radio-broadcasts of symphonic concerts, the unforgettable *Elektra* of Gertrude Kappel, the advances made in the study of psychology, the fact that the "intelligentsia" has shown great interest in Eugene O'Neill's psycho-analytic plays, especially in "Mourning becomes Electra," all these factors doubtless contributed towards making the production of Strauss' *Elektra* the unusual success that it was.

The attendance of movies and plays well produced has made the intelligentsia more critical of staging, just as hearing concerts and Wagner productions has resulted in the rejection of inferior musical offerings. The production of *Elektra* was generally acclaimed for its musical excellence owing, in great part, to the zeal of Artur Bodanzky, and criticized

¹For precisely fifteen minutes by the watch the audience, in slowly diminishing numbers, cheered and called the principal artists to the stage. . . . It is probably accurate to say that no one dreamed of such a reception of Strauss' formidable opera.

because of its inferior staging.¹

Influences similar to those that developed a new audience for the opera (an audience critical of the really musical side of performances, an audience that does not hail the leather-lunged tenor or the bejeweled prima donna, an audience that is attracted by a notable cast but displays more interest in the "Gesamteindruck" (teamwork) than in individual accomplishment)—the influences of the radio, of the gramophone with its recording of the so-called "accepted" masterpieces and of modern music, and the inclusion on concert programs of modern and ultra-modern music, have made concert-goers more critical not only of the quality of performances but of the programs themselves. One reads complaints of the all too frequent repetition of the accepted classics and of the dearth of performances of less familiar music. One reads of the growing demand for Bruckner, Mahler, and Sibelius, and cannot underestimate the growing interest in the works of neglected masters even at the popular Stadium Concerts in New York City.² Since that time the number of Bruckner and Mahler performances has not only increased noticeably but even met with enthusiastic receptions by different audiences in the same city and by audiences of different cities. How these composers are gradually coming into their own here was described in the November issue of *Chord and Discord* ("The American Renaissance.")

Since that issue went to press a number of additional performances has been given, all of which left no doubt as to the receptive attitude of the audiences. It is encouraging indeed to find that reviewers are abandoning the mincing attitude that used to stress the "shortcomings" of Bruckner and are gradually emphasizing the monumental virtues of his works.

As Mr. Oscar Thompson said very aptly of *Elektra*: "Time has shown that its virtues amply justify repertory," time will show that the virtues of Bruckner as well as Mahler will justify their inclusion in the standard repertoire of every important American symphonic organization just as they are included in the repertoires of the important symphonic organizations of many countries of Europe.

Mr. Gabrilowitsch's performance of Mahler's *First* in Detroit last October met with a cordial reception from the audience. When Bruckner's *Romantic* was performed in Milwaukee under the direction of Dr. Frank Laird Waller the reception was such that an encore was given.

¹Staging does not seem to have been one of the outstanding accomplishments of the Metropolitan even during Mahler's regime twenty-five years ago. One wonders why the effort, time, and money expended upon the lavish production of *Saalko* in recent years were not directed toward improving the staging of Wagner, for example. In Jan. 1908, Gustav Mahler, hoping to induce Prof. Alfred Roller to become the Stage Director, wrote:

"The gentlemen here are planning to appoint the present manager of the Scala (G. Gatti-Casazza) manager of the Metropolitan Opera and to engage the much praised conductor Toscanini for Italian opera, leaving me in charge of German opera. . . ."

"I have proved most thoroughly to them that the stage here needs a new master more than anything else and that I know only one who by means of his art and personality can 'pull the wagon out of the mud.' At the same time (and I have proved this) it is essential that this person be given complete charge of the stage and everything connected with it. . . . Here they respect only one thing—the ability and the will to do things. . . ."

[Gustav Mahler Briefe—Copyright—Paul Zsolnay Verlag.]

²Two years ago the press reported that the names of these composers appeared on the Request Ballot Programs more frequently than heretofore. The reason is obvious. Conductors had begun once more to give their audiences the opportunity of hearing a Bruckner or a Mahler work on rare occasions.

An unforgettable reading of the same symphony in New York under the baton of Arturo Toscanini was hailed with enthusiasm.¹ Bruckner's *Fifth*, which received its first Cincinnati performance under the direction of Eugene Goossens in December, excited the audience to a veritable storm of applause. It is revelative of the attitude that has been fostered towards Bruckner here since the Eighties to read the concluding sentence of Mr. Leighton's excellent review of this performance:

"Let no one stay away through fear of Bruckner."

Apparently the music-lovers of Cincinnati took his advice, for according to Dr. Sidney C. Durst, Director of the College of Music of Cincinnati, the audience manifested unbounded enthusiasm. Earlier in the season Boston audiences had made known in unmistakable terms their approval of Bruckner.

One of the most important contributions to the Bruckner movement was the series of performances of Bruckner's "Choral" (V) Symphony. There were four performances of the *Fifth* under the direction of Bruno Walter. The last of these was broadcast over the Columbia Chain thus increasing the actual listeners by untold numbers.²

While Walter was conducting the first two performances of the *Fifth*, Frederick A. Stock paid tribute to Bruckner and Wagner by performing the *Third Symphony* dedicated to the "Master of Bayreuth." In Chicago the audiences as well as the critics gave the work a highly satisfactory reception.³

As was pointed out above, students also are taking an interest in Bruckner. A concert in Newark, N. J., by the Newark Sinfonietta, conductor Armand Balendonck, given under the auspices of the N. J. State Normal School, included Bruckner's *Quintet* and the *Adagietto* from Mahler's *Fifth* and aroused great interest among the music-lovers of that city.⁴

All indications point toward a new audience, growing in size with every season. The rise and growth of such an audience led Pitts Sanborn to write after a memorable performance of *Tristan* at the Metropolitan: "The character, size, and enthusiasm of the audience bore witness to the practical wisdom of offering such a performance," while Olin Downes wrote, "The accepted dictum that 'Tristan and Isolde' could never under any circumstances become a popular opera suffered a shock. For the fuss the audience made, it might have been Aida."

Let opera impresarios bear in mind that the music-loving public's taste is changing, that it can discriminate, that well-performed Wagner, and *Elektra*, and the like are popular attractions. Let conductors and managers keep in mind that classics are repeated too often and that Bruckner and Mahler are coming into their own.

—ROBERT G. GREY

¹"The concert was well attended and the applause, particularly after Bruckner, long and enthusiastic."
—HUBBARD HUTCHINSON, *New York Times*.

²After the first performance Hubbard Hutchinson of the *New York Times* wrote: "The control that subdued the beginnings of the final crescendo and made possible the blaze of power which ended it and which brought a burst of applause and 'bravos' from a large audience was masterly."

³Dr. Stock should take courage from the reaction of last night's audience and play us more Bruckner. Nobody found it too long or too solemn

—GLENN DILLARD GUNN—*Chicago Herald Examiner*.

⁴The adagio—is the most informal, the most eloquent in the work and ranks with the more admirable in the chamber music form. It was played with a feeling for its harmonic structure and melodic contents and a technical smoothness that incited plaudits.

—*Newark Evening News*.

MUSIC BECOMES ELEKTRA

The painful attack of squeamishness suffered by our native esthetic spirit two decades ago upon the occasion of the American premiere of Richard Strauss' *Elektra* resulted in the placing of a ban upon that great music-drama which was not lifted until about a year ago.*

Among the influences that instilled into some enterprising Philadelphian music-lovers the courage to venture a revival that struck most critics as foolhardy the astonishing success of Eugene O'Neill's inspired modern paraphrase of the sombre Greek masterpiece should not be underestimated. After this purely dramatic triumph of the so-termed revolting and gruesome, there could no longer be any doubt as to the feasibility of von Hofmannsthal's dreaded libretto. Thus despite the uncontestedly classic status of Strauss' orchestral contributions in our own day the primary problematical feature that cast a pall over the hope of popularizing this most gloomy of tonal artworks in our country was undoubtedly musical.

And no wonder; for in the tremendously gripping and even terrifying music that holds uninterrupted sway over the listener's emotions throughout the breathless tonal suspense that is the score of *Elektra*, a strange orchestral idiom finds its highest utterance. This is that language of unadulterated music-dramatic effect one seeks in vain in all the romantic, dramatic magnificence of Wagner's epic scores. This vast difference between the two mighty Richards of the stage goes a long way towards explaining the stupendous recent triumph of *Elektra*, a laurel that could have been granted only an art-work of striking originality. What then is the nature of this tonal language, so telling and yet so different? The key to it lies in a few passages of the earlier *Salome* in which human passion and suffering already attain consummate expression by means of insistent, almost unmusical hammerings and pulsations in the contrasted colorings of the various instrumental families. Two generations before *Salome* Hector Berlioz, that great pioneer of orchestral effect, prophesied by occasional usage the vast range of emotional suspense yet to be translated into the vocabulary of instrumentation. A slight trace of a kindred revelation is evident in the operatic scores of Weber; but the real source (just as is the real source of all that is purely emotional in modern music) is to be found in Beethoven. The "prime genitor" of all this tonal passion is the revolutionary outburst of tone that begins the *Finale* of the *Ninth Symphony*. Yet this view by no means explains all the music of *Elektra*. The problem of sustaining by orchestral effect the undiminished suspense of an extended dramatic poem of such sombreness is one that could have been solved so consummately by perhaps no other composer in musical history. Strauss himself, having completed the huge labor of inspiration, must have wondered at the achievement.

*In his illuminating review of the Metropolitan Opera House performance Mr. Lawrence Gilman of the *N. Y. Herald-Tribune* recalls the reception of the masterpiece when it was first produced here in 1910 at the Manhattan Opera House. Writes Mr. Gilman in part:

This, we were told, was no lyrico-dramatic setting of the theme immortalized by Sophocles, Euripides, and Aeschylus—it was not, in short, an opera at all. It was a shambles, a charnel-house, an insane asylum shrieking through the bars of a lunatic score. Impassioned sermons were preached to us concerning the alleged brutality, violence, and ignoble horror of von Hofmannsthal's libretto and upon the shocking enormity of Strauss's score, its wilful infraction of every established law of musical procedure.

He must have realized that by this means of orchestral contrast no more could be achieved, for all his subsequent scores for the stage reveal a complete departure from the method of *Elektra*. The sudden change of musical religion displayed by Schoenberg after that Everest of orchestral romanticism, the *Gurrelieder*, is an example of a similar upheaval in the soul of a creative artist.

After all this generalization about the orchestral idiom of *Elektra*, the writer may be pardoned at least one brief attempt at specification, although he knows that the perusal of a "score" analysis is no fascinating prospect for the layman.

Elektra's cry of recognition, "Orest!" bursts upon a moment of complete orchestral silence. Her surprise is immediately echoed by the whole woodwind choir against a sombre background of lugubrious resonance in the string basses. The skilful contrast of a briefly uttered gasp of normal feminine coloring by the high-pitched voices of the flutes only enhances the breathless suspense of the moment. The scoring of the passage that now follows is the ultimate of Straussian virtuosity in instrumentation, the steady and telling application of orchestral contrasts not so much to mirror as to intensify the vital play of human passion in the lines of the poem, an achievement which, upon the whole, a mathematical survey of method can thoroughly illuminate only for the trained musician, though it be as well the nearest approach to an accurate accounting for the effect of the music upon the unsophisticated listener. There are felt coursing simultaneously two mighty lines of melody, veritable arteries of tone horizontally bound. Along the upper melodic line sound the combined voices of two oboes, an E-flat clarinet, two bassethorns, a bassclarinet, two horns, joined after a measure or two by all the strings, while four clarinets and two trumpets provide the rich harmonic background. Beneath this already highly sonorous tonal structure there sounds simultaneously another equally resonant, an independent melodic web realized by three trombones singing in harmony against the feverishly pulsating background of a motive alternately uttered by six horns singing high and an answering hammering chorus of deep-toned instruments (two bassoons, a contrabassoon, a contrabass trombone, a contrabass tuba and the string basses).

It was suspected by many, so well versed in the Wagnerian music-drama that they were blind and deaf to any other possible means of tonal expression for the modern stage, that Strauss' espousal of a purely melodic method in *Rosenkavalier*, *Ariadne*, etc., was tantamount to a personal confession by the composer that the score of *Elektra* was but a "charnel-house" of sensational artistic lies, a clever noise intended to cover his inability to assume the purple robe of the composer of *Goetterdaemmerung*.

But the steadily growing tumult of popular approval that has greeted successive recent performances of *Elektra* at the Metropolitan seems to have added another striking instance to the unending list of stupidities sponsored by yesterday's critics and estheticians in judging the real masterpieces of their own generation. The verdict of the critics has always been hampered by necessary haste, but fortunately the process of enlightenment constantly at work upon the general public brings about a certain though often a very belated rectification.

THE TURN TO BRUCKNER

Strange as it seems, in both Boston and New York, to the elder generation of reviewers and listeners, a new audience is now hearing the symphonies of Bruckner, hearing them without prepossession or prejudice, seemingly receiving pleasure from them. Frequenters of the *Symphony Concerts* know by heart the signs of boredom or distaste—the recurring rustle through the auditorium, the reading of the program-book page by page, the wandering eyes, the vacant faces, the waning attention. Not one was conspicuous when Dr. Koussevitzky revived the *Fourth Symphony* last Friday afternoon; while on Saturday evening composer, conductor and orchestra held the audience intent. On both occasions applause answered generally and warmly. The two performances, last spring, of Bruckner's longer, more exacting, more uneven, *Eighth Symphony*, brought no less interested and cordial response. In New York, Mr. Toscanini and the Philharmonic Society were as fortunate with the *Seventh*; while within a few weeks they will set out the *Fourth* as well.

At the beginnings of Bruckner in America, as some like to believe, his symphonies displeased reviewers more than they did lay listeners. Soon the scribes—and a few Pharisees—evolved a formula for discourse about them. It arrayed at length the composer's limitations and weaknesses. It noted less spaciouly, with a certain air of weariness, the signal and highly individual qualities that offset them. It implied, and usually asserted, that he and all his works were dull. Whatever the symphony in hand, this formula returned. There was no attempt to examine each one as a separate entity with its own particular quality. By dint of repetition upon hearers with little discernment and less courage of their own, the formula gradually prevailed as the verdict of American audiences upon Bruckner.

Pause ensued during which conductors next to never ventured his symphonies. Then the present return to them—by Dr. Koussevitzky and Mr. Toscanini annually in Boston, and New York; by Mr. Stokowski and Mr. Stock more occasionally in Philadelphia and Chicago. Forthwith, a new generation that knew nothing of the old reviewing formula, and shared none of the prejudices it had bred, listened to Bruckner for himself; heard each proffered symphony according to its kind and degree, usually took pleasure in it.¹ Enlightened and persevering conductors have not kept in vain their faith in Bruckner. In Boston and in New York in these nineteen-thirties, he has, decidedly, a present and a future—the "old crowd" (as the young amiably call it) to the contrary notwithstanding.² —H. T. PARKER, *Boston Transcript*, November 17, 1932.

¹The Columbia Spectator, a student publication in a review by A. W. Hepner praising Bruckner's *Fifth* Symphony as well as its performance under the direction of Bruno Walter asks, "Why not allow New York conductors to give them (the audiences) more music of this type, music which is monumental, which has something to say, and which is just as enjoyable as the usual routine of Beethoven's nine, and Brahms' four, symphonies?"

N.B. The above is significant because it reveals the attitude of the younger generation.

²And now the four recent epoch-making performances of Bruckner's *Fifth* Symphony by the N. Y. Philharmonic under Bruno Walter seem to have overcome even the opposition of the "old crowd" mentioned by Mr. Parker.

A NOTE ON DEMOCRATIZATION

Lately the hue and cry about depression has penetrated into the high places of American musical art, wreaking particularly sad havoc in the realm of opera. When the society of the *Friends of Music* dissolved last season, although the regrettable event was not directly due to unfavorable economic conditions, the sudden revelation that even so fine an institution had owed its life-blood to the almost unaided bounty of a single individual showed as vividly as the handwriting on the wall that the financial foundation upon which so many other of our leading musical organizations rested was far from stable.

The growing uneasiness inspired by last season's ominous crop of deficits was all too soon transformed to open fear when more than one nabob who had in better times proudly played the role of Maecenas suddenly withdrew his indispensable support and two distinguished operatic organizations lapsed into gloomy silence. For a time even the world-famous "Golden Horseshoe" threatened to be veiled in darkness, until a desperate compromise between the artists and the business management of the Metropolitan made it possible to promise music-lovers at least a curtailed season of performances for 1932-1933. Naturally, the whole distressing contingency aroused much indignation and a general longing among the mentors of the opera to vest the burden of financial responsibility in the numerous though modest, but certainly less treacherous private budgets of the general public. Last fall, upon being pressed for some definite statement concerning the plans of the Metropolitan, Mr. Artur Bodanzky, fresh from his annual European summer vacation, exclaimed:

"You tell me that both the Philadelphia Opera and the Chicago Civic Opera have had their support of a few financial backers withdrawn. This is not like your real America, but it is decidedly like those who use opera for their own social ends.

"I had no intention of discussing the finances of the Metropolitan Opera Company. But you have brought it up, so, perhaps, it is well. I say that it was the artists of the Metropolitan that saved this distinctly great American institution from going to the wall last winter.

"Yes, there is a plan afoot here. It is to take the Metropolitan Opera out of the hands of the wealthy few and put it in the hands of the appreciative public."

Whether the Metropolitan, hampered as it is by dependence upon a traditionally exclusive patronage, will be able to realize this rather Utopian dream, remains to be seen. Perhaps nothing but a fresh, vigorous and courageous beginning can bring about the desired millennium. At last such a start has been made though not in the snobbish, opulent East. Even at this moment of national woe municipal control of music has entered our country at the Golden Gate. To San Francisco goes the honor of having taken the step which may prove to be the most far-reaching in American musical history. In order to raise the six million dollars required for the creation and maintenance of the magnificent architectural and artistic venture the city floated an issue of four millions in bonds and has, in addition, pledged itself to an annual outlay of \$65,000 towards the maintenance of the institution. *Tosca*, a fine inaugural performance, was broadcast on a nationwide hook-up, October 15, 1932.

BRUCKNER'S NEGLECTED FIRST

Unless the immutable annals of art lie it will be the mournful lot of the ghosts of the day's musical Caesars to behold the scenes of their too facile earthly glories through ever-thickening clouds of obscurity. As that great wit among critics, Mr. Ernest Newman, has remarked, good and bad composers differ in one respect, that it takes the former a long while to be discovered and the latter a long while to be found out. Of the latter, then, the less said contemporaneously the better, for that species literally bestrides the shores of the Seven Seas (though it be for only a short season) like a Colossus, proudly effulgent in the smugness thrust upon it by a race congenitally incapable of identifying the rare portion of true gold that is to be its own contribution to the treasury of human culture.

It is far more comforting and profitable to consider the good though it can be perceived but afterwards. There lived once a man named Bach, whose *St. Matthew Passion*, after an initial modest performance under the composer's own direction, had to wait a century for a second hearing. More recently a certain Cesar Franck, having with superhuman perseverance fashioned one great work after another while his fellow-men seemed not to care, finally arrived unobserved at the threshold of his grave, still smiling wistfully, as though in response to life's grimly whispered jest, "Enter here and become immortal."

Of this patient, mighty company, too, is Anton Bruckner, whom Fate never even permitted to hear that magnificent *Fifth Symphony* of his, the spiritual power of which has at length after a steady critical opposition lasting over half a century succeeded in silencing the last remnant of an army of traditional scoffers in this country. "It is high time," this was in substance the significant confession of Mr. Olin Downes on January 25, during the few minutes of nation-wide radio spokesman-ship allowed him just before the fourth successive performance of the symphony under Mr. Walter, "It is high time for the American critical tribunal, face to face with an artwork of such overwhelming sincerity as this to abandon the unreceptive attitude it has steadily maintained towards Bruckner and own up that he was undoubtedly one of the greatest composers of the post-Wagnerian era."

The man who upon a first hearing unhesitatingly subscribed to the grandeur of Mahler's *Symphony of a Thousand* and has repeatedly regretted that conductors have chosen to do Bruckner's *Seventh* in preference to his stupendous *Eighth* would have at once selected as his favorites, had he lived in Beethoven's time, the *Third*, the *Fifth*, and the last of that master's immortal nine. Yet Mr. Downes must have been misinformed concerning the place generally granted Bruckner's *Fifth* among the composer's symphonies, for it is classed by European experts not with or beneath his *Seventh* but side-by-side with those other two masterpieces of subjective symphonic expression, his *Eighth* and *Ninth*. The critic of the New York Times may well feel gratified, for he has reserved his praise for nothing less than the best.

There remains now but one Bruckner symphony which America has never heard and this is a work which, from the point-of-view of depth, is a worthy forerunner of the composer's three greatest symphonies. Already seventy years have elapsed since its completion.* Now that the critical frown upon Bruckner has lifted and that at a moment when the symphonic repertoire thirsts perhaps more than ever before for additional serious works of real significance, may we not reasonably ask how much longer we must wait before being given an opportunity to hear this important composition?

—G. E.

*The First Symphony, for which many experts claim the proud status of "the most remarkable of all first symphonies."

FREDERICK A. STOCK AWARDED BRUCKNER MEDAL

After the performance of the *Third Symphony*, Dr. Martin G. Dumler, Honorary Chairman of the Bruckner Society, presented a medal to Dr. Stock in appreciation of the conductor's championship of Bruckner's music. Dr. Dumler expressed the hope that Bruckner's music will be presented more frequently in Chicago.

AN RCA VICTOR COMPANY MESSAGE

"We are determined to give to our public the best of modern music as well as standard works and it is very encouraging to know that we have the sympathy and interest of such people as yourself and your Society to whom we must, of course, look for support in this policy.

"We are indeed considering Bruckner and Mahler and if the opportunity offers we expect to do some recording of their works this winter.

Yours very truly,

CHARLES O'CONNELL,

Record and Recording Div.

SOME IMPORTANT RECORDINGS

BRUCKNER

Seventh Symphony; Berlin Philharmonic, Jascha Horenstein, Conductor; Polydor.

Te Deum; Bruckner Choir; Parlophone.

Scherzo, Third Symphony; Wiener Sinfonie Orchester, Anton Konrath, Conductor; H.M.V.

Scherzo, Fourth Symphony; Wiener Philharmoniker, Clemens Krauss, Conductor; H.M.V.

MAHLER

Kindertotenlieder; Heinrich Rehkemper; Polydor.

Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen—Urlicht

Mme. Charles Cahier with the Berlin State Opera Orchestra, Selmar Meyrowitz, Conductor; Ultraphone.

Der Tambourgesell—Rheinlegendchen

Heinrich Schlusnus with the Berlin State Opera Orchestra; Herman Weigert, Conductor; Polydor.

Adagietto, Fifth Symphony; Concertgebouw Orchestra, Willem Mengelberg, Conductor; Columbia.

All records listed here can be obtained at the Gramophone Shop, 18 East 48th St., New York.

TOSCANINI AND BRUCKNER

I doubt very much whether any other conductor devotes as much reflection, as much meditation, and as much intensity of feeling to the study of a work as does Toscanini. I am sure that none is as indefatigable in the search for spiritual as well as material perfection. He not only assimilates in his phenomenal memory the whole complicated musical structure, elaborated by the composer with so much care; he analyses the work and sifts it through his clarifying imagination with an insatiable interest for details and an unflagging progress towards an ideal. Toscanini's method of study is simple enough. He reads the score away from the piano, often, at night, in bed. Then, again, he spends hours at the keyboard, playing the music from orchestral score, and with consummate ease. While he is very short-sighted, he has no difficulty whatever in reading the smallest script once he has put on his pince-nez. He doesn't even bend forward conspicuously in order to bring his eyes close to the page. That he should find it irksome, at times, to read at sight some of the high-towering modern scores, is hardly surprising. In that respect he is surely no exception. I have heard other musicians complain that one ought to have some perpendicular mode of locomotion for travelling up and down such musical sky-scrapers. For how can you, when your eyes, say, are on the level with the lowest staff, see simultaneously the notes on the highest staff, about two feet above your head? During these periods of study Toscanini is completely wrapped up in the particular music under scrutiny. There is a very noticeable difference, however, in his manner of approaching works that do not appeal to his taste and works that kindle his interest. In the former case, as I have often heard the maestro tell, he postpones his study until the eleventh hour. In the latter case he is eager to begin immediately, and once he has started he can hardly tear himself away from the work.

It is inspiring to witness Toscanini's enthusiasm, his almost pathetic consecration to the interests of the composer. Repeatedly, during his preparation both of the Seventh and the Romantic Symphony, I had the privilege of hearing him play from the score. And I never saw him dedicate his well-nigh clair-voyant interpretative powers to any music with more ardor. Tirelessly he sought for ways and means—perhaps through slight modifications of tempo or dynamics, perhaps through stress of emphasis or accent—that might make the composer's message more clear, more trenchant, more effective. And how his face would light up when he had discovered a way of achieving the desired result.

Toscanini may introduce a slight revision in the score, adopting under certain conditions a most conservatively considered cut or amending slightly the instrumental web. This he does rarely, however, and only when he has convinced himself beyond all hesitation that he is realizing thereby more nearly the composer's intentions.

I seem to have wandered far afield from the Fourth Symphony of Bruckner. That he liked the work greatly he left no doubt while playing this or that page for me from the Partitur with an enthusiasm evidenced in every fibre of his body. While I was fully aware that he had taken a liking for Bruckner since he decided to perform with his great American Orchestra the Seventh Symphony I was surprised to find him more en-

amored, apparently, of the Romantic than of the later work. He as much as admitted, at any rate, that he found fewer weak spots in the orchestration. Personally I hope that Toscanini's enthusiasm for Bruckner will increase with every one of his works he makes his own. It is interesting to note that he not only was conducting the Fourth Symphony for the first time in his life when he produced it here, but that he had never before heard the work played by any one else.

—MAX SMITH*

*This is a special communication addressed to *Chord and Discord* by the well-known critic, Mr. Max Smith, after the recent performances of Bruckner's Romantic Symphony by the New York Philharmonic under the famous Italian conductor. Mr. Smith is a close friend of Toscanini and his representative in America. It was Mr. Smith who, at the request of Mr. Clarence H. Mackay, persuaded Toscanini to become conductor of the Philharmonic Symphony Society of New York.

The Wagner Memorial Parsifal

Amfortas.....	Friedrich Schorr	1st Esquire.....	Helen Gleason
Titulel.....	Siegfried Tappolet	2d Esquire.....	Philine Falco
Gurnemanz.....	Ludwig Hofmann	3d Esquire.....	Marek Windheim
Parsifal.....	Lauritz Melchior	4th Esquire.....	Max Altglass
Klingsor.....	Gustav Schuetzendorf	Solo Flower Maidens: Nina Morgana, Philine Falco, Dorothea Flexner, Editha Fleischer, Phradie Wells, Henrietta Wake- field.	
Kundry.....	Frida Leider	Conductor, Artur Bodanzky.	
A Voice.....	Rose Bampton		
1st Knight of the Grail..	Angelo Bada		
2nd Knight of the Grail..	Louis D'Angelo		

The performance given by the Metropolitan Opera Association under the auspices of the Southern Women's Educational Alliance proved to be a memorable occasion, a wholly appropriate tribute to the Bayreuth Master, who died fifty years ago (Feb. 13, 1883.)

There was no applause except at the end of the second act when the curtains parted and a bust of Wagner was revealed on the stage. The audience, said to have been the largest of the season, rose, thus showing its respect for one of the most remarkable figures in the history of music and its allied arts.

The restoration of all cuts revealed more than ever before the grandeur, the nobility of the *Buehnenweihfestspiel*, and proved conclusively the desirability of presenting this work in its entirety on all occasions. Leider proved to be a magnificent Kundry. Schorr gave a moving interpretation of the suffering king, Amfortas. The Gurnemanz of Hofmann had great dignity and simplicity. Melchior's Parsifal is well known for its poignancy in the first two acts and for its nobility in the last. Schuetzendorf emphasized the villainy of Klingsor.

All the principal as well as the minor roles were well sung and acted. A word of praise is to be said for the stage director, Hanns Niedecken-Gebhard, and for Mr. Bodanzky whose slow and deliberate tempi so immeasurably enhanced the majestic and noble qualities of the unique score.

—R. G. G.

SYMPHONIC CHRONICLE

A Record of Critical and Popular Reaction

ANTON BRUCKNER—4th {ROMANTIC} SYMPHONY

New York Philharmonic Symphony Society, Arturo Toscanini, Conductor; New York, Nov. 24th and 25th, 1932.

Although Mr. Toscanini excels in attaining an orchestral power of utterance in the cosmic sweep of Beethoven's symphonies and in Wagner's majestic scores of heroic legend, the harmonic fullness and glowing, shimmering volume of sound which came from his splendid band last night had a character which identified this composer most eloquently as a man of original ideas and individual ways.

—H. BECKETT, *New York Evening Post.*

The composer himself called it *Romantic Symphony* and by that name laid bare its real character in one broad stroke. The "romance" is that of the German woods, with the deep spell of which the tone-poet merges himself, and the intimate moods of which he, as a true poet, reveals in wondrous music.

Beneath the delicately discriminating hand of the conductor there arose that succession of exalted moods in the opening section, the poet's worship of the woods, his delight in the green beauty of nature, his awe before the boundless wizardry of creation!

A mournful, lofty strain begins the second movement. Here hope and sadness sound alternately, until the voices of the violas are raised in a heartfelt song of consolation. Such strength of faith as lies in this deep *motiv* is to be rarely met with in the themes of any composer since Bach.

—A. HAAG, *New York Staats-Zeitung.*

Bruckner's symphony showed throughout the scrupulous care with which Mr. Toscanini habitually prepares his performances; the numerous beauties of detail in execution which always delight a corner of the listener's mind, no matter how strongly its centre is swept by the emotional stream emanating from the orchestra as a whole. . . . Behind such details, however, shone the rich and changing fire of the performance as a whole, the flaming brasses lifting the finale to its tremendous *crescendi* (the brass section deserves special mention for its handling of Bruckner's great demands); the tenderness and delicacy of the *andante*.

—HUBBARD HUTCHINSON, *New York Times.*

What with two of the season's new singers emerging at the Metropolitan Opera House and Mr. Toscanini conducting Bruckner's fourth symphony at Carnegie Hall, this watcher of the skies was faced last evening with a difficult dilemma, which he conquered by hearing them all. . . . The fourth, or "Romantic" symphony, has been called a "Woodland Symphony," and it was in the woodland spirit that Mr. Toscanini

read it. The Philharmonic-Symphony players executed their director's will with a well nigh miraculous perfection. The result, for one listener, being that throughout this work (which Mr. Toscanini cut scarcely at all) he lived in a forest of enchantment. This performance will stand out as one of the unforgettable events of the present musical year.

—PITTS SANBORN, *New York World-Telegram*.

The Bruckner work was played with fine clearness, the themes and developments woven into a mighty musical pattern. The brasses, an important choir in the composition, spelled perfection, their climaxes a blazing sound, and playing also the difficult and intricate passages of the scherzo movement with unclouded tone and technical precision. Toscanini's contribution was a devoted and illuminative interpretation.

—*Musical Courier* (Dec. 3, 1932)

ANTON BRUCKNER—FIFTH SYMPHONY

Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra; Eugene Goossens, Conductor; Cincinnati, December 1st and 2nd, 1932.

Listening to such composers as Bruckner and Mahler one cannot help a feeling of inadequacy of comprehension. It surely is not just to pass lightly over such colossal labors as theirs, to admit ennui or disinterest and ascribe blame offhand to the creators who strove with such earnestness and idealism and spent so many years in stupendous preparation, and this in spite of little encouragement and small material gain. . . .

And, as with the B-flat Symphony last evening, the final emotion is thrillingly uplifting; the final judgment that of imposing grandeur and attainment; the final thought a reverence for a true artist, a great art creator, a perfect workman and an inconceivably capacious intellect.

The performance of the symphony was one of the major achievements in the history of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. Eugene Goossens seemed to have found in the music a reflection of some of his aesthetic sensibilities and predominant intellectuality, for nothing he has given us in the past, and most of it has been fine, has approached in breadth of concept, in perfection of detail, in completeness of comprehension and authority his presentation of this work. . . . Let no one stay away through fear of Bruckner.

—GEORGE A. LEIGHTON, *Cincinnati Enquirer*.

That Cincinnati audiences are appreciative of good music was proved by the reception accorded the symphony, one never before heard here. . . . There is nobility, grandeur in it and rugged beauty. . . . The word which best describes it is found in the excellent program notes, "Gothic."

—LILLIAN TYLER PLOGSTEDT, *The Cincinnati Post*.

It was a red letter day in the annals of musical Cincinnati when on December 1 and 2 the first performance of the noble Bruckner Fifth Symphony was given.

The Symphony Orchestra under its gifted conductor, Eugene Goossens, had worked long and hard, and was more than rewarded by the enthusiasm of the audience. From the first note until the last, the symphony was listened to with reverent, yet breathless attention, and to the great joy of the Bruckner enthusiasts this was manifested at both the evening and the afternoon performances. Needless to say, these audiences are quite different in type, as they usually are in each of our cities that possess a symphony orchestra, and that the Fifth Symphony should produce the identical effect on each audience is certainly an attestation of its greatness.

The opening Adagio produces in the hearer feelings of the utmost solemnity which, succeeded by the powerful octaves and the noble chorale, prepares one for the tragic theme of the Allegro. The gentle pizzicato second theme, the cantabile in the first violins, with the graceful woodwind arpeggios and the succeeding climax, fill one with a musical satisfaction that is added to by the intellectual satisfaction of the marvelous development and the glorious and jubilant close of the whole movement, which leave the musician and layman alike with the feeling of intense joy.

As do all Bruckner's slow movements, the Adagio leaves one speechless with awe. Its beauty is eternal.

The Scherzo is a great surprise in its use of the material of the Adagio, and the ensuing mood in waltz time cheers and amazes one with its consummate mastery of counterpoint. To a trained contrapuntist the last movement is a sheer joy. The colossal ability shown in the science of music is without precedent since the days of J. S. Bach. To the lover of music for music's sake only the tremendous climax is absolutely overwhelming and has few parallels for immensity, intensity, and exaltation of spirit.

As I said before, it was a red letter day in the annals of musical Cincinnati. —SIDNEY C. DURST, *Director College of Music of Cincinnati*.

ANTON BRUCKNER—THIRD {WAGNER} SYMPHONY ARNOLD SCHOENBERG—LIED DER WALDTAUBE

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Frederick A. Stock, Conductor; Jeanette Vreeland, Soloist; January 12th, 13th, 1933.

The great symphonist, Bruckner, was represented by his most monumental and impressive D Minor. What can a mere reviewer say of such a work? It is so rich in orchestral coloring, so profoundly erudite without the dryness of pedantry, its four movements a succession of inspired invention, that no word or panegyric can do justice to its greatness. Does not Bruckner deserve rank among the immortals?

—HERMAN DEVRIES, *Chicago American*.

Chicago heard only the Song of the Wood-Dove, which, as interpreted by Dr. Stock and as sung by Miss Vreeland, made such a deep impression as to make one wish that this entire composition might be given in its entirety, if not by the Chicago orchestra at Orchestra Hall, at least during the World's Fair.

—RENE DEVRIES, *Musical Courier*.

The Symphony, now fifty-nine years old, came to modern ears as a reaffirmation of the beauty and nobility of the art of tones. It is a majestic page, filled with a superb sonority, but filled also with a gentle sweetness of spirit-worthy, almost, of Schubert. . .

This Symphony is a masterpiece even to the intimate, almost devout, *adagio*. The first division is one of the most virile expressions in the literature. The scherzo has both fantasy and charm. The finale is a pageant of melody and of orchestral effect. Nor is it possible to expend too many superlatives in praise of the performance.

—GLENN DILLARD GUNN, *Chicago Herald and Examiner*.

The scherzo and the finale came out best. The upshot was to make one believe that if one accepts Schubert's tenth symphony—and I for one do not see how this can be avoided—then Bruckner is on undebatable ground so far as the model for his lengthy reveries is concerned.

—EUGENE STINSON, *Daily News*.

ANTON BRUCKNER—QUINTET

The Newark Sinfonietta, Armand Balendonck, Conductor, January 14, 1933.

It was indeed a daring thing to combine such weighty things as Bruckner, Mahler and Brahms on the one program and cultured Newarkers owe a debt of gratitude to him for enabling them to hear this music. . . .

As for the audience—it listened with apparently serious attention for nearly two and one half hours to the weighty program and accorded it generous applause.

In conclusion one may say that the general result was such as to warrant the hope that the affairs of the Newark Symphony Orchestra will so shape themselves as to enable Mr. Balendonck to bring to a practical fruition the plan he has privately expressed to the writer of performing in Newark one of the symphonies of Bruckner.

—JAMES P. DUNN.

This Quintet, composed in the year 1879, is Bruckner's sole contribution to chamber-music and proves him through its perfection, a master of an artform he resorted to but once. Though some of his ideas and his treatment of some parts of the forms involved betray his thoroughly symphonic character, these impressions do not violate the essentially five-voiced nature of the work, for the composer created here keeping in mind the limited carrying-power of a quintet of strings but exploiting to the ultimate all the expressive qualities of the five instruments at his disposal. The work abounds in colorful, highly romantic melodies, and as these shine forth from among the finely woven polyphonic web, often a continuous star-like glitter seems to issue from the shimmer of tone—an effect which Bruckner knew well how to use in contrast with splendid chord effects.

Mr. Balendonck conducted the difficult work with a feeling for plasticity of form and with a verve that revealed him as a thorough Bruckner interpreter.

—A. HAAG, *New York Staats-Zeitung*

ANTON BRUCKNER—FIFTH SYMPHONY

Philharmonic Symphony Society of New York, Bruno Walter, Conductor; January 12, 13, 14, 15, 1933. {The last of these performances was broadcast over the Columbia chain}.

One is grateful to Mr. Walter for reviving the B-flat Symphony of Bruckner. Though all but the first of Bruckner's nine published symphonics have been played in New York, our concert-goers do not hear them as often as they should.

Bruckner—the complete symphonic Bruckner—deserves to be better known. One of the most remarkable composers of the nineteenth century, he has never in this country received his due. . . .

How deep is his feeling, how piercing his vision of supermundane things. How lofty a beauty he could summon to his measures; how blazing a splendor touches the pinnacles of certain towering movements in his scores! Much of his music remains a *compendium maleficarum* for the censorious musical purist. Yet how easy it is to forget that fact when we listen to such things as the Dirge in the Seventh Symphony, the slow movement of the Eighth, the seraphic final Adagio of the Ninth—music of a valedictory tenderness, of a beauty transfigured and serene; music that searches the very heart of loveliness. . . .

There are moments when the curtains part, and we find ourselves confronted by an astonishing world of beauty, vast and inexplicable and mysterious, that fades and reappears and fades again, echoing with a strange murmur of revelation.

—LAWRENCE GILMAN, *New York Herald Tribune*

Such music, however, should not be permitted to lie in prolonged slumber. Certainly it ought to be preserved in these barren times and offered periodically for the consideration of concert audiences. It is worth hundreds of the more cunningly planned and industriously published works of some contemporaneous writers. Mr. Walter deserves commendation for resurrecting the score and for bestowing upon it the sincere and sympathetic study which was evidenced in last evening's excellent performance.

—W. J. HENDERSON, *New York Sun*

The slow movement is as fine as the first is glorious. This might be the windows or the fine painting and carving added to the frame of steel and stone. The Philharmonic strings played to full perfection, acquiring a mellow tone in the andante. The scherzo, too, added to the integrity of the structure. One moment it jumped. The next it danced almost in the tempo of a valse. The rhythm of the tympani announced the return of the jumping scherzo. . . .

It is a shame that the work of so fine a composer must suffer from lack of presentation. . . .

Why doesn't New York's musical audience lose some of that pseudo-sophistication and not only demand the popular works? Why not allow their conductors to give them more music of this type, music which is monumental, which has something to say, and which is just as enjoyable as the usual routine of Beethoven's nine and Brahms' four symphonies.

—A. W. HEPNER, *The Columbia Spectator* (Columbia University)

The suppleness of the strings as they developed the adagio's principal theme, and the contrapuntal clarity of the woodwinds, were characteristic of his thoughtful and sensitive reading; the control that subdued the beginnings of the final crescendo and made possible the blaze of power which ended it, and which brought a burst of applause and "bravos" from a large audience, was masterly. —H. HUTCHINSON, *New York Times*

This symphony is not only the "most contrapuntally brilliant" of Bruckner's nine, but otherwise one of the most impressive. . . .

Wilhelm Gericke introduced it to America at a concert of the Boston Symphony Orchestra in Boston on December 27, 1901. Joseph Stransky led the Philharmonic in the first New York performance on December 14, 1911. He repeated the work six seasons later. . . .

Indisputably this symphony stands in the front rank of Bruckner's compositions. In the second adagio the composer walks with rapt gaze in the region of his superearthy visions. The scherzo is a magnificent affair. The finale, which in spite of the counterpoint should hardly be spoken of as "fugued," is another superb fabric of sound.

Yesterday the auxiliary brasses, joining in the Parsifallian chorale, closed the work in a glorious outburst of golden tone.

The audience in its enthusiasm, not only applauded but cheered—a heartening record for Bruckner in our incredulous city.

—PITTS SANBORN, *New York World-Telegram*, January 16, 1933

Bruckner partisans had every reason to be joyful at last night's concert of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony in Carnegie Hall. Bruno Walter, altogether in the vein, gave the Fifth—or "Tragic"—or "Pizzicato"—Symphony the most stirring and revelatory performance of any Bruckner symphony within the experience of the reviewer. The same conductor had made much the same impression with this work at the last Salzburg festival, where his forces were the Vienna Philharmonic. Last night's performance was even finer in its sonorities, particularly those of the brass. . . .

There are broad, expressive, singing themes in the "Tragic" Symphony that go a reasonable distance toward justification of the Bavarian and Austrian conception of Bruckner as primarily a melodist.

—OSCAR THOMPSON, *New York Evening Post*, January 13, 1933.

But one such theme as the broad unisonous string melody of the Adagio is worth a multitude of the starved and torturous works that have passed for symphonies in Central Europe since Bruckner laid down his pen.

—OSCAR THOMPSON, *New York Evening Post*, January 16, 1933.

To Bruno Walter all gratitude for his signal pioneer service in the cause of Anton Bruckner. The applause of the audience was unanimous and spontaneous—not least owing to the splendid playing of the orchestra which responded with faultless quality to the wishes of its German conductor.

Bruckner himself never heard this B-flat Major Symphony. It was first performed while he was still alive (in Graz, in 1894, Franz Schalk conducting). New York heard it for the first time in 1911, under Josef Stransky. Since then it languished in almost total obscurity. According to press reports the work achieved a great success recently in Cincinnati under Eugene Goossens.

This success was confirmed yesterday. I consider the "Choral" or "Faith" Symphony, purely from the point-of-view of a felicitous expression of Bruckner's philosophy of life, the most significant symphonic work of the composer. Despite its length its structure is so irreproachably firm and yet so full of artistic variety, its thematic ideas of such individual power, its orchestral coloring and its spiritual "program" so rich, vital, and soulful, that this B-flat Major Symphony, thus blessed by the noblest genius, is destined for immortality.

It is necessary always to keep in mind the fact that the great tone-technician Bruckner is in all his compositions the "musician of faith." Many like to compare him with Johannes Brahms, but with little foundation. Yet a parallel between the respective views of life of the two composers may perhaps be drawn with some profit. Brahms—the great moulder, completely master of his feelings, the Protestant, who exercises an inexorable self-discipline, whose creations, despite all Viennese influence, are reflections of the severe northern German landscape! On the other hand—Bruckner, a child of sunny upper Austria reared among Baroque surroundings, a strict, deeply devout Catholic, who accepts joy and sorrow as his appropriate lot by the grant of Fate, and kneeling humbly before his God gives his soul up to the rich bounty of spiritual adventures out of which he shapes his resonant "choral" symphonies. How the man Bruckner, neglected, scorned, and condemned by poverty to a life of material want and worry, could have despite all his trials clung fast to hope and faith—that must remain forever a miracle of human fortitude and confidence.

It is to this spiritual phenomenon that the master gives overwhelming expression in the B-flat Major Symphony. The eighth-notes of the bass in the slow introduction to the first movement seem almost to be the beating of his own heart. (They make their appearance again later in the *Scherzo* and in the gigantic *Finale*). Then with gradually unfolding strength and clarity of tonal imagery there emerges as though out of an uncertainty of doubt a mighty theme, the rich content and coloring of which reveal the master of form whose unbounded exultation is the natural expression of a romantic-religious spirit. Then that splendidly swinging melodic line of the *Adagio*, that movement of a deep impressiveness almost without parallel, yet one containing no protest but (in its significant change to D major) humbly accepting every vicissitude. The rhythmic *Scherzo*, the strong pulsation of which attains a more restrained metamorphosis in the *Trio*, is a revelation of pastoral beauty. The titanic *Finale*, in which the composer, using a huge, boulder-like theme sprung from octave-leaps, builds upon a "Battle Fugue" (for so

it has been called) a "Double-Fugue of Victory" radiant with confidence to crown the work with a jubilant song of faith, a chorale of deep devotion—this movement brings to a close one of the mightiest of symphonic creations.

The performance was flawless. Bruno Walter infused into the thrilling orchestral experience such plasticity, rhythmic vitality, and dynamic mastery as could come only from one possessed of the inmost understanding of this great music.

—JOACHIM H. MEYER, *N. Y. Staats-Zeitung*.

N.B. Translated from the German by the Editor, and published with the kind permission of the *New York Staats-Zeitung*. This review appeared in German in the issue of January 13, 1932. The following, a brief excerpt of Mr. Meyer's review of the fourth successive performance of the symphony, appeared in the *Staats-Zeitung* on January 16, 1932.

If a more gripping and convincing performance than that of last Thursday were possible (Cf. above) it was realized yesterday under Mr. Walter's magic wand. Above all there must be mentioned in this connection the broad, melodic flow of the second movement with its deep impressiveness and the *Finale* with its impetuous ascent to the mighty "choral" climax.

Tumultuous applause rewarded the conductor and his splendid orchestra.

—JOACHIM H. MEYER, *N. Y. Staats Zeitung*.

A PARTIAL LIST OF BRUCKNER—MAHLER—REGER PERFORMANCES IN EUROPE {1932-1933}

Basel

- Oct. 29 Mahler—3 Songs
- Feb. 11 Mahler IV
- Feb. 25 Bruckner III
Conductor, Felix Weingartner

Berlin

- Mar. 20 Mahler IV
Conductor, Bruno Walter

Bochum

- Nov. 3 Bruckner IX (original version)
- Feb. 2 Reger—Symphonic Variations for violin and orchestra
Bruckner VIII
Conductor, Leopold Reichwein

Dortmund

- Dec. 12 Bruckner IV
- Oct. 17 Reger—Mozart Variationen
- Nov. 28 Mahler IV

1933

- Apr. 3 The second Westphalian Bruckner Festival will begin on this date. Among other Bruckner works to be announced, the original version of the Ninth, a Mass and the Te Deum will be performed during the Festival.

Duisburg-Hamborn

- Nov. 14 Mahler Songs and Symphony II
Conductor, Paul Scheinpflug
- May 8 Reger—Bocklin—Suite
Conductor, Hermann Abendroth
- June 12 Mahler—Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen
Conductor, Karl Koethke

Gera

- Oct. 3 Bruckner IV
 Nov. 18 Reger—Böcklin Suite
 Conductor, Heinrich Laber

Hagen

- Dec. 1 Bruckner V
 Conductor, Weisbach

Hannover

- Jan. 9 Bruckner VIII
 Conductor, Rudolf Krasselt

Kiel

- Nov. 14 Reger—Hymnus der Liebe; Beethoven Variationen
 Feb. 20 Bruckner III
 Conductor, Fritz Stein

Karlsruhe

- Nov. 9 Mahler—Lied von der Erde
 Nov. 30 Bruckner VII
 Apr. 26 Bruckner VIII
 Conductor, Josef Krips

Köln

- Oct. 24-25 Bruckner VII
 Mar. 7 Mahler VIII
 Apr. 3 Bruckner VI
 Conductor, Hermann Abendroth

Krefeld

- Jan. 14 Bruckner VII
 Conductor, Dr. Walther Meyer-Giesow

Leipzig

- Dec. 1 Bruckner IX (original version)
 Mahler—Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen
 15 Mahler I
 Conductor, Bruno Walter

Salzburg

The international Bruckner Festival is scheduled for the week of August 8th—August 15. Two orchestral concerts conducted by Siegmund v. Hausegger will include the *First Symphony* (Linz version) and the *Third Symphony* to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of Wagner's death. Otto Klemperer is expected to conduct the *Eighth Symphony*. The Quintet will be performed and Bruckner's *Masses* and *Requiem* will be sung. *Jedermann* and *Figaro* are included in the Salzburg program.

Stockholm

- Oct. 26 Bach-Mahler Suite
 Bruckner I
 Conductor, Vaclav Talich
 Jan. 11 Bruckner IX (original version)
 Conductor, Hans Weisbach
 Feb. 22 Bruckner VII
 Conductor, Eugen Jochum
 Apr. 5 Bruckner III
 Conductor, Vaclav Talich

Stuttgart

- Jan. 16 Bruckner IV
 Conductor, Carl Leonhardt
 30 Bruckner VII
 Conductor, Eugen Jochum
 Mar. 13 Reger—Symphonischer Prolog
 Conductor, Fritz Busch

Weinheim near Frankfurt

The third Bruckner Festival of Baden will be held in Weinheim from May 3 to May 5.

Wisbaden

- Nov. 11 Bruckner IX (original version)
 Mar. 24 Bruckner VIII and Te Deum
 Conductor, Carl Schuricht

AN EMINENT BRUCKNERITE

There arrived recently in America Mr. F. C. Adler, a noted German conductor, whose favorite field of interpretive activity for a quarter of a century has been the music of Bruckner. During the years immediately following the revolution in Germany Mr. Adler conducted with tremendous success several Bruckner symphonic cycles in Munich, thus helping immeasurably to pave the way for the great Bruckner enthusiasm which eventually resulted in the choice of that city as the scene of the First International Bruckner Festival. It was no mean accomplishment that popularized a "Bruckner Abend" concert program, a whole evening devoted to Bruckner, just as tradition has stamped with approval the Wagner or the Beethoven "Abend." It would be hard to imagine a richer and fuller musical experience than the following offering:

BRUCKNER ABEND

150th Psalm
IX Symphony
Te Deum

and such programs are typical among the long array of concerts offered the German music-lovers by Mr. Adler. The progressive idealism that revealed itself in such devotion to Bruckner could not resist the appeal of Mahler and Schoenberg, two more recent giants of deathless romanticism. Among Mr. Adler's proud achievements in the cause of serious music are to be found Mahler's dreaded *Sixth Symphony* (The Tragic) which no conductor has as yet dared to produce in America and that titanic cantata, Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder*, only recently given its New World premiere by the enterprising Mr. Stokowski.

During the past few years Mr. Adler has occupied a prominent position in the German music-publishing world. In this capacity he has been particularly kind to unknown and little known composers, among them also some Americans. The opera *Caponsacchi*, by the American composer Richard Hageman, one of the few Americans whose work has ever been presented on the German operatic stage, is one of Mr. Adler's publications.

It is to be hoped that some outstanding American symphonic organization will offer Mr. Adler an opportunity as guest-conductor to interpret some of the lesser known symphonies of Bruckner and Mahler for us and to renew with us the rich musical laurels he won through a long and active career as musical director in Germany.

—G. E.

MAHLER IN ESTHONIA

The brilliant young Bruckner and Mahler interpreter, Fritz Mahler, continues steadily to add to his laurels as a conductor of high ideals and great enterprise. His triumphant path as guest-conductor in many European cities brought him to Esthonia on January 20, when he performed Mahler's *Fourth* at Reval. Although it was the first Mahler music ever played in Esthonia, the audience expressed its enjoyment in unmistakable terms, applauding the fine work of the young guest-conductor with much enthusiasm.

THE SYMPHONIES OF ANTON BRUCKNER

In the near future the Bruckner Society will issue the first book in English on Bruckner's symphonies. The work comes from the pen of Gabriel Engel, the author of "The Life of Anton Bruckner" and "Gustav Mahler, Song-Symphonist," both of which treatises have met with flattering attention from critics and music-lovers. The new book will be adorned with a series of six full-page illustrations of famous conductors of Bruckner premieres by the greatest of Austrian silhouette artists, Hans Schliessmann, an immortal specimen of whose genius is the "Bruckner at the Organ" printed on the cover of *Chord and Discord*.

The following excerpt from the author's preface reveals the general nature of the work:

Thanks to the devotion and perseverance of such great conductors as Koussevitzky, Stock, Toscanini, and Walter there is no longer a critic of standing in our country who through the revelation of some of Bruckner's music has not become aware of the towering genius of that long-neglected Austrian symphonist. Never has the American music-lover known a greater need for information concerning the work and character of a great composer, yet the whole Bruckner literature in English is contained in a single, slender brochure on his life. Among the rather formidable array of recent books about Bruckner in German there are two, large sections of which are devoted to masterly analyses of his music. The first, by Ernst Kurth, abounds in fascinating psychological remarks often throwing more light on the mental processes of the author than of the composer. The second, by Alfred Orel, reveals too noticeably for the average music-lover the huge store of technical knowledge its author employs for the illumination of Bruckner's symphonic achievement. Two decades ago August Halm wrote his epoch-making analysis of Bruckner's symphonies, paving the way for all subsequent books on the subject. But much new material has been unearthed since then, all of which is presented in documentary form in that definitive source-work on Bruckner in seven volumes by August Goellerich—Max Auer.

No mere translation of any of the above-mentioned books can answer our immediate need, though no language without a translation of the monumental Auer biography of the master will ever be able to boast an adequate Bruckner literature. Powerful music the individual character of which refuses persistently to unfold when conducted in the accepted classical manner so necessary to Beethoven, or the romantic, temperamental manner required by Wagner, must be illuminated from a fresh point-of-view. Therefore, only a straightforward, objective exposition of the facts involved in Bruckner's symphonic contribution and in that of no other composer can claim general attention in America to-day. A concise presentation of such facts is the aim of this present treatise.

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By GABRIEL ENGEL

With Six Silhouettes by Hans Schliessmann

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