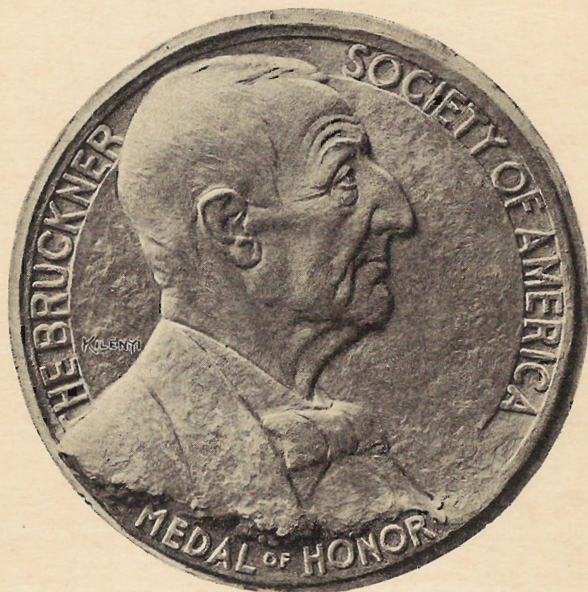


Chord and Discord



THE KILENYI BRUCKNER MEDAL

BRUCKNERIAD: A SYMPHONIC ODYSSEY

BRUCKNER PREMIERE!

MAHLER'S ART: A NEW SURVEY

MUSICAL VIENNA TO-DAY

MOZART AS A MUSIC DRAMATIST

SYMPHONIC CHRONICLE

March 1934

1#5

PROPOSAL FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FINE ARTS AS A NATIONAL ENTERPRISE

A METHOD

1. To organize the present lovers and supporters of all forms of music and the other arts into a body which shall have influence, prestige, and competent information.
2. To work, for the establishment of a Federal Department of Fine Arts; and for State and Municipal Departments of Fine Arts.
3. The organization to work with these departments for the accomplishment of cultural objectives held to be desirable to the personal and civic welfare of all citizens.
4. The organization, also, to act directly in otherwise promoting and furthering the progress of music and the other fine arts in this country.

OBJECTIVES

1. Stabilizing the music arts, insuring their further development, and steadying the morale of the many musicians who are confronted with the problems of livelihood and their artistic futures.
2. Broadening the outlet for employment of musicians (with preference given to American citizens) through increasing the number of major symphony and minor symphony orchestras, local opera enterprises, choral concerts, and miscellaneous concerts of every kind.
3. Counseling the study of music for its own sake, and the enjoyment and cultural advantages of such study; and pointing out the wisdom of turning to music as a vocation *only* when such decision appears eminently fitting.
4. Decentralizing music activities by encouraging and aiding in increasing the number and kinds of music-giving enterprises in every community where such activities are feasible.
5. Encouraging the making of music in the home, for the personal enjoyment and satisfaction of those immediately concerned . . . to the end that a fuller appreciation and understanding of the art may be had.
6. Extending cooperation through counsel and aid to those communities desirous of starting or broadening music activities suitable to their resources.
7. Encouraging and aiding in every community the teaching of such music in the high and grade schools as shall be deemed suitable to individual requirements. Also encouraging and aiding the study and teaching of music in colleges and universities, and conservatories.
8. Encouraging the engaging, in increasing numbers, of American solo instrumentalists and solo singers, as well as ensembles, where their ability to appear in courses of advanced artistic type shall have been amply proven.
9. Seeking to increase the number of concerts by superior artists—American and foreign—in high school auditoriums at "popular" prices.

The Bruckner Society of America, being whole-heartedly interested in this magnificent plan, originally sponsored by *Musical Digest*, (Pierre V. R. Key, Editor) gladly reprints it here, (in part) from the December, 1933 issue of that periodical, with the kind permission of the publishers. Those desiring further information concerning the plan should address

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BRUCKNERIAD: A SYMPHONIC ODYSSEY

I. ALLEGRO: STORM AND STRESS

1864—Anton Bruckner, organist, forty years old, and residing in the Upper Austrian provincial city of Linz, composes his first major work, the *Mass in D Minor*. Through his young orchestration-teacher, Otto Kitzler, conductor at the Linz theatre, he has come to know something of the fiery style of Richard Wagner, the master of the so-called "New Order" (*Neue Richtung*) in music, but this acquaintance is still restricted to the score of *Tannhaeuser*. In fact Bruckner's enthusiasm for Wagner's music is so limited at this stage that Kitzler urges him in vain to attend a Wagner performance during a sojourn in Vienna.

1865—Bruckner begins to compose his *First Symphony, C Minor*, in reality his third attempt in the great instrumental form. The marked "Storm-and-Stress" character of this work reflects clearly the tremendous inner struggle that is raging in Bruckner's soul at this time, compelling him to seek the opinion of the highest musical authority in the world.

Armed with the still incomplete score of his new symphony he travels to Munich, Europe's musical storm centre and finds the city in the throes of the preparation for the greatest artistic event of the century, the world-premiere of *Tristan*. He introduces himself to Buelow, then only thirty-five, and still unembittered and approachable.

Describing this incident in later years to his biographer, August Goellerich, Bruckner said:

Buelow examined my *C Minor Symphony* with great interest, giving alternate expression to his admiration of its beautiful ideas (as he styled them) and to his astonishment at the daring craftsmanship it displayed. "How splendid!" he exclaimed at one passage, and "What daring!" at another. At a certain particularly bold trombone passage he suddenly called out. "Ha, this is dramatic!" I said, "It's nothing out of the ordinary". Later I introduced myself to the master (Richard Wagner) who proved unusually kind and friendly towards me, seeming to take a liking to me at once. When Buelow told him about my symphony the master also asked to see it, but I did not have the courage to show it to him. Why, I could not even bring myself to sit down in his presence, at first, but he was reassuringly congenial and invited me to join his circle every evening. And so it went during the whole two weeks I remained there, waiting for the postponed *Tristan* performance. When, at the expiration of this time, Frau Schnorr (*Isolde*) was still ailing, I decided to return to Linz, although Wagner urged me to stay and wait. Somewhat later the premiere of *Tristan* did take place, but I could not obtain permission to return to Munich before the third performance. Wagner was very glad to see me and thanked me personally for having come again, but I did not dare show him any composition of mine even then.

1866—Bruckner finishes the *First Symphony* and composes his second great mass (*E Minor*). Overwork, discouragement due to continued neglect, his first unhappy love-affair, and the general hopelessness of the outlook for his artistic future bring about a total nervous collapse.

1867—On the verge of threatening insanity he is sent to Bad Kreuzen in the care of a priest. Thankful for his rescue from a horrible fate he composes his third, last, and greatest mass (*F Minor*).

1868—Filled with new hope he takes up cheerfully his duties as conductor of the "Frohsinn" singing society of Linz. Planning to make an approaching Festival Concert of the organization a sensational success he suggests that the Committee appeal to Richard Wagner for an original composition suited to their needs. He encloses a note of his own with the official request. Wagner answers Bruckner as follows:

I address myself to you, both to convey my thanks for your very friendly note and to ask you to tell the gentlemen of the "Frohsinn" how glad their warm message of encouragement has made me. I should be very happy indeed to accede to their request for an appropriate composition of mine for male chorus, but, as you must realize, a work of such a nature is scarcely to be found among my compositions. Still, after thinking the matter over, since you mention a Festival Concert with an assisting orchestra and female chorus, I believe I can offer you something that will be quite to the point. It is the closing section of my latest dramatic work, *Die Meistersinger*.

This is a Bass Solo, very grateful, without being really difficult, and requires, in addition, the full chorus and orchestra. Write to Fr. Schott, Mainz, for a copy of the piano arrangement, two acts of which are now ready, with the third soon to follow. Most likely, the engraving of the orchestral score of the Third Act is also sufficiently far advanced to make it possible for you to get hold of a proof copy of the section you will need. If not, ask Choir-Master Hans Richter of the Munich Court Theatre to obtain a copy for you.

The section I mean begins with the words "Verachtet mir die Meister nicht." ("Scorn not the masters".) Please announce to the executive committee of the "Frohsinn" that I accept with much pleasure the Honorary Membership to which they have elected me and shall look forward with real interest to any further communication from the Society. With most sincere, friendly regards, I remain,

Faithfully,
Richard Wagner.

Munich, Jan. 31, 1868.

Thus it came about that the world-premiere of the last scene of *Meistersinger* took place at a rustic festival in Upper Austria, under Anton Bruckner's baton.

1868—Bruckner's *First Symphony* receives its first performance, at the Redoutensaal, Linz, the composer conducting, May 9. Encouraged by this success, but convinced that his future progress requires a wider sphere of artistic activity, he plans to secure a position as organist or conductor in some musical capital. Good friends use their influence in his behalf in Vienna. His secret longing is to live and work in Munich, the city of Wagner, the center of the "New Order," of which he (Bruckner) feels himself a part. He appeals to Buelow for help:

Please forgive me, Baron, for annoying you with a humble plea now, when every moment must be as precious as gold to Your Excellency. I am compelled to do this because of most urgent circumstances.

I have been fortunate enough to achieve fame as an organist in my country. In Vienna people say I am the best organist in Austria. As a pupil of Sechter I have a certificate conferring upon me the right to teach in conservatories. I have composed several Grand Masses, the first of which was given in the Court Chapel at Vienna with such great success that a second performance was at once ordered by the imperial authority.

Your Excellency showed me the graciousness, a few years ago, of looking over some parts of my *C Minor Symphony*. Would you now be so kind as to answer this question of mine in strict confidence? Should my merit be overlooked in my own country (for I cannot stay in Linz forever) would it not be possible for me, through your own and Mr. Wagner's influence, to be granted an audience by the King, so that by playing for His Majesty I may gain his consideration for a position as Court Organist or Assistant Conductor, either in the church or the theatre, I do not care which, so long as I receive a somewhat more generous remuneration than I do at present? Or would this be impossible just now? Mr. von (sic!) Wagner who recently wrote so encouragingly to me would, I am sure, do anything he could to help me. Please tell him about this letter and let me know what he thinks, in addition to your own personal reaction. And if the plan should be possible, how great an annual

salary may I hope for? I await your answer with the utmost suspense. I beg you most earnestly to keep this inquiry of mine a deep secret, and particularly not to breathe a word of it to anyone from Vienna.

Will the third and last performance (*Meistersinger*) take place on the twenty-ninth of this month? If it is at all possible I shall go to Munich to hear the grand work in the company of my magnificent friend and hero, Wagner. I send you my congratulations and deepest respect. I await your gracious answer.

Anton Bruckner.

Linz, June 20, 1868.

Had Buelow and Wagner immediately sent Bruckner a favorable reply, but only would the symphonist have been forever lost to Austria, but the entire character of his art would probably have taken the wildly revolutionary path blazed by his *First Symphony*. Vienna spoke promptly and two weeks after the above letter Bruckner was appointed Professor of Harmony, Counterpoint, and the Organ at the famous conservatory in that city. For several years he yielded to the misguided, though friendly, advice of Eduard Hanslick, arch-critic, and Court Conductor Herbeck, who urged him to concentrate upon a career as organ virtuoso, telling him that if he must compose he should do so "sanely," practically, in short, conservatively. Bruckner heeded them, with the result that he was enabled to celebrate triumphs as a virtuoso in Nancy and Paris in 1869, and in London, at several concerts at the Albert Hall and the Crystal Palace, in 1871. In this "sane" mood he began his *Second Symphony*, a work spiritually inferior to his *First*. The high priests of music in Vienna now looked upon him with real respect. Even the coveted gates of the Viennese Philharmonic Society, that anti-Wagnerian bulwark of conservatism, were thrown open to him. His *F Minor Mass* had already been performed at the Augustinerkirche, and the long, gradual, but safe road to academic laurels that spelled wordly success as surely as it boded extinction to his genius seemed to beckon. He sensed this and in his perplexity clung desperately to his ideal of freedom of artistic expression as he saw it embodied in the brilliant music-dramas of Wagner. The progress of this inner conflict inevitably brought him into open schism with the Viennese forces of conservatism. Hanslick's report of the *F Minor Mass* already contains a hint of the unpopularity that was soon to engulf the name of Bruckner:

Bruckner's *F Minor Mass* commands attention because of its artistic counterpoint and fine fugal technique, as well as its numerous passages of individual beauty. In style and conception (aside from its gigantic dimensions and its great technical difficulties) it points to the *Missa Solemnis* as its model and reveals the powerful influence of Richard Wagner.

—Eduard Hanslick, *Neue Freie Presse*, June 29, 1871.

Although the very name of Wagner had by that time become anathema to all Viennese musicians, Bruckner was too naive and honest to be able long to conceal the spirit of utter worship which he harbored toward the master. Only during his vacation days at Linz had he hitherto dared to give free rein to his true feelings. An incident related by one of the members of the "Froshinn" clearly shows that the opinion of Wagner in musical matters had never ceased to be the supreme one for Bruckner. The time was the summer of 1871:

On one occasion Bruckner, being also bound for Kremsmuenster, where we were to give a concert in the garden of the "Kaiser Max," made the trip by carriage with us, for there was as yet no railroad along that stretch. Suddenly, during an intermission, he threw off his coat, and asking Choir-master Weissgaerber to take care of it for him, disappeared. When the program was over and it was time to think of returning home there was still no Bruckner to be seen. Knowing that he wished to remain there for a day or two as guest of the monastery we handed his coat over to a servant of that institution and went to the market-place where our carriages stood. Just as we were about to start off Bruckner came running up in his shirt-sleeves and, his face beaming with happiness, asked us to follow

him into Fuxjaeger's Tavern. There he climbed upon a table and in a voice shaking with emotion read out to us a letter that had just arrived from Richard Wagner, in which the master praised highly an original composition Bruckner had sent him. Everyone present shouted with joy and crowded about Bruckner to catch a glimpse of Wagner's handwriting.

Bruckner finished his *Second Symphony* in 1872 and, without waiting for a performance or criticism, launched upon a new symphony, a work which he determined to imbue with the unhampered, heroic spirit of the "New Order." With the sweeping power of this resolve he recaptured the flaming manner of his *First Symphony* and brought to it the added wisdom and mastery he had gained during the six year interim of struggle and study. As the score began to unfold beneath his pen he found inner peace and happiness, for he knew that in these pages the strength of his message was no longer marred by the doubts that beclouded the violent "Storm-and-Stress" of his *First Symphony*.

II. ADAGIO: PER ASPERA

During his vacation in August and September of the following year he made his choice and determined to cast his lot openly with the "new school." With his *Second* and *Third* symphonies under his arm he went to Bayreuth, not merely to get Wagner's opinion of these works but to secure his public approval and support as a symphonist of significance. His highest hope was to obtain consent to dedicate a symphony to the "master of all masters," as Bruckner called Wagner. The details of this meeting with Wagner remained throughout Bruckner's life the proudest of his memories and he never tired of relating them. Like a child he continued to harp upon the fact, so incredibly wonderful to him, that the "divine genius" had declared a Bruckner symphony worthy of being coupled with his name. Any one of a great number of letters might be cited to present Bruckner's version of the story, but perhaps the one he wrote to Baron Hans von Wolzogen of Bayreuth in Sept. 1884 is the most characteristic:

It was sometime about the beginning of 1873 (for the Crown Prince Frederick was just then at Bayreuth) that I asked the master's permission to lay before him the score of my *Second* and *Third* symphonies. He complained of the press of time (theatre construction, etc.) saying that it was not only impossible for him to examine my music at that moment, but that he could not even give the score of the *Ring* any attention. I said, "Master, I know I have no right to deprive you of even a quarter of an hour, but I thought that for you an instant's glance would be sufficient to grasp the quality of my work. Then he tapped me on the shoulder and said, "Well, then, come on in." We entered the *salon* together and he opened the *Second Symphony*. "Yes, yes," he remarked, glancing through it hastily, and I could see that it seemed too tame to him (for they had at first succeeded in intimidating me at Vienna.) Then he began to look at the *Third* (in D Minor) and at once exclaimed, "Look! Look! Now, this is surprising!" and so he went carefully through the whole opening passage (he particularly remarked the trumpet theme). Then he said, "Leave this score here; I want to look through it more thoroughly after dinner." (It was twelve o'clock.) "Shall I tell him now?" thought I and Wagner, sensing my hesitation, gazed inquiringly at me. Then with pounding heart, and trembling voice I said, "Master, there is something on my heart which I hardly dare to tell!" and he said quickly, "Out with it! Don't be afraid! You know how much I think of you." Thereupon I revealed my longing, adding that I wished permission for the dedication only if the master was really willing to grant it, for I feared above all to cast any unworthy reflection upon his sacred name. He replied, "Come and see me at Wahnfried at five this evening. Meanwhile I shall have examined your *D Minor Symphony* carefully and we shall then be able to decide this matter." At five sharp I entered Wahnfried and the master of all masters hurried forward to greet me, embracing me, while he exclaimed, "Dear friend, the dedication is truly appropriate; you have given me great joy with this symphony." For two and a half hours thereafter I had the happiness of sitting beside him while he spoke of the musical conditions in Vienna and continuously

served me with beer.* Then he led me into the garden and showed me his grave!!—I left Bayreuth the next day, and he wished me a pleasant journey, reminding me, "Remember, where the trumpet sounds the theme!"**

During the years that followed, in Vienna and in Bayreuth, he would often ask me, "Has the symphony been performed? It must be performed. It must be performed."

In 1882, when he was already suffering from severe illness, he once took my hand, saying, "Don't worry. I myself will perform the symphony and all your works." Moved, I could only exclaim, "O master!" Then he asked, "Have you heard *Parsifal*? How do you like it?" And then, while he still held my hand, I knelt before him and pressing it to my lips, said, "O master, I worship you!" Then he said, "Be calm, Bruckner," and a moment later, "Good-night," and he left me. On the following day he sat behind me during the *Parsifal* performance and scolded me for applauding too loud.

The touching incident and the little humorous one that formed the latter part of this letter take us far ahead of our main story; yet they are of importance because they describe the last occasion upon which these two great figures ever met on earth. Wagner died shortly after, leaving to his zealous disciples the fulfilment of his promise to secure universal recognition for Bruckner's art.

In the meanwhile Bruckner, wildly happy because of Wagner's acceptance of the dedication, turned his gaze homeward toward beautiful Vienna, where he fully believed his star to be in the ascendant. He little dreamed that this moment of happiness was the prelude to thirteen years of a martyrdom of scorn and neglect such as have rarely if ever embittered the lives of any other great men in the history of art; and the grand dark climax of this ordeal was to be the premiere of this very *Wagner Symphony*, the saddest and most amazing first performance of a great work on record. But that is also some years ahead of our story.

Only a month after Bruckner's return from Bayreuth occurred one of the happiest events of his life, the initial performance of his *Second Symphony*. The executant orchestra was the mighty Viennese Philharmonic, perhaps the best instrumental organization in the world at that time. Bruckner conducted in person. Once more the critic Hanslick sang his praises of the rising Austrian composer, though he did not forget to inject a reminder of his previous warning against the evil Wagnerian influence perceptible in the work. Bruckner's own impression of the reception given the *Second Symphony* may be gathered from a letter he wrote to his old comrades of the "Froshinn" a few days afterwards in answer to the proud congratulations they had sent him upon his great success.

I am very grateful for your loyal interest in my progress. It makes me all the happier to feel, as one of you, that I have not disgraced the name of the Society. The highest tribute of all, completely unknown to the audience, was paid me after the concert, in the great reception-hall where the members of the Philharmonic Orchestra, who had played like gods, waited to give me an ovation which mere words cannot describe. It will remain the most memorable day of my life as an artist!

Shortly after this concert Hanslick must have heard about the new symphony Bruckner had dedicated to Wagner. In the next months Bruckner was given ample opportunity to know that any further progress for him in Vienna must be made against the hopeless odds of the same avalanche of opposition that the heroic Wagner was facing. The Vien-

*For a detailed account of this humorous episode see *The Life of Anton Bruckner*, by Gabriel Engel, pp. 22-23.

**Engel's *Wagner Kalendar* (the page devoted to Aug. 20) is a facsimile of Bruckner's question in his own handwriting, *Wo die Trompete das Thema beginnt?* and Wagner's signed answer, also in his own handwriting, *Ja, Ja! Herzlichste Gruesse*. This card is one of the most highly treasured possessions of the Wagner Verein in Vienna.

nese press, the Philharmonic, the Conservatory, these were obstacles such as seemed to lend only greater glory and invincibility to the supreme music-dramatist's conquering advance, but to the shy, helpless Bruckner they meant heart-breaking oblivion for many a year.

Bruckner, unaware of the new dark undercurrent that was forming, now reviewed his professional career and, modestly enough, concluded that he would be justified in seeking material promotion. In addition to the miserably paid professorship at the Conservatory which had lured him to Vienna six years previously, he had attained two subordinate positions the significance of which was practically limited to their mere titles. One was the post of Associate Organist of the Court Chapel, the other, that of Assistant Teacher of Piano and Organ at the St. Anna Training School for Female Teachers. "Why not a chair for Harmony and Counterpoint at the University?" thought he, and sat down to write his application therefor to no other than—Prof. Hanslick. Sorry, old man, answered the academician, but we have no such post. Bruckner, undaunted, wrote another application, proving that in such times and in such a city, when and where music was of vital consequence, there should be such a chair. No, answered Hanslick, coldly, the language and grammar of music are the business, not of a university but a conservatory. Still failing to understand, Bruckner wrote again, eliciting the same curt reply. Then he began to "smell a rat." He made a fourth application through another channel, but eventually this also arrived at the arch-critic's desk for final judgment. Prof. Hanslick's impatient codicil to this document clearly transcends the impersonal dignity which alone befits an official comment:

I find in this application no facts that call for a revision of my previous views respecting this matter. *There is, furthermore, no evidence present that Mr. Bruckner has ever produced striking results as a teacher of composition.* (May 15, 1874)

Nevertheless, Bruckner persisted and made three further attempts, at length securing the desired appointment over Hanslick's head, thereby adding to the critic's store of anti-Wagnerian wrath against him an element of purely Bruckneresque texture. This long series of applications stretched over a period of almost two years, beginning early in 1874 and continuing until Bruckner's appointment as Lecturer on Harmony and Counterpoint at the University of Vienna on Nov. 18, 1875. He delivered his first lecture there on Nov. 25.

A view of the bare facts presented above might well lead those unacquainted with the more private details of Bruckner's life during this period to conclude that he was, after all, only a stubborn meddler, a nuisance. It is perhaps just, therefore, in this connection, to cite an illuminating letter written by Bruckner to his friend Moritz von Mayfeld on Jan. 12, 1875. Ever since his return from Bayreuth over a year before this Bruckner has been "turning heaven and earth" to bring about a performance of the new *Wagner Symphony*.

He seems, in this letter, to feel that the whole world is against him and does not even hesitate to name Brahms as a personal enemy.

My *Fourth Symphony* is finished. I have thoroughly revised my *Wagner Symphony*. Wagner's conductor, Hans Richter, was recently in Vienna and related in several circles how enthusiastically Wagner speaks of the work. But they will not perform it. Dessoof rehearsed it during the vacation, and even sent for me (for the sake of appearances). Later, breaking the promise he had made early in October, he told me that he was sorry, but the program was full. Some of the musicians of the Philharmonic, unsuspecting, still believe that my symphony is to be given. It seems that Brahms has banned my *Second Symphony*

in Leipzig. Richter, it is said, would like to perform the *Wagner Symphony* in Budapest. The injury that Hanslick has done me may be seen in the old "Press" of Dec. 25.

Even Herbeck says that I should try to get some help from Wagner in person. I have only my position at the Conservatory, on which it is impossible to live. I had to draw an advance of 700 florins in September or starve. No one wants to help me. Stremayr makes promises—but does nothing. Fortunately, a few foreigners have come to study with me—otherwise I should be compelled to turn beggar.

Just a little more patience, please: I have implored all the leading piano-teachers to recommend lessons to me, but beyond a lesson or two in theory I have received nothing. You will now realize how serious my plight has become. I would gladly settle abroad if I were only assured an existence. Whither shall I turn? Nothing could have induced me to come to Vienna if I had only had a hint of what was to come. It would be easy for my enemies to force me out of the Conservatory. I am really surprised that they have not yet done so. Students of the University and Conservatory, and even the menials are highly indignant over the treatment I am receiving. My life has been robbed of every joy—through pure malice. How gladly would I return to my old place as organist at Linz! If I had only gone to England then!

Filled with despair, and meeting with scorn or indifference wherever he turns, Bruckner nevertheless submits his *Wagner Symphony* to the Philharmonic again, for he cannot believe that the organization which was formerly so friendly towards him has abandoned him completely. The note accompanying the score is dated Aug. 1, 1875:

Although I finished my *Fourth Symphony* some months ago, I have not yet experienced the happiness (with the exception of my *C minor Symphony*, so kindly performed by the Philharmonic) of having any of my works produced in Vienna. Therefore I take the liberty of submitting to the honorable Committee of the Philharmonic one of these,¹ a symphony dedicated to the great tone-poet Richard Wagner in 1873 and highly praised by him. I beg that this work, surely not the most insignificant of present-day compositions, a fact perhaps best attested by the judgments of Liszt and Wagner, be included in the list of symphonies to be performed by the Philharmonic during the coming winter season, 1875-6. Should the Committee so desire, I am willing to have the symphony divided into two sections, to be given on two separate occasions.

Had not Bruckner already made bitter personal enemies of most of the musical powers in Vienna his naive emphasis of the praise of Liszt and Wagner would have sufficed to destroy any chance he might have had to secure the cooperation of the Philharmonic. Two more seasons passed during which his sole consolation was in a handful of brilliant students and young adherents, among whom was the sixteen-year old Gustav Mahler. This young genius revealed his homage towards Bruckner's art by making a piano arrangement of the *Wagner Symphony*, the first ever to be published. (A copy of this arrangement is to-day a genuine musical rarity.)

In 1876 Bruckner attended the premiere of the *Ring* at Bayreuth, but in the tremendous excitement of the Festival there was no moment left for the consideration of so humble a matter as a Bruckner symphony. The following year Conductor Herbeck, who had always cherished a high regard for Bruckner's talents, determined to do his utmost to bring to an end the malicious neglect of so fine an artist by his own countrymen. He suddenly announced, to the amazement of all, that he himself would produce the *Wagner Symphony*. Bruckner now took heart once more, even looking about for added performances that might follow this promised one. To a Berlin critic, Wilhelm Tappert, who had expressed an encouraging interest in his work, he wrote:

My *Wagner Symphony* (second revision) is complete, and Herbeck will perform it on Dec. 16, at the Musikverein Concert. If I can attract the interest of Director Bilsé, I should, with your permission, like to send this symphony to you. There would still be time for you to use it, if you should care to do so. Our Philharmonic is absolutely antagonistic to the "New Order" in music. I shall never again submit any of my works to them, for they have repeatedly rejected my offerings.

How Hans Richter can remain on the best terms with Wagner's bitterest opponents is truly a wonder to me. Alas, I have also come to know him as the arch-liar he is. Only recently have many of Wagner's statements become clear to me. I implore you not to be turned against me by the many malicious statements being made about me.

Two weeks after this letter was written, when Bruckner was just beginning to taste the joys of promised victory, the newly rising sun of his career was cruelly blotted out by a momentary whim of Fate. Herbeck died suddenly on Oct. 28, leaving to the unhappy composer the bitter choice of once more shelving the *Wagner Symphony* or conducting it himself, for no conductor in Vienna would have dared to step into the perilous breach left by the brave Herbeck.

In sheer desperation Bruckner refused to abandon this last opportunity of performing the work, although success was now hopeless. The concert took place on Dec. 16 before a fashionable Viennese audience of gay music-lovers. The symphony, allotted the last place on a long program, began so late that many listeners were already thinking of leaving the concert-hall.

The details of the fiasco that ensued were so unforgettably tragic that the laurel wreath which a few of his faithful students pressed into his hands as he fled from the hall may have well seemed to Bruckner the "crown of thorns" an Austrian poet has called it in a fine, recently published novelette.* This little book of scarcely thirty pages presents a realistic and sympathetic conception of the aged symphonist's last day on earth. The dying master has just managed to totter back into his room from the garden whither he has stolen from his bed while his faithful old servant Kathi was not watching. A confusion of fantastic shapes dances before his feverish gaze. He grasps convulsively at them and seizes one, when his vision clears suddenly, revealing clutched in his hand the laurel wreath of the *Wagner Symphony* premiere. He recognizes it at once. His thoughts fly swiftly back to the distant past. He experiences all over again the vivid spiritual adventures of that torturing hour almost twenty years before.

III. SCHERZO: BRUCKNER PREMIERE!

—RUDOLF LIST

A great hall illuminated by brilliant chandeliers. In the loges the glitter of countless jewels; the air is heavy with the mingled scent of rich perfumes. Anton Bruckner is about to grasp the baton. He meets the eye of one of the violinists, leering diabolically at him. From the direction of the flutists malicious chuckles grate upon his ear.

A lady in the first loge stares at him with contempt. What on earth can a creature like this Bruckner possibly know? Once a rustic tutor. To-day, by the grace of Herbeck and the churchlings, professor at the Conservatory. Thank heavens, we shall have to stand for no more from Herbeck. That "progressive" spirit actually thought he had unearthed a new Schubert. "Look, Egon," inclining coquettishly toward her neighbor, "This Bruckner, with his funny frock-coat, looks like a misplaced village waiter! How clumsily he holds the stick! He's simply awful! An ordinary peasant lout! Smoked ham, with dumplings and

*Rudolf List: *Kleine Bruckner-novelette*; Buchhandlung Ludwig Auer, Wien, 1933. Price, 1 Mark. Section III of the present article is a translation of pp. 11-19 of this novelette, published in *Chord and Discord* by kind permission of the copyright owners. The translation is by the Editor.

cabbage, personified! Gehring certainly hit the nail on the head when he called Bruckner a super-ass."

These remarks rise to Anton Bruckner's ear above the murmur of the audience, as though coming through a thin wall. It seems to him as though all the voices behind him are echoing the insults; some in the suave tones of polished elegance.

He struggles to collect himself, leaning heavily against the conductor's desk, like a drunkard at bay against the creatures of his delirium. If only Herbeck were still alive! Then he, Anton Bruckner, composer, would have been spared the ordeal of this evening. "Harmonizing", as Kathi always called it, yes, that was his sphere, but to stand and conduct before such an audience. . .

Or if only Richard Wagner were present, so that he might hear the "Third", the dedication of which he had accepted in so friendly a manner! Then those jealous defamers, those Hanslickians, would have to be mighty careful.

But he stands here now alone among hundreds, utterly alone, like a helpless organist at a gigantic organ, all the stops of which rebel against his touch. Well, there is no help for it; it is not God's will that Anton Bruckner be spared even this hour of bitter trial.

During the opening bars, with their buzzing figures in the violas, he is still filled with the despair of the moment. But as the solo trumpet, a voice from heaven, sounds the revelation of the first theme in sustained, soft tones, he once more feels firm ground beneath his feet and the breath of God enveloping him. He remembers that his faith in his mission must not be shaken; despite all pain, he must continue to serve, dispelling sorrows and timid repressions. A mysterious smile plays upon his lips.

Will Hanslick and the other gentlemen of the press write again to-morrow about his "insatiable rhetoric" and his "total wreck of a form"? Now, would it not be a fine thing if Anton Bruckner cared an iota what the critics said?

The master forces his thoughts downward towards reality. His whole attention is on the music. Upon its aspiration to pierce the veil of Eternal Splendor. How inevitably some obstacle, mundane and bitter, keeps hindering the ascent to the stars! Counter-theme in unison; earthly oppressiveness and pain, torturing doubts, treacherous seductions. Sin in ambush everywhere. Even in his own turbulent blood. Often he has felt it, boiling and pounding furiously. Again and again. . . .

Then one must be strong and pray. Sursum corda! To lose heart means defeat. The fanfares of faith must overwhelm the voice of every weakness. Always think of the cathedrals where the lamps of God are alight and mighty columns stretch toward heaven. They blossom aloft on the chiseled chorus of the brass-choir ascending in *b*G major. Day and night glow the lamps of the Lord, shedding their eternal, divine illumination. Life is a battle, not a dream. And you must often go weary to sleep before you have gained the ultimate victory. Deem it enough, if you may take the least touch of the divine essence with you into your night, that you may not have to wake on the morrow to the unmitigated solitude of mortal loneliness.

The master pauses. The first movement is over. In the foremost seats of the parquet and in the loges the listeners have risen. They rush from the hall, gesticulating vehemently.

Anton Bruckner follows them with his eyes as though his most loyal and last friends are now deserting him. The first three rows and

almost all the loges are empty. Slowly he attains full realization of the truth he had at first only vaguely suspected. People have made a scene of their departure. They want to show the management of the *Friends of Music* concerts that such a thing as a Bruckner symphony desecrates the program.

He asks himself in torment which part of the first movement they may have regarded as a violation of traditional form. Then he again sees malicious grins on the faces of the violinists; he hears a discontented murmuring in the audience. He must not pause any longer. He gives the signal for the *Andante*.

♩E major. Remembering Wagner's wish Bruckner conducts the main theme with great breadth of feeling. The orchestra obeys him against its will. The strings, spiteful, commence to hurry.

Not until the sweet *pianissimo* resignation of the ensuing triplet-figure whispers its secret credo into his ear do his silent anger and the utter forlornness of his troubled heart melt away. What does it matter, even though all conspire against him? That one, who understands him completely, means more than all the others together. In the moment of deepest resignation this thought uplifts him to a new triumph: the master has approved the symphony; the unapproachably great and exalted master! If such a man is scorned, Bruckner, too, is content to be reviled. As the master, so his vassal.

The violas sing a blessed consolation. Anton Bruckner bids the string-melodies blissfully fold their hands in devout harmony before a holy *mysterioso*. Out of mighty fanfares of jubilation issues the breath of humanity falling asleep in God.

The hall becomes a yawning emptiness. Even before the close of the second movement many of the people have risen and stolen quietly forth. In the standing-room parquet an excited argument is taking place. It must be young Mahler again, scolding one of the Brahmsians.

At Windhaag the people had run out of the little church just as they fled the concert to-day. Too free a fantasy! Yes, that had always been his trouble. Once it was the master-wagoner Krempelmeier (God forgive him!), to-day it is the high and mighty Hanslick, who condemns him for it.

In the depth of his moody meditations he has almost forgotten about the *Scherzo*. The people—if there are still any left in the hall; he is really afraid to turn and see—must begin to believe that Anton Bruckner has succumbed to his own monotony and tiresomeness.

In the *Scherzo* all his troubles are forgotten. Now he is once more back in Windhaag. It was such a fine little village! After all, what difference does all this chatter about his music make to him? Anton Bruckner makes music entirely for himself.

Heigh-ho, now the village-girls are dancing. His yellow-haired Theresa is there, too. A mighty pretty girl, far prettier than any of these rouged ladies who have come to the concert out of sheer curiosity.

Look out there! Theresa is again dancing with Bertl Gueltbauer. But Toni Bruckner must fiddle away for all he's worth when things are as jolly as this; no time for him to join in. How he would love to have a dance now! Especially with Theresa Bergner; as pretty as a picture, she is; just made for kissing. Careful there, Toni; yielding to temptation is always a sin. The deed is easy, atonement hard.

Stop! the first violin is playing much too fast. Franz, you—Bruckner, where do you think you are? This is not a village-dance at Windhaag. . . .

The first violins are forging perilously ahead. Now they are all together again. So, it seems, the feet of the "gentlemen musicians" are not entirely immune to the rhythm of the country *Laendler*. Just now, for instance, that went pretty well, the peasant's joyous yell. But O, those birds—it's too bad—I fear they don't dare sing out; I guess, they are only sparrows from the Viennese City Park, after all. A little more freshness wouldn't do their voices any harm.

And now comes the *Trio*: not much can be expected from that. A flirtation as conducted by the "gentlemen musicians" can hardly be in the same dialect in which "one of us" makes love to Theresa by the little brook... Oh yes, Theresa was really in love with him. But Bertl was always more masterful and won her consent. Those were unforgettable days in Windhaag: Dirt-shoveling, fiddling, organ-playing; but there's an end to everything.

At the last bar of the *Trio* a shameful tear glistens in Anton Bruckner's eye. What a disgrace it will be if anyone notices it and the papers tomorrow write: Anton Bruckner felt humiliated and broke down when he perceived that his symphony is worthless. Swiftly, then, he raises the baton and gives a hurried signal to begin the *Finale*.

The musicians gaze at him with frank astonishment, but follow his impatient bidding. Let him, since he asks for it, have that great joy: when he turns around at the end what a sight he will see! There are scarcely ten people left in the hall.

During a swift *pianissimo* passage in the violins Anton Bruckner furtively wipes a tear out of the corner of his eye with a knuckle of his left hand. Only not to despair! Even though the calamity of total misunderstanding burst in upon him on a rising *crescendo* with the force of a tempest, it cannot crush him who stands resigned before his God. He can, with complete confidence, defy all opposition, hidden or open, with a *fortissimo* of trumpets and trombones.

Yet life will always be a paradox: wedding-dance and funeral, cradle-song and burial wreath are like hands inextricably intertwined. Of one flesh, one blood, one heart-beat, and yet not similar. And while the violins play a polka at a dance, there across the road in the graveyard the musicians blow a solemn parting chorale. Both must hurry. Pleasure is impatient and sorrow cannot wait. And many a time it has happened that in the same hour an infant draws its first breath of air upon arriving at this pleasure garden of a world, its mother sighs her last and closes her eyes forever upon a dark, earthly journey.

It would all be a strangely childish and meaningless game if there were not spread above it the canopy of heaven, the cathedral of faith and trust, the mighty arch of which, curving downward in simultaneous splendor and humility, sheds over mortals an infinite compassion.

Anton Bruckner fights the battle to an end. He holds in his hand the sword of a soldier of God: a St. Michael clad in the bronze of austere chords and rhythms; in the invincible steel-like advance of the first theme, Victory, in the D-major miracle of divine salvation.

Anton Bruckner, beneath the spell of heavenly bliss, stands listening to voices issuing out of Eternity. When he awakes to reality, the musicians have gone. The hall yawns cruelly at him, one vast mocking grin. The master takes up his score and stumbles out.

Outside in the dimness of a passage his "gentlemen pupils" are waiting to give him the laurel wreath of thorns.

IV. FINALE: AD ASTRA

For seven years after this premiere the composer Bruckner remained practically hidden from a world convinced by the unanimous voice of a critical cabal that his work was an insignificant, plagiaristic echo of the mighty revolutionary music-dramatist. The merciless Hanslick's review of the *Wagner Symphony* sounded the dictatorial keynote for the other Viennese critics:

I could not make head or tail of the "gigantic" symphony. While listening I had a vision in which the *Ninth* of Beethoven became too friendly with Wagner's Valkyr maidens only to be trampled under the hoofs of their horses. I do not wish by this opinion of mine to hurt the feelings of the composer, for whom I really have the greatest regard.

The cup of misery he was thus compelled to accept could not poison a spirit so strong in faith as Bruckner's. Regardless of all scorn and neglect he went on composing and revising. He reshaped his *Fourth* and *Fifth*, finished his *Sixth* and *Seventh*, each work riper and grander than the preceding one. He was well advanced in the composition of his *Eighth*, the "Crown of Nineteenth Century Music" (as the great conductor Hermann Levi called it) when, like an angel, world-fame suddenly made its radiant appearance before his aging, humble eyes.

With a baton flaming with zeal and enthusiasm his young disciple Arthur Nikisch, in a single hour of inspiration, blazed the way for Bruckner into the hearts of European music-lovers forever. It was the memorable premiere of the *Seventh Symphony*, with its irresistibly appealing *Adagio* of premonition, begun in the mournful moment when the composer realized that he might never again see his great friend Wagner alive. The death of Wagner shortly afterwards had stamped this music as real prophecy, and all who heard it could feel that into the melancholy revelation Bruckner had poured the spiritual beauty of the deep, true friendship he had cherished through all the years for the departed "master of all masters."

Concerning this unforgettable premiere in the famous Gewandhaus at Leipzig on Dec. 30, 1884, I quote a paragraph from my own "Life of Anton Bruckner":

As the last note died away there was enacted a scene of unparalleled enthusiasm, the applause lasting fully fifteen minutes. Then Bruckner appeared on the stage dressed in his simple manner and bowed repeatedly in answer to the unexpected ovation. The following day one of the Leipzig critics said: "One could see from the trembling of his lips and the sparkling moisture in his eyes how difficult it was for the old gentleman to suppress the deep emotion he felt. His homely, honest countenance beamed with a warm inner happiness such as can appear only on the face of one who is too goodhearted to give way to bitterness even under the pressure of most crushing circumstances. Having heard his music and now seeing him in person we asked ourselves in amazement, 'How is it possible that he could remain so long unknown to us?'"

Shortly after this the symphony achieved a still greater triumph in Munich under the baton of that great Wagnerian, Hermann Levi. And still the childlike Bruckner was afraid of Vienna. When the Philharmonic Committee seemed inclined to perform the famous symphony he actually prepared an injunction to prevent such a performance, for he believed that Hanslick could, with a mere stroke of his pen, nullify the recognition that had come to him from Germany. Reassured by the suave Hans Richter, who wished to join the long list of conductors who had scored successes with the work, he finally agreed to risk a Viennese premiere. The concert took place in March, 1886, and proved very painful to Bruckner's enemies, giving them a powerful hint of the complete surrender in which they would soon be compelled to join. Hanslick, quite pettishly, wrote of the performance:

Certainly, it is without precedent that a composer should be called to the stage four or five times after each section of a symphony. Personally, I must confess myself incapable of an unbiased judgment of Bruckner's symphony, for it is so thoroughly unpleasant to me that it strikes me as being merely bombastic, sickly, and destructive.

Bruckner continued to harbor misgivings as to the relentless opposition of the anti-Wagnerites. On June 16, 1886, he wrote to his friend W. Zinne of Hamburg:

Such aggravating statements have come to my ears concerning Hanslick and Brahms, that I would rather be silent about the whole matter, but my heart is full of worry. Hanslick influences two other critics to slander me. They try every possible means of cooling Hans Richter's enthusiasm for me, for they know only too well Richter's fear of the press.

On Feb. 13, 1887, Baron v. Wolzogen received the following plaintive note from Bruckner:

Buclow is saying terrible things about me, just as he does about Berlioz, Liszt, and still more about Wagner himself. He says that Brahms alone has brought him the true musical revelation!!! etc. In company with Hanslick he will do me great harm. Hans Richter has surrendered to Hanslick's influence and once more everything is as dark as it used to be in Vienna.

And later, also to Wolzogen:

What a puzzling stand for Hans Richter to take! Only two weeks ago he declared before witnesses that I am a crazy musician without any sense of form and called the Brahms *Third* the new *Eroica* (of course, to curry favor with Hanslick.)

By 1890 Bruckner's suspicion and fear seem to have grown into an obsession. To Wolzogen again:

The Brahms cult here has taken an incredible turn—and with Hans Richter in the front rank!! He declares that the "new music" has no justification in the concert-hall and fears (because of Hanslick) to program any of my works.

His fears proved unfounded, for on Dec. 21, 1890 the Philharmonic under Richter gave both the original and the second versions of the *Wagner Symphony* on a single program! Next day, the Philharmonic received the following note from Bruckner:

Kindly permit me to convey to you my heartfelt gratitude and deep admiration for your highly poetic and extremely artistic performance of my *Third Symphony*. I wish particularly to thank Dr. Hans Richter and all the distinguished artists who assisted him with such sincere enthusiasm.

Long live the honorable gentlemen of the Philharmonic!

And to Wolzogen he wrote:

On the twenty-first of this month my *Third Symphony* met with a success such as is without precedent in the concerts of the Philharmonic. I was called to the stage twelve times. I was so moved that after the concert I wept, along with Wolf and Schalk. Only one was missing to complete my happiness—the indescribably great One who so generously conferred upon me the distinction of accepting the dedication of the symphony. Could this great One have been there to say to me, "Now, Bruckner, I am satisfied"—ah, what happiness would have been mine! Then I would have wept, indeed!

—GABRIEL ENGEL

For the original Bruckner material quoted in this article, *Chord and Discord* is indebted to Gustav Bosse Verlag, Regensburg, publishers of the following works in which the master's letters first appeared in print:

- (1) Anton Bruckner, *Gesammelte Briefe*.
- (2) Anton Bruckner, *Gesammelte Briefe, Neue Folge*.
- (3) Goellerich-Auer: *Anton Bruckner*.

The English translations were made by the editor.

MAHLER'S ART: A NEW SURVEY

The esthetic history of no generation is without its record of the failure of some great creative artist to attain general recognition. It would be consoling, indeed, to believe that this melancholy phenomenon has invariably been due to honest popular misunderstanding. Time, relentless exhumers of suppressed, sordid facts, eventually reveals the far darker cause that has often brought about the tragic neglect of true greatness by its contemporaries. Although too varied and subtle for any sweeping definition applicable to the whole range of art, this cause, in the realm of music, at least, seems almost always to have worn the face of organized hostile critical propaganda sprung from the personal antipathy of some arch-critic toward an isolated composer. A host of American music-lovers still remembers clearly the virulent campaign of the New York critic Krehbiel against Gustav Mahler; and the poisonous Krehbiel episode was but the American version of numerous sworn critical enmities the unpopular fanatic Mahler had attracted in the musical capitals of Europe before setting out to seek a more sympathetic and just hearing in the New World.

Throughout his life beyond the pale of the "accepted", Mahler's artwork persists to-day, twenty-three years after his death, a matter of heated controversy. In many ways it seems strange that his achievement should still be problematical. There is about his music nothing of a forbidding austerity or baffling crypticism. In fact, to the utterly modern-minded Mahler appears too obvious, for the idiom of his music is almost totally free from such startling tonal deviations as lend a sensational character to the contributions of most of our own day's "modernists", the so-called *atonalists* or the exponents of the quarter-tone dialect. Even a generation ago his music, though somewhat off the beaten track, was by no means the strangest of the age, for those ultra-exotics, Debussy and Skriabin, were among his contemporaries.

To many musicians, particularly those of a passing order, Mahler is still the insignificant author of extremely long, tedious, complicated, bombastic, over-scored works. Daniel Gregory Mason makes the following nonchalant remark in his little book on appreciation, *From Song to Symphony* (p. 227):

It (Strauss' *Alpine Symphony*) and all the heavy music of Mahler, Reger, and others of which it is typical, in which the overfed body has suffocated the soul, reminds us of the ironical advice of Flaubert to a young architect: "If you do not know how to build the Parthenon, pile up the Pyramids."

Yet it is said that Bruno Walter (who studied with Mahler) and Mengelberg consider him one of the greatest composers who have ever lived. Such extreme verdicts, of course, prove nothing, but the mere fact that men of Walter's and Mengelberg's eminence should sponsor so high an estimate is at least a just cause for investigating the case of Mahler with care.

Perhaps the paramount hindrance to the universal recognition of Mahler is his almost constant use of an augmented orchestra. A single performance of his supreme masterpiece, *The Symphony of a Thousand*, is so expensive a project that it is regarded, at least during this box-office-controlled regime, impossible except as the crowning attraction of a grand music festival. It is largely because of this financial consideration

that the musical "powers-that-be" regard a composer's demand for an unusually large number of performers as the unpardonable sin. Influenced by those opposed to gigantic symphonies for economic reasons, the average music-lover believes that the composers of such works labor under an exaggerated conception of their own importance. Although the universal trend of our impoverished day is towards the small chamber symphony, it seems necessary to brand such a superficial view of the augmented orchestra as detrimental to the free progress of musical art. Numerous "accepted" tall-scored works by Strauss, Stravinsky, and others serve as eloquent warning in this matter. At any rate the notion is wholly unfounded in the case of Mahler's prodigal orchestral technique. Any analysis of his great scores with a view to adequate simplification for the traditional orchestral group would at once reveal that excessive tonal volume, i.e., noisy impressiveness, is never one of his aims and that deeper motives calling for unusual instrumental combinations indispensable to his message underlie every instance of his alleged transgressions beyond the normal orchestral confines. If a symphony is scored for an augmented body of performers it does not necessarily follow that the entire group will always, or even often be used simultaneously; nor does it necessarily follow that such a work will contain a larger percentage of fortissimo passages than a Mozart symphony.

Another charge, that of "excessive length", has also prejudiced many against Mahler. His shortest symphony, the *Fourth*, is forty-five minutes long. The longer ones are twice that length, or more. Some music-lovers, without having heard a single one of these symphonies, nevertheless do not hesitate to pass "blanket" judgment upon all of them, saying, "They are too long." Yet the same people will sit through an opera or oratorio of twice that length without flinching. They forget that symphonies also have their individual content and that in a true artwork this content is the chief determinant of the form. Symphonic messages vary tremendously in depth, in intensity, in scope, etc., and cannot be subjected to arbitrary chronometric limitation. Beethoven himself, when he made the *Eroica* twice as long as his *First Symphony*, became the prophet of this truth.

When Bruno Walter gave Mahler's *Fifth* in New York in 1932, although some of the audience left before it was completed, others remained after the conclusion cheering and applauding loudly. Mahler's works usually make a deep impression on audiences. Leopold Stokowski relates the following about the *Eighth Symphony*, which he produced in 1916 for a run of nine performances in Philadelphia and New York:

When we played Mahler's Eighth Symphony it made an impression on the public unlike anything else I have ever experienced. There seems to be a human quality about this work which so deeply moved the public that the greater part of the listeners were in tears at the end of the performance. This happened at all nine performances we gave; so it was not due to an accidental condition on one particular date.

The Philadelphia "Public Ledger" for March 3, 1916, (the day after the American premiere) read:

Every one of the thousands in the great building was standing, whistling, cheering, and applauding, when Leopold Stokowski, his collar wilted, his right arm weary, but smiling his boyish smile, finally turned to the audience in the Academy of Music last night.

Accounts further relate that the applause was so tremendous that it could be heard inside buildings across the street. Then we also read of the tremendous success of this work at its world premiere in Munich on September 12, 1910 and that of *Das Lied von der Erde* under

Bruno Walter a few months after Mahler's death, in 1911. It hardly seems likely that such approving public reactions should be inspired by music "in which the overfed body has suffocated the soul."*

With the exception of some immature student works, Mahler's creative work falls within two forms, the symphony and the song, excepting that much-revised cantata, originally conceived as an opera, *Das Klagende Lied*. He wrote eleven symphonies, including the unfinished *Tenth Symphony* and *Das Lied von der Erde*, which many might consider a song-cycle, although the composer subtitled it "A Symphony". The songs may be conveniently catalogued in groups, of which *Lieder und Gesaenge aus der Jugendzeit* are with piano, while the others are with orchestra, namely *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, *Songs from Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, *Kindertotenlieder*, *Seven Last Songs* (including the *Five Songs after Ruckert*), and, if we are so to consider it, *Das Lied von der Erde*.

Mahler regarded these songs as the keynote to his symphonies. He frequently quotes themes from his songs in the symphonies or uses them as the bases of symphonic movements. In this respect he reveals some kinship with Schubert, who used *The Trout* and *Death and the Maiden* as the bases of movements of chamber-music compositions, while *The Wanderer* found its way into a long *Fantasia* for piano.

The charges advanced against Mahler, as deduced from his symphonies, fall to pieces at once, if applied to his songs. Those who decry against his large orchestras should examine *Ich atmet' einen Linden Duft*, one of the Ruckert songs, a mere wisp of a song, containing but 36 measures and scored only for one flute, one oboe, one clarinet, two bassoons, three horns, harp, celesta, first violins, and violas, in addition to the voice. Those who fear his long fortissimos will search this song in vain for a dynamic indication greater than piano. They will also find the long pianissimo passage which closes *Das Lied von der Erde* very interesting. Those who find Mahler soulless should hear the anguished beauty of the *Kindertotenlieder* and those who find him dry should hear *Rheinlegendchen*, one of the *Wunderhorn* songs—if it is "music in which the overfed body has suffocated the soul," then a Strauss waltz must be the very essence of pedantry! There is an individual quality about the music of Mahler, an individuality not of conscious eccentricity, but of sincerity and genuineness. It is free from all that is stilted or done merely to conform with set standards. There is a quality in his musical texture which is alive and a clearness of outline and keenness in his instrumentation which appeal instantly.

His music, essentially built on the tradition of Beethoven and Wagner, announces not the beginning of a new school but the conclusion of an old one in its fullest richness and maturity. It is the music of unashamed Romanticism—Romanticism of the philosophical, introspective type that is not too blase to be concerned with the great problems of life and of the soul.

*In a recent interview with William Engle, feature-writer of the *N. Y. World-Telegram*, our business-czar of serious music, Arthur Judson, described this series of performances of the *Symphony of a Thousand* as the most memorable mile-stone of his managerial career. Only two performances had been scheduled. Quoting the *World-Telegram* of Dec. 19, 1933:

"Philadelphia, the first night, was dumfounded. Then it was jubilant. Instead of two performances, ten were given, and the town celebrated as though the Athletics had won the pennant. In New York the Friends of Music heeded. They engaged Mr. Judson to bring the production here, and in a special train the huge cast came, to storm and conquer the Metropolitan."

A person hearing a Mahler composition for the first time might describe it as sounding like the music of Richard Strauss with the mood of Cesar Franck. Its melody, harmony, and counterpoint might remind one of Strauss in numerous respects—the frequency with which both alternate very involved passages with those of folk-song simplicity is especially outstanding—yet Mahler reaches a height of spiritual exaltation which the ultra-worldly Strauss never even hints at attaining, not even in *Death and Transfiguration*. The comparison with Franck is only one of mood, the pouring forth of the inmost thoughts of a lonely soul, for the extreme chromaticism of the great Belgian's expression is not present.

Mahler's music is religious in the broadest and best sense—religious rather than merely churchly, pious, or ecclesiastical; it is the music of the sincere philosophical meditator rather than that of the professional clergyman.

One feels that Mahler has opened up his soul completely in his music. Where Bach is austere, where Beethoven makes us feel inferior to him, where Brahms, despite his more intimate moments, remains sternly aloof from us, where Franck is too far gone in his own meditations to be aware of us, where Debussy merely suggests and hints at what he means, Mahler takes us completely into his confidence, he speaks directly to our hearts and pours forth his inmost thoughts, but without indulging in the hysterical emotional instability of a Tschaikowsky. There is something extremely human about Mahler's music. We realize he is no super-man, no saint, but merely an ordinary person just like ourselves, and with all our own weaknesses and our own problems. He is one of the most human of all composers; yet for all his openness, he cannot be accused of a lack of restraint.

The most powerful influence in Mahler's music is probably that of the German folk-song. One feels, even in his most complicated passages, that the folk-song is immediately behind him, and frequently it comes forth boldly into the light. Although a complicated loftiness continuously alternates with the extreme simplicity emanating from this, it is, very likely, this folk-song quality which imbues Mahler's music with a home-like, natural feeling. Many of the songs from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (not to mention numerous other instances), might as well be folk-songs, yet apparently Mahler uses a real folk-song but once—the old French tune *Frere Jaques*, which, somewhat altered and transposed to minor, is the opening theme of the slow movement in the *First Symphony*.

Mahler was a passionate lover of nature and he has not hesitated to incorporate this love into his compositions. The beginning of the *First Symphony* bears the direction: "Like the voice of Nature" (*Wie Ein Naturlaut*). Woodwind figures are often labelled: "Like bird-voices". (*Wie Vogelstimmen*). These are not merely clever imitations; they are essentially musical, not illustrative, though their resemblance to the songs of birds is unmistakable. A very fascinating passage occurs in the finale of his *Second Symphony*, just before the chorus enters. Here the flute and piccolo, twittering like birds, alternate with fanfarelike passages of distant trumpets, the whole accompanied only by the soft roar of the bass drum or timpani. Surely, if nature had a voice and could speak, it would sound like this!

Mahler clearly traces his ancestry from Beethoven. Like Beethoven, he is essentially an optimist, in spite of the tragic interruptions which

continually steal into his music. Like the Beethoven of the last quartets and of the *Ninth Symphony*, he is concerned with the trials and ultimate triumphs of the soul.

The German chorale has an important influence on Mahler. Its sturdy simplicity and dignity appeal to him. He uses it in a mood of triumph or of hopeful faith, as at the end of the *First Symphony*, or the *Second Symphony*, beginning of the fourth movement (marked "Choralmaessig") and the fifth movement after 10, or the *Sixth Symphony*, finale, at 106. (These numbers refer to the small "student" scores.)

Schubert seems to have exerted a strong influence over him, Mahler's straightforwardness often reminds one of Schubert's boyish simplicity. Certain curves in his melodies and the way he combines two melodies simultaneously in such a natural manner immediately suggest Schubert.

Since he was a post-Wagnerian and a great Wagner enthusiast, it is not surprising that Mahler should feel the influence of the great music-dramatist. His music is built on the epic scale on which Wagner built. There is also a certain similarity in the way in which the two composers produce great climaxes and cause them to subside. Besides, like Wagner, Mahler does not surprise us with sudden crashes of the full orchestra such as characterize Beethoven. Yet he cannot be accused of imitating Wagner; he shows a thorough comprehension of Wagner's technical contribution, but does not resemble him spiritually. The deciding point of contrast between the two is the marked folk-song influence in Mahler, an influence toward which Wagner was very indifferent, the oboe theme in the *Siegfried Idyll* notwithstanding.

With Brahms, on the other hand, Mahler shares this love of the folk-song, and reveals, besides, a general nobility and elevation of style not unlike those underlying the greatest works of the North-German genius.

Some mention of the kinship between Mahler and Richard Strauss has already been made. Although the latter was really the younger, born in 1864, while Mahler was born in 1860, Strauss, successful from the start, early attained classic status in the world of music. Mahler resembles him in his orchestral technique, and, as pointed out before, in some ways in his music. Yet Strauss is essentially a composer of "program" music, a realist, while Mahler is essentially a composer of "absolute" music, a dreamer, and an idealist. They differ chiefly in mood.

Whether Mahler "programmed" his symphonies or not has been the source of some disagreement. We have it upon the final authority of the composer himself that he did not desire any "program" other than the phrase *Wie Ein Naturlaut* which he said was the secret of his composition. It is said that he even disapproved of thematic analyses and program-notes, saying one should listen only for the general effect of a composition at a first hearing and, should he find it sufficiently arresting, then study it intensively. Richard Specht, in his thematic analysis of the *Ninth Symphony*, says it was written at Mahler's request, in order to have an authorized version, but adds that Mahler disapproved of the practice in general. It is quite clear that Mahler is trying to impart some message in all his symphonies, but it is done in a manner essentially musical, not illustrative. He clearly expresses the longings and conflicts that trouble the human soul. He inherits his method from the Beethoven of the *Eroica*, the *Fifth*, the *Ninth*, and the final quartets and piano sonatas. Much as a Haydn symphony voices cheerfulness, a Mahler symphony

expresses contemplation or triumph. As for a detailed story, with definite action in the manner of Strauss or Berlioz, it has none. The sung texts which Mahler introduces at times furnish the sole "program" clues of an extra-musical character to be found in his symphonies.

We read comments such as the following about Mahler's symphonies:

His symphonies all aim to express some definite thought, such as pessimism finding its cure in simple faith, love of nature leading to a high idea of Pantheism,, or doubt clearing in the joys of immortality. (H. J. Baltzell: History of Music, pp. 469-70).

His *Second Symphony* is entitled *Ein Sommertorgens-Traum* (A Summer-Morning's Dream) and expresses a pessimism that finds its cure in simple faith. The first movement depicts despair that is hardly consoled by the beauties of nature, rejects all dreams of future glory and is untouched as yet by the religious contemplation hinted at in the closing choral. Then comes an idyllic movement ending with the same unsatisfied struggles. The third movement shows the hero seeking the haunts of men, and becoming disgusted with their eternal, restless bickering. (Elson: Modern Composers of Europe, pp. 35-36)

Much of this seems like sheer nonsense. It would be difficult to fit the above description of the first three movements into the music. To begin with, the *Second Symphony* is practically officially nicknamed the *Resurrection Symphony*, this title being derived from the text of the choral finale. Mahler himself called the first movement *Totenfeier* (Death-celebration) but even this is not particularly illustrative. One might as well try to attach colorful names to the movements of the symphonies of Mozart, Haydn (except such as the *Clock*) Beethoven (except the *Pastorale*), Brahms, Schubert, Schumann, Franck, Elgar, or Sibelius.

Mr. Elson analyzes the *Third Symphony*, which he calls *Naturleben* (*Nature-life*) on pp. 36-37 of the same book as follows:

This time the work portrays a pantheistic idea of the exaltation of nature and life. The first movement, wholly separate in idea from the others, again represents the search for a satisfactory solution of this world's life. Then follows a delightful minuet and a charming scherzando, bubbling over with the joy of nature.

It is doubtful whether the composer would have approved of Mr. Elson's analyses. Mahler's "program" is impersonal, a succession of emotional moods, not a succession of dramatic events; he uses moods as the dramatist uses characters.

It is not untrue that Mahler originally sponsored "programs" for some of his symphonies, but he later rejected them unconditionally. He invented some hastily in response to public demand, for it must be remembered the symphonic "poem" was the rage in those days. He had his *First Symphony* played at its premiere under the name *Titan: Symphonic Poem in Two Parts*. This much, at least, can be said with certainty: even if Mahler did "program" his symphonies, we can get complete enjoyment from them without knowing a single thing about the "programs".

—WILLIAM PARKS GRANT

MAHLER IN ENGLAND

The distinguishing feature of the recent music festival at Sheffield was the performance of Mahler's *Eighth*, the *Symphony of a Thousand*, by the London Philharmonic, under the direction of Sir Henry Wood. Basil Maine, reporting the event for Musical America (Dec. 10) wrote in part:

This boy's choir, collected from the city schools, sang, not with the timid tone of Elijah's youth looking for a sign of rain, but as if this were the opportunity of a lifetime. As Sir Henry had told the boys at the rehearsals, they will probably never have the chance to repeat their experience, even if they grow to be solo singers or choristers. In England, for several reasons, we have heard very little of Mahler. . . Yet I, for one, would not have missed the Sheffield Choir's performance of Mahler's *Eighth*.

The eminent English music-critic, Ernest Newman, reporting a radio performance of Mahler's *Fourth* in Liverpool under the direction of Robert Heger, finally subscribes to the claim, persistently advanced for many years by continental musical authorities, that the music of Berlioz, or Brahms, or Sibelius, each calls for an individual type of listening independent of the traditional attitude universally assumed towards the older classics. His reaction to Mahler's art, summarized in the *London Times*, Dec. 17, 1933, is as follows:

Orthodox criticism can easily make deadly play with his faults; but when the debit side has thus been set forth, there surely remains, on the other side, much that is worthy not only of our disinterested study but of our profound admiration. . . . Place yourself at Mahler's point-of-view in the No. 4, instead of at the point of Beethoven, Brahms, or Wagner, and you see the work for what it is—the accurate and fascinating record of purely personal experiences in a purely personal idiom.

IMPROMPTU ON A PAPER TRUMPET

Where was Mr. Julian Seaman on the evening of Jan. 27, or (for that matter) on the afternoon of Jan. 28? Mr. and Mrs. Music-Lover, who attended the Philharmonic concerts on those dates, would give a lot to know. And why was Mr. Seaman's face so red on Jan. 29? Because of Mr. Toscanini's overwhelming Bruckner interpretation the day before? Mr. Seaman must be convinced by now that the music he mistook for Bruckner's *Romantic Symphony* was Mirrorly a Seamanphony Erroroica.

Moral.—A slight "crack" in the *Mirror* may prove a "bad break," indeed.

TOSCANINI OVERTAKES SEAMAN

The performance of Bruckner's *Fourth (Romantic) Symphony*, which Mr. Seaman so amazingly anticipated in the enigmatic review referred to above, actually took place a week later, on Feb. 3, 1934. Concerning this hearing of the work Mr. Pitts Sanborn wrote as follows in the *World-Telegram*, Feb. 5, 1934.

Local Brucknerites will be sadly put out if Mr. Toscanini should fail to repeat later on Bruckner's *Romantic Symphony*, which he led with such excellent effect at the Students' Concert of the Philharmonic-Symphony Society Saturday night in Carnegie Hall. Perhaps he will see fit to include it in one of his Thursday-Friday programs after the Beethoven symphonies have all been disposed of.

BRUCKNER IN ENGLAND

British Broadcasting Corporation Orchestra, London, England; Conductor, Dr. Adrian Boult; December, 1933.

"Bruckner has never found a stronger response here than he has in America but it must be said that the public has had precious little opportunity of taking him to its heart. The few sporadic performances we have had have been so promptly 'written down' by the critics that any budding enthusiasm has been promptly nipped. All the more merit is due to Dr. Adrian Boult and the B. B. C. Orchestra for a truly beautiful performance of the unfinished *Ninth* symphony. And if applause is any indication at all this performance ought to go a long way toward breaking down the barriers."

—CESAR SAERCHINGER, *Musical Courier*.

MUSICAL VIENNA TO-DAY

For several generations there has dwelt such magic in the word "Vienna" that the mere sound of it has been sufficient to awaken in most minds delightful reveries and associations, emotional reactions sprung from the deep grandeur of the classics of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, which originated there, or from the pure, soothing romance of Schubert's melodies, or, perhaps, from the light, rhythmic enchantment of the waltz-world of Johann Strauss. These colorful spells have held uninterrupted sway over the vast multitude of general music-lovers to whom the supercarthly legendary atmosphere that works of genius acquire only long after their creators have passed away seems absolutely pre-requisite to an unconditional surrender to their wizardry.

There are, however, many lovers of the art who, either having personally visited Vienna in recent years or having, by means of current published reports, carefully followed the course of musical progress in the Danube city, will have supplemented these more mellow, universal associations with a fresh conception sprung from modern tonal influences more or less grippingly experienced. To such music-lovers an accurate "bird's-eye" view of the rather confused artistic pageant representing Vienna as a musical city of to-day will, no doubt, be quite welcome. To these in particular the following remarks are dedicated.

Before the actual musical panorama of present-day Vienna may be unrolled it is necessary to contemplate the career of a distinguished artistic personality, one (alas!) long departed from us, but one, who wielded so powerful an influence over the musical development of the city a generation ago, that his ideals and accomplishments alone can provide us with the proper point-of-view for a clear understanding and estimate of Vienna's unaltered position as the leading musical city of continental Europe. I refer, of course, to Gustav Mahler.

Mahler, who was the first composer since Bruckner and Brahms to devote himself to the great classic instrumental form, the symphony, came to Vienna not in a creative but in an executive musical capacity. He was appointed Director of the Imperial Opera House in 1897 and, during the ten years of his tenure at that institution, brought about epoch-making operatic reforms. He was the first to imbue the policy of a regular repertoire opera company with the artistic ideals which Richard Wagner had realized in his perfect music-drama performances at the Bayreuth Festival Theatre. Together with Alfred Roller, who remains to this very day scenic director at the Viennese Opera, Gustav Mahler strove to attain a perfect union of the essential elements of the musical score and its stage-setting and demonstrated the practicability of this ideal by amazing reincarnations of chosen German music-dramatic masterpieces from Gluck to Wagner. Although circumstances made it impossible for him to carry out his entire gigantic plan the series of model performances he brought about at the Viennese Opera proved a permanent contribution, the artistic brilliancy of which continues to radiate from the lofty offerings of that stage to this day.

Parallel with his executive activity at the Opera went Mahler's private achievements as a creative musician. During the years between 1897 and 1907 he composed five of his colossal symphonies, from the *Fourth* to the *Eighth*, inclusive. To shape these monumental works the scant vacation days from the Opera had, naturally, to suffice. The inner conflict between the tremendous urge in him for this subjective expression and that other responsibility which he held sacred, the perfect performance of the works of others, grew constantly more intense, finally culminating in the real cause of his withdrawal from the Opera, an event which he survived by only three years. His farewell message, addressed to the artists of the Opera in Dec. 1907, is a significant spiritual document, the following excerpt from which will be found especially pertinent to the present topic.

"Instead of the complete fulfilment, of which I had dreamed, I leave behind me the mere fragment of achievement which is man's fated limitation. It is not for me to say what my efforts have come to mean to those for whom they were intended. Yet at such a moment as this I feel that I may say: My purpose was sincere; my aim was high, though not invariably crowned with success, for no one is so hopelessly handicapped by material obstacles as the executant artist. But I have always offered up my entire being to the cause, never placing personal comfort and inclination before duty. Therefore, I felt I could honestly demand of you the same complete self-surrender. During heated moments of busy striving none of us could escape entirely aggravations and personal wounds. But whenever real success attended our labors we forgot all pain and fatigue, feeling ourselves sufficiently repaid by the solution of a difficult problem, even though we received no special material reward therefor. Thus we have all truly gone forward and, with us, the standards of the institution to which our efforts were dedicated."

The deep artistic sincerity behind these words furnishes a hint of the thoroughly human quality that was a fundamental trait of Mahler's being. Such was the personality which the artists of the following generation adopted as their guiding spirit, as the ethical foundation of their creative work.

A few years after Mahler's death came the Great War. While it raged the most sanguine artistic hope of Vienna was to maintain and bequeath unimpaired to the coming age the high standards of the Mahler period. The Opera persisted as the musical focal point of the city. When, in November 1918, Richard Strauss and Franz Schalk took charge of the institution, its artistic condition was of the utmost brilliancy. Then there came into existence the first series of those model performances of the Strauss operas in the quality of which Vienna leads the world to this very day. Even Clemens Krauss, present director of the Opera, seems veritably predestined to the interpretation of Strauss' works and was therefore recently entrusted with the world premiere of the master's latest opera, *Arabella*.

Not only has Vienna maintained and repeatedly proven to the world of to-day its right to the title, *The Opera City*, but it has attained a still wider artistic significance through the tremendous impetus it has recently given to creative music. That world-wide revolt against the traditional ties of tonality, a movement the origin of which is inseparably associated

with the name of the Viennese Arnold Schoenberg, has continued since its birth, about 1908, to draw its nourishment from Vienna. So overwhelming, so convincing have the tenets of this musical creed proven that no serious composer of to-day is completely free from Schoenberg's influence, although the most important creative musicians have always succeeded in subordinating this influence to their own individuality. Schoenberg himself has long since left Vienna, but his outstanding pupils, Anton Webern and Alban Berg, live and work here, passing the master's message on to the younger generation. Although the appreciation of the esoteric compositions of Webern is still restricted to a small circle of friends, this artist's position as radio-conductor and choir-master gives his talents an opportunity for wider expression. His model performances of classical and modern choral and orchestral works tend to reveal him as the legitimate heir to Mahler's art of conducting.—Alban Berg devotes himself exclusively to composition and teaching. Of the Schoenberg circle he is the one who clings most closely to the canons of tradition, consciously accepting them and clothing them in modern garb. Many features of his orchestral language are clearly anticipated in the last works of Gustav Mahler, particularly in the *Ninth Symphony*. In 1930 Alban Berg's *Wozzeck* achieved the greatest triumph any radically modern work for the musical stage has ever attained at the Vienna Opera. Besides, Berg's music has been signally honored abroad time and time again, and therefore he may well be considered the most representative artistic personality of Vienna to-day.

Of particularly eminent gifts among the younger Viennese composers is Ernst Krenek, whose musical and literary versatility has aroused favorable notice far beyond the Austrian confines. Since the popular success of his opera, *Jonny Spielt Auf*, his creative work has been marked by constantly increasing depth and spiritual power. His latest music-drama, *Karl V*, which will have its premiere at the Viennese Opera next winter, closes with an apotheosis of the cultural mission of Austria, an especially timely bit of symbolism. Although actuated by a strong sense of national consciousness, Krenek has always subordinated his Austrianism to the broader human quality which dominates his life as an artist.

While the above-named musicians represent the newer, more striking phase of the art's progress in Vienna, the city has long been the chosen residence of many less radical composers, who abide devotedly by the traditional canons of the art, striving in their own conservative way to increase the musical treasury of mankind. Preeminent among these are Franz Schmidt and Julius Bittner. The work of Schmidt is distinguished by great technical mastery and deep earnestness, while Bittner has earned for himself the title "creator of the folk-opera." Joseph Marx and Erich Wolfgang Korngold have given us music of subtle harmonic richness. The latter has, unfortunately, fallen short of the supreme promise of his "wonder-child" days, having apparently descended almost exclusively to the composition of operettas.

On the subject of "Operetta" a single remark should suffice, for this form has come to be universally regarded as a kind of Viennese export. Since it has of late lost much of its original spontaneity, its exponents have striven desperately (but in vain) to cover up this fatal defect by over-generous applications of "tricks of the trade," thereby

achieving only a sham pompousness. The leaders among the operetta-composers living in Vienna are Franz Lehar, Oskar Strauss, and Emmerich Kalman. Ralph Benatzky, engaged in this field of composition abroad, is also a Viennese.

The high-lights of Vienna's concert life are the instrumental performances given by the Philharmonic (an orchestra consisting of musicians of the Opera) and the choral concerts of the perennially famous *Society of the Friends of Music*. The male choruses (the *Schubertbund*, the *Maennergesangverein*, and the *Saengerknaben*) have often borne to foreign countries eloquent testimony of Vienna's musical quality. Many eminent singers and virtuosi, and a host of instrumental and choral organizations of more or less local fame lend such a vivid and abundant variety to the city's musical life that it seems in this respect wholly unique among the world's capitals. On many winter evenings important concerts are given simultaneously in from six to eight different halls. Numerous conservatories of high standing attend to the shaping of Vienna's young musical talents, who are spurred on to their utmost efforts by the lure and the excitement of the many international competitions for rich prizes still held annually in the city.

Serious musical research is also being constantly encouraged and conducted at Vienna. The faculty of musical science at the university has appointed Prof. Heinrich Lachs to succeed the world-famous scholar, Guido Adler. Prof. Eugen Wellesz, a composer of great prominence, is an international authority on Byzantine music, as well.

Another striking feature of Viennese musical life is the tremendous activity of its musical commentators in print. The abundance of this journalistic expression reflects the importance which the people of the city attach to their histrionic and musical events. Unhappily, most of the generous space allotted the music-reviewers by the newspapers is devoted to glittering witticisms rather than to serious, enlightening music-criticism, thus often resulting in fierce ink-duels that fill the air with bitter personalities. Yet even this evil has its illuminating significance, for does it not help to prove how important to the Viennese soul are all discussions of art—and, particularly, of music?

—WILLI REICH

A radio address delivered at Strassburg, October 30, 1933; English translation by Gabriel Engel.

BRUCKNER'S FIRST IN JAPAN

Bruckner's *First*, a work for which leading European Bruckner authorities make the lofty claim that it rivals the master's greatest symphonies as a powerful expression of his individuality, still remains unperformed in this country, though seventy years have elapsed since its composition. Music-lovers and symphonic conductors of America may be interested to know that this work was recently given its Japanese premiere by the Takaradzuka Symphony Society of Kobe, under the direction of Josef Laska, Nov. 22, 1933. To which of our own conductors will fall the honor of giving the American premiere of this important symphony, and how soon?

MOZART AS A MUSIC DRAMATIST

About twenty-five years ago Gustav Mahler, fresh from an epoch-making decade as absolute artistic director at the Viennese Imperial Opera, cast an omniscient eye upon the troubled affairs of the Metropolitan Opera House and said, "There is needed here, above all, a central authority, with unconditional powers to shape each presentation, for without such a master the perfect union of text, music, and their stage-setting is out of the question." The man he recommended for this post (which by the way, has never existed in New York) was Alfred Roller, his own Viennese artistic director, a man whose continued association with the Vienna opera to this very day goes a long way to explain the uninterrupted operatic supremacy of the Danube city.

Last April, "Mephisto" of *Musical America*, remonstrating with a disgruntled correspondent who complained bitterly of the inadequate stage-management perennially at work at the Metropolitan, mentioned one or two men who had made notable contributions towards the improvement of that institution's discredited "stage" reputation. The first name he advanced was that of Ernst Lert, a stage-director unforgettably associated, in the minds of opera-goers of recent years, with exquisite performances of such works as *Sadko* and *Le Preziosse Ridicole*. Why, in the course of two seasons, an artist clearly capable of consummate achievements in his field, should have staged so few works in a manner worthy of his quality, is a mystery which will be cleared up only when someone completely "in the know" back-stage at the Metropolitan will have the courage to reveal the details of a system which the smoky rumors of many a year have branded as a "factory."

With the echoes of the enthusiasm recently aroused by a broadcast performance of *Don Giovanni* still ringing in the ear, one begins to wonder whether fine Mozart opera would not prove a greater esthetic satisfaction than shabby versions of Richard Strauss. This country has never experienced the true greatness of Mozart as a music dramatist. Those who have seen Mozart operas at Vienna will need no proof of this statement. They may ask, however, whether a Mozart series could be given here without artistic standards similar to those by means of which Gustav Mahler awakened apathetic Viennese opera-goers to esthetic delights beyond their dreams. To one familiar with the details of Mahler's career it seems that a very pertinent parallel might be drawn between the operatic conditions of New York to-day and the Vienna which Gustav Mahler found in 1897. Should the violent methods which he used during his early campaign of rehabilitating the Imperial Opera become effective here there might be seen an amazing eruption of executives, directors, and "stars" out of the Metropolitan. But all that is only imagination. It is Mozart about whom we set out to talk.

The dramatic revitalization of Mozart for the sophisticated world of our day is a mighty difficult problem involving a thousand and one psychological subtleties beyond the ken of most operatic stage-managers. Perhaps the supreme authority on the subject "Mozart as a Music Dramatist" is Ernst Lert, whose monumental book "Mozart in the Theatre" (German) is still generally considered the last word on the topic. Had this man been given free rein to do so, he surely could have made a permanent contribution to the American opera-lover's appreciation of Mozart.

Salzburg, beautiful shrine of the world's Mozart cult, strives to maintain for posterity every ideal necessary to the consummate performance of the master's works, both for the operatic and the concert stage. More than ever before, the art of Mozart is to-day the guiding principle of outstanding composers for the stage. Therefore, no serious young composer, conductor, or singer with operatic aspirations should leave any stone unturned in an effort to attend the entire Salzburg Summer Festival Series. Particularly for lovers of Mozart it is the world's supreme master school.

We note with pleasure that among the huge galaxy of authorities on every phase of Mozart's art summoned to Salzburg to take charge of the coming series of summer courses there are:

—Bruno Walter, greatest of all Mozart interpreters, who will conduct a series of Mozart operas;

—Dr. Ernst Lert, of La Scala Milano, who will lecture on "Mozart as a Music-Dramatist";

—Marie Gutheil Schoder, of the Vienna State Opera, who will give a general course in "Opera Dramatics".

The complete, definitive prospectus of the courses to be given at Salzburg in the summer of 1934 is now ready for distribution and may be obtained from any of the following sources:

The Theatrical Seminary: N. Y. School of the Theatre, 139 W. 56th St., N. Y. C.

The Institute of International Education, 2 W. 45th St., N. Y. C.
Salzburg Mozarteum Academy, Mozarteum, Salzburg, Austria.

FRANK THIESS ON BRUCKNER AND MAHLER

The internationally famous German novelist Frank Thiess, in a letter accepting with thanks his election to Honorary Membership in the Bruckner Society of America, makes the following interesting summary of his views concerning the significance of Bruckner and Mahler. These illuminating views, published some years ago in great detail in the brilliant chapter of Mr. Thiess' *Gesicht des Jahrhunderts* devoted to music, will be translated in full in the next issue of *Chord and Discord*.

No composer since Bach has penetrated as deeply as Bruckner that zone of the human soul which is the dwelling-place of man's religious feeling, the feeling that he is dependent upon lofty forces beyond the control of mortal reason and will-power. Thus the message of Bruckner's music may be grasped not through a mere comprehension of his artistic capabilities but only through a realization of the depth to which he was moved by the elemental forces of life. In his own day, when religion had suddenly taken on an extremely problematical character and rational influences were universally arrayed against it to attain, if possible, an unconditional negation of faith, the work of Bruckner represents a complete philosophy of the inner life, of a loftiness far beyond the range of words, a spiritual revelation impossible to any language but that of music.

Mahler seems to me a true spokesman of the passing age, our own epoch of hopeless unrest and spiritual disintegration. His contrast to Bruckner lies in his choice of text, the problem-wracked soul of modern humanity, its countless contradictions, its tragic solitude and terror. He offers us no consolation; he does not uplift us, as Bruckner does, with revelations of Eternity, but he shows us with unparalleled clarity and relentlessness the true features of our own earth-bound faces.

JAKOB WASSERMANN ON BRUCKNER AND MAHLER

The following brief letter addressed to the Bruckner Society of America by the late German novelist Jakob Wassermann not long before his decease must take its place as a significant human document of a generation in which the disrupting influence of chaotic economic and racial elements has invaded even the absolute domain of musical art.

In these few simple words of the great artist who in the *Goose-man* gave the world one of its rarest treasures of musical fiction the age-old artistic honesty of the whole race of which Wassermann was throughout his fruitful career a fervent spiritual leader seems to find eloquent expression.

Because of the complete solitude in which I have been living for many years I am too far removed from musical happenings to be able to send you an extended article on the subject of the present significance of Bruckner and Mahler. Besides, as I am myself only in a very limited sense an excruciating musician, I do not feel that I am the one who should write such an article. I should, however, like to say that Bruckner's music makes a deeper impression upon me than Mahler's, and naturally so, for Bruckner's was the more original and universal genius. His true importance is still far from having attained the recognition that is its just due. His individuality is still obscured by the shadow of Wagner, just as Mahler's by the shadow of Bruckner. Perhaps several decades must go by before it will be possible definitely to classify two such great artists.

I accept with gratitude the offer of Honorary Membership in your society.

THE KILENYI BRUCKNER MEDAL AWARDS

On the evening of Dec. 4, 1933, at the Harvard Club, New York City, Bruno Walter was the guest of honor of the famous Musicians' Club, *The Bohemians*, at their regular monthly gathering. Rising in response to the ovation tendered him by these foremost representatives of the American world of music, he exhorted all true artists to strive as they had never before to combat the darkness that seems to be settling down upon every cultural phase of life by steeping their souls completely in the light of their artistic ideals.

Under the irresistible spell of his fervent, simple appeal one forgot for the moment the purely social nature of the occasion, almost believing oneself listening to the high-priest of some sacred cult voicing the formula of its ritual.

To one familiar with the details of Anton Bruckner's struggle with adversity, the doctrine of spiritual salvation through whole-souled devotion to the eternal beauty of art seemed particularly appropriate, for one of the outstanding events on the evening's program was the official presentation to Bruno Walter of the exclusive Bruckner Medal of Honor recently designed by the noted sculptor, Julio Kilenyi, for the Bruckner Society of America. The warmly appreciative attitude towards the great Austrian symphonist given unmistakable expression by the President of the *Bohemians*, Rubin Goldmark, in the course of his presentation address did honor not only to Anton Bruckner and Bruno Walter, but also to the progressive spirit of our dean of American composers, revealing him as desirous of communicating to this large body of his distinguished colleagues (among whom there must have been more than one anti-Bruckner irreconcilable of the "old order") that the art of Bruckner, so far from being a thing of the past, is still very much alive, promising to become a significant addition to the spiritual treasury of the generations to come in America.

The Kilenyi Bruckner medal (reproduced on the front cover of *Chord and Discord*) has also been awarded to one American and two Austrian musicians, whose course in life, though not illuminated by the world-wide brilliancy attending the career of an idolized symphony conductor, is, because of its quality of deep, unswerving devotion to the Bruckner cause, deserving of signal notice. These musicians are:

DR. MARTIN G. DUMLER, of Cincinnati, noted American composer of sacred music; Honorary Chariman of the Bruckner Society of America; Vice President of the College of Music, Cincinnati.

PROF. MAX AUER, of Voecklabruck, Austria: co-author of the monumental Goellerich-Auer biography of Bruckner; author of *The Life and Work of Anton Bruckner*, Vienna, 1933, the sole detailed book on Bruckner for the layman; (this book exists only in German); founder and Honorary President of the Internationale Bruckner Gesellschaft.

PROF. FRANZ MOISSL, of Klosterneuburg (near Vienna); organist; editor of the *Bruckner Blaetter* and *Musica Divina*; Bruckner conductor of widespread European reputation; a founder of the Internationale Bruckner Gesellschaft.

SYMPHONIC CHRONICLE

A Record of Critical and Popular Reaction.

GUSTAV MAHLER— SECOND SYMPHONY

Philharmonic Symphony Society of New York, Bruno Walter, Conductor—Assisting Artists: Jeanette Vreeland, Sigrid Onegin and the Chorus of the Schola Cantorum of New York (Hugh Ross, Conductor); February 23, 24, 1933.

Last evening's performance was one of uncommon authority and eloquence. Mr. Walter stood in a peculiarly close relation to Mahler. He was his friend, his confidant; and he has been, since the composer's death, one of his most convinced, attached, and persuasive apostles. Like his colleague, Mr. Mengelberg, Mr. Walter reveres this music. For him it is compact of greatness and revelation; and this unquestioning, unflinching devotion imparted extraordinary fervor and a touching quality of almost priestly exaltation to Mr. Walter's disclosure of the work.

—LAWRENCE GILMAN, *New York Herald Tribune*

Reverting to Mr. Walter's communication, we learn how the symphony develops itself. "The first movement," explains the conductor, "is a funeral march for the death of a hero; the second, an idyll from the life of the man. The third movement is uncanny, partly humorous, partly diabolical. It is a symphonic evolution of the song from the medieval source-book, 'Des Knaben Wunderhorn,' of St. Anthony of Padua's sermon to the fishes. The worse types of man, allegorically revealed in fish, are musically portrayed."

Mahler was always struggling upward toward the stars. He sought to pierce the heavens and read the secrets of eternity. . . . There are pages of extraordinary beauty in this score, pages which no music lover would wish to neglect. . . .

The audience last night was most attentive and applauded long and vigorously when the symphony was finished.

—W. J. HENDERSON, *New York Sun*

For this program one listener at least was profoundly grateful. Mr. Walter was a disciple and associate of Mahler, and, as in the case of Willem Mengelberg, when we learn about Mahler from him we receive authoritative information.

Of the Mahler symphonies, the second (in C minor) certainly has not been overworked here. . . .

Performed as it was last night, under the commanding leadership of a man who comprehends it and believes in it, the score arrests and holds your attention.

—PITTS SANBORN, *N. Y. World Telegram*

For the reviewer the third movement, considered alone, may well rank with the "Queen Mab" Scherzo of Berlioz and the "Midsummer Night's Dream" Scherzo of Mendelssohn.

The performance was one of unusual excellence. . . . The orchestra played with beautiful tone and a rare measure of refinement. Miss Vreeland and Mme. Onegin achieved their solos commendably and the chorus met the exactions of music full of dynamic contrasts richly and well.

—OSCAR THOMPSON, *N. Y. Evening Post*

GUSTAV MAHLER— SEVENTH SYMPHONY

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Frederick A. Stock, Conductor; March 2, 3, 1933.

Those intervals of pure joy come to us with the hearing of the exquisite second serenade—a creation that is absolutely a masterpiece. Here, there, and everywhere there are pages and pages of delicately wrought beauty, of charm and sensitive feeling for grace and harmony.

The orchestra played magnificently, and Mr. Stock conducted with the reverential care of the devotee.

—HERMAN DEVRIES, *Chicago American*

Mahler's genius was revolutionary. He struck out in a new artistic direction, despite a lingering, backward glance toward the "Meistersinger" of Richard Wagner. But there are no Wagnerian reminiscences in the first movement of the seventh symphony. Rather there is a harsh, aggressive, irrepressible individuality that challenges the world with a new, a different message.

The themes, with their angular progressions, are like no other melodies. The harmonies, though conforming, fundamentally, to the established idiom of the nineteenth century, so torture the incidental and passing dis-

sonance that the effect often approximates the polytonality of the present. . . .

One ends by being charmed, delighted, and stimulated by this work, though America has been slow to accept it. I hope Doctor Stock repeats it.

—GLENN DILLARD GUNN, *Chicago Herald & Examiner*

Mr. Stock went back a decade for the principal orchestral number by reviving Gustav Mahler's Seventh Symphony, a spacious, skillful work, written in so leisurely a manner that the composer was able to put five movements into it, instead of the conventional four. It has its reminiscent moments, but it works out well, and the audience liked it.

—EDWARD MOORE, *Chicago Tribune*

ARNOLD SCHOENBERG —PIERROT LUNAIRE

Under the auspices of the League of Composers; Phila. Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, Conductor; Assisting Artist, Mina Hager; N. Y., Apr. 16, 1933.

The listener found both the work and its presentation tremendously impressive. The way in which the expressionist Schoenberg succeeds in shaping and painting a series of mood-pictures with an almost incredible economy of means cannot fail to arouse and hold our admiration and respect for that art of his which will yield to no compromise. "Pierrot Lunaire" is a magnificent example of polyphonic construction, a masterwork of contrapuntal skill, in which all standards of value must be made to conform to its micro-cosmic scale. The melodic lines of the music are extremely free, the coloring strikingly vivid, the rhythms tense and vital, the entire harmonic picture being dominated by an extraordinary spell which renders direct esthetic participation impossible. Consequently, we must enjoy this unusual work about the moon-struck "Pierrot" who sees phantoms under the night-sky, has delusions, and becomes the voluntary prey to waking-dreams, at a certain distance, without the sympathy that comes only from personal participation, and yet with a suspense which strives to span the chasm between our power of comprehension and the extraordinary phenomena of strange worlds.

Mina Hager fulfilled splendidly the lofty demands Schoenberg makes upon the soloist with the *Sprechstimme* and Mr. Stokowski muted the instrumental background down to that chamber-musical level at which, despite all the softening of shades, every detail of the structure was revealed with chiseled clarity.

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

GUSTAV MAHLER— FIRST SYMPHONY

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

Mr. Walter's performance was a triumph of the conductor's art, ability to penetrate

to the deepest and subtlest thought of the composer, to transmit his own comprehension and enthusiasm to the men and to inspire an audience. It is seldom that Mahler has had such justice done him here, and a large gathering showed its pleasure.

—OLIN DOWNES, *New York Times*

As a texture of sound, the score is often delightful. Its great quality is its sincerity. In the first movement, especially, there is much that beguiles by reason of its naivete and freshness and simplicity, its candor and sweetness that suggest at times the thought of Schubert, yet are indisputably Mahler's own, original and self-sprung, stamped with his signature and image. The childlike and ingenuous directness, the lyric charm of many pages, are irresistible. The homely tenderness, the folk-like humor, the long, nostalgic reveries, the poignant brooding of the music at its best—these qualities are not easily to be forgotten.

—LAWRENCE GILMAN, *New York Herald Tribune*

The Mahler detractors are unceasingly busy. . . .

At one time I, too, in less mature judgment, denied Mahler any outstanding worth at all, except that he had mastered a method of clever and colorful orchestration. I feel that I have come to see more than that in Mahler.

—LEONARD LIEBLING, *Musical Courier*

Individual champions, as well as Mahler Societies, made the ideals and purposes of Mahler clear to those objectors who had looked upon him as being devoid of originality, and something of a deliberate sensationalist. Many eloquent and even poignant pages came to be recognized justly in his symphonic output. His strong subjectivity is now correctly admitted to be the logical expression of a mentality so independent and intellectually imaginative.

—LEONARD LIEBLING, *New York American*

The first movement . . . is certainly the most concise and solid in structure. It also reveals most clearly the dual nature of the composer Mahler; for where could one find (without engaging in futile arguments) so compelling an instance of a wintry gray mood into which the occasional entrance of a few elemental harmonies, dictated by a romantic nature, appears almost discordant? The second movement is possessed of a splendid Laendler-like character. Here the great gifts of Mahler, who so loved to draw from the wells of folk-like sentiment, find their most felicitous expression. The third movement is truly a masterpiece—once entitled "A Funeral March after the Manner of Callot." It is based on a well-known picture in an old south-German book of children's fairy tales, *The Hunter's Burial*. Mr. Walter, with the utmost concentration upon the exactness of every dynamic detail, clothed this movement with such intensity and so much tonal expressiveness that it alone made certain the success

of his reading of the D Major Symphony. The orchestra was in the best of form and received its just share of the evening's honors.

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

The performance suggested that this symphony, given a fair chance, might vie in popularity with the later symphonies of Tchaikowsky. In the first two movements there is, besides expert orchestration, page after page of a melodious and lucent naturalness.

The "solemn and measured" third movement, despite its funeral character and its touch of irony, likewise makes a compelling appeal to the ears. And in the stormy finale there is real splendor. Admirably performed, it stirred the audience to an enthusiasm easy to understand.

—PITTS SANBORN, *N. Y. World-Telegram*

ANTON BRUCKNER— EIGHTH SYMPHONY

Philharmonic Symphony Society of New York, Bruno Walter, Conductor; October 26, 27, 29, 1933. (The last of these performances was broadcast over the Columbia chain.)

To the many to whom Bruckner is still a problematic composer, whose symphonies are barren tonal deserts with but sparsely sowed oases, this symphony should provide material for a conclusive proof of the Austrian's right to be classed with the immortals of music. Notwithstanding its length, it is so closely knit that not a measure can be eliminated reparably, even as the music dramas of Richard Wagner are mutilated by excisions.

Most critical encomiums have expended themselves on the adagio movement and certainly its pages seek their peer in symphonic literature. But the challenging and haunting first movement, the highly original scherzo with its poetic trio and broadly conceived, grandiose finale, are master creations.

Mr. Walter is to be felicitated on presenting this symphony in its entirety.

—J. D. BORM, *New York Herald Tribune*

In spite of its external difficulties the *C Minor Symphony* should be played more often. And not only because of its celebrated *Adagio*, justly regarded as the summit of achievement in the realm of symphonic slow movements.

If any one of the nine Bruckner symphonies is destined to silence the stupid chatter of certain would-be authorities concerning "the naïvete and crudity of the man and composer Anton Bruckner," it is this gigantic *C Minor Symphony*. Here there speaks to us not the unreflective, hyper-spontaneous musician of other works, the fanatic of childish faith, who gives free rein to a fantasy of epic range, sacrificing therefore the firm framework of his symphonic structure. Here are none of those passages of inadequate consistency to support the sweeping allegation that forms the major premise of the Anti-Brucknerite's well-worn syllogism. In the *C Minor Symphony* a master of symphonic form has reared a sublime

temple of classic beauty, at the altars of which a poet, a mortal purified by sufferings, offers up his gratitude to the Almighty in a rhapsody of supreme jubilation.

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

The adagio, as Lawrence Gilman remarks in his illuminating program note, "some would put at the head of all adagios 'by reason of its solemnity, nobility and elevated thought,' to which one might add 'sheer musical beauty.'"

An early commentator on this movement declared that it was meant to suggest "the all-loving Father of Mankind in His measureless wealth of mercy." Be that as it may, the adagio is one of the most exalted and majestically beautiful of symphonic movements.

This implies no undervaluation of the opening allegro or of the scherzo, supposed to depict the "German Michel," the "plain, honest, much-enduring (but slow) German"—a scherzo that is interrupted by a trio of singular loveliness.

—PITTS SANBORN, *New York World-Telegram*

ARNOLD SCHOENBERG CONCERT

Assisting Artists—Nadia Reisenberg, Ruth Rodgers, Rita Sebastian, Edna Sheppard, and the Pro Arto Quartet (A. Onnow, G. Prevost, L. Halleux, R. Maas) N. Y., Nov. 11, 1933.

Program: Third String Quartet, Opus 30; Four Songs, Opus 6; Three Piano pieces, opus 11; Klavierstücke, Opus 33; Second String Quartet, Opus 10

Arnold Schoenberg, for a quarter of a century a storm centre in Austria, Germany and other portions of Europe, had the probably unique experience, last night in the Town Hall, of being present at performances of his music when it was not hissed. In fact, he faced a friendly, attentive and extremely appreciative audience.

Mr. Schoenberg had reason to thank the League. The League of Modern Composers, and Mrs. Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, were responsible for the very appreciative reception last night of the Third String Quartet, which opened the program.

So presented, before an audience especially prepared for the hearing, the work has a remarkable success. The logic of the musical thought and its closely knit development were never more strongly felt. The listener followed intently and curiously the unfoldments of the ideas. Richly or acridly dissonant as the case might be, the music was obviously possessed of an inner pressure of logic and life. Yes: there were even seconds when the uninitiate might take pleasure in melodic moods and harmonic color. This applied particularly to the *Intermezzo* and the *Finale*. The compactness of this writing does not limit the free play of the ideas. Whether this will be great music for a later day who shall say?

—OLIN DOWNES, *New York Times*

Rita Sebastian, contralto, sang them (four songs from Op. 6) with straight-forward delivery, with beauty of voice and artistic taste and made a definite success of all four. They were Traumben, Verlassen, Ghassel and Der Wanderer. Edna Sheppard played the difficult piano parts, a task masterfully executed.

The Second String Quartet, Op. 10, in which the composer calls for a soprano voice in the third and fourth sections, was another magnificent achievement by the Pro Arte players. Here the idiom is more apparent for the hearer and there was a fine response on the audience's part. . . .

The poems Litanci and Entrueckung which Schoenberg has set for his quartet are by Stefan George, a contemporary German poet of no mean gifts. Schoenberg has found music of superb expression for their mood, lifting them to an enduring place. . . .

The occasion was one which will go down in musical history as one of vital importance, the public recognition by our city's musicians and music lovers of him, whom we must call the greatest modernist of them all.

—A. WALTER KRAMER, *Musical America*

Extended discussion of this music must await an occasion more leisurely than this; in general, it may be said that the program presented an interesting juxtaposition of various aspects of Schoenberg's music—neo-romanticism in the second quartet, whose last two movements Mr. Gilman described as "of haunting beauty, in the acidulated 'Tristan' manner of the younger Schoenberg" when the "League" first gave this work here in 1924; the sharply contrasted piano pieces of Op. 33 in which the later Schoenbergian treatment of short and varying interested themes characteristic of the third quartet makes its appearance; romanticism in the songs, these mainly dark in color, with moments of ingratiating beauty.

—FRANCIS D. PERKINS, *New York Herald Tribune*

ANTON BRUCKNER— NINTH SYMPHONY

Performed by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Frederick A. Stock, November 16 and 17, 1933.

Everything that Bruckner wrote is animated by a friendly and modest spirit, and at times the ninth symphony has moments of genuine beauty and inspiration.

—HERMAN DEVRIES, *Chicago American*

Yet this, too (the Adagio) is noble music and it may be that its creator will eventually win a place with Brahms and Franck. Or it may be that he came too late upon the field and that his music will be forgotten before it has been truly known. This were a pity, or so it seems to me, for I find the music attractive in a fantastic way, and the figure of the composer both wistful and tragic, qualities that are reflected in his song.

—GLENN DILLARD GUNN,
Chicago Herald and Examiner

The Bruckner symphony brought great satisfaction to Mr. Stock's audience, though considering the enormous amount of applause that was heedlessly misspent during the day I am not sure the satisfaction was well earned.

—EUGENE STINSON, *Chicago Daily News*

HUGO WOLF— DER CORREGIDOR (EXCERPTS)

Philharmonic Symphony Society of New York, Bruno Walter, Conductor; Assisting Artists: Grete Stueckgold and Gustav Schuetzendorf. Nov. 26, 1933.

One has heard it said that "Der Corregidor," as a stage-piece, is not always theatrically effective. That may be so. But it does not seem an adequate reason for excluding the work from the repertoire of our principal lyric theatre, the Metropolitan, in view of the extraordinary musical quality of Wolf's opera, the sheer loveliness and poetry and humor and tenderness that well from almost every page of this enamoring score.

We are perhaps inclined to forget that a considerable number of operas that are exceedingly lively members of the standard repertoire maintain their hold upon the affection of their audiences almost wholly by reason of their musical appeal, and with little regard for their dramatic effectiveness. If an opera were always to be kept from the stage because there are parts of it which are not "good theater," the slaughter of masterpieces would be appalling. Among the casualties would be, for example, no less a composition than "Tristan and Isolde": for how often have we heard it said that the second act of that rather popular work is "poor theater?" I do not happen to share this view.

But even if this score were less genuinely dramatic in the pulse and contour of the music than it is, "Der Corregidor" would still clamor for production on the stage of the Metropolitan by reason of the beauty and power and fascination of the music. Here, again and again, is Hugo Wolf at his most moving and memorable. This is for the most part, music of rare imaginative vividness, of a beauty that takes one by the throat, a charm and grace and poetry that enchant the ear and the mind. It is the score of an artist to whom intellectual and spiritual distinction and expressiveness and truth of style were second nature—the score of a master.

—LAWRENCE GILMAN, *New York Herald Tribune*

Both during and after his lifetime, Wolf suffered from grievous public neglect of his music. His colleagues and the critics also were divided in their estimates of his worth, although some of the opposition was due to the fact that he allied himself with the Wagner-Bruckner faction and thereby drew upon himself the wrath of the powerful penwielder, Hanslick, and his vengeful adherents.

Lovely music, melodious, graceful, characteristic, and witty, is dressed by Wolf in

orchestration of rich and resourceful kind. In "Der Corregidor" he shows himself to be as original and masterful as he is in his songs.

—LEONARD LIEBLING, *New York American*

For this music, judging by the pages heard yesterday, deserves a better fate than neglect; it is music of great tenderness, humor and passion. It is a work of indubitable creative power.

The remaining four excerpts, two of which were entirely orchestral, bring the Corregidor more actively into the proceedings. The music by turns is maliciously humorous, stormy, mocking and violent. The orchestra speaks with fullness and rich variety, maintaining always clarity of presentation. The audience responded to the performance with the warmth it merited. If the Metropolitan Opera is in search of a novelty for next season, it could not do any better than mount this long-neglected opera of an authentic genius.

—H.T., *The New York Times*

GUSTAV MAHLER— FIRST SYMPHONY

The Civic Symphony Orchestra, Denver, Colorado; Conductor, Horace E. Tureman; December 5, 1933.

Mahler's First Symphony was a feature of the second concert given by the Civic Symphony, Horace E. Tureman conducting. An element of uncertainty in the first movement was redeemed by the good work done in the last two movements, the orchestra giving a telling performance of the closing portion.

—JOHN C. KENDEL, *Musical America*

GUSTAV MAHLER— NINTH SYMPHONY

Boston Symphony Orchestra; Dr. Serge Koussevitzky, Conductor; Boston, December 8th and 9th, 1933.

The weariness of a man longing for peace can be felt throughout the first movement and the concluding adagio. Indeed, the muted brasses sigh out under the strings, shortly after the beginning of the andante, a motive that strikingly recalls the composer's musings at the end of "The Song of the Earth," upon a pleasant land beyond death where "the distant skies are shining blue, eternally." Even the obstreperous rollicking of the scherzo, upon a country dance tune is soon interrupted by black melancholy. . . .

Yet like Wagner when he wrote "Tristan," Mahler the artist was able to preserve sufficient balance to express himself clearly.

—C.W.D., *The Boston Globe*

But in "The Song of the Earth" and this Ninth Symphony, as Dr. Koussevitzky and the orchestra have played them to us, Mahler wears another and less debatable aspect. In

these later pieces he is concerned with the expression of more personal and intimate feeling, of the obsessions that pursued his final years. Then were the coming of death, our mortal end in oblivion, ever upon him. They might soothe his imagination; yet did they fester upon it. In those last days he would scorn life and the ways of men; mock janglingly at them. Yet never could he put them altogether by for more mystical or cosmic visions.

Judge as the hearer may of his expression of these broodings that consumed him, compared with many a composer of our day, sterile, routined, dryly cerebrating, Mahler at least had something to express and more or less potently expressed it.

—H.T.P., *Boston Evening Transcript*

A fourth hearing of Mahler's Symphony naturally made for clearer appraisal of this remarkable work. The most moving and impressive portion of the symphony seemed yesterday to be, not the final Adagio that would wrest from the grave its secrets, but the opening Andante, which even more in its resignations than in its protests is music of a heart-shaking, heart-breaking sadness. The Scherzo, with its rustic gaiety and vigor, pleased as before.

Again it was easy to be stirred by the ironical third movement that is said to have expressed Mahler's aversion to the futile hurly-burly of New York City, where the Symphony was sketched. . . .

While thanking Dr. Koussevitzky for the opportunity once more to hear this Ninth Symphony, is it out of place to suggest that there are five completed symphonies of Mahler that Boston does not know, and others that it has not heard in years?

—WARREN STOREY SMITH, *Boston Post*

ANTON BRUCKNER QUINTET (ADAGIO)

New York Philharmonic, Hans Lange, Conductor; Feb. 8, 9, 11, 1934 (broadcast over Columbia Chain.)

Another instance of Hans Lange's ability to dig up new and unfamiliar works was last evening's program of the Philharmonic-Symphony Society at Carnegie Hall. . . .

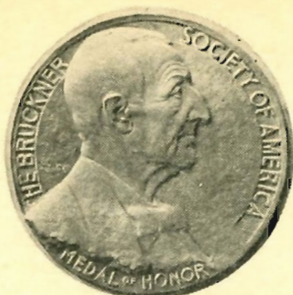
The unfamiliar was represented by the Adagio from Bruckner's Quintet in F Major, played augmentatively by the string section. . . .

A surprising tonal balance that brought out in marked relief the melodic voices against passing note progressions, featured the Bruckner piece. Its mood is intensely emotional, and approaches a religious fervor. The audience found it particularly to its liking.

—R. C. B., *N. Y. World-Telegram*

In Memoriam

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—WARREN STOREY SMITH, *Boston Post*.

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—HARVEY GAUL, *Pittsburgh Post Gazette*.

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