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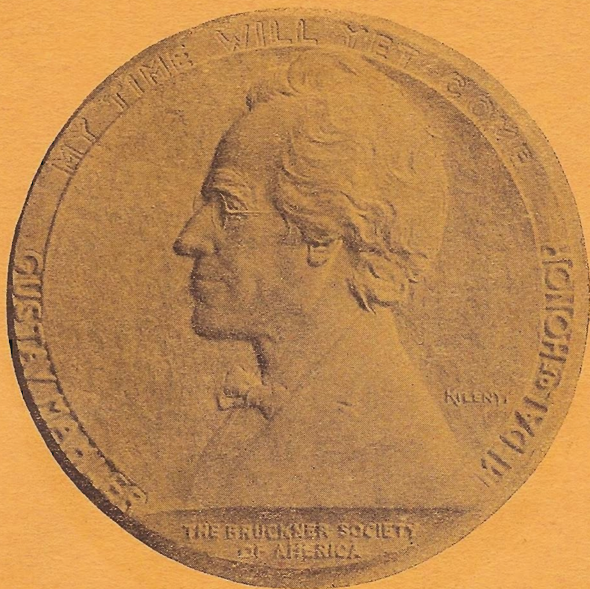

THE KILENYI MAHLER MEDAL

CHORD AND DISCORD

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

With Hammer and Cowbells—Mahler's *Sixth* Comes to America .... *Gabriel Engel* 1

Bruckner's Slow Movements .... *Robert Simpson* 13

Arnold Schoenberg's Debt to Mahler .... *Dika Newlin* 21

Bruckner and Mahler and Tonality .... *Warren Storey Smith* 27

Mahler's *Fifth Symphony* .... *Wolfgang Stresemann* 30

Bruckner's *Seventh* .... *Neville Cardus* 34

Gustav Mahler and Hugo Wolf .... *Donald Mitchell* 40

In Memory of Mahler—Mahler's *Eighth* .... *Lawrence Gilman* 47

Why No Air Premiere for Mahler's *Sixth?* 51

Bruckner's *Eighth* and the Reviewers (1948) 56

American Premiere of Mahler's *Sixth* 59

Mahler's *Sixth* .... *Warren Storey Smith* 64

An American Bruckner Premiere 66

Mahler's *Fifth* on Records .... *Gabriel Engel* 69

Mahler's *Second Symphony* in New York and Boston 71

Bibliography of Books on Bruckner 75

Bibliography of Books on Mahler 79

Salome at City Center (New York City) 81

Symphonic Chronicle (July 1946—January 1948) 84

Index to CHORD AND DISCORD (Vol. I—Vol. II, No. 4) 103

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WITH HAMMER AND COWBELLS

MAHLER'S SIXTH COMES TO AMERICA

By GABRIEL ENGEL

The prolonged, spontaneous ovation accorded the belated American premiere of Mahler's *Sixth* at each of its three performances (Dec. 11-13, 1947) by the N. Y. Philharmonic under Mitropoulos' brilliant direction, should go a long way toward proving that this sadly neglected work is in reality one of the most vital and appealing of all Mahler's symphonies. Given perhaps less than a dozen times during the two score years of its existence, mostly during Mahler's lifetime (i.e., before 1911), it is not likely that any living American reviewer had ever heard it before. Of course, the premiere at Essen, as well as the performances that followed, had elicited the usual raucous chorus of critical abuse heaped upon any Mahler achievement by a world in which petty jealousies were busy every moment producing fresh axes to grind. Yet even had it been a new work by Beethoven or Brahms it could scarcely have better survived the heavy cross of rejection laid upon it by apologetic extenuations on the part of confessed Mahler devotees. "My time will yet come", Mahler used to say, commenting upon the failure of his contemporaries to understand his works. He meant hostile critics and musicians, no doubt, but so far as the *Sixth* was concerned, he might as well have included most of his friends. Significant in this connection are some words Arnold Schoenberg spoke about Mahler's art:

> "In place of many words, it would perhaps be best for me to say, 'I believe firmly and unshakably that Gustav Mahler was one of the greatest of men and artists'. For there are only two possible ways to convince anyone of an artist's quality: the first and better way, to produce his work; the second, which I must now use: to communicate to others one's own faith in that work. . . .
>
> "In reality there is only a single towering goal for which an artist strives: *to express himself!* If he succeeds in that he has won the greatest success an artist may achieve; beside that everything else is minor. Self-expression embraces all: death, resurrection, fate, etc., as well as the lesser, though not unimportant human problems. . . .
>
> "I believe that Mahler simply did not notice that his themes were banal. And, to be sure, for a single reason: *that they are not banal.* I must confess here: I also belonged at first to those who found these themes banal. I believe it important to admit that I was Saul before I became Paul, for it may be deduced therefrom that I too was misled by that *fine* sense of discrimination of which his opponents are so proud. Rather, only now have I come to heed that *fine* sense no longer, since my ever growing impression of the beauty and grandeur of Mahler's work has convinced

me that such judgments arise not from a truly fine sense of discrimination, but on the contrary, from the total lack of ability to discriminate.

"I had found Mahler's themes banal, although the work as a whole had made a great impression upon me. To-day I could no longer maintain such a stand, even with malice. Just think! If those themes were really banal, I could not help find them still more banal to-day than I did at first. Banal means rustic, signifying a retarded state of culture. Such a state of culture does not imply anything bad or false. It merely represents something superseded, obsolete, once-right, but no-longer-true. The peasant behaves not badly, but in an out-dated manner, aping those of a once higher cultural state. Banality, then, implies an out-dated state of manners and outlook, once really the manners and outlook of the more cultured; not banality from the outset, but merely grown to be such when supplanted by the succeeding stratum of cultural progress. But it can never become valid again; once rendered banal, it must remain banal. And when I now declare that I can no longer find these themes banal to-day, I know they could never have been banal; for a banal idea, that is an idea that strikes me as outmoded, trite, can seem to me, upon further acquaintance, only more banal, more trite. Certainly, never more significant. Furthermore, when I keep discovering in this idea, the more I contemplate it, (and this is my experience with Mahler) new facets, fresh beauties, splendors, then there can remain no doubt: the idea is the very opposite of banal. It is not something that has been long since by-passed for reasons that cannot be misunderstood, but rather something the inmost meaning of which has yet to be fathomed, something that was too deep to permit immediate grasp of more than its outer form. And in reality it has gone thus not only with Mahler; almost all the other great composers were subjected to the censure of banality. I need only mention Wagner and Brahms.

"Equally silly is another criticism hurled against Mahler: that his themes are unoriginal. In the first place, just as in art the isolated detail, so in music the theme alone, is not the main thing. For an artwork, like a living organism, emerges an entity. Exactly as with a child, it is not just an arm nor a leg that is first created. Not the themes, but the entire work is the inspiration. Not his is the true gift of invention who creates a good theme but rather his who conceives a whole symphony at once. In the second place, however, Mahler's themes are original. Naturally, one who singles out the first four notes will detect reminiscences, but he is no less ridiculous than one who hunts for original words in an original poem. The theme consists not of a few notes, but of the musical products of these notes. The little structure we call a theme should never be the sole yardstick of the large form of which it is the relatively smallest element. Schopenhauer once remarked that the most unusual things have to be said with the most usual words. That must of necessity be the case with music as well; that the

> most unusual things have to be said with the most usual sequences of tone. One is almost tempted to go further: that it is unnecessary for a musical composition to have an original theme. Otherwise Bach's Chorale-Preludes would not be works of art. Yet artworks they certainly are."[1]

To some extent Mahler himself must be held responsible for the timorous pre-disposition of the musical world, conductors as well as music-lovers, toward the *Sixth*. The references to the work's content and complexity in his letters are confused and confusing. In 1904 he wrote to Richard Specht:

> "My *Sixth* will pose riddles the solution of which will be possible only to a generation that has already accepted and digested my first five."[2]

The work was then complete in concept, but probably still in rough sketch form.

In a letter to Bruno Walter in the summer of 1906 Mahler, in his usual exuberant, elated manner following the completion of a symphony, scolds him with good-natured impatience for quixotically condemning as unsound one of Wagner's polemics in favor of program-music.

> "True, just as in all art, the utmost purity of the means of expression is desirable. When making music one should not seek to paint, describe, etc. Yet whatever the music one creates it cannot help being the complete human—feeling, thinking, breathing, suffering.
>
> "In a word, one who lacks the necessary genius should keep hands off; but he who has it need fear nothing. All this arguing about the exact nature of a work of musical art strikes me as though one, having begotten a child, starts breaking his head afterwards over whether it is really a child, begotten with proper intentions, etc. In short, one has made love and—succeeded: That's that! And if one does not and cannot love, why there just is no child. Again that's that! And if one does and can—well, there is a child. And again that's that!
>
> "My *Sixth* is done. I believe I have succeeded. A thousand times that's that!"

And then came the premiere at Essen, with its hostile critical reception, nothing new to Mahler, who had learned to take rebuffs from the press in his stride. Bravely he wrote to Mengelberg preparing the *Sixth* for its Amsterdam premiere:

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[1] *Rede über Mahler*. Translated by Gabriel Engel from excerpts included in a privately printed pamphlet issued by Schoenberg's friends and pupils in celebration of his 60th birthday. The complete text will be included in the collection of Schoenberg's writings to be issued in the fall of 1948 by the Philosophical Library Inc., 15 E. 40th Street, New York, N. Y., under the title, STYLE AND IDEA.

[2] This letter, as well as the others that follow, is translated by Gabriel Engel from Mahler's *Briefe*, (Vienna, 1924), by kind permission of Alma Mahler Werfel.

> "My *Sixth* appears to be too hard a nut for the tender little teeth of our critics of to-day. Just the same it manages to push its way through the concert halls."

Shortly after this Mahler sent his friend Joseph Reitler, conferring in Paris with the conductor Colonne, who wished to introduce a Mahler symphony there, the following amazing note:

> "Under no condition would I advise the *First*. It is very difficult to grasp readily. I would rather recommend the *Sixth* or *Fifth*."

It seemed now that the *Sixth* was not such "a hard nut" to crack, after all.

By then, however, the damage was done. Bogey gossip he had unwittingly helped further by sanctioning dour programmatic allusions to the score, added to the snide remarks of jealous musicians of note concerning the precocious cowbells and hammer and the inanities and insanities of the orchestration, had transformed the symphony's hoped-for laurels into a crown of thorns.

Following the few performances during Mahler's lifetime the *Sixth* remained virtually taboo. Most surprising has been the attitude of Mahler devotees toward this mistakenly neglected work. Paul Bekker, author of a monumental German tome on Mahler's symphonies, published in 1921, may be regarded as the spokesman for the majority of these. He said:

> "It would not be right, in order to overcome the antipathy to it inspired by its exceptional content and form, to call for more frequent performances of this symphony as a separate work."

Heard as an entirely separate entity, with a message complete in itself, Mahler's *Sixth* might well persuade the listener that the composer was a pessimist. Yet the same listener hearing the *Fifth* independently, with its enthusiastic message of joy and love of life, could not help concluding by the same logic that Mahler was the very voice of affirmation. The truth, however, is that each of these works, indeed every one of Mahler's symphonies, stresses a different facet of the "complete human" mentioned in his letter to Walter. Man's ever-changing experiences in life exert subtle influences over his spiritual alchemy; they cause changes in his "feeling, thinking, and suffering" which determine his consequent spiritual state.

If I may use the apt contrast of Milton's immortal odes, the tragic Finale of the *Sixth*, a veritable Ode to Human Suffering, is but the momentary *Il Penseroso* of an artist, whose inner life was one vast *L'Allegro*, ecstatic with the urge and the felicity for self-expression. Viewed from the first movement's arduous ascent to life's topmost summit, whence the homely echo of cowbells still tinges the transfigured revelation of eternity with mundane limitation, this Finale may well reflect Mahler's hopeless struggle to maintain his lofty ideals at the Viennese Opera against the stumbling-blocks set in his path by malicious, powerful opponents, envious of his high artistic authority. For years Mahler suffered under the premonition that this episode would end tragically for him, as it did, though not till

some seasons after its probable prediction in the foreboding hammer blows of the *Sixth*.

Only absolute belief in their indispensability could have caused Mahler to introduce the hammer and cowbells, scored here for the first time in any symphony. Those who suspect that he might have hit upon such precarious tonal timbres out of a desire for sensational effect, need only be reminded that he would transport a special set of cowbells, constructed according to his own specifications for this work, hundreds of miles to insure accurate rendition of the desired timbre. Mahler's conception of the hammer blow, on the other hand, seems never to have been adequately realized. Paul Bekker, who attended some of the rare early performances, concludes, naively enough, that this failure was perhaps intentional: that it supports the validity of Mahler's symbolism by suggesting MAN'S insurmountable limitations, the vanity of his effort even so much as to mirror the voice of Fate. The score calls for "a short, powerful, but dully echoing stroke of unmetallic character." Paul Stefan hints, "Like a falling tree." In a letter dated Aug. 18, 1906, to Mengelberg, in a quandary about the hammer blow, Mahler said:

> "Too bad you told me so late just how you felt about the hammer blows. I can make no change now, as I gave my *imprimatur* to the publisher weeks ago. Frankly, I felt just as you do about the matter, but forgot to note the change. Well, let's try it your way in Amsterdam and perhaps it can be appended somehow to the score later."

The original score shows that Mahler did omit the third and most fateful of the hammer blows (as published in the study-score released after the world premiere). However, the published version greatly intensifies the work's sensational appeal. Perhaps this fact will continue to influence the conductors of its rare performances to retain the third stroke. Once heard it cannot be forgotten. Whenever the work is performed listeners will be told about it in advance and they will await it expectantly. It is literally the death blow. Why did Mahler change his mind about mirroring the very stroke of death in tone? Perhaps superstition had something to do with it. Yet artistic integrity actually demanded that it be omitted. The two preceding hammer blows were warnings, premonitions, sufficiently sombre to lend conviction to the description "Tragic". The third, followed by the mourning choir of trombones, involves an almost photographic bit of realism, violating the pure symbolism Mahler really intended, but apparently himself understood clearly only after it was too late to amend the score in press.

Just another word about the cowbells and hammer. At the American premiere, in almost every detail a perfect presentation of the work, these two important symbols, so difficult of realization in accordance with Mahler's intent, might possibly have been improved upon. The cowbells, rather spasmodically sounding, seemed somewhat harsh and over-prominent. The score stresses particularly that the bells be rung "at a distance." As this sound, in particular, tends to produce a disturbing audience-reaction, aside from feeding the hostile critic's penchant for gibes, it should be most meticulously tested before a performance. The greatest feasible distance from

which the bells would be sufficiently perceptible to show that they are related to the score would be the proper distance. As for the right timbre, one would have to unearth Mahler's own specially constructed cowbells to know the exact truth in that regard. The score reveals the unbroken, gently waving line Mahler used for his cowbell notation, indicating that he desired a soft, unbroken tone, but the timbre he fancied may remain a mystery forever. The hammer blow at Carnegie Hall was startling, sharp, and penetrating, in all, surely impressive, yet as a symbol of Fate not over-convincing.

At first, perhaps, some of the hostile scribes were driven by urgent deadlines to snap judgments, the equally ready retraction of which might have involved some sacrifice of authority and pride. With each fresh ovation granted a Mahler Symphony their stand grows more puzzling, almost seeming the expression of a planned, hammer-like attitude already notorious in America in Mahler's lifetime. At any rate, the hammer and cowbells provided their now very banal remarks about Mahler's alleged banality with a grateful point of departure. Gleefully, they rose to an all-time low of superficial condemnation. To them we heartily recommend the telling words of Schoenberg on the nature of banality (with special emphasis on Mahler's art). By his own confession once in agreement with them, this man, one of the foremost creative artists of all time, is not merely a great musician, but a keen esthetician as well. Having survived a half-century of critical buffetings, with his artistic integrity unscathed, he recently viewed with whimsical pardonable irony a belated American Academy of Arts award in recognition of a lasting contribution to art, already realized in great measure just about the time of the world premiere of Mahler's *Sixth*.

FIRST MOVEMENT

Listening to the opening strains one seeks in vain to single out a definite lesser melodic component corresponding to the traditional concept of "first theme." There is here no cadence, no marker for the quick, facile analyst. One is swept along by an impassioned march-like outburst of lyricism, the vehicle of a number of motivating sources. It surges impetuously onward by ramifications rhythmically ever new. Through sixty measures of alternate wide leaps and zig-zag rushes it pursues its breathless way. It is not just a theme; it is a march-song of symphonic scope, an integral creation of the process known to musical rhetoric as "free fantasy". The powerful forward urge of this march is not the expression of restlessness. It mirrors the heroic determination of man's will to surmount all obstacles.

A singular motive, of grim, relentless power gives the first hint of a tragic outcome for all the earth-bound aspiration just presented. A word about the origin and nature of this fateful motive, destined for a paramount role in the symphony, may be of interest. At the end of the opening movement of Mahler's *Second* there occurs a particularly gloomy, brief episode, reflecting the victory of death over life. It involves an instant change of mood from major to minor by the depression of the middle tone of a major triad. The aptness of this harmonic transformation as a symbol of the shadow of death ever-impending over life must have struck Mahler when planning the *Sixth*. No less singular than this fate motive itself is the instrumental dress in which he arrayed its initial appearance. Trumpets and

oboes sound it simultaneously, the former graded from *ff* to *pp*, the latter from *pp* to *ff*, the darkening of the harmony thus being reinforced by a corresponding darkening of orchestral timbre, as the dimmed brilliancy of brass gives way to the increased nasal volume of woodwind. Whether or not one favors such intricacies of dynamics in mingled timbres, this is a characteristic example of the meticulous virtuosity Mahler brought to the scoring of the *Sixth*, that seems worth pointing out. Echoes of the fate-symbol's harmonic change haunt the brief, mysterious chorale that follows, softly chanted by the woodwind. Gradually the air grows more peaceful and cheerful, to greet the advent of the light-hearted song-theme, which seems at first nothing more than the idealized chorus of a Viennese popular song, characterized by short, separated phrases, alternately amorous and lilting.

Ah, the song-theme, into which symphonists have traditionally poured the utmost melodic magic of which they were capable! Yet certainly not so Mahler, especially in this simple, diatonic song-theme. Obviously its chief mission is not of a cantabile nature; it is above all the vehicle for two contrasted motives, destined to high importance in the movement's development. Therefore, the listener should realize that instead of compact themes the exposition of Mahler's *Sixth* is devoted to contrasted moods, presented in freely evolving, song-like structures, the primary aim of which is not to sing, but to convey the motives, the characters in the symphonic drama about to be unfolded. So numerous are they, especially in the opening march, that Mahler, eager to familiarize the listener with these essential particles flashing by with kaleidoscopic swiftness, resorts to the classic device of repetition. In view of the brevity of this exposition and the enhanced comprehension of the ensuing development a second hearing of the many motives would afford, Mahler's demand for such a repetition should not be ignored.

As first heard, but a simple melody clothed in simple harmonies, it returns shortly a transformed creation, impetuous, joyful, resplendent in a luxurious contrapuntal garb of supporting voices. After full, satisfying expression it subsides in a dreamy cadence.

The extended development section falls into four divisions, separated by the strongly contrasted moods which hold successive sway. The first of these exploits a number of varied rhythmical motives drawn from the march, culminating in a new, more impassioned march-melody freely evolved out of those motives. The listener becomes aware of the lessening weight of conflict, the melodic line almost attaining an air of open exultation as it ascends to a more ethereal plane.

"Gradually more sustained," says the score. The violins leap jubilantly upward, to become transfigured in whispered, closely harmonized *tremoli* suggesting the rarefied atmosphere of a lofty summit. Faintly echoing out of the valley below rises the homely sound of cowbells. A choir of eight muted horns and trombones intones the chorale-theme. This passage, a marvel of orchestral color achieved by purely indigenous means, is one of the most felicitous instrumental inspirations of a composer whose pioneering achievements at the threshold of twentieth century economy of instrumental means are still regarded by experts as the supreme models in their field.

The song-theme, hitherto only an occasional, fragmentary apparition in

the development, now flowers into a full-blown, tender melody in the solo flute. Inverted it gains immeasurably in grace and expressiveness. Transmuted by this brightening magic the stormy march re-enters regenerated, now major, strong and confident, bolstered by a powerful orchestral setting. The song-theme, eloquent in the violins, ascends to the brilliant plane of D-Major, where it achieves its fullest, warmest utterance.

Ominously a shadow of the original, dark march-mood looms up in the trombones over aroused, pulsing basses. Alarmed, the entire orchestra falls upon it with full force, "as though bursting in, furious with anger", hints Mahler in the score. In the stirring passage that ensues, Mahler's inexhaustible polyphonic resourcefulness is revealed in the masterful way he marshals the multitude of motives in ever new combinations. The brass now takes charge, dispelling every vestige of the sombre elements that threatened. The song-theme, rising in the trumpets, becomes a veritable hymn of triumph. Unbounded joy fills the air as the movement draws to a close.

ANDANTE

Mahler decided that the placid *Andante*, third movement in the original score, would serve to better advantage if heard immediately following the dynamic, exciting first movement. Certainly, its marked contrast of spirit affords the listener grateful relaxation. Yet there is a more valid reason for the change. The Scherzo includes dark motives that attain full significance in the Finale. Closer to the latter in content, it is in that respect a preparation for it.

The opening theme of the Andante, set in major, and entrusted mainly to the violins, is a tender love-song, of deceptive simplicity, if one passes too lightly over the striking injection of evasive touches of minor in the melodic line. Those more intimately acquainted with Mahler's individual characteristics will appreciate their significance. They know Mahler's irresistible urge to parody and satire, sometimes not even sparing the lugubrious air of a funeral march. Yet the subtle interchange of the theme's major and minor moments is firmly based on the fate-symbol. Early in its unfolding is heard a plaintive motive, aptly set for the oboe, its rocking rhythm much like a lullaby-fragment. This lullaby-motive becomes one of the principal vehicles of the movement, a dream of love, peace, and contentment colored by a profusion of typically Mahlerian instrumental imagery. In a polyphonic setting enriched by ever-varied re-echoings of this motive in strings and woodwind the love-song attains increased ardor, gradually luring the entire orchestra into warm participation. Finally it subsides in a gracious, leisurely cadence amid a rich interplay of imitative voices.

A few measures in minor cast a momentary shadow, quickly dispelled by an exultant outburst of the lullaby-motive in the trumpets, over an impressive hymn-like melody in the horn choir. The mood at this point is closely akin to that of the Finale of the *Fourth*, Mahler's Ode to Heavenly Joy. Cowbells, heard faintly, as from a valley deep below, bear the everyday world's last greeting to the intrepid mountain-climber (the human will) on the lonely lofty summit he has scaled. The very gates of Heaven seem to open before him, revealing indescribable super-earthly splendors. Swiftly the veil is drawn. Yet vestiges of the celestial vision survive in the

violin's ecstatic countermelody as the love-song returns with almost devotional fervor in horn and woodwind. Interpolations of the lullaby-motive enhance the breath-taking beauty of this passage, one of Mahler's most felicitous polyphonic inspirations.

Again the melancholy minor theme, horns and deep strings predominating, yields to the broad-winged countermelody of the violins, awakening the whole orchestra to full-throated, ardent participation in the love-song. The first theme is not heard again. The movement draws to a close along a fine-spun, ever-softer strand of motives, rising and falling like sighing heartbeats in the breast of the lonely one whose yearning evoked the song.

SCHERZO

The swiftly changing panorama of dance elements, by turns graceful, lumbering, lilting, whirling, presents a weird, shadowy world of rhythmic life gripped by the fantastic spell that sways the Scherzo. A vividly picturesque creation in A-minor, the symphony's reigning key, it is the typical goblin-haunted Mahler scherzo, the proving-ground of an almost uncanny display of tonal wit. Yet it never bursts forth into merry laughter. Instead of humor it offers the wild cachinnation of lurking demons; in place of a smile of cheer, a gargoyle leer. The opening theme (rather, a succession of varied dance-themes) reveals several salient points in common with the march of the first movement, the highly serious mood of which it seems at times openly to parodize.

Especially striking is the delicately constructed oboe theme in major, corresponding to the trio section in the classical scherzo. Labeled *Altväterisch* (in archaic style) it pretends to evoke a memory of pre-Haydn Austrian folk music, where the oboe was the melody-carrying instrument. Yet even here the unsettled rhythm, alternately 3/8 and 4/8, shows a Mahler not just making, but rather poking fun. Nevertheless, the charm and pseudo-naiveté of this passage are irresistible.

The fate-motive, dormant throughout the Andante, reappears here, adding an ominous element to the fantastic spell. At first it takes the form of a sudden, shattering outburst of trumpets, too brief to dispel the spirit of the dance. At the end, with trumpets muted, it is a descending succession of sardonic, nerve-tingling utterances, lending the close an air of dire foreboding. The scene is now set for the mighty, tragic Finale.

FINALE

In the Finale the dark elements lowering over the Scherzo burst forth with utmost power to present the fateful solution to life's problem. Hitherto but scattered phenomena, since the content of the earlier movements did not require their planned union, they are now subjected to close integration. The listener becomes aware that all that preceded was a preparation for this titanic welding of forces. The heroic ascent of the mountain-climber (the human will) only to awaken at the summit to the insuperable limitations of the earth-bound mortal; the idyllic invocation to love and peaceful contentment, a fleeting, yearning dream; the diabolic mockery of malicious demons; and over all, the shadow of inevitable Fate, a warning apparition, briefly glimpsed at widely separated moments of portent, foretelling the tragic outcome.

Set in a tremendously magnified sonata-form framework, introduced by an extended sostenuto passage 114 measures in length, this Finale is the longest instrumental closing movement in symphonic literature. From the viewpoint of intent, as well as extent, the preliminary *Sostenuto* is a direct offspring of the introduction to Mahler's *First*, that magic spell woven by young genius over a weirdly colored 64-bar organ-point. That initial haunting prelude raised the curtain, not on a single movement, nor just on one symphony, but in fact on that entire enchanted quartet of major works known to the world as Mahler's *Wunderhorn* Symphonies. The introduction to the Finale of the *Sixth*, a grim creation, equally purposeful, more profound, is the eloquent prelude to tragic disclosures. This Finale is unique, even with Mahler, being the only tragic closing movement in all his symphonies. Every other one (the song-cycle *Lied von der Erde* excepted) ends on a major note of dazzling apotheosis.

The Finale's principal divisions are set off by the three much-discussed hammer blows, the first marking the beginning of the development, the second its close, and the third (the blow Mahler afterwards wished to omit) bursting in on the coda's opening phrase. This added formal function enhances the hammer's tragic symbolism, giving it authority over the form of the movement, as well as over its content.

The violins leap aloft in C-minor along an impassioned melodic line as free as the flight of a cadenza. Descending they are overtaken by the fate-motive, blared forth by the horn choir, and forced to enter the symphony's ruling tonality, A-minor, foreordained key to the Finale's gloomiest revelations. In no other Mahler symphony does a single tonality play so significant a role. Clearly, he regarded A-minor as tragedy's own peculiar tonality, for he set it to rule over the opening movement, Scherzo, and Finale.

A fresh motive, beginning with an octave-leap, lugubrious in the tuba, is but an inversion of the first march-motive. Startled reiterations of an upward-rushing phrase are familiar from the Scherzo. Accentuated march-motives of brighter cast fail to achieve definite major tonality in the horns. Fantastic fragments of themes unite ever more closely in polyphonic embrace, to flower sombrely in a softly muttered, yet "heavily accentuated" (Mahler) funereal chorale in the deeper-toned wind instruments. The march-motives seek thematic integration on a brighter plane, but the fate-motive, masterful in the trumpets, bars the way. Again and again it frustrates them, pointing the way in gradually livelier tempo to the mighty *Allegro Energico* section, the Finale proper.

The first theme, like the march-song of the opening movement, is not a theme in the traditional sense, but rather a theme-group, a larger song-structure of almost spontaneous growth, each succeeding motivated portion of it seeming to issue from the previous one by a sort of dynamic self-evolution. The octave-leap continues prominent in this rhythmic outburst of stormy passion. The fate-motive sounds more threatening than ever in an angry rhythmic variation by trombones. An accentuated melody, product of the octave-leap and the chorale, bravely shakes off the latter's funereal air and mounts by daring leaps and punctuated rhythms to an exultant climax in the trombone choir. In this suddenly brightened atmosphere is born the second theme.

Of combined heroic and lyric cast, the song-theme presents in definite major tonality the aspiring melodic line denied thematic fulfillment by the

fate-motive in the preliminary *Sostenuto*. Horns, then woodwind, deliver its opening phrases, whereupon the violins, warm and sensitive, transmute the rhythmic strain into a song of soaring lyricism. A shadow in minor hovers over the cadence, evoking familiar dire motives. Yet only for moments is the smooth tide of the theme stemmed. It rises again, more impulsive and impassioned than at first, a veritable hymn of joy, luxuriously colored by alternate instrumental groups of varied timbre, the violins contributing to the background a particularly striking series of closely harmonized *tremoli*. The very peak of triumph appears at hand—then suddenly, the first crushing blow! The hammer of Fate has struck. The orchestra recoils, as though paralyzed by the shattering edict. Austere motives of the funereal chorale in diabolic augmentation leap to the foreground, dragging in their wake the terrifying fate-motive.

What now? Panic—but not for long. Presently, the still indomitable will to resistance, mirrored in rapid, driving motives in strings and woodwind amid excited ripplings of the harp. A new melody, rich in heartfelt lyricism, brings reassurance in trumpet and horn. In the clash of these elements of darkness and light the principal song-theme reappears, transformed by inversion and clouded in minor. "Everything with rough strength", hints the composer, as swiftly pounding rhythms in woodwind and trumpet and a depressing motive in the basses strive in vain to thwart the song's purpose. They are put to rout by the march-song, which now enters in a "fiery" (Mahler) re-creation, clearing the path for the returning melody of reassurance. Brighter and surer than at first it soars aloft on broad wing, bearing a message of hope. This time its flight is unhampered, attaining completion in an extended melodic line of transfigured lyricism, its cadence evoking further affirmation in an eloquent re-birth of the song-theme itself. Then, at the very threshold of supreme fulfillment, the fateful hammer strikes again. Once more the mighty edict of Fate, but this time unaccompanied by the fate-motive, a psychologically sound omission, tending to enhance the motive's effectiveness later in the Finale's tragic climax. Again the struggle of the stricken will to survive, reflected in fleet, panicky runs in the strings.

The trombones, in a broad, powerful, cadenza-like passage, inspired by the octave-leap, parallel the first strains of the preliminary *Sostenuto*. The recapitulation here begun is comprehensive, embracing not only the themes of the *Allegro Energico*, but the introductory *Sostenuto* as well. In no respect a mere repetition, this restatement has the air of thematic consummation. It is a fresh presentation of the principal ideas in new, more impressive instrumental garb, rich in polyphonic revelations of melodic facets hitherto scarcely suggested. Here for the first time the fate-motive is granted full thematic formulation. The octave-leap yields its noblest fruit in a heroic four-part fugato in the brass choir. The melody of reassurance becomes a hymn of triumph in the horns, last and most convincing reflection of the human will to win to the topmost summit.

The violins have just entered upon their final impassioned cadenza, a restatement from the *Sostenuto's* beginning, when the third and last hammer blow falls. Yet the cadenza continues on, descending into the unfathomable depths. There remains only the dark fundament of tonality—A-minor, pedestal for the foreordained triumph of tragedy. Gloom invests

the hushed closing measures, a brief, mournful epilogue, based on the octave-leap, intoned in canon-style by trombones and tuba.

The curtain falls on darkness. Yet there is left not death, but only night, a night that ends a dark chapter in Mahler's vast symphonic autobiography. Further chapters, some brighter than any that have gone before, are yet to come—the new dawn of the *Seventh* and the transfigured choral *Eighth*, "Symphony of a Thousand", aptly called by one of Europe's outstanding composers "the world's greatest *Te Deum*", rounding out Mahler's second symphonic tetralogy, of which the *Sixth*, with its sombre finale-nocturne, constitutes but a dark, yet very great, intermezzo.

IRENE JESSNER SINGS MAHLER SONGS

Irene Jessner, the well-known Metropolitan Opera lyric soprano, who distinguished herself by her portrayal of such roles as Sieglinde, Elsa, Elizabeth, Chrysothemis, and notably the Marschallin, made her bow as a *Lieder* singer at Town Hall on Nov. 9, 1947. Included on her program of unhackneyed songs were three by Mahler: "*Ich ging mit Lust durch einen gruenen Wald,*" "*Scheiden und Meiden,*" and "*Ich atmet' einen Lindenduft.*" These proved a particularly happy choice with their challenge to the artist's highest capabilities in the interpretive field. Responding to their challenge, Miss Jessner rose to her full artistic stature, projecting their deeply felt moods so vividly that the listener was instantly caught up in their colorful spell. She revealed these songs to be second to none in their richness of psychological nuance, indispensable to the vehicle of the truly great *Lieder* singer.

Representative of the laudatory comments by reviewers after the concert are the following newspaper excerpts. H. C. S. of the N. Y. Sun thought that "she should be heard in recital more often" and commented on the beauty of her voice which is "capable of dynamics ranging from an exquisite pianissimo to a ringing full voice". According to R. L. of the New York Times, she was at her best in the Schubert and Mahler numbers. "Schubert's famous *Der Jungling an der Quelle* was exquisitely done, both for the spirit of the song and in matters of tonal beauty, form, and color, with a beautiful pianissimo in the top of the voice and sometimes an effect of glittering ice. Similar qualities were noticeable in Mahler's *Ich ging mit Lust durch einen gruenen Wald* and *Ich atmet' einen Lindenduft,* given with a delicacy and an elegance most characteristic of the composer." A serious singer aspiring to distinction in the concert field might do well to emulate Miss Jessner in her wise choice of a group of Mahler songs to enhance the poetic wealth and variety of her program offerings.

BRUCKNER'S SLOW MOVEMENTS

By ROBERT SIMPSON

In his programme-note on Bruckner's Fourth Symphony, Sir Donald Tovey says, "The plan of his *adagios* consists of a broad main theme, and an episode that occurs twice, each return of the main theme displaying more movement in the accompaniment and rising at the last return to a grand climax, followed by a solemn and pathetic die-away coda". It will be found instructive to look for evidence to support this generalisation, considering the slow movements of the symphonies in chronological order. The first and least important is that of the exercise of 1863. It has a broad main theme which is the only really characteristic element in the whole of this F minor symphony; the work cannot have been intended for performance, since in it Bruckner deliberately abates his own individual style, already present in his mind as the Mass in D minor, written down soon afterwards. Although the main theme of the movement faintly prefigures glories to come, the piece as a whole, ternary in plan, is cramped by a stiffly formal middle section. The earliest mature orchestral slow movement is found in Symphony No. 1 in C minor.

There is to be heard all that is finest in early Bruckner. It begins darkly, in an F minorly A flat, with ominous stirrings in the bass, rising slowly twice to threatening outcries. After the second of these the air clears, and in an unambiguous A flat major comes a very soft *chorale,* modulating gradually until it settles on B flat major. In this key there is a beautiful curving melody, joined by equally gracious counterpoints. B flat, however, is not secure in its own right and is very soon revealed as the dominant of E flat, where the melody alights, reaching a broad climax in a remarkably short time. This device of shortening and broadening a design by allowing the second group to commence while the transition is still in progress is derived from Schubert, who often creates wonderful subtleties that are misconstrued as weaknesses by the unwary.

The key remains as, with a change of time, a new idea enters. This, a glorious flow of really Brucknerian melody, in some ways prophetic of the famous *Moderato* in the slow movement of the Seventh Symphony, turns out to be an expansive central section. Many lovely modulations pass before the tranquillity becomes overcast and mysterious flowing semiquavers mask the return of the dark elements. The semiquavers persist to add power to the recapitulation, the chorale follows with shadowy new scoring, and then the second theme, starting in E flat and moving to A flat. The music then drifts into a serene *coda* upon which no trace of the original unrest is allowed to creep. The design is thus an unusual blend of ternary and sonata forms, a sonata exposition being followed by a middle section based on new material; not a development section but the first two-thirds of a ternary structure which, instead of completing itself with a restatement of its own, returns to the opening of the exposition. That follows, like a sonata recapitulation, its keys rebalanced, and is joined to a *coda.*

The slow movement of the posthumous symphony in D minor is far less

valuable, though Bruckner was rather harsh in rejecting the symphony, which is well worth hearing. The form of this B flat major piece can be described briefly. First comes a hymn-like tune, somewhat lacking in character. This, with its alternations of strings and wind, establishes the tonic. It modulates towards the dominant, where a second, more graceful theme appears, longer than the first and tonally more free. The flowing scale figures that occupy its latter part then move into D flat, the first theme joining them in the basses below. The same thing occurs in A flat and then phrases from the second theme are used to turn the music back to the tonic. The first subject returns over a *pizzicato* bass. It tends to modulate but is checked by the restatement of the second group in the tonic. That merges into a *coda* and the only further reference to the opening theme is at the end. The movement is therefore in sonata form with a desultory "development". As a whole it lacks a sense of climax, a fault rare in Bruckner, but it certainly does not conform to Tovey's formula.

The *Andante* of the Second Symphony in C minor is of higher calibre. It is one of the earliest examples of a way of composition that gave rise to many later and quite dissimilar masterpieces by Bruckner. The method is based on the very quality that is absent from the *Andante* of the previous symphony; the composer's sense of climax lets him raise vast mountain ranges. This is one of the smaller chains, but it is impressive. A flat major is the main key and in and around it the calm first paragraph remains, eventually coming to rest on the dominant of F minor. Beginning in F minor there sounds a typical soft horn solo against a *pizzicato chorale*, very like some passages in the Fourth and Fifth symphonies. This, as the music soon shows, is not the start of a second group or section, but is a slow link to an immense counter-statement of the opening paragraph, illuminated by counterpoint and making the first climax of the design. The music dies away never having left the environs of A flat, and the *chorale*-like link reappears, this time starting in the supertonic. In character with the spaciousness of the plan as a whole, the chorale is now heard twice without losing its essential transitory quality and the final return to the opening is thus rendered more striking by the delay. Decorated by complex rhythmic combinations, the theme begins again in A flat, which has hitherto not been challenged. As it soars towards a great height, there is a magnificent modulation to the bright key of B major, the first fundamental change in the whole movement. The rest of the music after this culmination concerns itself with reinstating A flat in a gentle and moving *coda*. This form would be like Tovey's if there were an extensive "episode". The twice-used horn theme cannot be so regarded since it merely links the three great waves that constitute the main body of the structure. When Bruckner writes a distinct episode it is always in a contrasting key and expands itself on a large scale. That is not the case here.

The Third Symphony in D minor contains one of the grandest of Bruckner's earlier slow movements. It is large and clear-cut, externally simple and internally complex. It bears a Neapolitan relationship to the main key of the symphony, being placed in E flat major. Not enough attention is normally given to the beauty of Bruckner's key-schemes; too often he is said to modulate haphazardly when in fact he is weaving a fine tonal net which spreads further than the average listener can at once perceive. Even at this stage of his career there is a striking though compara-

tively small example of the power in the opening part of this *Adagio* showing how he can establish a key by exploring wide surrounding areas that Brahms, for instance, would call remote. The majestic main theme soon moves into darker regions, but after rising to two great bursts separated by a soft phrase the music subsides into E flat again in such a manner as to show that the tonic has never been disturbed; all "modulations" have hitherto been mere links in one thread. The first real change of tonal centre is felt with a new theme in a different time and tempo *(Andante quasi allegretto)* (3/4). This is the outset of a huge middle section poised, in spite of many other incidental keys, on B flat. The new stream flows richly, anticipating in its harmony the second idea of the *Adagio* in No. 8, and its counterstatement leads to another thought *(Misterioso)* in G flat, another of Bruckner's beloved suggestions of *chorale* style. This receives separate treatment before giving way to its immediate precursor, which, launched gently in C major beneath smooth semiquavers, gains intensity as it glides from key to key, arriving at a chromatic canon in the strings. The dominant of F flat is then treated as a German sixth and the opening strain returns, this time expanded and developed, accompanied by sweeping string figures (at first *pizzicato*), touched with deliberate quotations from Wagner (to whom the work was dedicated), and at length achieving symmetry by delivering two full bursts of cathedral music, separated by the same soft phrase mentioned at the corresponding point in the first part. To all this is attached a finely held *coda*. Here the scheme is roughly ternary A-B-A; B is naturally less cumulative in effect than A, which is given added force on its second entry. In every detail this movement has true greatness.

Although Tovey is sympathetic to Bruckner, his analysis of the *Andante* of the Fourth Symphony does not seize on what is literally the key point, Bruckner's use of tonality. Had he noted this he would certainly not have remarked, "his all-important episode is as slow as his vast main theme. The result is curious; the thing which is oftenest repeated and always expanded, the vast main theme, is welcomed whenever it returns; while, as Johnson would have said, 'the attention retires' from even a single return of the episode". It is surprising to find this great scholar not noticing that what is at first part of a really gigantic paragraph behaves as an episode only when it is heard again much later. This phenomenon is entirely the outcome of Bruckner's subtle distinction between real modulation and mere passing references to foreign keys.

The character of the movement as a whole is that of a veiled funeral march, with the strange effect that the observer's distance from the dark cortege seems to vary uncannily. At one moment the action is so far off that it might almost be static; at another the hearer is himself in the midst of the procession. Pervading the whole is a sense of dreamlike unreality. The key is C minor and the colossal first section is centred firmly around C, ending in the major. It contains three thematic elements. First there is a plain marching tune with a subdued accompaniment of muted strings. C minor is obscured but not banished when this leads to a most solemn *chorale* that modulates too constantly for any other key to establish itself. Dying away, it is succeeded by the most mysterious idea of all, a *cantilena* of violas, almost still, with the distant tread of remote *pizzicati*. Dimly lit by different key-colourings, it finally settles in C major, which, miraculously

sounds as if its sovereignty had never been in question. Truth is that Bruckner has so far allowed no other key to gain a foothold. One of the grandest aspects of his art is its way of forcing the hearer to enlarge his conceptions of nearly all musical devices. This is not megalomania; it is mastery. It may be averred that this C major is really the dominant of F minor, but it should be remembered that in a minor key the tonic major always sounds as if it might at any moment fall to the subdominant.

The change, through D flat to A flat, that follows this section shows at once how different is the effect of a clean change of key. Starting in A flat, fragments of the first tune are developed with new shapes, building a big climax which subsides on the home dominant, awaiting the restoration of the opening in C minor. At this stage a symmetrical restatement would be clumsy, and Bruckner treats his recapitulation in an individual way. In order that he shall be free to reserve his greatest effort for the *coda* (an unusual balance of force in a slow movement in any case), the composer reverses normal methods. His opening expository part is dominated by one key. It does not move definitely to a new one, as do all sonata expositions. This procedure does not preclude the need for an extensive development, for no sense of form is yet achieved; the music must expand further. Bruckner does not, however, wish his plan to end flatly with a return of the opening; the central development must be balanced by a proportionate coda that is to crown the whole with a great climax, which must be prepared if it is not to sound like a mere addition to something already complete.

The surprising solution to the problem is Bruckner's treatment of the necessary restatement as if it were a primitive kind of sonata exposition; its end thus left open, a *coda* grows perforce. The first theme moves out of C minor, the *chorale* is omitted (since it would give the impression of a symmetrical repetition) and the remote viola phrases are heard, grouped this time round D minor-major. This key is very expressive because it has so far been allowed no independence. Only now can this passage be regarded as a true "episode". After this the composer moves with suitable gravity back to C minor for a *coda* which creates a tremendous mass of tone. The subdued end contains oblique references to both the *chorale* and the viola theme. It should now be clear that Tovey's episode (the viola theme), far from being "as slow as the vast main theme" is purposely much slower, and is, each time, a much needed period of repose before a return to action.

In the Fifth Symphony is at last to be found an *Adagio* that Tovey's formula describes, though it is still questionable how far the word "pathetic" is ever applicable to Bruckner's music. "Solemn" it always is, but it is too grand for pathos.

D minor is the key of this great movement, whose proportions are as simple as they are magnificent. The main subject is on an oboe over a *pizzicato* accompaniment that is also used in the *Scherzo* of the symphony. The whole of the first group is quietly devotional, resting eventually in F major. Its rhythms, combining 6/4 with 4/4, have immense potentialities. The second part begins at bar 31 with one of the world's greatest melodies, the purest and noblest Bruckner; it gathers strength as it climbs to a full climax, turning majestically in combination with its own image and with other aspiring phrases. At its height it is poised on the dominant of C, but with a sudden hush the home dominant intervenes.

There now follows an expansion of the other group, in D minor at first, but moving with the aid of swirling quavers through other keys as it becomes sterner in mood, ending with dramatic alternations of pp and ff. It breaks out suddenly and misty harmonies make a beautiful return to the second theme (Tovey's episode), this time in the tonic major. After passing through entirely new developments, it slips into a long-drawn link that brings about the last return of the original material with due mystery. The strings join the woodwind and brass, accompanying them with wave-like semiquavers, and the whole last section resembles some mighty minster nave, full of great sweeping curves of breathtaking grandeur. At the end the light fades into the mystery of the opening. In one important respect, Tovey's description is incomplete. It gives the impression that the "episode" is repeated literally and that it is mainly the "accompaniment" that changes at each appearance of the main theme. In most cases the term "accompaniment" can mislead, though here it is just if it is applied to the activities of the strings during the presence of the first subject.

The next instance needs less description than most, for it perpetuates Bruckner's mastery of sonata structure on the vastest possible scale. Tovey has rightly said of the *Adagio* of the Sixth Symphony, "the slow tempo inspires him to a mastery of the big and supple paragraph that Brahms would have been compelled to praise." Though the key is F major, the beginning is nearer to F minor with its descending minor scale in the bass. The contrasting group starts with a very gracious theme in E major, but soon enters the orthodox dominant, C major, sustaining a climax in that key. From this comes a calm descent to a grave theme in C minor. There is no break at the end of the exposition and the C minor tune drifts into other keys, leading to a deliberate development of the opening subject. The recapitulation is defined by a clearly fixed F minor-major, but the theme expands into a massive *crescendo-diminuendo* in a manner that makes it the logical continuation of the development. The second group is restated with remarkable poise and subtlety, growing this time from the tonic instead of from a remote key and having an entirely new set of modulations besides added beauties in the scoring. There is an optional cut in this passage (from bar 113 to 132 inclusive). Tovey approves of this, but reluctantly; without it Bruckner's exquisite redistribution of keys in the second group is lost. The movement cannot be thus truncated; its exposition is wasted if it is not explained by the restatement. This exposition recalls that in the slow movement of the First Symphony and also has its origin in Schubert. The perfectly shaped *coda* is as peaceful and strong as the summit of Mount Everest in the sunlight.

The *Adagio* of the Seventh Symphony was not, as is often thought, composed in memory of Wagner. Most of it was finished before Wagner's death, and only the *coda* is funeral music that can definitely be ascribed to Bruckner's sorrow at that event. The whole elegiac movement is perhaps the most immediately accessible of all Bruckner's compositions. In its key-system it is one of his profoundest essays and can be analysed fully only at greater length than is possible here. (This remark applies also to the slow movements of the last two symphonies). The opening is huge, a sombre train of themes, originating in C sharp minor and creating a climax on the threshold of F sharp minor. After some dark hesitancy, the tonal trend of the first section is explained by the second, the famous and

glorious *Moderato* in F sharp major. In due course it sinks again to C sharp minor. This time there is a slow growth to a very powerful utterance in G major (bar 127), one of the remotest possible keys. This G major behaves momentarily as if it intends to be the dominant of C, but leads instead to A flat major, in which the second group sounds with fresh orchestration. Now A flat is simply G sharp, the home dominant, and consequently the recapitulation of this group acts as an immense dominant preparation for the restoration of the tonic and the main theme. This is a new application of the cardinal principle of restatement. Bruckner rarely restates material to serve mere demands for symmetry. He treats each case as a novel phenomenon. Because he sees the true nature of his material, he is able to use familiar devices to mould it into unfamiliar, living forms.

The main theme now becomes the backbone of an enormous structure, towering high and crowned with a superb climax in C major. This key is directly related to G major, which emphasized the previous somewhat less prominent peak. The whole mighty design is thus integrated at a stroke. All that remains to be executed is the sublime *coda*. C major itself, like G major before it, is a link in a tonal sequence and moves one step further into D flat major (C sharp major, the tonic major). The rest is music of extraordinary depth. In examining these works it becomes increasingly obvious that Bruckner's "constant modulation" is illusory, for he often circles a single tonal region with many different keys, none of which asserts itself above the others. They are as dancers in a group; one may be momentarily in possession of the stage, but the rest are still performing in support. An iron discipline regulates their movements.

This iron discipline is evident at the beginning of the slow movement of the Eighth Symphony. The key is D flat major. For the first twenty bars D flat (or C sharp) persists in the bass, with the result that its re-emergence at bar 29, after the intervention of remote keys, comes with real assurance. Its grip has not been loosened. It then gives way to the dominant of E major, which is a long-distance preparation for the opening of the second group in that key. Like the *Adagio* in No. 5, this design comes close to Tovey's dictum. It is conceived on a gigantic scale and the main point for remark is the fact that each return of D flat is convincingly driven home as an establishment of the tonic. The sum effect is that the whole vast organism has never really left its roots in that key. The achievement is the more remarkable when one considers that only once is D flat established by dominant preparation. The key relationships are extremely intimate and intricate. E major in which Group II is first heard is, despite its sharps, a dark area beside D flat, being in reality F flat major, and the later resurgence of the same subject matter in the supertonic major, E flat major, has a distinctly brighter effect. As in the *Adagio* of his previous symphony, Bruckner relates the two main climaxes tonally, the first coming at bar 125 with a 6/4 chord of B flat major and the other, the result of one of his greatest passages, at bar 239 with a wonderful 6/4 chord of E flat major. It is also worth noting that E major is given prominence several times; first it comes as the key of the second group (bar 47), then again at bar 119 as a bright contrast to E flat minor, and thirdly with tremendous effect at bar 211, where it is approached suddenly after a vehement preparation on the dominant of A flat. This latter change recalls the so-called

"Recapitulation" in the first movement of No. 7, and is, indeed, one of this composer's favourite modulations. Of the sheer majesty of this movement it is impossible to speak, since such music can be described only in its own terms. It is, without doubt, one of the greatest of all symphonic *adagios*. More than that cannot be said here.

Lastly, what can be said of the movement that now has to end the Ninth Symphony, of the ultimate expression of Bruckner's art and faith? It is a commonplace to state that this Ninth, like Schubert's B minor symphony, is satisfying in its unfinished form, that there is a sense of finality in the slow movement which makes anything else needless. It has even been asserted that Bruckner's death was somehow opportune, that the work was saved from the encumbrance of a *Finale* by a considerate Providence, presumably intensely musical and not given to bothering with Long Works. Had the *Finale* been completed, it would probably have combined the contrapuntal brilliance of that of the Fifth with the massive, granite-like consistency of that of the Eighth. Such a movement would have made all existing theories about the present "completeness" of the Ninth ridiculous and its loss is a matter for deep regret. One must, however, remain thankful that the torso of Bruckner's Ninth Symphony ends with so wonderful a sense of peace, rather than with the fierce *Scherzo* which, like that in the Eighth, is placed second in order.

The opening of the *Adagio* of No. 9 has often been compared with that of *Tristan und Isolde*. No two works could be more dissimilar, in spite of certain surface resemblances. That Wagner influenced Bruckner technically is true, but the Austrian's ethereal music has nothing in common with Wagner's richly, rather aggressively sensuous mode of expression. This plan is far removed from Tovey's formula. It is, as one expects, gigantic, and begins with the usual pair of theme-groups. The first of these evolves from a daring leap of a minor ninth from the dominant of E, and as a whole this section is pervaded by shifting, restless harmonies, reaching a mighty, strange climax, the mysterious echo of which contains a marvellous use of trumpets. As the mood deepens, a slow *chorale* moves towards the second group. The first group, while it is firmly based upon E major, does not parade that key, which nevertheless is a true tonic. Bruckner's well-loved major mediant is the key of Group II, a fine *cantabile*, the last development of the types found in the First and Seventh symphonies. But here there is a new austerity beneath the graceful forms. Bruckner's spirit is now too quiet, too close to the awesome reality of death to find pleasure in warm, emotional utterance as in past years. There is here a soft tension, a waiting for an unknown experience. It is this sense of having been created on a strange threshold that gives the whole movement its uncanny power.

The tonality is deliberately obscured for long stretches of the music by the remarkably bold use of chromaticisms, which are carried far beyond those of any other contemporary composer. It is also notable that all the big crises of the movement are moments of dissonance. On all previous occasions they have been blocks of consonant harmony. This is quite a new element in Bruckner's music, yet more evidence of the constantly expanding, forward-looking nature of his mind. The second group leads to a return of the first, which brings itself to a solemn *tutti* beginning in B minor, but modulating freely. Another quiet passage, full of strictly con-

trolled power, causes a big outburst on the dominant of C, similar to the first high point in the opening paragraph. The mystery is not resolved by the entry, in A flat, of part of the second group, which soon breaks off with dejected echoes on oboe and horn, to be replaced by strenuous developments of chromatic figures from the main theme, interspersed with great *chorale* phrases. At length E major takes control once more. This time Bruckner's manner of design is quite unprecedented. The second theme, greatly augmented, and with an agitated accompaniment, is sung by the first violins in the tonic. Very slowly the agitation and the grandeur increase until the music reaches one of the most stupendous and terrifying culminations in all music, with a discord of truly astounding force. This chord, which was severely diluted by Ferdinand Löwe in his "revision" of the symphony, contains the following notes—E, F sharp, G sharp, A, B sharp, C sharp. The mighty crisis resolves into utter peacefulness and the *coda* that ends the movement quietly is perhaps the profoundest passage Bruckner ever wrote. Not only is it a summing up of the whole *Adagio*, but it can be regarded as a backward glance of the old composer at his entire career, as subtle allusions to themes from earlier works indicate.

The inadequate description of the Bruckner *adagio* by Tovey meets its final repudiation in this movement, in which the second group, or "episode" is used to provide the biggest climax in the piece. It should not be forgotten, however, that Tovey's remark occurred in a concert note, and he himself would, no doubt, have been the first to admit that it was loosely applied. One should therefore not criticize that remarkable thinker on such flimsy grounds. It suffices to be grateful for provocation to pursue the matter further. The above sketches of the music in question must on no account be regarded as analyses. Their failure to deal properly with at least the last two cases is only too clear, but, pendiing fuller discussion at some later date, it is hoped that they may provide still more provocation for others to pursue the matter further.

WNYC AND WQXR BROADCAST BRUCKNER AND MAHLER RECORDINGS

Performances of Bruckner and Mahler as well as recordings of their music are being heard on the air with increasing frequency. New York City's Municipal Station, WNYC, and Station WQXR broadcast available Bruckner and Mahler recordings regularly. Both stations deserve special commendation for their contributions to the musical and cultural life of the communities within their radius.

To commemorate the 87th anniversary of Mahler's birth, Station WNYC broadcast Walter's recordings of Mahler's IV and IX on July 7, 1947, while Station WQXR (New York City) devoted its July festival to the music of the Austrian master. The Municipal Station also took cognizance of the 16th anniversary of the founding of The Bruckner Society of America. On January 4, 1947, WNYC broadcast a recording of Bruckner's *Fourth*. Preceding the broadcast the Executive Secretary of the Society gave a five minute talk. During September WNYC broadcast a Bruckner Festival. Recordings of Bruckner's *Fourth, Fifth, Seventh,* and *Ninth* were played.

ARNOLD SCHOENBERG'S DEBT TO MAHLER

By DIKA NEWLIN

The superficial observer, unfamiliar with the Viennese musical scene, would be indeed hard put to it, confronted with one of Schoenberg's twelve-tone scores and Mahler's First Symphony, to determine what influence the older composer might have had upon the younger. And yet the influence of Mahler is ever-present in Schoenberg. Indeed, to me, it seems increasingly impossible to understand Schoenberg without understanding Mahler. If the works of Schoenberg are seldom heard and even more seldom understood, it is at least in part because the great tradition of music-making in Vienna—a tradition of which Mahler was among the most outstanding latter-day representatives—has not really been understood.

To one who knows the proud and independent nature of Schoenberg, it is by no means surprising that he did not, at first, succumb to Mahler's influence willingly. He and young Alma Maria Schindler—later to become Alma Mahler—were fellow-pupils of Alexander von Zemlinsky. Often they saw each other at the Sunday evening musical gatherings of Frau Conrat, the friend of Brahms; it was on one of these occasions that Alma asked young Schoenberg if he were going to hear the Vienna Philharmonic's performance of Mahler's Fourth Symphony.[1] "Why should I bother?" replied Schoenberg—or words to that effect. "Mahler already couldn't do anything in his First and I suppose the Fourth is the same, only more so!"

But Schoenberg could not hold out forever against Mahler; fundamentally he did not wish to. His relationship with Mahler seems to be characterized throughout by that curious ambivalence of love and hate which, in a similar way, always characterized the attitude of the Viennese intellectuals towards Vienna.[2] That Mahler should sooner or later exert a profound influence on Schoenberg seems inevitable, given the special position which Mahler occupied in Viennese musical life from 1879 onward. The mighty spiritual influence which the powerful director of the Vienna Court Opera exerted through his performances, not on musical circles alone, but on every aspect of intellectual life, is hardly conceivable to those who did not undergo it during Mahler's regime. Performances of Gluck, Mozart, Weber—and Wagner—became celebrations in a new temple of art. And the young Schoenberg, though his firm grounding in the practise of chamber music prevented him from falling into the epigonous *al fresco* music-making of so many of his contemporaries, was, like his entire generation, under the thrall of Wagner. When he was twenty-five he had heard all Wagner's operas between twenty and thirty times each. *Tristan* was so familiar to him and to his friends that they evolved a game to be played during its performances; the winner was the one who could find

[1] January 12, 1902.

[2] This feeling about Vienna finds characteristic expression, appropriately enough, in a letter from Schoenberg to Mahler wherein Schoenberg uses the highly significant phrase "our hated and loved Vienna."

the most "new melodies" in Wagner's highly plastic inner voices. Elsewhere I have discussed the significance of this highly analytical method of listening for Schoenberg's technique of composition. Does it not also tell us something important about Mahler's technique of conducting?[3] It was not the broader outlines and the most obvious melodies alone that were important to Mahler the conductor; every inner part had to have its own life, its own plastic form. This concern for the clarity of each individual voice, ever-present in Mahler's compositional consciousness as well, led him to exercise the utmost care in the indication of the various dynamic levels in his scores. At one and the same moment, one instrument might be playing *piano*, a second *mezzo forte*, and a third *fortissimo*. (But Schoenberg, though his fine ear would delight in distinguishing Wagner's inner voices in a beautifully articulated Mahler performance, did not like these nervous paroxysms of the most varied simultaneous dynamics on the printed page. He preferred to reduce the dynamics of a given vertical combination to a single common denominator, and to indicate the relative emphasis of the different voices by means of his symbols H- and N- or P and S.)[4]

It was through Arnold Rosé, Mahler's brother-in-law and the concertmaster of the Vienna Philharmonic, that Mahler and Schoenberg first came into friendly contact. Mahler, visiting one of Rosé's rehearsals of *Verklärte Nacht* in 1903, was impressed by what he saw and heard, and realized that young Schoenberg was a force to be reckoned with. Then, Zemlinsky brought Schoenberg to visit the Mahler household, and a rather lopsided friendship, with many ups and downs, developed among the three composers. Mahler regarded "Eisele und Beisele," as he called his two talented juniors, with a mixture of affection and exasperation, while Schoenberg wavered between admiration of Mahler's mastery and irritation at his frequently condescending manner. At one time, Schoenberg was occupying a garret in Vienna and was much disturbed while composing by the constant pealing of church bells which dinned into his eyrie from all sides. He complained about this situation in Mahler's presence, but Mahler responded *sehr von oben herab*, "Oh, that doesn't matter; just put the church bells into your next symphony!" Schoenberg was much annoyed, but bided his time until chance furnished him with the opportunity for the perfect *riposte*. Mahler, about to go away for the summer, remarked that he supposed the birds singing all around his *Komponierhäuschen* would make life miserable for him as usual. Schoenberg promptly retorted, "Well, just put the birds into your next symphony!"[5]

But the casual bickering could not conceal the fact that Schoenberg's relationship with Mahler was becoming even closer and warmer. The friendship was further cemented by Mahler's hiring Zemlinsky to conduct at the Vienna Opera in 1906. It was during the summer of that year that

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[3] Of course I am not forgetting that Schoenberg must have heard, in his youth, many Wagner performances which were *not* under the direction of Mahler. But it is scarcely conceivable that Mahler's dynamic concept of the Wagner scores—which, be it remembered, he insisted upon presenting in their uncut form, as his predecessors had feared to do—can have failed to accentuate the influence of Wagner upon Schoenberg.

[4] *Hauptstimme* and *Nebenstimme*: principal and subordinate voices.

[5] Of course Mahler had already done so in his *First* and *Second!*

Schoenberg, who was just finishing his first *Kammersymphonie*, found time to write to Mahler, "Nothing could please me more than your saying that we had come closer together." And, during the following concert-season in Vienna, Mahler found ample opportunity to defend the cause of the younger composer. The famous tale of Mahler's rising up in wrath to quell the opposition on the occasion of the Rosés' premiére of Schoenberg's First String Quartet in Vienna (February 5, 1907) has been too often told to need further repetition here, but its implications do need further elucidation. Mahler's bold defense of Schoenberg certainly did not mean that he completely understood what Schoenberg was trying to do. In fact, with characteristic intellectual honesty, he admitted that Schoenberg's concept of music often surpassed his comprehension. Of this very First Quartet, he said to Schoenberg, "I'm accustomed to reading thirty-voiced orchestral scores—and the four voices of your Quartet give me at least twice as much trouble!" And, after a performance of the *Kammersymphonie* which he had noisily applauded in defiance of the anti-Schoenberg faction, he frankly said that he did not understand this music; but he had the courage to blame this deficiency on his own ear, not on the unfamiliar sonorities. There is no doubt that his public defense of Schoenberg was, in spite of his private mental reservations, utterly sincere. In Schoenberg he recognized a man of his own kind, an intransigent spirit in whom respect for the noblest traditions of music was combined with the courage to break away from outworn conventions . Schoenberg's well-nigh frightening sincerity and directness inspired in Mahler a confidence which was not dependent on understanding alone, but on the emotional response to a kindred soul. Schoenberg, unavoidably on the defensive in these critical years of his development, yet felt this confidence of Mahler's and responded in kind. In his last letter to Mahler (July 5, 1910) he reveals himself completely under the spell of his mentor; he begs Mahler to pardon him for his one-time contrariness which had so often forced him into contradiction for its own sake. That forgiveness had long since been granted. Mahler, during his last illness, often thought of Schoenberg and begged Alma and her stepfather, Carl Moll, to stand by him always. The fund for the support of young composers which was established as a result of this forethought of Mahler's frequently benefitted Schoenberg. How fitting that this last gesture of Mahler's helping hand should have been reciprocated by Schoenberg's supreme act of devotion, the dedication of the *Harmonielehre* to Mahler's memory!

The friendship between Schoenberg and Mahler is a matter of record; but it is more important for our purposes to assess the specifically *musical* influences of Mahler on Schoenberg. What are these and where may they be found?

Let us consider first the knotty question of *tonality*. Schoenberg's identification with the process whereby individualized tonalities are fused into the larger system of "pantonality" (a term which he prefers to the inaccurate "atonality") is universally known. Less well known, perhaps, is the fact that Schoenberg himself credits Mahler with playing a significant part in the preliminary stages of this process. To be specific, it was Mahler who first introduced into the symphony a concept which I have called "progressive tonality." The classical symphony either began and ended in the same key or, if beginning in minor, frequently ended in the parallel major.

Bruckner was quite satisfied with this principle of his forebears;[*] Mahler, however, was not. In the First Symphony he applies his new principle to one movement only. The song-cycle on which the symphony is based, *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, began in D minor and ended in F minor. Mahler now transfers this idea to the Finale of the symphony, which begins in F minor and ends in D major. But the principle must now be extended to the entire symphony instead of being limited to a single movement. This happens in the Second Symphony, which begins in C minor and ends in E flat major. Of course, this is not a very striking modulation, for the relative major is as closely related to the minor as the classical parallel major would have been. Mahler finds his way to a more radical application of the principle in his succeeding symphonies, with the exception of the Third, Sixth, and Eighth. The Fourth Symphony moves from G major to E major, the Fifth from C sharp minor to D major, the Seventh from B minor to C major, the Ninth from D major to D flat major, and *Das Lied von der Erde* from A minor to C major. Mahler follows the classic pattern of ending a minor symphony in a major key (the tragic Sixth is the only one of his symphonies in which he did not do this). He seems to have a particular fondness for the tonal progression of a half-step from beginning to end of a symphony, a preference which he evinces in the Fifth, Seventh, and Ninth Symphonies. In the Fifth and Seventh Symphonies the half-step is ascending (C♯—D, B—C); this ascending motion gives these symphonies a certain forward impulsion which is synonymous with an optimistic approach to life. This impression is strengthened by the fact that in each of these cases the beginning key is minor and the ending key is major, as well as by the busy and energetic tone of the Finales. On the contrary, the descending half-step in the Ninth Symphony (D to D flat) seems to strengthen the feeling of resignation which imbues that work.

What has this to do with Schoenberg's dissolution—or expansion—of tonality? That question is answered if we turn to Schoenberg's Second String Quartet, the first work in which he completely transcends the limits of the tonal system. The significant thing here is that Schoenberg composed the first three movements in clearly defined keys with key-signatures—F sharp minor, D minor, E flat minor—and did not enter the realm of "pantonality" until the Finale. Beginning a work of symphonic proportions "tonally" and ending it "atonally" is surely the next step beyond beginning it in one key and ending it in another very distant one. In the preceding paragraph, I indicated that the concept of progressive tonality in Mahler has something to do with expressing the emotional climate, as it were, of each individual symphony. For Mahler, each symphony was a world in itself, which had to be constructed according to its own laws; as this applied to form, it applied to tonal progression also. Now, the progression from "tonality" to "atonality" is closely involved with the emotional content of Schoenberg's Second String Quartet, especially insofar as this is expressed in the text of the last movement. Attention has been drawn before now to the relationship between the idea of the Stefan George poem which Schoenberg chose, "Ich fühle Luft von anderen Planeten," and the concept of a new musical world in which the old laws of tonality are transcended.

[*] Obviously the ending of the Ninth Symphony in a different key is a special case, akin to that of Schubert's *Unfinished*.

This very Second Quartet of Schoenberg's seems to be the meeting-place of a number of different trends, all of which may be traced, in one way or another, to the influence of Mahler. I mentioned the *text* of the last movement. The use of the soprano voice in the third and fourth movements of this quartet may surely be attributed to the influence of Mahler's symphonies. It was, of course, quite typical of Schoenberg to introduce an innovation instead of slavishly copying the older composer, as some other less independent spirit might have done. Instead of composing another "choral symphony" more or less successfully, Schoenberg chose to introduce the human voice into a new *genre*, that of the string quartet; thus he continued that tradition of innovation in chamber music which he had begun with his *Verklärte Nacht*, the first symphonic poem for chamber ensemble. He did not, however, repeat this particular experiment a second time, although his preoccupation with the infinite expressive possibilities of the human voice is well known.

In the Second Quartet, there also arises that problem of "quotation" which plays so prominent a role in Mahler's work. All students of Mahler are familiar with his practise of self-quotation, which also extends to the quotation of familiar extraneous motives. (The most famous example of this latter development is the third movement of the First Symphony, with its all-pervasive *Frère Jacques* motive.) What is not always realized is that such quotation, either of one's own work or of other familiar themes, is in its essence *operatic*. Classic instances of this are the citations of *Una cosa rara* and *The Marriage of Figaro* in *Don Giovanni*, and of *Tristan* in *Die Meistersinger*. Every such quotation in an "abstract" work of music represents an expansion into the dramatic field. Hence, when we consider Mahler's lifelong preoccupation with opera—even though he never composed a dramatic work in his maturity—it is by no means surprising that the use of such quotations became basic in his concept of the symphony. From him, this idea passed to his great Viennese successors—both music-dramatists—Schoenberg and Berg (but not to Berg's great co-disciple Webern, whose musical nature was to lead him along paths far removed from opera). Berg used such quotations more often than Schoenberg; we might cite his quotation from *Tristan* in the *Lyric Suite* for string quartet, and his use of the Bach chorale *Es ist genug* in his Violin Concerto, as well as numerous quotations (both from his own works and from others') in his two operas *Wozzeck* and *Lulu*. However, it is Schoenberg's use of such material which primarily concerns us here. The most characteristic example of it is precisely in the Scherzo of the Second Quartet, where *Ach, du lieber Augustin* makes an unexpected appearance. I have always felt that this idea was, at least indirectly, suggested to Schoenberg by a particular movement of Mahler—the above-mentioned third movement of the First Symphony, that very symphony which Schoenberg had long ago considered a prime example of Mahler's incompetence! I have often heard Schoenberg discuss this movement in terms of the deepest admiration; he likes to characterize it as the first consciously wrought expression of *irony* in music. One might be tempted to apply a similar interpretation, then, to the Scherzo of Schoenberg's quartet—a movement which is, perhaps coincidentally, also in D minor; but the composer specifically repudiates such an interpretation. To Schoenberg, the words "Alles ist hin," so characteristic of the old

Viennese song, were utterly without ironic or satirical intent, but had a real and deep emotional significance.

Finally, in assessing the influence of Mahler upon Schoenberg, we must approach the problem of *orchestration*. This has two entirely different aspects. On the one hand, Mahler's celebrated *Monumentalinstrumentation* certainly affected the orchestration of Schoenberg's greatest essay in the monumental style, the *Gurre-Lieder*. It is true that the original conception of the *Gurre-Lieder* antedates Schoenberg's conversion to belief in Mahler; on the other hand, the entire period of its instrumentation covers those years when Mahler's influence on Schoenberg was steadily increasing. This monumental orchestral style, whether in Mahler or in Schoenberg, is characterized by a willingness to introduce any and every effect necessary for the complete expression of the musical idea, even if it requires the use of instruments never before heard in a conventional orchestra. In this sense, Mahler's cowbells in the Sixth Symphony are the pendant to Schoenberg's heavy iron chains in the *Gurre-Lieder*. Thus we see that both Schoenberg and Mahler escape from the limitations of the conventional ready-made large orchestra which must serve for the expression of every sort of idea or emotion. While the monumental orchestra is sometimes considered to be inflexible in its modes of expression, this is obviously not true if it permits the addition of special instruments for special purposes. This process will eventually lead to the creation of a *specialized* ensemble for each new composition according to its particular musical needs. It is to Schoenberg and his disciples that we owe the most stimulating developments of this idea, which is a logical outgrowth of Mahler's feeling that each symphony is a separate world with its own laws of construction. Nor is Schoenberg's use of chamber-music combinations for this purpose in any sense a repudiation of the Mahlerian tradition—this in spite of the fact that Mahler was not a composer of chamber music in the ordinary sense. Works like the *Kindertotenlieder* certainly have the character of chamber music; and, even in Mahler's most fully orchestrated scores, many passages may be found in which unusual combinations of *solo* instruments play together with the utmost finesse. It is from the influence of passages such as these, combined with that of such works of Brahms as the Horn Trio and the Clarinet Quintet, that music like Schoenberg's two Chamber Symphonies and Berg's Chamber Concerto is derived.

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Unavoidably, an essay of this character can only scratch the surface of the subject which it purports to discuss. However, if it induces in those readers who already know and love Mahler a new interest in becoming better acquainted with the works of his supreme spiritual disciple Schoenberg, it will have served its purpose.

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[7] In connection with this concept of quotation we might also cite Schoenberg's use of the Beethoven victory motif in the *Ode to Napoleon*.

BRUCKNER AND MAHLER AND TONALITY

By WARREN STOREY SMITH

What was the attitude of Bruckner and of Mahler toward tonality, both as to keys they preferred and their method of employing them? Before attempting to answer the first part of this question, it would be profitable to examine that of certain of their predecessors. Prior to the nineteenth century the choice of keys was governed largely by expediency and by custom. With the advent of Romanticism we encounter definite key-preferences and key-antipathies, often directly traceable to the composer's temperament and personality. Are we to believe that Mozart disliked the key of F-sharp minor because he chose it for only one of the hundreds of movements that he wrote, the Adagio of the Pianoforte Concerto in A major (K. 448)? Probably not. The key was usually avoided at that time, even though Haydn did make use of it in the *Farewell Symphony*.

But how about Chopin's seeming aversion to D major and D minor? His tonal scheme obliged him to use them both in the Preludes, Opus 28. Otherwise, the former turns up only in a single Mazurka, Opus 33, No. 2, and the latter in the insignificant and posthumously-published Polonaise, Opus 71, No. 1.

For these particular keys Schumann had an especial fondness, and Mendelssohn was certainly partial to them. You might sum it up by saying that, whereas Chopin and Liszt inclined toward the richer and darker tonalities, Mendelssohn preferred the clearer and brighter ones; and that Schumann occupied a middle ground. The mere mention of Mendelssohn in this connection suggests the keys of A and E, major and minor: the *Italian* and *Scottish Symphonies*, the *Midsummer-Night's Dream Music*, the Violin Concerto and sundry piano pieces. A psychiatrist would have no difficulty in showing why Felix, the Happy One, avoided the nocturnal key of D-flat, for which both Chopin and Liszt had a natural affection. And now for Bruckner and Mahler.

Of the two, I would say that Mahler had the more pronounced key-affiliations, but the case of Bruckner is by no means uninstructive. When the latter would be portentous he turned instinctively to D minor, the key of Beethoven's Ninth, as witness his own *Ninth* and *Third Symphonies*. For Beethoven this was also the key of storm and stress, *vide* the Piano Sonata, Opus 31, No. 2; while a storm, whether at sea or on land, turned Wagner's thoughts D minor-ward. At first Bruckner favored the keys with fewer sharps and flats; later he courted the richer ones, particularly in his slow movements.

E-flat major was for Beethoven, and later for Strauss, the manly, the heroic key. It is no mere coincidence that this is the key of both the *Eroica* and *Ein Heldenleben*. For Bruckner it spelled romance. To transpose the magical opening of the *Fourth Symphony* would be to thwart entirely the composer's intention.

The significance of E-flat in the music of Mahler is, of course, enormous. To him it stood for nobility, loftiness of utterance, exaltation, triumph

over despair, the victory over death. It is the key of his two greatest climaxes, namely, the concluding pages of the *Second* and *Eighth Symphonies*. It is also the key of the rapturous "Ewiger Wonnebrand" of Pater Seraphicus, wherein the theme of the finale of the *Eighth* is first disclosed. As the key of consolation it sheds, in the idyllic *Andante moderato* of the *Sixth*, almost the only ray of light that falls upon that tragic work. That there is no natural affinity between that key and A minor, the tonality of the other three movements, makes its use here the more striking. Incidentally, in choosing A minor as the key of the Sixth, as well as of the despairing first movement of *Das Lied von der Erde*, Mahler aligned himself with the Chopin of the morbid *Second Prelude*.

If E-flat spelled triumph for Mahler, so did D. But the latter sounds for him a brighter, a less solemn note. One need only instance the finales of the *First* and the *Fifth*, though they exult in very different ways. Does it weaken the argument to recall that the infinitely sad opening of the *Ninth* is also in D major? Or to remember that what Bruno Walter called the "radiant Rondo" of the *Seventh* and the end of *The Song of the Earth* are both in C major? I think not. Joy and sorrow are of nearer kin than we are sometimes inclined to believe. Schubert knew this and so did Mahler. Indeed, these two, who had so much in common, who were in so many ways alike, shared the profound knowledge that the major mode could be sadder by far than the minor. You can forget the end of Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique* once you are outside the concert hall; the closing pages of *Das Lied von der Erde* may trouble you for days. If we consider this, for some Mahler's most treasurable page, Schubert's *Am Meer* and the *Dead March* from Handel's *Saul*, we can well believe that no key can be more eloquent of grief than bright C major. Again, in that treasury of sad songs, Schubert's *Winterreise*, the saddest of all, *Das Wirtshaus* and *Die Nebensonnen*, are in major. Nor am I forgetting that *Der Wegweiser* is in G minor.

While on this matter of key preferences, it should be noted that if two of Bruckner's symphonies are in D minor, no less than three of them are in C minor: the *First*, *Second* and *Eighth*. The others are, respectively, in E-flat, B-flat, A and the rarely-encountered E major. The nine of Mahler (ten, if we include *Das Lied von der Erde*) exhibit a wider variety, though we should recognize that the *First* begins and ends in D, that the *Third* begins in D minor and concludes, serenely, in D major and that, as noted above, the *Fifth* ends and the *Ninth* begins in the last-named tonality.

The nineteenth century saw a gradual relaxing and widening of the old concept of key relationship. Haydn and Mozart actually initiated the process, though they respected convention in the matter of their second subjects and side subjects and the respective keys of the several movements, whether in their sonatas, their symphonies or their chamber works. We must not forget, however, that Haydn wrote a piano sonata in E-flat with a middle movement in E, the boldest stroke of the kind until Beethoven turned to that key for the *Largo* of his C minor Piano Concerto.

So far as I am aware, Schubert was the first to use three keys, or rather, three tonal centers in a four-movement symphony, his *Third*, in which the several movements are respectively in B-flat, E-flat, C minor and B-flat. Mahler went him one better. His *Ninth Symphony* has four movements in as many keys, and the five-movement *Fifth* presents this unorthodox

array: C-sharp minor, A minor, D major, F major and D major. Curious relationships are to be encountered in both the *Third* and the *Seventh*. And surely Mahler was the first to begin a symphony in one key and finish it in another. Thus we find the *Second* commencing in C minor and ending in E-flat; the *Fourth* beginning in G major and ending in E; the *Seventh* having an E minor first movement and a C major finale; and the *Ninth* beginning in D and concluding in D-flat. A like procedure in the *Fifth* has just been noted.

The finale of Bruckner's *Eighth Symphony* starts off in F-sharp, though its main tonality is C minor with a C major close. This trick is common with Mahler and might be set down as a personal idiosyncrasy and as his most striking contribution to the widespread disruption of the tonal conventions so characteristic of the twentieth century. We find it in the finale of the *First* (F minor to D major); in that of the *Second* (C minor to E-flat); in the first movement of the *Third* (D minor to F major); in the finale of the *Fourth* (G major to E); in that of the *Sixth* (C minor to A minor); and in the initial movement of the *Seventh* (B minor to E minor).

Beginning with Beethoven, composers broke away from tradition and placed their second subjects in keys other than the dominant and relative major. Here Bruckner occasionally outstripped them all. The *Fourth Symphony* is in E-flat, yet the second theme of its first movement begins in D-flat, in the exposition, and in B major in the recapitulation. In the first movement of the String Quintet he went even further. The key is F major and the second subject enters in F-sharp and modulates to C, the expected dominant.

Nevertheless, in the last analysis neither Bruckner nor Mahler can be regarded as tonal anarchs, something that Wagner very definitely was in *Tristan*. They adhered to the classical media, the classical forms, and their breaks with the past were incidental rather than fundamental. We can say of the music of both that it was rooted in the tonal system and that their musical thinking, like that of Brahms and Strauss, was essentially diatonic rather than chromatic. Beyond question, this has helped to give their music its permanency. Tonality and diatonicism are the bedrock of music, let the atonalists protest as they may.

MAHLER'S FIFTH SYMPHONY

By WOLFGANG STRESEMANN

Mahler's *Fifth* is a masterpiece. Its music is tremendously vital, passionate, and exuberant, traversing the widest possible scope of human emotions. Never again did Mahler take so firm and positive an attitude towards the problems of life; never did he write more optimistic music than in the Finale of the *Fifth*. This work surely deserves a permanent place in the repertory of our orchestras. When played by Bruno Walter and the New York Philharmonic Orchestra in 1947 it was received with tumultuous applause. So great was the impression it made everywhere that "Columbia" decided at once to have it recorded by Walter and his orchestra. These recordings, now available, are truly magnificent. They should help greatly to increase the popularity of the work.

The *Fifth* is, indeed, a monumental symphony in every respect. Its five movements, divided into three parts, last more than an hour, each part containing music of the first order, representing a "high spot" in Mahler's creative achievement. Unlike his preceding symphonies, the *Fifth* has no program, yet, like all the others, it is a true expression of his own beliefs. Moreover, it has an enhanced sense of spiritual unity. Prokofieff's remark that his own *Fifth* reflects the "spirit of Man" is equally true of Mahler's composition. There is a great difference between the *Fifth* and the *Fourth*. The latter sings of "Heavenly Joy", while the *Fifth* is, in the best sense of the word, earthbound. It deals with the eternal struggle of mankind against the heavy blows of Fate, mirroring man's titanic defiance of the dark elements and his final victory. In spite of its two big sections in "minor" the *Fifth* is the work of one who believes in himself, who is determined, audacious, and daring. Here, more than ever before, Mahler follows in the path of Beethoven. Therefore, it is not surprising that in this work he adopts Beethoven's symphonic principles to a degree not met with in his former symphonies.

The *Fifth* marks a notable change in Mahler's creative activity. Suddenly, he now turns to "absolute" music. With the unerring instinct of genius he finds a new technique, suitable to this new species of symphonic writing. Compared with its predecessors the *Fifth* is far more polyphonic. It has a greatly expanded development section of increased symphonic scope. In addition, it contains several *fugati*, as well as a world of contrapuntal phenomena unparalleled in Mahler's earlier symphonies. It is interesting to note that Mahler later changed the entire instrumentation of the *Fifth*, something he never did in any other case, before or afterwards. This is especially astonishing as the composer was (and deservedly) considered one of the greatest experts in orchestral writing. Yet the *Fifth* meant such a bold step into "new territory" that, although successful in realizing the right form, Mahler failed at first to find the right orchestral garb for it.

The symphony begins with a funeral march, which bears the notation "*Wie ein Kondukt*" (like a funeral procession). Because of its spiritual

significance this funeral march represents a sort of prelude to the symphony. In this first movement Mahler offers a breathtaking, intensely profound vision of a funeral procession, with its fateful atmosphere and all its inherent, but momentarily suppressed grief. The march consists of three parts, of which only the short middle section rises to a passionate lament. The rest of it is "dead", i.e., devoid of open feeling. This "dead" music belongs among Mahler's greatest inspirations. Not only does it afford a graphic picture of the passing of a funeral procession, it symbolizes the (temporary) deadness of the human heart and spirit at the moment when the hammer of fate has struck. How MAN awakens from this state of torpor, how after a long struggle he finds his way back to himself, how soul and heart revive, all this is set forth in the following movements. Though the *Fifth*, as stated before, has no set "program" (music must always follow its own laws) yet throughout the symphony the fundamental idea of human resurrection is clearly perceptible.

The second movement, thematically related to the "prelude" (both forming the first part of the symphony) is marked "*Stürmisch bewegt, mit grösster* Vehemenz" (stormy, agitated, with utmost vehemence). As though tormented by pain, the music mounts to the utmost peak of violence, reflecting despair, anguish, and terror. This *agitato* phrase is followed by a beautiful *cantilene*, one of the saddest, most expressive melodies ever written by Mahler. Later there is unfolded a third mood. The knife of despair is blunted, but its wounds unhealed. There remains an empty, ghost-like atmosphere, symbolizing the dawn of a dead morning after the great blow.

The second movement closes in this completely desolated mood. Its coda is one of the most ingenious inspirations of the entire symphony, containing measures unforgettable to one who hears them with keen ear. Yet this dark, despairing movement would not be a true Mahler piece did it not also include a few signs of hope and encouragement. Mahler, optimist with a bleeding heart, has the strength of conviction needed to glimpse the light, even midst the torment of this raging music. When, in the development section (though only for a few bars) as well as near the end of the movement, a chorale-like melody makes its dramatic entrance, it seems as though the clouds suddenly part and the sun breaks through. At this moment the music rises to even greater heights. Yet this brief vision of light must remain a phantom (like the triumphant episodes in the second movement of Beethoven's *Fifth*). The mood of despondency has prevailed too long to be dissipated at once by the advent of the chorale. As the *Fata Morgana*, impressively and movingly set forth, fades away, the music resumes its previous character, this time seeming even more ghostly, shadowy.

The third movement (the second part of the symphony) is a scherzo of huge dimensions, in D-Major, apt tonality for symbolizing strength and vitality. Its unusual length is justified, for it is intended to form an important (correspondingly extended) contrast to the gloomy first part of the symphony. Although it is one of Mahler's favorite Ländler type expressions this scherzo is not a *humoresque*, but a forceful piece, loaded with tremendous energy. Like a mighty storm it scatters the darkness of the preceding movements, immediately establishing an atmosphere of vigour and buoyancy. The untamed forces of nature are shown revived in this exuberant music, which spreads a vernal influence with all its wondrously manifold moods. The eternal miracle of rebirth is its great theme. For

such a subject there could be no better form than the dance, symbol of activity and abundant strength. Mahler succeeds here in vitalizing this form to a degree unknown before. Almost unending is the stream of his inventive power and imagination, both resulting in music extremely rich in expressiveness and rhythmic vitality. Its pulse varies. At first it pounds violently; it is equally strong at the end of the movement. Yet between these the beats grow softer and, in the dream-like horn episode, seem to come to a temporary standstill. The way Mahler combines these extreme moods within the framework of a dance, and creates an entire world full of ever-changing colours without abandoning the moving pattern of the ¾ time, shows a greatness of conception as yet unsurpassed. The third movement is an integral part of the symphony, for it is, on the one hand, juxtaposed to the opening section, and it also serves as a bridge to the *Rondo-Finale*, itself preceded by another "prelude", the short *Adagietto*.

The fourth movement, scored for strings and harp only, is thematically related to the *Finale*, which follows without pause. This is only logical as there is also a definite spiritual connection between both movements. The great storms have passed. The road to a new life lies open. But before MAN sets foot upon that path *(Rondo-Finale)* he abandons himself to a few moments of blissful rest *(Adagietto)*. The fourth movement opens with a beautiful, tender melody. However, it is not entirely free from melancholy undertones. A veiled sadness haunts this yearning, soulful music. At first it sings quietly, later rising to ecstasy, but always maintaining a kind of mysterious, transfigured mood, as if man's conscious and subconscious voices were both sounding simultaneously.

In the *Finale*, however, the latter voice has no place. There is nothing left of sufferings and struggles. After a gentle awakening from repose the music moves on, assuming a serene and cheerful character. This movement combines the moods of the *finali* of Beethoven's *Eighth* and Brahms' *Second*. Again Mahler overwhelms the listener with the great vitality of his music, but unlike that of the third movement this vitality is no longer an unrestrained force of nature. It serves a definite purpose. Now the symbol of human optimism, its powerful drive is transformed into open joy and strength. This new purpose is characterized by the extensive *Fugato*-expression which gives the Rondo-Finale an immense impetus. At the end of the movement the chorale-like song is heard again, this time no longer a phantom but a triumphant reality. Its reappearance creates a mighty bridge to the first part of the work and one is, therefore, justified (as is done in analyses of Beethoven's *Fifth)* in emphasizing the underlying spiritual idea of the symphony.

Mahler's *Fifth* is a stirring, exciting work, doubly eloquent, as a purely musical witness to the great symphonic stature of Gustav Mahler and as a mighty human and poetic document, mirroring the struggles and sufferings of his life. This symphony is far more than a spiritual self-portrait. It contains a universal message which cannot fail to move anyone not totally indifferent to MAN's life on this earth. Do not blame Mahler for having written another *Per aspera ad astra* symphony. As long as there is music, composers will, again and again, express the longing of mankind to pierce through the darkness and conquer fate. Only to few may it ever again be given to reach the monumental heights of the *Fifth*. Only few may ever be able to match Mahler's tremendous power of conception, or

his noble, genuine exaltation. Our musical era (and the same holds true for our time in general) is not rich in composers of truly outstanding human stature. For that reason we should cherish all the more Gustav Mahler and his music.

DISCRIMINATING TASTE FOR GOOD MUSIC IN IOWA

From The Des Moines Tribune, Friday, May 9, 1947
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(By a Member of The Tribune's Editorial Page Staff.)

It's news when any symphony orchestra tackles Bruckner or Mahler compositions on a program. It's bigger news when a college student orchestra performs them, and it's really something when music patrons in a small midwestern town demand both Bruckner and Mahler on the SAME program!

Yet that's what happened when Simpson college invited the Iowa University symphony orchestra to give a concert in Indianola last Sunday.

Recognition

Bruckner and Mahler symphonies still suffer somewhat in this country from the adverse criticism which greeted their first performances. Their length has seemed unforgivable to some conductors and audiences, and the technical difficulties of Mahler's works, at least, have posed problems.

However, most leading musicians and conductors, and Bruno Walter, particularly, regard Bruckner as eligible to be counted among the great "Bs". They know that Mahler's music, heroic in proportions and dramatic in development, entitled him to his proper place among the greatest composers of all time.

They know that the only thing needed to accord both of them the wide recognition they deserve is simply more frequent performance of their compositions.

Discrimination

The Indianola audience demonstrated that this is true. It thoroughly enjoyed the university orchestra's splendid performance of Bruckner's Seventh Symphony and the exquisite Adagietto from Mahler's Fifth.

The concert was "news" from beginning to end. For one thing, it didn't include the usual "program pieces" which are often included on concert programs as a sop to undiscriminating musical taste.

The only other offering was Bach's Overture in D Major which, in the manner of Eighteenth century overtures, consists of several movements rather than the single one that is typical of overtures today.

The audience was ideal. The listeners would have satisfied even Toscanini in their quietness, attention and genuine appreciation.

The fact that a program including Bach, Bruckner and Mahler was requested and really "went over" is indeed a tribute to Simpson college with its long tradition of leadership in music, and to its music director, Sven V. Lekberg.

The splendid performance of a program that would have been "heavy" even for a professional orchestra is a tribute to the high standards maintained in the state university's music department and to the outstanding musicianship of the orchestra's conductor, Professor Philip Greeley Clapp.

It seems particularly appropriate that the concert was performed on the first day of National Music week, for it clearly demonstrated that Iowa is in the vanguard of music appreciation and accomplishment.

BRUCKNER'S SEVENTH

By NEVILLE CARDUS

The following article, which appeared in the February-March 1947 issue of *Hallé*, is reprinted by permission of the author and the publishers, The Hallé Concerts Society, Manchester, England.

ANTON BRUCKNER
AND "THE MASTER"

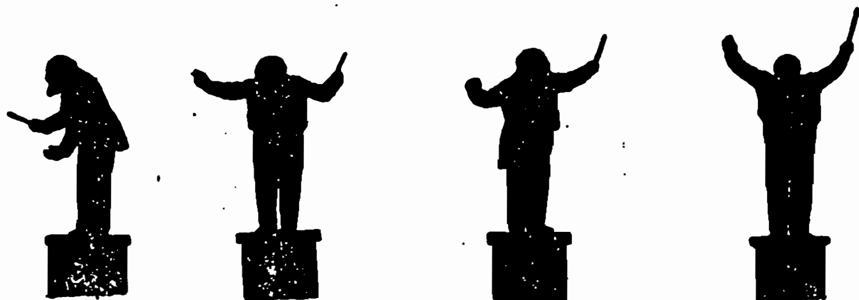
It is one of the richest ironies of music that Bruckner should ever have fallen amongst Wagnerians. They used him in the controversy with Brahms; they set him up in a high place; they even altered his orchestrations, making his adagios sound like the Trauersmarsch, and his first movement climaxes like the God's entrance into Walhall. He was the simplest and least political man; Mahler found the perfect description of him — "half god, half simpleton." Varied Nature herself could not create two men as unlike as Wagner and Bruckner; Bruckner was unworldly, naive, "God intoxicated," without a hint of sex in his music, not Protean but always himself. And if he had nothing in common as man or artist with Wagner, so is it a mistake to relate him closely to Beethoven in particular or to the German symphony in general.

The instrumental symphony came to consummation through Haydn and Mozart. Beethoven fertilised it with drama; and the dénouement was achieved by strength of an heroic conception of man's destiny. He created what the Germans called the *Apotheosen-Finale*. But from the Beethoven conception the classical symphony branched away in two directions: Men-

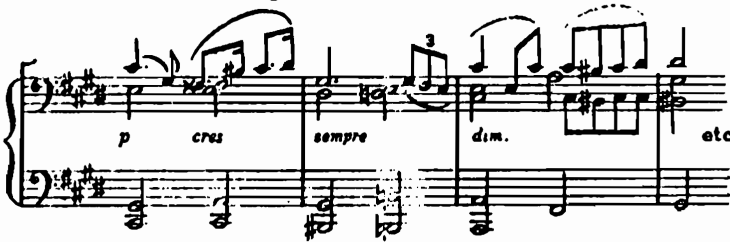
delssohn, Schumann and Brahms gave the stamp and Stimmung of *Mitteldeutsch* bourgeoisie; after his first symphony, Brahms avoids the "Apotheósis" finale and the "heroic" gesture; the finale to his Fourth is a strictly musical apotheosis. Mendelssohn, Schumann and Brahms each composed German music, and observed the symphonic logic of the great school in which they were nurtured. Bruckner did not grow from this branch. With Schubert was born the Austrian symphony, less academically logical than the German, not heroic but inspired by nature-worship and poetry of heart, and as untrimmed as the *Wienerwald*. To the Schubert symphony (represented by the "Unfinished" and the "C major") Bruckner brought not an abstract ethic of humanity (*Menschlichkeit* is untranslatable, but that is what I mean) but a personally-felt religious note, deep-toned, trustful, and patient. The climax in fact of a Bruckner symphony is the adagio; Bruckner has little to add to his slow movement; his scherzi are genial and psychologically not exactly important; and his finales are too obvious "durchkomponiert," too plainly a matter of music-making—as in the finale of the Seventh symphony

Bruckner is really a curiosity. In Vienna he came to be ranked with the greatest—far above Brahms. Outside Austria he has led a chequered posterity. No Italian could sit through music so un-vocal, no Frenchman could listen for long to music so little of the world of wit and women. He has recently enjoyed a vogue in the Woolworth's Store of music, which is the U.S.A. In England he is invariably dismissed as a "bore," and an "organist" thrown in (Bruckner was indeed a very great organist). "Bruckner," writes Frank Howes in *Full Orchestra*, "may be described as a Wagnerian operating in the sphere of symphony, though his own musical origin was the organ." Bruckner, it is true, frequently uses the orchestra like an organist; he cuts-off suddenly a mass of block-harmonised tone, then you can almost see him pulling out a stop—consider, for example, the middle part of the adagio of the Seventh symphony. The recurrent pauses in a Bruckner symphony, especially during an adagio, are as though born at the organist's fingers and feet; but Bruckner uses them with absolute rightness in the development scheme of the Austrian symphony, which, as I say, is not of a German rigidity of logic. Sense of improvisation, or of a reflectiveness that turns so raptly inward that the outer world and its prosaic consequentiality, is forgotten—here is the unmistakable mark of a Bruckner adagio.

Adagio in music is not merely a term indicating a certain tempo; the word has come to mean a certain kind of musical emotion conveyed in a certain style. If you were to play quickly the adagio of the Ninth symphony



of Beethoven, it would still remain an adagio in *feeling;* a real adagio is a meditation along labyrinthine ways; and it must sound with a spaciousness of harmony, and the melody must be broad and unhurried. So, the adagio of the Seventh symphony of Bruckner, the greatest I think since the adagio of Beethoven's Ninth: it begins in this noble way:



This is not only a noble and symphonic sound; it is a noble idea, expressed with a power not forcible, but simple, even though Bruckner conveys it to us by means of two Wagner tubas, two bass tubas and contrabass tuba and violas.

It runs almost imperceptibly into—

These quotations do not represent separate themes; rather they are sentences in a continuous paragraph, with the suggestion of a pause, the semi-colon. After Bruckner has "stated" a thematic group, he quotes phrases from it and contemplates their significances at his organ. There are devout intakings of breath during the sequential treatment of—

Next, after a modulation naively Brucknerian, comes one of the most seraphic melodies in existence, a song entirely at peace and lost to the world, which goes its ways echoing, in the wood-wind, its own hearteasing cadences:

Such a melody is not only beautiful as music; it contains the quality of a mind unburdened with earthliness. If any mortal man may be said to have held communion with bliss it is here; the music is in a state of grace . . . . From the mundane point of view of composition, I may add that the melody is scored with a perfect feeling for string and wood-wind tone counterpoint and responses.

The length of the development-section in a Bruckner symphony has served as the basis of much complaint, but critics have seldom taken the trouble to understand that development-sections in Bruckner are elaborate because of the elaborate and rich nature of his material. Even musicians who belittle Bruckner as a whole are prepared to admit that his themes are magnificent. There are none *more* magnificent. Take the theme that begins the Seventh symphony

and so on, for twenty-one bars. Bruckner certainly does not build from straws or bricks, he handles rocks, and encompasses his symphonic world in one sweeping glance. But the point is generally overlooked that not only are his themes broad and long; more than that, he goes beyond the two complementary and contrasted themes of classical usage and instead, he gives us two theme *groups*, each *group* consisting of separate germ-melodies. To refer back to the image I employ above, Bruckner thinks in terms of sustained paragraphs or periods, each sentence a related idea or nuance. Inevitably he needed to widen the scope of the development-section; and many times he is unable to support the heavy wheel of his universe. He is reduced often to "marking time," deluding himself that he is moving from point to point when as a fact he is remaining in the same place, employing sequences,—sentences taken from the organic paragraphs and rendered rather lifeless by this process of fission. None the less, we must realise that the length of a Bruckner movement is not just the consequence of prolixity; he is not deliberately garrulous. There is another aspect of this matter of duration in a symphony not as a rule considered with enough musical or psychological insight.

To object to the duration of a symphony, and of a Bruckner adagio especially, is irrelevant, if no doubt only natural at times. Duration and stature are necessary to the truly symphonic style; you can no more have a short adagio than you can have a Rossini crescendo that goes on for half an hour. If there is a recurrent tedium in a Bruckner adagio, here again is an attribute which is part of the sublime manner. A sleeping sort of grandeur falls over sublimity; only the artist who is always aware of an audience remembers to make points bar by bar. Bruckner was never a

conscious artist; he seldom tried to arrest attention; he composed with no heed of the phenomenal and transient universe.

This music is called "old fashioned" nowadays. Possibly. But perhaps Hindemith Britten, Stravinsky and Bartok may one day become "old-fashioned," too. Bruckner was advanced enough in 1880 to assimilate technical ideas from Wagner (note that I say "technical ideas"); and Wagner was then as "advanced," to say the least, as any of the present-day experimentalists. Nothing matters except genius. And perhaps greatness of spirit is something even above what is generally understood as "genius."

Mahler was right—"half god, half simpleton." The way to the heart of Bruckner is through love; you must get rid of the idea, so prevalent amongst the young today, that music depends on cleverness or a formulated aesthetic. Bruckner's music was the man himself, the man who was born when Beethoven walked the earth, who died in Vienna, ill at the age of seventy-two, still a rustic by nature. When his Fourth symphony was conducted in Vienna by Richter, Bruckner went round after the performance to the artist's room and shyly gave Richter a four-shilling piece as a tip — a *Trinkgeld*. He was so grateful.

The adagio in the seventh symphony was once supposed to have been written after Bruckner had heard the news of the death of Wagner; but later researches suggest that the movement was nearly finished before Wagner died, and that the coda is really Bruckner's tribute to the composer he always called "The Master." But the approach to the coda is one of the majestic crescendi of all symphonic music, built on rising sequences and the second theme quoted in this essay; the climax is achieved by a stroke on the cymbals which elevates this usually anonymous instrument to a radiant height. It was with this cymbal clash probably in mind that Hugo Wolf uttered his infamous "One cymbal clash in Bruckner is worth all the symphonies of Brahms, with the Serenades thrown in."

The coda begins with brass echoes from Walhall and Wotan, and now like a benediction we hear the ineffable cadences of

Bruckner made the adagio both the musical and psychological apotheosis of the symphony. His scherzi, are redolent of Upper Austria, not grotesque in the Beethoven way, but homely with the *Lokal* tone. The middle section of the scherzo of the Seventh symphony is a nostalgic memory of little Styrian villages, cosy low-raftered interiors and check tablecloths at noon, and bird-calls and hazy distances. But the great first movement and its magnanimous exposition, and the subsequent adagio have exhausted the underlying imaginative conception; for the rest, Bruckner has to be content with "music," excellent and resourceful enough, but unable all the same to achieve a synthesis of the grandeur that has gone before. The conception of the symphony as a continuous unfolding activity of the imagination, each movement not only a musical form complete in itself, even if under the obligation to go into a context and serve the uses of contrast, but as an act in a drama carrying onward a creative shaping energy—this is a conception that has not troubled many symphonic composers in England,

France and Russia; but Beethoven was awake to the problems presented by such a conception. He wrote no adagio after the Fifth until the Ninth symphony, then he was urged to call in massed voices for the finale. Bruckner left *his* Ninth symphony unfinished, without a finale. Mahler, a pupil of Bruckner, ended his Ninth, as Tchaikovsky ended his Sixth, with an adagio.

An age very much in a hurry may not wish to stay long enough to absorb Bruckner's secret. It doesn't matter really. And it is not of major importance that Bruckner does not command audiences in every land. Who has heard "Gerontius" in Vienna? How many musicians anywhere know by heart the "Requiem" of Fauré? As a lover of the Wessex novels, I am not a bit dismayed whenever I am told that Thomas Hardy is unknown in Italy, France and Central Europe.

The foregoing silhouettes are an impression, by an Austrian artist, of HANS RICHTER conducting the Fourth Symphony, in Vienna, and receiving the homage of the Composer.

GUSTAV MAHLER AND HUGO WOLF

By DONALD MITCHELL

The following article by Donald Mitchell is printed with the permission of the author and editors of *Mandrake*, a Review of the Arts, published at Wadham College, Oxford.

In Alma Mahler's recently published "Life and Letters of Gustav Mahler"[1] there are some extremely interesting notes on the early friendship of these two composers. The fact that Mahler and Wolf lived together at the beginning of their careers as musicians seems not to be widely known and has attracted little attention. According to Alma Mahler, her husband's version of the affair was this:

> "Their friendship went back to their early life, when, with another man called Krzyzanowsky,[2] they shared a room for a few months. They were very poor and, as all three were musicians, extremely sensitive to noise; so when any one of the three had any work on hand, the other two had to tramp the streets. Once Mahler composed a movement of a quartet for a competition while the other two spent the night on a bench in the Ringstrasse.
>
> "Mahler gave lessons; Wolf did not, or only very few. When their money ran out, one of them gave a pupil notice. The plan was to ring the bell, say he was suddenly obliged to go away and request payment for the lessons already given. The ready money provided meals for all three for a day or two. On the other hand, a pupil was lost forever."

Alma Mahler's account throws a revealing light on both Mahler and Wolf as Wagnerians:

> "The three friends made their first acquaintance with 'Götterdämmerung' together, and in their passionate excitement they bawled the Gunther-Brunhilde-Hagen trio to such effect that their landlady came up in a fury and gave them notice on the spot. She would not leave the room until they had packed up their scanty belongings, and then she locked the door angrily behind them.
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> "One day, as they were talking, Wolf got the idea of writing a fairy-tale opera. This was long before Humperdinck and undoubtedly an original inspiration. They considered many themes and finally hit on Rübezahl. Mahler was young and impulsive and he began on the libretto that very night and finished it next day. In all innocence he took it to Wolf for him to see. But Wolf also had made a start and was so put out by Mahler's having stolen a march on him that he threw up the whole idea and

[1] John Murray, 1946. Trans. Basil Creighton.

[2] I have not been able to trace this musician.

never forgave him. Outwardly they remained on friendly terms for some time longer, but they avoided each other's society. Many years later they met on the way to the Festspielhaus at Bayreuth and passed by with a curt: 'Hallo'."[3]

There it appears that the friendship between Mahler and Wolf ended. They both pursued very different paths and their association was never again as close. Mahler must have seen Wolf for the last time in 1897. According to Alma Mahler:

> "Soon after Mahler had been made Director of the Vienna Opera, Wolf was announced: and there he stood, lean as a skeleton, with burning eyes, and imperiously demanded the instant production of 'Corregidor'.[4] Mahler, knowing the work and its defects, made the usual evasions: no singers suited to it, etc. Wolf grew obstreperous and Mahler did not like the look of him. He had a special bell within reach for such occasions. He pressed it and his man came in with the prearranged message: 'The Superintendent wishes to see you at once, sir'.
>
> "Wolf found himself alone. He rushed downstairs and along the Ring. His mind gave way; he thought he was the Director and on his way home. When he arrived at Mahler's flat, 2 Auenbruggergasse, he rang the bell; and when the servant opened the door, he shouted at her to let him pass—he was the Director. She slammed the door in his face in terror. Shortly afterwards he was shut up in a lunatic asylum . . ."

Mahler and Wolf are hardly ever spoken of together. In the case of Mahler, our academicians have classed him inseparably with Anton Bruckner (1824-1896). Both wrote nine immense symphonies, both were Austrians, both neo-Wagnerians, both, say the critics, huge bores. Those whom the music-critics have joined together, let no man put asunder! Wolf is tacked on more fittingly to the list of great German *lieder* writers: not that he fits particularly easily as his conception of the song did not include any reference to folk-melody whatsoever.[5]

To hear Mahler and Wolf talked of in the same breath, to hear their music discussed as being sprung from very much the same soil, is a rare

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[3] I doubt whether this trivial quarrel over a libretto is the whole explanation. It seems more likely that Wolf disapproved, and was possibly jealous, of Mahler's growing reputation as a conductor and composer. Alma Mahler recounts that Mahler obtained an engagement at Bad Hall when he was eighteen. "Wolf would not accept any job and said arrogantly that he was going to wait until he was made 'God of the Southern Hemisphere'; and he went hungry until his death."

[4] Alma Mahler states that the first performance of "Corregidor" took place on the 12th of February. Unless she means the first performance under Mahler's direction, her statement is inaccurate. The first performance was at Mannheim on the 7th June 1896. As an opera it is hardly a success. Alma Mahler remarks truly that "a series of songs, however beautiful, does not make an opera". In this connection it is interesting and significant to recall Mahler's completion of Weber's sketches for "Die Drei Pintos". I have always thought it a pity that Mahler did not write an original opera.

[5] A good point made by H. C. Colles in the Oxford Hist. of Music Vol. VII. O. U. P. 1934.

occurrence. More important, they shared a common attitude to life and their music is the product of a similar type of musical consciousness. They might well have agreed with Berdyaev that "being is suffering".[6] The realization of this truth, says Berdyaev, "is already a step towards deliverance from suffering, from the bitterness of being. It is salvation through knowledge—self-salvation". Both Mahler and Wolf sought escape from their suffering through music: music was their own kind of self-salvation, and they were men who had suffered deeply and tasted the "bitterness of being".

Mahler and Wolf were brought face to face with suffering in their early years as children. Mahler was born in the small Moravian village of Kalischt in 1860. His father, who was a brutal, domineering man, owned a distillery. The marriage was an unhappy one, complicated by the presence of twelve children. Five of these children died of diphtheria, the sixth, Ernest, died in his twelfth year; Mahler's eldest sister, Leopoldine, after a wretched marriage, died of a tumor on the brain; Otto,[7] his elder brother, a frustrated musician, shot himself in a frenzy of Dostoievskian philosophy, Alois turned forger and had to flee to America. Justine,[8] Mahler's second sister, lived with him until his marriage. She was a neurotic, morbid woman, and Alma Mahler tells how when she was a child ". . . she stuck candles all round the edge of her cot. Then she lay down and firmly believed that she was dead." Such then were some of the fantastic figures that peopled Mahler's youth. Fortunately his talent for music was discovered at an early age and he was sent to Prague to study.

Wolf was also born in 1860, and as he too made his way to Vienna, he was subjected to exactly the same musical influences as was Mahler. He was the fourth son of a prosperous leather-dealer and was born in Windischgräz in Southern Styria. His father was a competent musician, but in spite of this (or perhaps because of it) he would not hear of his son taking up music as a career. He determined that his child should follow a more settled and safe profession. Until he was fifteen Hugo went from school to school—and in each one he was a disastrous failure. Whatever else was accomplished in these miserable years, at least his proud spirit was not broken. At length his father's resistance collapsed and Hugo went to the Vienna Conservatoire. He lived with an aunt until the worst blow fell in 1877 and he was expelled from the Conservatoire.[9] From then until 1881 he had to endure real poverty and hardship: he left

[6] "Spirit and Reality" Bles, 1939. Berdyaev himself would seem to have a high opinion of music as he writes of "The triumph of music, the greatest of the arts . . ." in "Slavery and Freedom" Bles, 1943.

[7] "His promising younger brother, Otto, of whose musical gifts he thought very highly, shot himself in 1895. Two Symphonies were found in his desk, parts of one of which had been performed. . . . There were a number of songs with orchestra, three books of songs with piano accompaniment . . . while a third symphony was near its completion." Bruno Walter, "Gustav Mahler" Kegan Paul, 1937. It would be interesting to know what these compositions were like.

[8] Bruno Walter, in the preface to his book, speaks of Justine as a "loyal sister".

[9] It appears that Wolf was blamed for some act of indiscipline of which he was not actually guilty.

his aunt's[10] and was dependent on his friends' charity.[11] Wolf never forgot his struggle for existence as a young man.

Vienna, a city with which Mahler and Wolf were much concerned, was a curious place at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. Divided, as it was, into factions and warring groups arguing over the merits of the particular composers they championed, Mahler and Wolf had to make their decisions as to which they should support.

Wolf was the more vitriolic of the two and as music-critic of the *Salonblatt*[12] he was able to enthuse over Wagner and Bruckner and rage against Brahms. Mahler and Wolf certainly must have been aroused by Brahms' needlessly rude "boa-constrictor" condemnation of Bruckner. Mahler was inclined to stand aside from these conflicts; he had his own troubles as anti-semitism[13] was already apparent in the opposition he met on attempting to gain public appointments. The position being so confused perhaps it is not surprising that Mahler and Wolf did not appreciate their own common basis. Wolf was certainly no Mahler fanatic and Mahler in later years said to Oscar Fried: "Of Wolf's one thousand songs, I know only three hundred and forty-four. Those three hundred and forty-four I do not like."

Nevertheless, it is time that a companion other than Bruckner[14] was found for Gustav Mahler, and time that Wolf was freed from the comment of "perfect miniaturist" by showing him alongside a great (in every sense of the word) symphonist. The squabbles in Vienna are forgotten, Mahler's stricture[15] on Wolf can be disregarded, and their music considered.

At first sight a Mahler-Wolf comparison seems to be grotesque. Wolf's concentration on the song was as intense as Mahler's on the symphony, and possibly no clearer division than that between the song and the symphony exists for the critical mind. The difference in size of Mahler's and Wolf's compositions can be a considerable obstacle, but it is actually a superficial one. Mahler's forty-odd songs and Wolf's symphonic poem "Penthesilea" are significant deviations from their respective obsessions.

Also to be remembered is Mahler's quite definite interest in the function of the human voice in music. There is not much truth in the stock phrase: "Mahler's symphonies are inflated song-cycles" but there can be no doubt

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[10] It was probably at this time that Wolf joined up with Mahler and Krzyzanowsky.

[11] One friend who aided him was Franz Schalk, the conductor. Mahler later assisted Schalk by giving him an engagement at the Opera.

[12] Wolf was appointed in January 1884. Hans Pfitzner, the German composer and a keen Wagnerian, is the only contemporary figure to approach Wolf in sheer critical vehemence.

[13] Strangely enough, Cosima Wagner was one of the foremost exponents of this racial discrimination, in spite of Mahler's magnificent productions of Wagner's operas.

[14] Apart from the fact that Mahler wrote symphonies for large orchestras and that his works take as long to perform as do many of Bruckner's, I fail to see any real connection between the two composers. "Child-like and naive" is a favourite phrase of English critics when describing Mahler's music: the phrase can much more properly be applied to Bruckner. It seems to me that the gulf between, say, "Das Lied von der Erde" and any one of Bruckner's symphonies, early or late, is immense.

[15] In any case, Mahler's verdicts on composers were liable to be disconcerting. He wrote in a letter to his wife in 1904: "Now that I've worked my way through Brahms, I've fallen back on Bruckner again. An odd pair of second-raters."

as to the importance he attached to the voice as an instrument. At certain moments Mahler felt that the introduction of the voice was a necessity if his musical conception was to be realised to the full, and use is made of it (in various forms—choirs, soloists etc.) in the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 8th Symphonies and *Das Lied von der Erde* (which Mahler specifically entitles a Symphony for Contralto, Tenor and Orchestra). There are the *Kindertotenlieder* and the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*. Already, by means of this vocal bridge, Mahler can be brought half way to meet Wolf. The Mahler of the enormous Eighth Symphony and its *Veni creator spiritus*[16] does not overshadow the Wolf of:

> "*Auch kleine Dinge können uns entzücken,*
> *Auch kleine Dinge können teuer sein.*"[17]

Yet Wolf could be magniloquent. As H. C. Colles points out: "'Promethus'[18] is a setting which could only have been made in the Post-Wagnerian era."[19] When heard in its orchestral version, the repeated chords at the opening are as striking as the vigorous theme given to the horns in the first bars of *Das Lied von der Erde*.[20]

It is not suggested that Mahler and Wolf shared any points of style in their music: both of them were too highly original and independent as creators for such similarities to exist. But it is peculiar how some of the very early Wolf songs (published posthumously)[21] have something in common with the early songs of Mahler. There is the same feeling of anguish about them, sorrow at the swift passing of all earthly beauty and the impossibility of achieving permanent happiness. Mahler in "Hans und Grethe"[22] asks:

> "*Und ist doch der Mai so grün!?*"

with extraordinary emotional force, almost as if the wonderful greenness of May was too much for him to bear—Wolf echoes it with his:

> "*Gesegnet sei das Grün und wer es trägt!*"[23]

"*Wenn du mich mit den Augen streifst*"[24] has the breathless drive of the fourth of Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder*:[25] it may be difficult to imagine the comparison, but mentally orchestrate the Wolf and the task is simplified.

Mahler and Wolf possessed what might seem at first to be a sense of humour; but it is cynicism rather than humour, or a twisted smile nearer

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[16] This Symphony was advertised as "The Symphony of a Thousand" owing to the vast forces employed in its performance: Mahler himself called it the "Barnum and Bailey Exhibition".

[17] Book I. No. I. *Italienisches Liederbuch*. (Paul Heyse).

[18] Book II. No. 49. *Goethe Lieder*.

[19] Oxford Hist. of Music Vol. VII.

[20] *Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde*.

[21] *Musikwissenschaftlicher Verlag*. Leipzig-Wien 1936.

[22] Book 1. *Lieder und Gesänge*. Schott's.

[23] Book III No. 39. *Ital. Liederbuch*.

[24] Book III No. 38. *Ital. Liederbuch*.

[25] "*Oft denk' ich, sie sind nur ausgegangen.*" (Rückert)

tears than laughter. The scherzi of Mahler's Symphonies are packed with this kind of sinister buffoonery. An excellent example of Wolf's mock-Romantic manner is "*Selig ihr Blinden*"[26] where the words are sung above a descending accompaniment that is much like a bare trombone-part lifted from the finale of Mahler's Second Symphony. If not humourous (and Wolf's "*Storchenbotschaft*"[27] certainly can qualify for the term, as can Mahler's "*Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt*[28]) Mahler and Wolf can be gay. They both delighted in landscapes of green fields and blue skies. Wolf could sing happily of the town he wandered through with his lute:

> "*Ich sing' und spiele, dass die Strasse schallt,*
> *so manche lauscht—vorüber bin ich bald.*"[29]

and Mahler:

> "*Ging heut' Morgen über's Feld,*
> *Thau noch auf den Gräsern hing,*
> *Sprach zu mir der lust'ge Fink:*
> *"Ei, du! Gelt?"*
> *Guten Morgen! Ei, Gelt? Du!*
> *Wird's nicht eine schöne Welt?*"[30]

Mahler and Wolf had some of the same characteristics. Both were egotistical, abnormally sensitive and nervous, quick to find insults where none were intended. Both could be unbalanced by quite ordinary noises, Wolf by a barking dog or cabmen cracking their whips,[31] Mahler by the mournful lowing of cattle.[32] As types, they were alike: reflections in the same mirror. It happened that Mahler was the public figure with a miraculous command of rhetoric; he was a big man in every sense other than physically. He held important public appointments and wanted to speak for the World: in his own music he tried to embrace the Universe. Wolf was retiring, had no patience with publicity and was not one for making grand statements in the grand manner. His oratory (a legacy from his Wagnerian environment) was persuasive, intimate, and extremely subtle. Wolf wanted nothing to do with the world. "If only," he wrote to Franz Schalk, "I were a shoemaker like the incomparable Sachs. Cobble on week-days and compose on Sundays just for myself and two or three friends."

Neither Mahler nor Wolf were able to compose in long, unbroken stretches. Mahler, torn between his conducting and original scores, could work only in his holidays. Wolf had periods of complete creative sterility which lasted on one occasion for three years.[33] Both died young. Wolf

[26] Book I No. 5. *Ital. Liederbuch.*

[27] Book IV No. 48. *Mörike Lieder.*

[28] Universal Edn.

[29] Book II. No. 27. *Ital. Liederbuch.*

[30] *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen.* No. 2. Weinberger, 1946.

[31] Gerald Abraham: "Lives of the Great Composers" Vol. III. Pelican.

[32] Bruno Walter: "Gustav Mahler".

[33] 1892/4. Wolf wrote in this time only the famous "Italian Serenade" for small orchestra

in 1903, after just over four years in an asylum, Mahler in 1911 of heart-failure. Perhaps it was that Wolf in his exhausted condition felt like Leopardi: "Non posso, non posso piu della vita."[34] Mahler, the public man, had to keep up appearances and died more conventionally if more peacefully. His epitaph is to be found in a song of 1905:

> *"Ich bin gestorben dem Welt getümmel*
> *Und ruh' in einem stillen Gebiet.*
> *Ich leb' allein in meinem Himmel,*
> *In meinem Lieben, in meinem Lied."*[35]

Wolf in his:

> *"Sterb' ich, so hüllt in Blumen meine Glieder . . ."*[36]

Mahler and Wolf often joined hands in the "lied": but they deserve to be remembered together, not for any chance similarities in their music, but for their profound belief in the tragic attitude to life, which is no easy philosophy to hold. They expressed, in their own personal ways, the same fundamental truth that slowly developed to be the centre of their artistic consciousness and the fountain of their inspiration.

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[34] "I cannot, cannot endure life any longer".

[35] "*Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen*". CF Kahnt, Leipzig.

[36] Book III, No. 33, *Ital. Liederbuch*.

IN MEMORY OF MAHLER

MAHLER'S EIGHTH (SYMPHONY OF A THOUSAND)

By LAWRENCE GILMAN

The following article by the late Lawrence Gilman, published by the New York Herald Tribune on May 10, 1931, is reprinted by permission of the Herald Tribune.

Twenty years ago this spring, Gustav Mahler abandoned his arduous and stormy activities as conductor of the Philharmonic Society of New York and returned to Europe, an embittered, a heart-sick, and a dying man. On the 18th of May they buried him in the Grinziger Cemetery at Vienna. Was it to observe the death of the remarkable composer, the singular tone-poet who is still a storm-center of dispute among the musicians of two continents, that Mahler's climactic score, the so-called "Symphony of a Thousand," was chosen for performance as the outstanding event of the Cincinnati Festival that has just been brought to a close under the direction of Eugene Goossens?

Whether by accident or design, this revival of Mahler's Eighth Symphony marks the twentieth anniversary of the composer's death. The choice of the score was a fortunate one. The Eighth Symphony, according to the composer's friend and biographer, Richard Specht, was for Mahler "the complete expression in tones of his own inner vision. He regarded his preceding works as preludes to this great 'Hymn of Love.'" It was not quite his last work. Mahler completed the Eighth Symphony in 1909, and in that year he composed his Ninth and sketched his Tenth Symphonies. The poignant "Lied von der Erde"—perhaps his least uneven production—was written while he was still at work upon the Eighth Symphony.

Mahler, says Richard Specht, "spoke proudly of the Eighth when he called it 'a gift to the people'; and he said this in the glad hope that the work, in contradistinction to his other less accessible symphonies, would win the hearts of all his hearers by a single appeal. The overwhelming impression made by the premiere of the gigantic work under Mahler's own direction, the storm of enthusiasm, as of an immense cry of gratitude, that broke loose at the close of the performance, seemed to be a fulfillment of this hope."

It is gratifying to think that the triumphant premiere which Mr. Specht recalls must have brought deep solace to the self-torturing, hypersensitive, unhappy Mahler. The event took place in the autumn before his death, at Munich (the date was September 12, 1910). "After the performance," wrote Leopold Stokowski, who was present, "the vast audience sprang to its feet, and a scene of such enthusiasm ensued as one sees only once in a lifetime. To those who realized, in part at least, the inner sadness of Mahler's life, there was something infinitely tragic in his figure at that moment of supreme triumph."

It was Mr. Stokowski who introduced the "Symphony of a Thousand" to America in an extraordinary series of performances with the Philadelphia Orchestra which he undertook in the spring of 1916. The work

was produced on March 2, and had a run which, for a mere symphony, was almost equivalent to the triumphant persistence of "The Green Pastures." The Academy of Music was jammed at all the performances. For hours before the doors were opened, a line of intending ticket-buyers stretched around the corner of Locust Street and far up the block along Broad, waiting patiently in the raw spring wind. Even the traffic policemen outside the Academy were excited about the attraction, and spoke of it almost as respectfully as if it had been a prizefight.[1]

In the following month, the Society of the Friends of Music imported Mr. Stokowski with his army of executants to New York and the work was disclosed to this capitol at a memorable concert in the Metropolitan Opera House.

Thus Mahler returned as a conqueror to the country which he had left in sorrow and defeat. That he happened to be dead was merely, of course, a fulfillment of the traditional and familiar destiny of the artist.

It cannot be said that he is generally accepted here at the valuation which is placed upon him as a composer in Central and Northern Europe. But there are many enthusiasts for his music hereabouts, and it is perhaps significant that his most exacting and formidable work should have been selected for revival last week in Cincinnati.[2]

If this is to be viewed as another triumph for Mahler—and doubtless it should be so regarded—it must be said that the triumph has not been won by inexpensive lures, by any deliberate address to the groundlings. The Eighth Symphony is austere and remote in subject (*pace* Mr. Specht): it is an expression, conceived upon the loftiest plane, of a supremely exalted theme. Again one must wonder if it was by chance, or by felicitous design, that Mr. Goossens chose this symphony of Mahler's for performance in the year which marks the hundredth anniversary of Goethe's completion

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[1] Concerning the nine performances of Mahler's *Eighth* in Philadelphia and New York, Mr. Stokowski relates:

> 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 emotion on one particular date.

In an interview with William Engle, feature writer of the New York World Telegram, Mr. Arthur Judson described the above series of performances as the most memorable mile-stones of his managerial career. Only two performances had been scheduled. Quoting the Telegram of December 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.

[2] We have seldom seen an audience display such enthusiasm as did this audience in Music Hall. We have never felt the claims of Mahler and his disciples to have so much justification. . . .

The writer heard the symphony for the first time . . . He could listen with a clear and unprepared mind to the sheer effect of music and performance, and that effect was overwhelming. . . .

. . . He (Mahler) saw mighty visions and he believed, and there is that in his music—at least when it is presented as it was this evening—that makes fault-finding with detail or measuring with a yardstick seem somewhat petty. . . .

Olin Downes, N. Y. Times, May 7, 1931.

of the Second Part of "Faust": for Mahler in his symphony has essayed nothing less than a musical projection of the Final Scene of "Faust," prefaced by an elaborate setting of the Latin hymn, "Veni Creator Spiritus."

The composer sought to link his setting of the ancient hymn of Hrabanus Maurus—which Mahler conceived as "a song of yearning, of rapturous devotion, an invocation of the creative spirit, the love that moves the worlds"—with the concluding scene of "Faust," which he viewed as the invocation's answer, issuing from those transfigured apparitions wherein the poet's visions "are made to pass before us as in a glass, and the heavenly wisdom is unfolded in a divine ascent." For Mahler's inner life was a perpetual and agonized interrogation of the *magnum mysterium*: it was his impassioned aim to achieve those states of transported reverie and mystical apprehension wherein the consciousness is disengaged and enfranchised. As Goethe observed of Filippo Neri, Mahler "sought the gift of ecstasy, that hovering of the spirit above the earth"; and there were moments when he achieved the spiritual liberation, this "standing outside oneself in freedom," and became the Pater Ecstaticus of his own enraptured vision.

It could never be said of Mahler, as a foreign writer once amazingly said of Schumann—apparently in praise—that "Schumann, in his music for 'Faust,' does not attempt to compete with the poet, to convince the world that a musician can be 'a thinker'." Mahler had no such contempt of intellectual activity. It seemd to him not impossible that a musician, no less than a poet, could be a thinker without doing irreparable injury to his work. He was not impressed by the singular theory that music may be benefited by purging it of ideas. Indeed, it is precisely its width of reference, its contact with the great intellectual and spiritual currents of the nineteenth century, that gives Mahler's art its prime distinction and interest as a contribution to the music of his time, whatever one may think of the outcome of his attempt—in Rossetti's phrase—to "mix his colors with brains."

It is no affair of the critic's, so far as his function as a suggester of values is concerned, what means an artist elects to use in embodying his conceptions. A good deal of witless comment has been provoked because Mahler in this choral "Symphony of a Thousand" (or symphonic cantata, as you choose) asks for extraordinary forces—for two mixed choruses, a boys' chorus, eight solo voices, and a huge orchestra, comprising a piano, an organ, and—a mandolin: in all, about a thousand performers. The fact is interesting, but irrelevant. The point, since one is discussing not a circus but a work of art, is rather: What has Mahler succeeded in doing with his multitudinous choristers and his eight soloists and his immense orchestra —and his mandolin?

Well, it is indisputable, we think, that he has handled them like a master: with a constructive technique that takes the breath by its surety, its address, its resourcefulness, its imposing command of mass and its fertility in detail. Here is a superb piece of tonal architecture: majestic and harmonious in plan, noble in its amplitude and sweep of line. But what of the stuff within—the spiritual and poetic content of the score, and the character of its musical inspiration?

It must be evident to any sympathetic student or listener that Mahler has been sensitive to the spiritual greatness of Goethe's conception, and that its quality is reflected in certain pages of his score. This music, in its

best moments, has caught something of the unique ecstasy, the mystical passion, the otherworldliness, the ineffable serenity and tenderness, the rapturous exaltation, of the original. Such moments are the speech of Pater Ecstaticus; the line, "Wenn du hehr gebietest," in the speech of Doctor Marianus, with the succeeding interlude and choral passage; and the lines beginning "Neige, neige," of Una Poenitentium—especially the music, of exceeding loveliness, to the ecstatic "Er kommt zurück!"

In the non-Goethian First Part of the symphony, the setting of "Veni, Creator Spiritus," one does not easily forget the overwhelming tonal plangency of the Gloria Patri.

That the texture of the music is not throughout of this rich and glowing quality is scarcely remarkable. Mahler undertook a venture that would have taxed the genius of Wagner—the one musician who was fully qualified not only to apprehend but to complement the universal mind of Goethe. Would that Wagner had accomplished in his maturity the "Faust" Symphony of which he had dreamt as a young man!

Bayard Taylor reminds us that in Goethe's poem are "Circles within circles, forms which beckon and then disappear; and when we seem to have reached the bottom of the author's meaning, we suspect that there is still something beyond." How, indeed, shall any music save the greatest convey, without numerous haltings and lapses and futilities, Goethe's subline phantasmagoria, with its transcendent allegory of the mystical interpenetration of Beauty and Divinity? So one need not be surprised to find Mahler stumbling and groping in his music, and writing passages that are empty or dull or commonplace, or even trivial—as when he transforms Goethe's "Mater Gloriosa" into an insipid tonal nonentity who might have stepped from the pages of a cantata by Gounod. There is no need to specify these passages further—they will be identified by those who are most deeply moved by that in the work which is indubitably choice and rare.

It is curious that Bayard Taylor, half a century ago, should have spoken of the closing scene of "Faust" as "a symphony": "an ever-rising and ever-swelling symphony, with its one theme of the accordance of Human and Divine Love"; as, again, "this mystic Symphony of Love." It almost seems as if he had previsioned the tonal possibilities of the poem—possibilities which Mahler, in this symphony of today, has in so large a measure realized and fulfilled. For here, take it all in all, is one of the noblest scores of our time. In it, now and again, are pages unforgettable for their superearthly beauty—inspirations of which their creator might justifiably have said, with the singer of the Odes of Solomon, "So are the wings of the Spirit over my heart, and I have been set on His immortal pinions."

WHY NO AIR PREMIERE FOR MAHLER'S SIXTH?

Many who read the momentous announcement made by the Philharmonic-Symphony Society of N. Y. late in September, 1947, that Dimitri Mitropoulos would conduct the American premiere of Mahler's *Sixth* in December were undoubtedly cheered by the thought that at last this great symphony, completed forty-two years ago, would be heard by the large American radio audience. What happened later to cause a change of plans is not hard to guess—the Mahler work didn't fit into the music-news-music-news broadcast pattern C.B.S. had established for the Sunday afternoon concerts. Numerous letters were written urging that the work be broadcast, which, incidentally, would have been a world radio premiere, but the Philharmonic-Symphony Society or C.B.S. remained immovable in this respect.[1] At least two writers of radio and music newspaper columns presented the case for the listener. On two successive Sundays Mr. B. H. Haggin, in his column "Music on the Radio" in the *N. Y. Herald Tribune*, gave prominence not only to the fact Mahler No. 6 had not been broadcast but also to the general state of affairs regarding serious music on the major networks. The importance of what he had to say cannot be underestimated and by permission of the *N. Y. Herald Tribune* Mr. Haggin's column of Jan. 4, 1948, is reprinted in full below.

> Mr. Jack Diether—whose complaint about the Philharmonic's failure to broadcast Mahler's Sixth and other new works I discussed last Sunday—sent me his Oct. 24 column on the subject in "The Malibu (Calif.) Times," which contained some interesting material that I think worth giving here.
>
> Quoting from the Philharmonic brochure for radio listeners the statements "How America's cultural life has grown during the last century! Radio is responsible for the rapidity of the growth in the past few decades," Mr. Diether wrote: "Those who take those remarks to heart . . . occasionally may wonder wistfully how the growth of culture via radio is faring in other lands. For their benefit I would like to summarize the last three months' offerings, in this field, of another country's radio, that of Britain, as gleaned from the B. B. C.'s weekly 'Radio Times.'"
>
> The three months were July, August and September of last summer; and those of us who can recall what the great American networks offered in that period are in a position to appreciate the B. B. C.'s presentation of "a number of inclusive musical series . . . including the complete sets of Haydn's, Scarlatti's and Debussy's piano works, Mozart's violin sonatas and Schubert's and Brahms's

[1] The B.B.C. two weeks later on December 31, 1947, gave Mahler's *Sixth* its radio premiere. Apparently unable to broadcast the concert performance at the time it was given and fully aware of the significance of the symphony, a transcription was made and broadcast! The performance was given by the Orchestra of the Nordwestdeutscher-Rundfunk under Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt. Earlier in the year the B.B.C. broadcast a performance of Mahler's *Ninth* by the same orchestra and conductor.

chamber music played by Szigeti, Fournier, Schnabel, etc.; nine programs of sixteenth and early seventeenth century chamber and vocal music, nine of eighteenth century chamber and orchestral music, twelve programs of modern British music and four song recitals by Lotte Lehmann. Excerpts from four operatic festivals were transmitted, those at Edinburgh, Glyndebourne, Salzburg and Lucerne; and among the operas that were broadcast twice or more in their entirety were Mozart's 'Figaro' and 'Cosi fan Tutte' (four times each . . .), 'Don Giovanni,' Beethoven's 'Fidelio,' Strauss's 'Salome,' 'Elektra' and 'Arabella,' and Einem's 'Danton's Death'." Also broadcast were the performance of Mahler's "Lied von der Erde" by Bruno Walter and the Vienna Philharmonic in Edinburgh, a performance of Mahler's Ninth Symphony in Hamburg. And "from the other orchestral concerts . . . I will mention only one work, the American composer William Schuman's Piano Concerto, which has never been heard on the American networks."

Turning back to America, Mr. Diether concluded: "The manager of the New York Philharmonic who wrote me that the first American performance of Mahler's Sixth, in December, cannot be broadcast because of its 'unusual length' said more about the true state of American radio than the sweeping words of the Philharmonic's printed brochure. If our radio were really the measure of our cultural growth, as the brochure claims, we would have little cause to be proud of its rapidity."

As a matter of fact one can observe in radio's growth a step backward for almost every step forward. Twenty years ago WOR was broadcasting the New York Philharmonic on Thursday nights and later on Sunday afternoons; a few years afterward it was broadcasting its own Bamberger Little Symphony for an hour on a weekday night and the Perole Quartet for a half-hour on Sundays; still later it broadcast series conducted by Wallenstein; last year its only high-caliber program was the Cleveland Orchestra 11:30 on Mondays; this year it isn't even doing that. C. B. S. took over the Philharmonic from WOR and still broadcasts it; but other programs that it has added—the Budapest Quartet, Egon Petri, and now even Invitation to Music—it has dropped, leaving only Bigg's organ recital early Sunday mornings and Eileen Farrell's vocal hodge-podges late Sunday nights. N. B. C. organized an orchestra for Toscanini which it still maintains at enormous cost, but apparently only to be able to say it maintains an orchestra for Toscanini at enormous cost, for it has shifted the program to the dinner hour on Saturday when people tell me they cannot manage to listen, and some have to hear a rebroadcast of a defective recording late at night when they cannot operate their radios at the necessary volume-level.

All this provides the answer to the talk about the blessings conferred on American music lovers by the American system of commercialized radio. Certainly it gives them performances by the great orchestras and the Metropolitan. But it gives them these all jammed into Saturday and Sunday, except for the Boston Sym-

phony on Tuesday. And it gives them almost nothing beyond these orchestras and the Metropolitan—nothing remotely like the B. B. C.'s coverage of the entire musical literature described by Mr. Diether. Nor do the differences end there. A friend wrote me from Switzerland about the broadcast of Bruno Walter's concert in Lucerne: it was late in starting and there was further delay in the intermission, which led her, after her experiences here, to expect the final work to be cut off before the end. Instead the work was completed and the news program that followed began twenty minutes late. "Could you imagine this happening in New York?" she wrote. What happens here was described by a reader who listened to the Boston Symphony broadcast of Berlioz's "Harold in Italy" recently: as a result of delays in starting and between movements the finale was cut off about half a minute before its conclusion — "final hurried announcements [being] made with the orchestra playing in the background."

On January 4, 1948, the N. Y. Philharmonic broadcast *Jeanne d'Arc au Bucher*, a dramatic oratorio, by Arthur Honegger and Paul Claudel. The broadcast began at 3 and, with comments about the work, ended at 4:20 P. M. It was followed by the usual newscast. The broadcast from London was omitted.

In his article in the N. Y. Herald Tribune, December 28, 1947, Mr. Haggin wrote in part:

> Mahler's Sixth Symphony, which was given its first American performance recently by the New York Philharmonic under Mitropoulos, was heard by several thousand people who were able to attend the concert on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, but not by several million all over the country who are said to listen to the Philharmonic broadcasts on Sunday afternoons.
>
> One such person in Syracuse, N. Y., who wrote the Philharmonic about this, sent me what he rightly called the "stupid answer" which explained that the playing-time of the Mahler symphony, 65 minutes, made it impossible to fit the work into a Sunday broadcast program. The entire broadcast lasts 90 minutes, which is enough to contain a work lasting 65; but the Philharmonic representative was speaking from the point of view of C. B. S.; what the symphony didn't fit into was the style of the broadcast—approximately 45 minutes of music, 10 minutes of intermission with a speaker, and another 30 or 35 minutes of music.

The Philharmonic found a way to broadcast the Honegger work. Lack of time seems to be a lame excuse for the symphonies of Bruckner and Mahler. The Philharmonic or C. B. S. could, if necessary, omit the news casts. Audiences can hear news and commentators on any station several times a day. They hardly need the Philharmonic's news period to keep abreast of the times especially if the newscast deprives them of the opportunity to hear rarely played works.

The question might also be raised as to why a popular program of fam-

iliar music was arranged for the January 25, 1948, Sunday afternoon concert when a performance of the Bruckner *Eighth*, which was played on the concerts of January 22 and 23, and is not often broadcast, would have given the radio audience a welcome change from the customary fare, for Walter's readings of Bruckner's *Eighth* have always been praised highly and received enthusiastically (see pages 56-58 for reviews of the forementioned performance). One month after the *Eighth's* premiere performance in Boston in 1909 it was repeated by request. Many listeners will recall that in January, 1941, the Bruckner *Eighth* was put on the air by the Philharmonic-Symphony Society in response to a telegraphic request sent by interested students at the State University of Iowa when they learned it was not to be broadcast and a different program substituted.

BRUCKNER—MAHLER—SCHOENBERG

By DIKA NEWLIN
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF MUSIC, WESTERN MARYLAND COLLEGE

The above new book was published in 1947 by King's Crown Press, a division of Columbia University Press, 2960 Broadway, New York 27, N. Y. The following information concerning it is reprinted with the publisher's permission.

Arnold Schoenberg, on September 13, 1944, achieved in his exile the age of seventy. The year when Huneker could write of the first performance of *Pierrot Lunaire* that it was "the very ecstasy of the hideous" was thirty-two years behind him. Even further behind was the time when a critic yelled "Stop it!" during the first performance of the First String Quartet. Now the moment had come when the possibly greatest living composer could be considered in relation to his musical heritage, and that is what Dika Newlin has done in this book.

The author's thesis is that, contrary to general opinion, Schoenberg does not stand apart from the past but is the present heir of the great Viennese tradition. He is, she demonstrates, in the direct line of that modern phase of the school of Vienna which began with Bruckner and continued with Mahler.

Since the music of all three men is inseparable not only from their heritage but also from the social, religious, and political milieu of the Hapsburg capital, this book becomes a full-scale presentation of the music and personalities of three composers about whom a great deal of controversial opinion has been written. It is an unusually able and well-written work of scholarship, amply illustrated with thematic material.

CONTENTS: Preface. Introduction: The Continuity of Musical Tradition in Vienna; Austrian Convention and Revolt; I. ANTON BRUCKNER—Conservatism and Catholicism—1. The Problem of Bruckner; 2. Backgrounds; 3. Vienna; 4. Symphonic Style; 5. Sources for Bruckner's Theory of Harmony; 6. Church Composer; 7. Chamber Music; Symphonist; II. MAHLER—1. Mahler, Bruckner, and Brahms; 2. Mahler as a Young Man;

3. *Das Klagende Lied;* 4. Literary Influences on Mahler; 5. Lyricist; 6. Opera Director; Symphonist; III. SCHOENBERG AND BEYOND—Decades of Decision—1. 1874-1899; 2. 1900-1907; 3. First Steps in Atonality; 1907-1911; 4. 1911-1915; 5. To the "Twelve-Tone Scale"—and After; 6. Triumph, Catastrophe, Reorientation: 1924-1944. Bibliography. Index.

REVIEWS

"Miss Newlin's book provides good biographies of the three men. She conveys that authentic sense of the personalities involved which results from a real understanding of the resolution of many apparent contradictions, in the course of each composer's development. She has added new material to the old biographies, particularly in the field of theoretical and esthetic speculation, and she gives a number of illuminating examples of the influence Viennese composers of the 19th and 20th centuries had on one another.

"The great virtue of the book lies in the fact that, because the author is herself a competent composer, she deals with the dynamic elements in each man's work, instead of making a desiccated analysis. . . .

HENRY COWELL, *The Musical Quarterly*

"Dika Newlin's Bruckner, Mahler, Schoenberg is a fine, well written and admirably reasoned piece of work. It can be unreservedly commended to those who admire these masters and even to those who do not. The authoress, herself a pupil of Schoenberg, has a profound knowledge of her subject and communicates it vividly to the reader . . . . As a very positive contribution to the story of three still controversial figures of musical experience, the volume commands wholesale admiration."

Musical America

". . . Interesting chapters on the work of Bruckner and Mahler, and those on Miss Newlin's teacher, Schoenberg, are well worth reading and digesting."

FELIX BOROWSKI, *Chicago Sun*

". . . Her subject is of great contemporary interest and her research worthy of respect."

Harper's Magazine

BRUCKNER'S EIGHTH AND THE REVIEWERS (1948)

A MAJOR TRIO AND A MINOR DUO

If a vote is ever taken on the season's 10 best symphonic performances, my guess is that Bruno Walter's reading of Bruckner's Eighth Symphony with the Philharmonic-Symphony in Carnegie Hall last night would be up on top.

Anyway, as of now in midseason, it has my vote for a place among the three most gripping performances since last September. I don't think I would surprise anybody by crediting Arturo Toscanini with the two others.

Mr. Walter would doubtless insist on sharing the honor of last night's rendering with the Philharmonic personnel. Certainly the orchestra co-operated beautifully, and the conductor must have felt special pride in finding it completely en rapport on all details. They played like a band of perfect Brucknerites.

For the main impression was of a group of men working by common inspiration towards one goal—the goal of giving one of the world's most unfairly neglected composers the kind of hearing that would compensate for all the ridicule that pursued him while he lived.

The performance made you wonder why this man's music has been slow in gaining headway among public and critics. True, the symphony is long, but during those 72 minutes so many exciting things happen that dissenters ought to be very few in number.

There are stirring moments all through the symphony—episodes of giant conflict and eerie solemnity; moments of sky-blue calm and poetry, and passages of broad symphonic humor that prove that Bruckner could pause amid his cosmic musings for a little homespun spoofing.

On the whole, though, the symphony moves along the higher planes of discourse. One theory is that the last two movements are concerned with the idea of divinity. This claim is plausible enough, considering that Bruckner dedicated his next symphony to God!

Mr. Walter once told me he regarded Bruckner's symphonic world as a complete cosmos—that is, it left nothing to chance or mystery, and answered every question it posed. You felt that last night in the wondrous unity and clarity of the performance.

There were no dark areas anywhere, or, rather, where spans of mystery arose, the light that was Bruckner's own certainly soon spread over them. The doubts were scattered and the simple man—half-peasant and half-seer—was his confident self again.

Mr. Walter must have been happy last night in the assurance that both the orchestra and the audience were with him—the orchestra proving it through its splendid teamwork, and the audience by way of one of the season's most fervent ovations.

LOUIS BIANCOLLI, *N. Y. World-Telegram*

This listener is deeply grateful to Bruno Walter for his uncut performance of Bruckner's Eighth Symphony with the Philharmonic-Symphony

Orchestra in Carnegie Hall last night, a performance which obliterated the unfortunate impression made by Serge Koussevitzky's emasculated version of this work given here earlier in the season with the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

But there was more than gratitude due Mr. Walter for letting us hear every note of this truly sublime creation; it seems strange that over half a century after the completion of this wonderful symphony it should be necessary to call attention anew to its greatness. For there are still many music lovers and musicians who are baffled by Bruckner's architectonics: by his utilization of groups of themes instead of following classical procedure in his corner movements. But the breadth and depth of his ideas made such formal procedure ineluctable.

It is difficult for me to comprehend how a hearing of this stupendous product discoursed as it was last night can fail to bring with it conviction of its timelessness and the purity of its inspiration. Not only the angelic Adagio, but the three remaining movements are the emanations of pure genius. Mr. Walter has interpreted the Eighth Symphony here before with impressive results; but on this occasion his conception was of such surpassing perceptiveness, so inward and so eloquent in turn that it marks a pinnacle in his long and distinguished career. Nor has the Philharmonic ever in my experience played better; the translucent sensuousness of sound which pervaded the performance will linger long in the memory of all who were fortunate enough to be present.

JEROME D. BOHM, *New York Herald Tribune*

For the Eighth symphony towered over everything. It was given without a cut and it lasted seventy-two minutes. Despite its weakness and discrepancies of structure, especially in the final movement, the listener was not dismayed, or impatient, or less than absorbed in the essential grandeur and beauty of the revelation. True, the first movement also has cracks that cannot be eradicated, even when such an inspired interpreter as Mr. Walter is in control. The movement has also a loftiness and a vision that far surpass its technical limitations. There is the supplication, the mystic fervor, the inner conflict of him who cries out, "Lord, I believe. Help Thou mine unbelief." There are the three titanic climaxes which occur in the development of this movement and seem as if they would rend the orchestra in twain.

Of the form of the immensely expanded scherzo Bruckner is completely and unqualifiedly the master. The movement has the smell and savor of the good earth. Its vigor and jocosity give place in the trio to a passage fully worthy, in its tenderness and vision, of Beethoven. Then comes the lyrical slow movement, the movement in which the artist speaks as simply as a child of the sublime. It is in the finale that the symphony again and again falls to the earth, picks itself up, stumbles forward toward the light. It is curious that such weak and redundant writing could be part of the score which includes three of the greatest movements in the literature of the romantic symphony. This weakness is the more striking, and the more touching, because of the conclusion, wherein Bruckner appears to be groping for a summation after the cyclical manner—a summing up of themes previously heard—which lesser composers than he have frequently achieved.

This method, or a hint of it, only emerges in the final pages in which

there is reference back to the opening theme of the first movement, and a final combination, very magnificent, of themes of both the scherzo and adagio—a flash of sheer grandeur, after a chaos of floundering. For all that, with every defect granted or multiplied, the symphony, so magnificently revealed last night, was a thrilling experience.

The orchestra played magnificently. The conductor missed nothing of the composer's thought and its devoted revelation. He laid us all under an obligation which will not be forgotten or lessened as time passes in the memory.

OLIN DOWNES, *The New York Times*

After intermission Mr. Walter and the orchestra returned for the hour-and-a-quarter panorama of Bruckner's Eighth Symphony. Mr. Walter's devotion to Bruckner, which has earned him the medal of the Bruckner Society, is well known. As a matter of fact, conductors in general appear to be fond of Bruckner, possibly fascinated by the mechanics of bringing his elephantine scores to life. Listening to them is something else again. The Eighth Symphony's splendor or orchestral dress is exceeded only by its banality of subject matter; it is like devising a magnificent Florentine tooled binding for the collected works of Edgar A. Guest. At that, the comparison is probably unfair to Mr. Guest; not even he could match Bruckner platitude for platitude.

JOHN BRIGGS, *New York Post* (Copyright 1948)

The notion that a thing said loudly will enforce its truth has an echo in such music as Bruckner's Eighth Symphony which was played by the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra under Bruno Walter's direction in Carnegie Hall last night. Like others of this composer's works, it has its felicities, but considering everything it is hard to see how the work as a whole can be taken seriously.

A recent performance by Koussevitzky left the feeling that something more authoritative might add to its meaning. The only mystery that Walter disclosed, however, was how this awkward, well-meaning but essentially second-rate music had survived as long as it has. Sincerity it has, and imposing scoring, but also labored thematic material, sprawling structure and climaxes repeated incessantly. The dignity the score contains was brought out, in a performance of great fidelity.

H. C. S., *New York Sun*

AMERICAN PREMIERE OF MAHLER'S SIXTH

Mitropoulos Conducts Philharmonic Symphony, New York, in Brilliant Performances

Audience Cheers

The following reviews appeared in the New York papers after the first of three performances given December 11, 12, and 13, 1947.

Co-featured in odd contrast on last night's Philharmonic program in Carnegie Hall were George Gershwin's "Concerto in F," with Oscar Levant as soloist, and the American premiere of Gustav Mahler's Sixth Symphony. Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted.

The one thing in common was the excellent performance. Mr. Mitropoulos added two dazzling readings to his Philharmonic score card, and Mr. Levant re-asserted his claims to being America's chief custodian of the Gershwin legacy.

There comparisons ended. For the Gershwin score is about as close to the Mahler Symphony as Tin Pan Alley is to Kamchatka. But the modern orchestra accommodates all comers, so it was all one world on last night's program.

While there were many ways of viewing the Mahler Symphony last night, there was only one for the Levant-Gershwin episode. The fabulous Oscar made this coiling scroll of the Roaring Twenties live all over again in the moody melody and biting rhythms.

Reaction to Mahler's massive 70-minute span ran all the way from ecstatic accolades to blistering gibes. Most complaints were that the symphony was too long, too loud, and too much of the same thing.

Yet, the symphony was given a strong ovation. Many rose in their seats and shouted "Bravo!" and Mr. Mitropoulos was recalled for repeated bows with the orchestra.

How much of the response should be credited to the performance and how much to the symphony it would be hard to say. Certainly the 41-year-old score packs many orchestral thrills, among them the three-hammer blows of the finale.

There Mahler pictures his future in harsh prophecy, using an actual hammer to accent the personal horror to come. The orchestra shrieks in terrifying tones, and some of the blackest pages in all music follow.

I frankly liked the symphony—the march-like beat of the opening, the pastoral quiet of the slow movement, the odd, zig-zagging rhythms of the Scherzo, and the shattering Judgment Day of the Finale.

Maybe Mahler wrote one or two better symphonies, like the Ninth and "The Song of the Earth;" but the Sixth crams a power of its own in its fierce heartsick moods and tragic foreboding.

And Mahler wasn't wrong in his bleak prediction, for the fatal hammer struck three times, just as he dreaded—his young daughter died; his ideals and hopes as conductor crashed; and he died an untimely death in 1911.

With the grim prophecy fulfilled, life had finally imitated art.

LOUIS BIANCOLLI, *N. Y. World-Telegram*

This reviewer, who has always considered himself a devout Mahlerite, must confess that a first hearing of his Sixth Symphony performed by the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra under Mr. Mitropoulos's direction in Carnegie Hall last night brought with it a temporary defection.

Although dubbed by Mahler himself as "tragic" symphony, this listener could find little in the work which required seventy minutes in traversal to justify this appellation. For all the elaborate symbolism which has been associated with its cow-bells and hammer-blows, the former supposedly suggesting unutterable loneliness, the latter, the ineluctable blows of fate, very little that is genuinely affecting and first-rate musically is to be heard in this expansive product.

In none of his other symphonies is one made so aware of the composer's eclecticism. Some of his ideas come straight out of Schubert, including the principal theme of the first movement of the "Unfinished" Symphony. But not only Schubert but Bruckner and even Richard Strauss enter largely into his thematic scheme and are dealt with at length. Mahler's well known affection for march rhythms is exploited ad infinitum in both the first and last movements with fatiguing results; for the subject matter utilized is incredibly banal.

The best movement is the Andante moderato, in which the serenely bucolic scene depicted is peopled by sentimentally inclined beings. There are characteristically ironic touches, too, in the Scherzo. But the monumentally conceived finale, which takes twenty-nine minutes to unfold, is Mahler at his most magniloquent and tiresome.

What can be admired unreservedly is the orchestration, which is superb throughout the symphony. Combinations which must have sounded startling when the symphony was first heard in 1906 are still strikingly effective and highly original even today. But despite the truly overwhelming mastery of his technical resources revealed, this is the weakest and most commonplace of Mahler symphonies.

Nothing but praise is due Mr. Mitropoulos for this exhaustive discourse of a highly exacting work, which was conducted without benefit of a score and was fully deserving of the prolonged applause and cheers bestowed upon it by the audience. The reviewer regrets that because of the late hour he was only able to hear a few measures of Mr. Levant's interpretation of Gershwin's Piano Concerto.

JEROME D. BOHM, *N. Y. Herald-Tribune*

The gigantic, 70-minute Sixth Symphony of Mahler was performed for the first time in this country at Carnegie Hall last evening, and the demonstration afterward for Dimitri Mitropoulos and the Philharmonic-Symphony suggested your reviewer was not the only one who found it a profoundly moving experience.

Since earlier and later works of Mahler are known here, the piece merely confirms what we already knew rather than discloses new aspects of the composer. The staggering instrumentation of the Sixth has been matched in other works. Mahler's morbid sensitivity to combinations of instrumental tone has been revealed elsewhere. His preference for emotional impact rather than formal design also has been demonstrated in his "Lied von der Erde," in that unforgettable passage for the tenor—"Dunkel ist das Leben, ist der Tod." And in fact the final movement of the Sixth is

precisely that mood of overpowering melancholy stretched out to thirty minutes' length. Yet Mahler's stylized despair also is music of such beauty that it leaves the listener depressed, but curiously exhilarated. It is a quality to be found in Mahler's contemporaries, in the febrile, introspective writing of Stefan Zweig; it is the expression of a neurotic civilization, an inbred culture that achieved craftsmanship and refinement at the cost of overstrained nerves.

The program ended with George Gershwin's Concerto in F, with Oscar Levant playing the solo part dextrously. I cannot help thinking that the juxtaposition of the two works by so imaginative a musician as Mr. Mitropoulos was not merely a coincidence.

The Concerto is crude, brash, unpolished in almost every attribute in which the Mahler Sixth reveals excellence; but it has an all-important power to touch the hearts and emotions of listeners. The merit of the symphony is mature sophistication; that of the Concerto is youthful energy. Mahler was the magnificent autumn of Viennese music. The musical mathematicians who followed were dry leaves falling from a plant that ceased to flower. It may be that Gershwin is the imperfect, tentative budding of an equally magnificent plant which some of us may live to see in bloom.

JOHN BRIGGS, *N. Y. Post*, (Copyright 1947)

The first performance in America of Mahler's Sixth Symphony was given by Dimitri Mitropoulos and the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra last night in Carnegie Hall. This performance brought cheers and long-sustained applause in its wake. Mr. Mitropoulos kept returning to the stage, bowing graciously, at last gesturing to the orchestra to rise and bow with him. And indeed it would be hard to imagine the symphony played more brilliantly, theatrically, as is its due, and with such immense fortissimos that some supersensitive souls were dumbfounded. But the multitude was delighted, and the performance a triumph for composer and conductor.

And what of the symphony, per se?

Mahler averred that he detested program music, that an audience must reach its verdict on the basis of its reactions to the music as music, and not because of some story or special meaning connected with it. If we take the Sixth Symphony from this standpoint it is clear that like every one of Mahler's overextended works in the form it is of uneven merit in the different parts. The first movement of the Sixth is weak, banal in its thematic material, repetitious, anything but convincing in its medley of tragical march rhythms and bucolic tones. The best movement is certainly the slow one.

It has pleasant if commonplace and harmonically uninteresting melodies, and a lofty mood. The melodies soar and foliate more continuously and with less sagging in the middle than is usual with Mahler. There are noble effects for horns and answering trumpets, where the music seems to ascend and to unfold like a vision. No doubt that this is one of the finest lyrical movements that Mahler penned.

Musically it is the summit of the symphony. The scherzo affects again the *ländler* style and the peasant accent, with the false innocence that it often pleases this composer to assume, as if he were saying, "See how

naive, how gay, how innocent and pure of heart I, the tragic, the fated one, can be!" This becomes trite and tiresome, and the repetitions onerous.

The finale is three times as long again—incredibly drawn out, inflated, redundant in the way admirably described by Richard Strauss when he said that Mahler "dampened his fortissimos" and "smothered his effects in the last movement." Everything comes in, all the melodies, motives, developments, all the instruments, which are multitudinous. The orchestra includes doubled horns, augmented trumpets, trombones, woodwinds, cowbells and a hammer—fortunately without a sickle, or Mr. Mitropoulos might be in the custody of the FBI at this very moment.

Now it appears, despite Mahler's coyness on the subject, that this symphony has an underlying program, and one that is deeply tragic. This is unfortunate, because the finale sounds very brilliant, indeed triumphant. Undertones of tragedy are lost in the din and the commotion, the hosannas of the brass, the flamboyant melodies that soar from strings, horns and what not, and reach climax upon climax. The audience seemed to feel victorious too. Perhaps they had not read the program book.

Regardless of these constructions, one is constrained to conclude that this is on the whole a patchy, diffuse and uneven symphony, with the customary bombast and inequality between its pretensions and actual ideas. One more symphony by the grandoise Mahler.

The symphony was followed by a work which on the whole has more originality and inventiveness in it. We mean George Gershwin's Concerto for piano and orchestra, played smashingly and with new authority and power by Oscar Levant as soloist. But the concerto seemed to have caught one bad contagion from the symphony. Its whole performance was exaggerated in scale. In the middle movement it missed a large measure of the poetry with which it was invested in more than one performance that we heard from Gershwin himself.

The piece was over-played, over-blown, over-climaxed. Now that the very gifted Mr. Levant has shown his ample mastery of its pianism, let him please give it more intimate and imaginative treatment when next he plays the work and let not Mr. Mitropoulos conduct Gershwin as if he were Mahler.

OLIN DOWNES, *N. Y. Times*

Taking music for granted can be a temptation in a city which has as much of it as New York; but in what other art could the violent contrast of last night's Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra concert in Carnegie Hall exist side by side? Gustav Mahler, over-driven and introverted; George Gershwin, easy-going and extroverted, each portrayed by a self-likeness as distinctive as a thumbprint.

This audience had the experience of hearing a Mahler symphony—the sixth—which is not merely unfamiliar, as most of his still are, but actually new to this country. Some opinion holds it the weakest of the nine, which might be an explanation; but it is hardly so inferior to the others that no one should have ventured it in the forty-one years since it was written. The oversight, if such it may be called, was rectified by Dimitri Mitropoulos last night.

To one who finds the best of Mahler's symphonic works patchy and insufficiently worked over, only one element of the occasion was truly ab-

sorbing — the consistently magnificent workmanship of Mitropoulos. Phenomenal memories are not new to us; but Mitropoulos left one incredulous of the blueprint he drew for the orchestra with no score in sight. (There was none for the Gershwin, either.)

This symphony has a lovely songful slow movement—and very little else that is not dismally over-written. The finale alone is a twenty-six minute morceau—a time span multiplied by the repetitious elaboration of ideas mostly dreary and second class.

There is scarcely a page that doesn't have its quota of ingenuities, some of them still unique with Mahler, but the totality suggests a completed jig-saw puzzle of an unintelligible design. The ultimate paradox is that the audience received the playing with remarkable enthusiasm.

IRVING KOLODIN, *New York Sun*

That so tremendous a work as Gustav Mahler's Sixth Symphony should have waited 41 years after its European premiere for an American performance is a curious reflection upon the ways of our musical world. This symphony is the autobiography of a great soul; and its subjectivity of style is at once its strength and weakness. Mahler, like Balzac, simply poured himself onto paper, with little regard for academic laws or the emotional reserves of the bourgeoisie.

This is torrential music, filled with the horror of death; the desperate resistance of a creative spirit unwilling to surrender to final oblivion; the struggles of a mind which longs for eternal peace and yet is still torn by doubts. In listening to it, as in listening to the music of Wagner, one either surrenders to the hypnotic spell and understands, or one closes one's ears, and hears only turgid rhetoric instead of the heartbreaking eloquence with which the score is filled.

Purely as an achievement of formal development and orchestration the Sixth Symphony is monumental. The use of cowbells to symbolize the peace of mountain heights, of the celesta, glockenspiel and other coloristic devices never cheapens the work. And the almost unprecedented battery of brass and percussion enables the composer to create a whole new vocabulary of sonority. The exquisite melodic curve of the slow movement and the ghostly trills of the finale represent string writing at its subtlest. And the chorale passages in the deep brass are overwhelmingly majestic. The symphony is tender, savage, capricious, rebellious by turns; almost every human emotion is expressed in this dramatic poem. Yet even the gigantic finale is logically worked out; the length of the work is inevitable, like that of Schubert.

Mr. Mitropoulos conducted magnificently, and the orchestra insisted on his taking the first few bows alone. The tremendous ovation was richly deserved by the conductor, the orchestra—and the music!

ROBERT SABIN, *Musical America*

MAHLER'S SIXTH

Rare Symphonic Work Impresses Critic in First American Performance

By WARREN STOREY SMITH

The following article appeared in the *Boston Post* on December 21, 1947 and is reprinted by permission of the *Boston Post*.

That we are too familiar with certain important works and woefully ignorant of others was the burden of last week's discourse. The compositions chosen to point the moral were Handel's "Messiah," immediately impending from the Handel and Haydn Society, and Mozart's "Idomeneo," which we get this afternoon, at the Opera House, from the New England Opera Theatre. The point could have been made just as well by citing two symphonies, each their composer's sixth, one of which had just been played here for the hundredth time (speaking in round numbers), while the other was receiving in New York its first American performances. The pieces in question? Tchaikovsky's "Pathetic" and the so-called "Tragic" Symphony of Mahler.

Back in 1933 Dr. Koussevitsky proudly announced his intention of playing the only Mahler Symphony still unknown in this country, but it remained for his one-time protege, Dimitri Mitropoulos, as acting conductor of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony, to turn the trick. Some difficulty with the Symphony's Leipzig publisher was the reason given for Koussevitsky's failure to come across with the threatened premiere. Mitropoulos had his troubles, too, but they were slightly different. Mahler's music is now in the public domain, but it seems that the orchestra parts of the Sixth went up in smoke when Leipzig was bombed. Scores of the work are scarce, but one was forwarded from London and from it the parts were copied. And so, 41 years and six months after the Sixth was first heard, at Essen, the brilliant and indefatigable Greek maestro gave it to the United States. There were three performances, on Dec. 11, 12 and 13, and it was the last of these that your deeply impressed correspondent heard, as one of a Carnegie Hall capacity audience that received the work with cheers and shouts of "Bravo," fully deserved by composer, director and orchestra.

Even in Europe performances of the Mahler Sixth have been few and far between. From the very outset, it was destined to be the black sheep of the Mahler flock. Not because it was weak—it is, in fact, one of the most firmly-knit, most consistently powerful of his creations—but because, unlike its fellows, it bids us not to hope but to despair. There are, of course, relieving episodes: the slow movement is an idyll, serenely beautiful; the second subject of the otherwise somber first movement has sweep and passion; the trio of what may be termed the grimmest of symphonic scherzos, is pleasant, if not exactly gay. But whereas the other eight symphonies and "The Song of the Earth" have their bitter, their sorrowful or their ironic pages, they nevertheless all end in major, whether the mood be one of triumph, elation, calm resignation or blissful contentment. The Sixth alone withholds this ultimate consolation.

"The symphonic gradations and climaxes of the final movement," writes Bruno Walter, Mahler's most devoted disciple, "resemble in their dismal power the towering waves of the ocean that rush at the ship and wreak destruction." Nor does Mahler soften the blow through a merciful brevity, as does Tchaikovsky in the finale of the "Pathetic." On the contrary, this concluding movement lasts close on half an hour, with only a passage here and there to offset the prevailing gloom. Without resorting to hyperbole, you can call it both terrible and terrifying. It has at times a nightmarish quality. Were a contemporary composer possessed of Mahler's remarkable powers, both of musical invention and of orchestration, he might thus paint the darkest side of our unhappy day. The three New York audiences that cheered the symphony could hardly have enjoyed this finale. Enjoy is not the word. Let us rather say that they responded instinctively to something by which a more innocent generation would have been shocked and repelled. In fact, we know that in the past the Sixth has had this very effect.

Like most of the Mahler symphonies, the Sixth calls for a huge orchestra —incidentally, Mr. Mitropoulos conducted it, as he does everything, from memory—and included among the percussion instruments are cowbells, (used with enchanting effect in the Andante, as a symbol of loneliness), a "rute" (a sort of a birch brush applied to the bass drum) and a hammer. "Thus Fate knocks at the door," said Beethoven of the opening of his Fifth Symphony. In the Mahler Sixth it strikes us down.

AN AMERICAN BRUCKNER PREMIERE

HOOSIERS INTRODUCE FOURTH (ORIGINAL VERSION)

Fort Wayne, Indiana, Jan. 21 and 22, 1948

This week has brought another big achievement by the Ft. Wayne Philharmonic Orchestra of some 80 amateur and semi-professional musicians.

Under the energetic guidance of Director Hans Schwieger, the orchestra won critical acclaim Tuesday and Wednesday with an American premiere of Bruckner's Fourth Symphony in its original unedited version. The two concerts represented not only a big forward stride for the orchestra itself, they also indicated increasing demand by the Philharmonic's audience for more and more substantial music.

"I wouldn't have dared to present the Bruckner two years ago," Mr. Schwieger told me. "We used to do things like 'Carmen' excerpts or Liszt's 'Les Preludes.' Nowadays I'd put them on a pop concert program," he added.

HENRY BUTLER, *The Indianapolis Times*

Awe and reverence were apparent in Mr. Schwieger's conducting as he guided the orchestra and the audience through the massive tonal edifice reared by the devout and simple-hearted Austrian. It was a reading founded on a deep-seated realization of the power and the glory inherent in the music.

In the first movement of his "Fourth" Bruckner meditates now and then on some of the beauties of nature. The "Scherzo" leads the listeners out of the cathedral and lets them disport themselves for a time in the company of hunters and happy Austrian peasants. The greater part of the work, however, is impregnated with profound mysticism. Bruckner's "Fourth" is filled with nobility and loftiness of utterance. It is, to borrow Bruno Walter's apt expression, "a kind of musical Gothicism." Brahms, it is true, called Bruckner a "fraud," and Eduard Hanslick laughed the peasant from Upper Austria to scorn; but there is reason to believe that Brahms knew better, and some scholars are convinced that Hanslick was not completely honest in his diatribes.

The playing of the orchestra was not always accurate, and the tone was sometimes lacking in the sumptuousness which the character of the composition requires. Nevertheless, Mr. Schwieger imbued his reading of the symphony with warmth, sincerity and devotion. His feeling for vitality of rhythm was keen to the highest degree, and his thorough acquaintance with the structure of the work in all its many details kept him from presenting a gnarled and misshapen performance such as is bound to result when a conductor with no insight into Bruckner's way of writing undertakes to expound the Austrian master's scores. It was a memorable performance—memorable because of its dignity and its honesty of purpose, memorable because it made history in Fort Wayne and in the United States. The orchestra has never played better.

WALTER A. HANSEN, *The News-Sentinel* (Fort Wayne)

The Bruckner Symphony dates back to the last century, but has suffered from the lack of appreciation long applied to Bruckner's work in general, a neglect nobody seems to understand when said work is given competent performance in a concert hall.

The premiere American performance was better than competent. The array of part-time musicians led by the energetic Mr. Schwieger played the massive score with an alert sincerity that more than compensated for occasional technical flaws in recreating Bruckner's sprawling, cathedral-like structure. Mr. Schwieger's thoroughly informed, carefully prepared reading disclosed both the composer's heavenly vision and the peasant earth on which his feet were planted. He found vitality and character in music too many authorities heedlessly dismiss as simply inflated. It was a masterful achievement.

The young and willing Fort Wayne Orchestra is founded on lines pioneered by the Indianapolis Symphony in its earlier years under Ferdinand Schaefer. Most of its members are gainfully employed at other occupations —in fact, full time positions in local business and industry, are the inducement R. H. Wangerin, manager of the orchestra, uses to bring many qualified musicians to Fort Wayne.

CORBIN PATRICK, *The Indianapolis Star*

The greater portion of the evening was dedicated to the work of Anton Bruckner's Fourth (Romantic) Symphony, in E Flat Major. Bruckner was a Nineteenth Century composer and organist. In this decade when the formless music of moderns receives so much acclaim and attention, it was soul-satisfying to hear the music of a long-neglected man—one who might well be worthy of being called the fourth "B."

Bruckner's conception of music is absolute. His form is classic, as opposed to the oversize-orchestras and impressionism of the Strauss school. That Bruckner was a devoted student of that master of instrumentation, orchestration, and harmony—Wagner—was readily felt. The solidity of structure (especially strings), the breadth of tone, the boldness of contrasts, and the variety of coloring were nerve-tingling. Yet it was all subsumed under the framework of the sonata form. This is genius: a composer who binds himself in chains, and then proceeds to caper as an acrobat with a moving counterpoint. The first movement contained a triple counterpoint. Shades of "Die Meistersinger!" Yet of far greater importance is the fact that in this symphony are united intellect and emotion. One knew that this music was created by a person of depth. The themes, so simple, were always bold, and the last movement, militant. To follow the intricacies of the counterpoint demands tremendous concentration. But even without so doing, the deep faith and conviction of Bruckner himself shone forth.

Mr. Schwieger's conducting, and the visible earnestness of the orchestra-members, were effective throughout. Mr. Schwieger never is a time-beater. Nor is he a mere showman—despite his prodigious memory. While details never escape him, he is not a detail-hounder. His aim, and ability, is always to convey. This is because he grasps the inner meaning—intellectual and ideal—of the composer. The orchestra responded well in most instances, especially the strings, winds, and French horns. That Mr. Schwieger had the courage to undertake a premiere — in America — performance of a neglected work shows the possibility of having eclectic tastes without lower-

ing standards. Schumann is credited with saying that his own development began when he got it into his head that there were other countries than Germany in the world. Perhaps Fort Wayne's musical development has begun in earnest, now that we realize that there are other composers than Beethoven, Brahms, and all the other familiar names. For this, thank you, Mr. Schwieger.

ROBERT V. SCHNABEL, *Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette*

LIST OF BRUCKNER AND MAHLER PERFORMANCES

SEASON 1947-1948

BRUCKNER:

II Kansas City Philharmonic Orchestra, Efrem Kurtz, Conductor; Jan. 27 and 28, 1948.

III New Haven Symphony Orchestra, Paul Hindemith, Conductor; Jan. 12, 1948.

IV (Original Version) Fort Wayne Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Schwieger, Conductor; Jan. 21 and 22, 1948.

VII Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, Conductor; Feb. 20 and 22, 1948.

VIII Boston Symphony Orchestra, Serge Koussevitsky, Conductor; Boston, Nov. 7 and 8, 1947; New York, Nov. 13, 1947; Boston, Dec. 30, 1947. (Last performance broadcast over A.B.C.)
Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, Conductor; Dec. 11 and 13, 1947.
Philharmonic Symphony Society of New York, Bruno Walter, Conductor; Jan. 22 and 23, 1948.

STRING QUINTET Little Orchestra Society, Thomas K. Sherman, Conductor; New York, Nov. 3, 1947.
Friends of Music, San Diego and La Jolla, Calif.

TE DEUM The Mozart Orchestra, assisted by Henry Street Settlement Music School Chorus, Robert Scholz, Conductor; New York, Mar. 14, 1948.

MAHLER:

I Cincinnati Symphony, Thor Johnson, Conductor; Jan. 2 and 3, 1948.
Kansas City Philharmonic Orchestra, Efrem Kurtz, Conductor.
Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Reginald Stewart, Conductor; Oct. 29, 1947.

II Boston Symphony Orchestra, Leonard Bernstein, Conductor; Harvard and Radcliffe Chorus; Feb. 6 and 7, 1948.
Cincinnati Symphony, Fritz Busch, Conductor; Cincinnati May Festival.

IV Kansas City Philharmonic Orchestra, Efrem Kurtz, Conductor; February 1948.
Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Fabien Sevitzky, Conductor; Eleanor Steber, Soloist; Feb. 28 and 29, 1948.

LIEDER EINES FAHRENDEN GESELLEN
Columbus Symphony Orchestra, Izler Solomon, Conductor; Carol Brice, Soloist; Feb. 17, 1948.
Rochester Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, Conductor; Dorothy Maynor, Soloist; Dec. 4, 1947.

VI Philharmonic Symphony Society of N. Y., Dimitri Mitropoulos, Conductor; December 11, 12, and 13, 1947.

VIII Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, Conductor; December 1948.
Hollywood Bowl Symphony, Eugene Ormandy, Conductor; Summer, 1948.

DAS LIED VON DER ERDE
Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, Conductor; Nov. 6 and 8, 1947.
Philharmonic Symphony Society of N. Y., Bruno Walter, Conductor; Jan. 15, 16, and 18, 1948. (Last performance broadcast over C.B.S.)

KINDERTOTENLIEDER
Little Symphony Orchestra Society, Thomas K. Sherman, Conductor; Karin Branzell, Soloist; New York, December 1, 1947.

MAHLER'S FIFTH ON RECORDS

PROBLEM CHILD

By GABRIEL ENGEL

The following review was published in the *Saturday Review of Literature* November 29, 1947, and is reprinted by permission.

Dazzling orchestral clarity and a spirit of high jubilation are the most striking musical and emotional indices of Mahler's extremely polyphonic "Fifth Symphony," just released by Columbia in this superb recording under Bruno Walter. Listeners acquainted with his earlier symphonies (the "First," "Second," "Fourth," and "Ninth" have been published in fine recordings in this country) may wonder how so sudden and apparently total an upheaval in the composer's human and artistic make-up came about. The explanation of the amazing transparency of the massive orchestration is simple. Fifth in number, the work is, from the viewpoint of orchestral idiom, in fact Mahler's last symphony. The following note dated 1911, written shortly before his death, proves that he brought to the scoring of this "problem-child" of his fantasy, all the technical skill and maturity of artistic judgment he had gathered throughout a busy life's vast symphonic labors.

> The "Fifth" is finished. I have been compelled to reorchestrate it completely. I cannot understand how I could have at that time (1902) written so much like a beginner. Clearly the routine I had acquired in the first four symphonies failed me altogether, as if the new message called for a new technique.

Spiritually, the "Fifth" seems only at first a revolutionary Mahler expression. Repeated hearings reveal it to be a closely related sequel to the earlier symphonies—a comparatively gigantic follower, to be sure, but nevertheless a symphony undeniably of the same basic emotional, as well as musical, fibre. The "Fifth" employs no themes transplanted entire from Mahler songs, as do the earlier symphonies. Its method of melodic generation is more elemental .Its principal themes arise out of subtle paraphrases of melodic fragments, dominant motives, borrowed from the Rueckert songs composed by Mahler before the "Fifth."

Structurally, the first movement, the Scherzo, and the stupendous rondo-finale are magnified re-creations of the corresponding sections in the preceding symphonies. Beside this frankly joyous scherzo, which might be called the symphonic apotheosis of the Viennese waltz, the earlier scherzos seem almost miniatures, parodies of joy, qualified by frequent touches of bitter, spiteful irony. Like the "Second," the "Fifth" begins with a funeral march. In the former the entire movement is swayed by the tragic drama of the "Death Celebration." In the "Fifth," however, the funeral march is in the main a serene song of sorrowful resignation, as brief as a prologue, uncomplicated by symphonic development. Culminating in a song based

on a phrase borrowed from one of the "Kindertotenlieder," where it is significantly set to the words "Freudenlicht der Welt" ("joyful light of the world"), it suggests the happy goal to which the work aspires.

The Adagietto separates the scherzo and rondo-finale like an exquisite elfin spirit between giant elemental forces. It is a reverie of loneliness, of world-abandonment. Significantly, its yearning first melody is an unmistakable paraphrase of the famous Mahler-Rueckert song "Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen" ("I am become a recluse from the world"). The two possess undeniable kinship of content. Strings and harp are the only instruments used in the Adagietto.

Just as Beethoven, in the finale of the "Eroica," had transformed the normally disjointed variation-form into a mighty framework suited to the weightiest revelations, so Mahler, in this rondo-finale, evolved a mighty integral structure, equal to the fullest symphonic formulation of spiritual triumph. From the chief motivating elements of the preceding movements he constructs two vitally rhythmic themes, not for a mere rondo, but for a rondo-like structure into which he builds a masterful double-fugue on those themes, crowning the whole with a magnificent chorale.

As for the musician who was at once the heart and mind behind this splendid first recording of Mahler's great "Fifth Symphony," Bruno Walter has performed a true labor of love. For him this means more than just another recording. It is his supreme tribute to the loftiest manifestation of his revered master's genius.

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA PERFORMS MAHLER'S FIRST UNDER CLAPP'S DIRECTION IOWA CITY, IOWA, JULY 16, 1947

From the first measures through the final surging moments of this arresting composition by one of symphonic literature's most inventive creators, the orchestra noted and made proper mention of each of the varying moods, the tuneful melodies, the attention-holding harmonies, the emphasizing repetitions—and then managed to weld these many musical moments into a cohesive whole that made genuine symphonic sense.

Perhaps the one element above all others that makes of the playing of Mahler compositions such genuine experiences on the University of Iowa campus is that Doctor Clapp somehow manages to transmit to his student-faculty musicians a considerable measure of his own deep love for that composer's works. In other words, the university musicians quite obviously enjoy themselves as they play, and thus enjoying are better able to win the audience's pleasure, too.

RON TALLMAN, *Iowa City Press-Citizen*

Conductor Philip Greeley Clapp can take a deep breath and rest in the knowledge that last night's concert of the summer symphony orchestra held in the main lounge of Iowa Union was a success . . .

Following the intermission, Clapp paced the orchestra through the difficult Mahler Symphony No. 1 in D major. Professor Clapp, is certainly an enthusiastic admirer of Gustav Mahler.

The music was descriptive, gay at times, sorrowful at others. With every change of emotion, the orchestra projected the feeling with a force that held the audience captivated.

DICK DAVIS, *Daily Iowan*

MAHLER'S SECOND SYMPHONY IN NEW YORK AND BOSTON

BERNSTEIN DEDICATES HIS FIRST PERFORMANCES OF RESURRECTION SYMPHONY TO MEMORY OF FIORELLO H. LAGUARDIA

City Symphony Orchestra — Conductor: Leonard Bernstein; Soloists: Ellabelle Davis, Soprano, and Nan Merriman, Mezzo-Soprano; Chorus: Schola Cantorum, Hugh Ross, Conductor — City Center of Music and Drama, New York (Sept. 22 and 24, 1947 — Opening Concerts of the Season)

On the afternoon of Sept. 22, 1947, Fiorello H. LaGuardia, the man regarded by many the best mayor New York ever had, was laid to rest. He was esteemed not only by his friends but by his political enemies as well, for his was that rare political genius that had translated ideals into action. He loved people and he loved the finer things of life. A passionate devotee of good music, one of his fondest dreams was the establishment of a great municipal hall where the economically less favored might attend at low cost excellent performances of the masterworks of the realm of music, operatic and symphonic. The City Center of Music and Drama was the realization of that dream. Therefore it was peculiarly fitting for Leonard Bernstein to dedicate his splendid heartfelt reading of Mahler's monumental *Resurrection Symphony* to the memory of the man who had given so much of himself to the spiritual betterment of his fellow citizens, as evidenced by this very temple of music which his dynamic personality had called into being. Here the music lover of modest means might share just such experiences of beauty as this great symphony, a work that had meant so much to Fiorello H. LaGuardia. In his moving, spontaneous prefatory tribute, Mr. Bernstein said:

> "We are gathered here tonight largely because of the devotion and foresight of one man. That man is not with us tonight, for he was buried this afternoon. Therefore, although this program has already been dedicated to a great cause, I should like to rededicate it—not to the resurrection of his soul, for he does not need that from us. No man who gave and received so much love in his lifetime could possibly need it from us. But rather we should dedicate it to the things he stood for and fought for, along with those two others so recently taken from us, Wendell Willkie and Franklin Roosevelt. Let us dedicate our performance of this great *Resurrection Symphony* of Mahler to the resurrection of our world, that it may become the kind of world he hoped for and struggled for with his very life."

To venture the *Second* of Mahler, a composer still hotly debated thirty-six years after his death, with any but an orchestra of major caliber requires a conductor of more than ordinary courage and ability. But to per-

form this difficult and gigantic work at an opening concert of any but the most seasoned band calls for something beyond the proverbial angel's tread; it demands a kind of daring born of flaming enthusiasm. Clearly such was the *daemon* that swayed the young orchestra led by a young conductor when the New York Symphony began its season with Mahler's *Resurrection Symphony*. Under the circumstances a merely good performance could justly have been a source of keen satisfaction to its participants; the actual stirring performance can be hailed as a major accomplishment . So completely had the youthful leader communicated his enthusiasm to the players, soloists, and chorus that the fiery playing and singing more than compensated for some shortcomings of polished detail. Cold, chiseled perfection would have been a sad exchange, if achieved at the sacrifice of such overwhelming warmth and zeal. The principal rough spots evident at the first performance were ironed out to a great extent when the work was repeated. Mr. Bernstein built up the climaxes with amazingly mature skill; none of the highlights of the work, whether dramatic or lyric, seemed to elude him. He painted its darker moments in especially sombre colors, its message of hope in truly radiant hues. As the strings sang and the music soared this listener realized that *Gustav Mahler—Song Symphonist* was indeed a happy choice for the title of the Mahler biography by Gabriel Engel.

Ellabelle Davis and Nan Merriman proved to be excellent artists. Miss Merriman's singing of *Urlicht* will long be remembered as an outstanding rendition. She had obviously mastered the deepest implications of the text, so tellingly did she convey its meaning to the audience. Beneath her flawless diction, the vibrant warmth of her voice, and her intelligent interpretation the unutterable loneliness of the great soul from which this song sprang found poignantly eloquent tongue.

The gusto of the choral rendition revealed the choir's own pleasurable participation in the music. Its almost hushed entrance, its expectant pronouncement of the passage, "*Bereite Dich*", and of the climactic close (sung rather than shouted), its invariably clear enunciation, these were virtues of achievement reflecting great credit upon Mr. Hugh Ross, distinguished conductor of the Schola Cantorum.

The public, which, in the words of the late William J. Henderson, is the final jury, rose to its feet, cheering and whistling its approval at the end of both performances.

MAHLER'S RESURRECTION SYMPHONY RETURNS TO BOSTON AFTER THIRTY YEARS

Wins Acclaim of Critics and Audience

Boston Symphony Orchestra—Conductor: Leonard Bernstein; Soloists: Ellabelle Davis, Soprano, and Suzanne Sten, Contralto; Chorus: Harvard Glee Club and Radcliffe Choral Society, G. Wallace Woodworth, Director—Symphony Hall, Boston, Feb. 6 and 7, 1948.

Why it has taken a generation to hear the "Resurrection" Symphony again one may only wonder, considering how many piddling items have turned up in that time. Let us give thanks that we have heard it at long last, for it is a masterpiece of splendor and noble vision and of a scope that can only be called tremendous.

This is characteristic Mahler, full of that composer's painfully sharp

sense of mankind's struggle and aspiration, joy and suffering, and of his unanswerable last question: What is the meaning of Life itself? But the pessimism that overwhelmed Mahler in his later years of the Ninth Symphony and "Das Lied von der Erde" was yet to come when he penned the magnificent and profound pages of the Second Symphony.

He ended it upon a mood of shining hope and reassurance, of eternal life to come after the Last Judgment which his mighty horns, trumpets and trombones so impressively herald. The sense of mystery, so essential a part of Mahler's musical expression, permeates the first movement and most of the scherzo. The "Primal Light" section wherein, on words taken from the verses of "Youth's Magic Horn," man asks for light to guide him, is of a really poignant beauty. As for the majestic finale, that comes as close, I think, to anything one will ever hear in suggesting The Last Trump and the choir of the Heavenly Host.

Yesterday's performance was the finest work I have yet heard from Bernstein, who has caught the spirit and the style of Mahler. He showed he can handle triumphantly the huge apparatus Mahler needed to express himself. Bernstein further achieved a personal and an emotionally overwhelming performance. This was no less than masterly and deserved every cheer and round of handclapping of the noisy ovation which followed the last E-flat major chord.

Miss Davis and Miss Sten sang with absolute beauty of tone and style, and the chorus produced a marvelous pianissimo, thanks to the excellent preparation of G. Wallace Woodworth. The orchestra, especially the hard-driven brass, was magnificent. Very likely this will prove the high point of the Symphony season.

CYRUS DURGIN, *The Boston Globe*

It is difficult to write calmly and impossible to write adequately about what took place at Symphony Hall yesterday afternoon. Before an audience that largely did not know the music or possibly that such a piece existed, Leonard Bernstein restored to the repertory of the Boston Symphony Orchestra the Second or "Resurrection" Symphony of Gustav Mahler, previously heard here at two special concerts under Dr. Muck just 30 years ago. Mr. Bernstein's triumph, and incidentally Mahler's was no less dramatic than the Symphony itself.

It was obvious all along that Mr. Bernstein had orchestra and audience in the hollow of his hand, and the music in his head and in his heart. Through the three purely instrumental movements the spell worked by piece and performance was unbroken. Then Suzanne Sten added her contralto voice to the orchestra and sang, with deep devotion, the "Urlicht" (Primal Light), that is the key and clue to the work, the explanation of that which has gone before and of the tremendous things that are to come.

The finale, which Mahler has directed should follow without pause, has been described as a vast tonal fresco of the Day of Judgment. The orchestra sounds the crack of Doom; there are calls from the horns; there is the tread of the hosts marching to the Judgment Seat. The chorale of the funereal first movement is recalled and measures about to be sung are played by the instruments. The voice of doom is heard again and again and after it those amazing bird-calls, in flute and piccolo, that "symbolize the last living sound of a mortal world about to be dissolved." Then, as

from the other world, the chorus—ah, so softly—intones the words "Aufersteh'n, ja auferstehn wirst du, mein Staub" (You will rise again, my dust), and the Symphony begins to move toward its climax.

Yesterday this sublime setting of Klopstock's "Resurrection Ode" was entrusted to the choirs of Harvard and Radcliffe, too few in numbers, because of the restrictions of the stage, but mighty in valor. With the chorus was Ellabelle Davis, to sing the measures for soprano solo, as these particular ears have never heard them, and Miss Sten once more entered the picture, with Mahler's own words, "Believe, my heart, you have lost nothing." All too quickly came the overpowering conclusion, in which the bells peal and the very gates of Heaven are opened. When the audience recovered itself, pandemonium reigned. The emotional storm which had slowly gathered was finally released. And, you can take my word for it, no such excitement has been seen in Symphony Hall in many a year.

WARREN STOREY SMITH, *The Boston Post*

Mr. Bernstein achieved a major triumph yesterday with the performance of Mahler's immense Second Symphony. It was an interpretation that caught fire from the first stormy measures to the glorious finale where the composer unleashes all the musical forces at his command. This achievement was the more remarkable in that, owing to the subscription audience, the stage could not be enlarged, and the augmented orchestra, chorus and soloists had to squeeze in as best they could. It must have been very cramping for the players in the hour and a quarter the Symphony takes, but they did their duty with a will and turned in some superlative playing.

Mahler's genius was a strange one and he did not always succeed in pulling off his grandoise designs. The Second Symphony, however, is uniformly and in the end overwhelmingly successful. It is my feeling that too much is written about Mahler's music in the shape of programs for it. Does it really help us in listening to the third movement to read all about St. Anthony and the fishes and the vulgarity of the world? Something, of course, about "Des Knaben Wunderhorn" and the texts of the last two movements should be noted, but for the rest I found Paul Stefan's program mainly pretentious nonsense. Whereas I enjoyed the music thoroughly and was never bored for one instant.

Some have professed to find the third movement one of the finest things in all Mahler, but the truth is that the whole Symphony abounds in these happy touches. For others the ineffable peace of the fourth movement will have been one of the most moving things in the Symphony. And here, incidentally, the effect was enhanced by the beautiful singing of Suzanne Sten. Mr. Bernstein secured a perfect accompaniment for her, and the result was peculiarly felicitous.

ALEXANDER WILLIAMS, *The Boston Herald*

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WER HAT DIES LIEDLEIN ERDACHT?—Mary Paull, Soprano, Kenneth Hieber, Accompanist. Vanguard 3.

"SALOME" AT CITY CENTER

LASZLO HALASZ CONDUCTS MEMORABLE PERFORMANCES

Although *Chord and Discord* devotes its efforts primarily towards promoting increased public interest in the music of Bruckner and Mahler, it has on occasion included articles calling attention to unrelated musical events of outstanding importance and merit. Indubitably of this category was the series of presentations of SALOME during the spring and fall seasons of 1947 by the New York City Opera Company at the New York City Center of Music and Drama. Here was an inspired group heroically working on an all too slender budget, yet with results so successful that they might challenge the best achievements of a long established operatic institution of foremost rank.

The critical keynote of this fine production was struck in the spring of 1947 by Mr. Biancolli of the N. Y. World Telegram, who wrote following the first performance: "Anyway, the City Center Troupe has finally hit the operatic jackpot with Strauss' SALOME—and one can only applaud its courage and cheer its success."

Appropriately, therefore, the N. Y. City Opera Company opened its fall season on Sept. 25 with the Strauss classic, "one of the toughest scores in the repertory", according to Mr. Biancolli. Again, as in the spring, critics acclaimed the production as important musical news, while audiences cheered—and with good reason. Here, a reality, at last, was that long cherished dream of the late Fiorello H. La Guardia, the dream of providing the people of the City of New York with the opportunity to hear grand opera produced in the grand manner at prices that the less well-to-do music lover could afford.

At a time when truly great performances of opera in America are sadly conceded by some experts to belong to a faded past, productions conceived in so high a spirit of artistic fervor evoke nostalgic memories of that allegedly vanished operatic grandeur. With this SALOME, however, we are once again experiencing a truly unified production of one of the most complicated modern masterworks of the singing stage, again realizing that music drama as conceived by Wagner need not languish a mere unattainable ideal. We see again that, almost insurmountable obstacles notwithstanding, so long as the work is given due careful preparation, it can be translated into a living reality, stirring our emotions to their very depths. Undoubtedly the most notable feature of SALOME, as presented by the N. Y. City Opera Company, was the complete subordination of each participant to the role in which he or she was cast. Though several of them deserved the rating of "star", yet none assumed the (alas, too familiar) role of a planet trying to outshine the surrounding lesser luminaries.

Among the minor parts, special mention should be made of Norman Scott's movingly beautiful rendition of the lines about Jochanaan: "He is a holy man—He is very gentle. Every day when I bring him food, he thanks me."[1]

William Horne's clear, resonant voice brought out the pathos of the lines of Narraboth, the weak, lovesick, unfortunate Syrian captain. The

[1] "Er ist ein heiliger Mann—Er ist sanft. Jeden Tag den ich ihm zu essen gebe, dankt er mir."

passion in his voice when he sang the passage: "How fair is the Princess Salome this evening."[2] literally rang throughout the hall. Vasso Argyris' portrayal of the same role made Narraboth one of the more important characters of the drama. He sang effectively and acted with great skill. His gradual surrender to the wiles of the young princess, culminating in Narraboth's defiance of the Tetrarch's orders, and his growing expression of despair at Salome's continued efforts to tempt Jochanaan, held the attention of the audience.

Ralph Herbert, the Jokanaan in five performances, uttered his dire predictions and condemnation of the promiscuous Herodias with great power. The clarity of his diction made the words wholly intelligible. He has a beautifully resonant voice. Carlos Alexander as Jokanaan also made the character highly impressive. His acting, singing, and appearance seemed to intensify the Prophet's fanaticism. Substituting for Ralph Herbert on twenty-four hours notice, the twenty-three year old Michael Rhodes, a newcomer to the operatic stage, distinguished himself by his highly intelligent portrayal of Jokanaan. His is a young voice, vigorous, fresh, pleasing. He seemed a somewhat more gentle prophet than the others. Memorable was the religious ectasy he instilled into the lines: "He is in a boat on the sea of Galilee and is speaking to his disciples. Kneel on the shore of the sea and call unto Him. And call Him by name . . ."[3]

Excellent as it was at the very outset, Frederick Jagel's characterization of the lustful, degenerate, neurotic Herod, possessed by a vague, indefinable fear, a role shot through with every nuance of abnormality, has grown steadily more convincing. Through his artistry the character of Herod takes on the significance the poet intended for it as one of the central figures and prime movers of the tragedy. At his debut on Oct. 30th, Edward Molitore made it evident that he had given a great deal of thought to the role of Herod. The Tetrarch's vain attempt to hide from Herodias his fear of the Prophet ("He said nothing against you. Besides he is a very great prophet."),[4] his alarm at the thought that the dead might return ("What! He raises the dead? . . . I forbid him to do that. It would be terrible if the dead returned.");[5] his nervous delight while watching the dance; his pleas that Salome accept almost anything but the head of Jokanaan as a reward for the dance; his complete sense of frustration and despair as he utters the words: "Let them give her what she asks. She is in truth her mother's child."[6]—all these were highlights in his excellent characterization of the unsympathetic Herod. Mr. Molitore has a rich voice; his diction is clear for the most part.

Growing familiarity with the role increased the vividness of Terese Gerson's portrayal of the degenerate Queen. Contempt for Herod swayed her whole being. Voicing this scorn seemed to be of greater moment to this Herodias than avenging Jokanaan's condemnation of her. She almost sneered as she addressed these words to Herod: "My daughter and I are

[2] "Wie schön ist die Prinzessin Salome heute Abend."

[3] "Er ist in einem Nachen auf dem See von Galiläa und redet zu seinen Jüngern. Knie nieder am Ufer des Sees, ruf ihn an und rufe ihn beim Namen . . ."

[4] "Er hat nichts gegen dich gesagt. Überdies ist er ein sehr grosser Prophet."

[5] "Wie, er erweckt die Toten? . . . Ich verbiete ihm, das zu tun. Es wäre schrecklich, wenn die Toten wiederkämen!"

[6] "Man soll ihr geben, was sie verlangt! Sie ist in Wahrheit ihrer Mutter Kind!"

of royal blood. Your father was a camel driver and a thief and a robber to boot."[7] Mary Kreste's characterization of Herodias was wholly convincing. She directed her wrath at Jokanaan. Her determination for revenge never flagged. There was passion in her voice as she urged Salome to insist upon her "pound of flesh." She reveled in her triumph as she told the miserable Herod: "My daughter did the right thing."[8]

The writer does not recall a Salome comparable to Brenda Lewis's. Pleasing to the ear—and, what is so very rare in opera, to the eye as well—this extremely intelligent, superb actress possesses a voice of great beauty, wide range, and extraordinary telling power. To hear a Salome merely sing this difficult part with such ease is an experience rare enough, but to witness, in addition, an exciting interpretation of the Dance of the Seven Veils renders that experience truly unforgettable. Her cajoling of Narraboth into disobeying the Tetrarch's command not to allow anyone to see Jokanaan; the scene with the Prophet; her brooding after Jokanaan spurns her advances (as Pursifal rejects Kundry's); her first seemingly naive request for the head of Jokanaan; her later ferocious demands that Herod live up to his oath; all these dramatic high-spots revealed Miss Lewis as a consummate actress, able to carry her audience with her. She was a naive, yet a cunning, a brooding, neurotically passionate, yet determined Princess of Judea who, despite the sinister, revolting spell in which her soul was hopelessly gripped, did not fail to arouse pity as she sang the words of the epilogue: "The secret of love is greater than the secret of death."[9] Perhaps the suggestion of ultimate redemption in the closing song-like bars of the score is the artist's answer—compassion for even this supreme sinner, finally awakening, though only to the vaguest glimmer, to the enormity of her sin.

The settings designed by H. A. Condell provided an effective background for the sinister plot. Especially impressive were the floating clouds hiding the sickly moon every now and then, creating the impression of a bad omen and lending emphasis to the words at the beginning of the play: "Something terrible will happen."[10]

Leopold Sachse, the stage director, deserves special recognition for the teamwork on the stage—teamwork that lent importance to the drama as drama rather than to the individual singing-actors.

As for the mighty contribution of Laszlo Halasz, artistic director and conductor, it would be difficult indeed to praise too highly his work in unifying the presentation of so exacting a work. His intelligent, emotionally inspired reading of the dramatic score projected its tragic spell with an integrity that seemed to unite stage, orchestra, and listener in one perfect participating experience. His interpretation underlined with ever increasing intensity the sultry, foreboding, tragic atmosphere of the drama, but faintly relieved at the close of the epilogue by the mere suggestion of a motive of redemption.

For the discriminating, rich and poor alike, City Center productions would be a bargain even at considerably higher prices.

[7] "Meine Tochter und ich stammen aus königlichem Blut. Dein Vater war Kameltreiber, dein Vater war ein Dieb und ein Rauber obendrein."

[8] "Meine Tochter hat recht getan."

[9] "Das Geheimnis der Liebe ist grösser als das Geheimnis des Todes."

[10] "Schreckliches wird geschehen."

SYMPHONIC CHRONICLE

A Record of Critical and Popular Reaction

GUSTAV MAHLER: FIRST SYMPHONY

Philadelphia Orchestra, Dimitri Mitropoulos, Conductor, (Robin Hood Dell Concerts); July 27, 1946.

The Mahler Symphony repeated its success of last season. Though some of Mahler's works are adjudged dull, this opus belied its length, in its forthright construction, firmness of melodic line and frequent freshness. Mitropoulos conducted with a keen insight into its musical qualities, and both he and the orchestra won an ovation.

Samuel L. Singer,
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Musically, the most interesting program of the week took place at Robin Hood Dell last night. Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted, with his usual excellence, Schubert's Symphony No. 6, in C Major, and Mahler's first in D Major. Unfortunately, the fact that it was Saturday night kept the attendance down to 3500 for this truly rewarding concert.

It (Mahler's I) is a piece which holds the attention of the listener very closely, without being overly intellectual and without lacking spontaneity. Its seriousness does not exclude sensuous beauty. The second movement, *Kräftig Bewegt*, is particularly attractive, almost light. One welcomes the playing of a work which has all the hallmarks of greatness and is yet so rarely heard.

C. S., *The Philadelphia Record*

Franz Schubert and Gustav Mahler, not often associated on one program, proved verdant pastures of music, where the lyric qualities of each composer, the contemplative passages, and the joyous pulse of life were seized upon by the conductor and communicated with illumination.

There were 3,500 persons on hand to enjoy this music, which was postponed from the regular Wednesday night schedule. They heard the rarely-played Mahler First Symphony in D major, a long work, whose beauties require gifted intuition and a thoughtful, rather than heavy hand, on the part of the conductor. Following the excursions of Mahler into the pensive realm of fancy, where nature and philosophy mix, was a rewarding experience for the audience.

E. E. S., *The Evening Bulletin*

ANTON BRUCKNER: FOURTH SYMPHONY

Philadelphia Orchestra, Dimitri Mitropoulos, Conductor, (Robin Hood Dell Concerts); August 9, 1946.

Bruckner composed with a wide sweep, using all choirs of the orchestra freely, particularly the brass, a good instance being the dancing Scherzo. The first movement has simple themes vigorously treated.

Samuel L. Singer,
The Philadelphia Inquirer

This is not the kind of symphony to send you away whistling and it's easy to understand its lack of popular appeal. But it does leave you with a challenge and the desire to hear it again. Under the masterful baton of Dimitri Mitropoulos and the superb playing of the Dell orchestra, it proved an exciting and stimulating experience.

June Herder,
The Philadelphia Record

As far as Philadelphia is concerned the programming of a Bruckner symphony is an extraordinary event and many have had to form their knowledge and appreciation of this master's accomplishments through available phonographic recordings or occasional radio broadcast from other cities.

It has been said that the length of Bruckner's symphonies militates against their acceptance in the concert repertoire —a specious argument in view of the fact that in the seventh and eighth symphonies of Shostakovich, not to speak of other less-publicized orchestral creations, present-day conductors and audiences have not hesitated to welcome works of an hour or more in duration. In the final analysis, however, it is the worth, rather than the length, of a composition that

should determine its recognition. A piece of great music may consume a long time in performance yet seems short because of its superlative qualities and elements. On the other hand a meretricious work, while only taking a short time to get through, will seem boring and much too long.

For his listing of Bruckner's magnificent fourth symphony at the Dell, Dimitri Mitropoulos is to be heartily thanked. He is one of our American conductors convinced of the high merits of the composer's music and its title to be heard by audiences. . . . From start to finish the symphony's musical content is replete with passages of touching beauty and refreshing force, and each of the four movements supplies its own particular features to stir and delight. In details of construction and orchestration it certifies Bruckner's sure mastery. There are fascinating modulations, remarkably-wrought contrapuntal sections, and themes of stunning contours and patterns. To the attentive listener, unfamiliar with the symphony of Bruckner's music, it will come as a revealing and stimulating experience, the strongest kind of argument that we should have more of the same. For those here who already appreciate the grandeur of the symphony, the occasion will offer gratifying compensation for having had to wait so long for a "flesh and blood" performance of the work in this city.

William E. Smith,
Robin Hood Dell Review

ANTON BRUCKNER:

EIGHTH SYMPHONY

Boston Symphony Orchestra, Serge Koussevitzky, Conductor; Oct. 11 and 12, 1946.

Two strongly contrasting symphonies, Mendelssohn's "Italian" and the Eighth of Anton Bruckner, make up this week's program by the Boston Symphony Orchestra at Symphony Hall. Serge Koussevitsky chose Bruckner's long and massive work as an observance of the 50th anniversary of the composer's death.

Although composed and revised between 1884 and 1890, Bruckner's Eighth has certain aspects that looked considerably ahead of its time. In it you find the same German continuity and logic you find in Brahms or Beethoven, and you find Wagner to be the origin of much of the instrumentation. Yet there is more than that: a certain sense of modernity that led to the more sophisticated and involved style of Mahler and others who followed.

The element native to Bruckner, however, was a sense of emotional naiveté, of splendid visions and unworldliness. That element is on every page of the Eighth Symphony. Here, perhaps, is the fact that has kept Bruckner from achieving wide popularity. It very well may be that concert-goers are still confused by the paradox of naive expression set in a complicated and grandiose style, and that it is hard for them to distinguish between Bruckner's highly developed technic and the provincial simplicity of the man himself.

Cyrus Durgin,
The Boston Daily Globe

According to how you look at it the monumental Symphony of Bruckner was judiciously curtailed or ruthlessly cut. The performance consumed not much over 50 minutes and the piece should last closer to an hour and a quarter. In the case of the Adagio, always the climax of any Bruckner Symphony, it is a shame to omit a single measure. It is all too heavenly. Yet this is a restless age and rather than have his audience grow fidgety a conductor will use the blue pencil. Nevertheless, we have had to endure the entire opening Adagio of Shostakovitch's Eighth Symphony, lasting some 20 minutes; and Bruckner had a great deal more to say and said it a great deal better.

To turn to Bruckner's merits, we have here, as elsewhere, themes of incomparable strength and beauty, wondrous harmonies and magnificent orchestral sonorities. This simple, uncouth man spoke with the voices of Beethoven, Schubert and Wagner, not copying them but paralleling their eloquence with his own. Dr. Koussevitsky gave the Symphony a fervent and devoted reading, one in which the many beauties of the music were fully revealed.

Warren Storey Smith,
The Boston Post

But the essential nobility and spiritual fervor of the man are what remain in the mind after hearing the Eighth Symphony. These qualities were the more deeply impressed on us by the intense and sympathetic interpretation which Dr. Koussevitsky and the orchestra gave of the score.

Alexander Williams,
The Boston Herald

ANTON BRUCKNER: *FIFTH SYMPHONY*

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Desire Defauw, Conductor; Nov. 14 and 15, 1946.

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra dedicated its concert at Orchestra Hall last evening to Anton Bruckner, who died half a century ago last month. In order to demonstrate that the composer really had been one of the notable figures of his day—and is even of ours—Desire Defauw, who conducted, revived his Fifth Symphony, which had not been heard in Orchestra Hall for nearly 40 years.

It had been played in Chicago only once before last night and then under the baton of Frederick Stock, who, we believe, did less well with it than his successor, inasmuch as he omitted to provide the extra instruments of brass which Bruckner added to the finale of his work. In any case, the revival of this massive score was a welcome one, for much of it is fine and noble music, sometimes, to be sure, a little long-winded, but fertile with thematic material of high distinction. . . .

The performance was admirably conceived and executed. Whether the conductor's idea of the score was the most exalted Bruckner cannot be declared, but it did achieve great richness of tone and well molded phrasing. The brass passages were handled with impeccable taste, not made too exuberant until the final moments, when the chorale was chanted fortissimo, with all the stops pulled out.

FELIX BOROWSKI,
The Chicago Sun

It's too bad his (Bruckner's) overzealous friends have made a cult of Bruckner. The great and superior rival of Brahms deserves to be heard more often on his own merits.

C. J. BULLIET,
Chicago Daily News

Both strings and winds had a purity of tone that fell happily on the ear, and at the finale when the brass choir spoke from its lofty place, it made you think there might be something to the Bruckner school holding out for the gentle old Austrian's apocalyptic visions.

CLAUDIA CASSIDY,
Chicago Daily Tribune

GUSTAV MAHLER: *FOURTH SYMPHONY*

San Antonio Symphony Orchestra, Max Reiter, Conductor; Frances Yeend, Soloist, Dec. 19, 1946. First performance in San Antonio.

The mighty Fourth Symphony by the controversial Bohemian composer, Gustav Mahler, enjoyed an expressive, poetic reading by Reiter and the Symphony. The work is a wondrous poem which is transformed into a vision of heavenly bliss in the third and especially the fourth movement where the poem, "The Heavenly Life," is sung by a soprano soloist.

In the solo part of the Mahler Symphony and two Strauss lieder, "Freundliche Vision" and "Kling," Mozart's "Alleluja" and Marietta's Song from the Korngold opera, "The Dead City," Miss Yeend displayed a rich, well-controlled lyric soprano voice. In the scant time since Miss Yeend's last appearance here with the Symphony—she sang the role of Micaela in the organizataion's production of "Carmen" last February — her voice seems to have grown in quality and increased in range. This depth and texture were especially noted in the solo part of the Mahler work.

San Antonio Evening News

GUSTAV MAHLER: *DAS LIED VON DER ERDE*

Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati, Conductor; Set Svanholm and Suzanne Sten, Soloists, Jan. 12 and 13, 1947.

A music and a performance of superlative beauty were heard here Monday night, an occasion which the discerning hearer well may store in memory as one of the significant events of his musical experience.

The music was Gustav Mahler's "Das Lied von der Erde" ("The Song of the Earth"), his last large symphonic work. . . .

In Miss Sten and Svanholm we had two superb artists, vocally and artistically. When have we had a voice as brilliant and compelling as Svanholm's or one so like molten gold as Miss Sten's? Aside from the appeal as gorgeous sound of tone and quality, the service of fine musicianship was devoted to the interpretation of the difficult score, difficult

technically and enormously so emotionally. . . .

"The Song of the Earth" is made up of six movements, allotted three each to the singers, who virtually are a part of the instrumental complex, and uses for text purported German translations of Chinese poems. It was unfortunate that the audience was not supplied with the English version of the text. The text reflected the trend of German intellectualism during the early years of the present century, an inevitable development through pessimism, negation and materialism to disaster of which the first World War was a symbol rather than a cause. Even so, the poetic beauty of the text and its veiled symbolism were ideal stimulus to Mahler's soaring imagination, and the musical texture with which he surrounded it is of exalted beauty, as materialized in a musical complex rich in the magic of inspired uses of instrumental means.

A compelling device is the use of melodic formula A-G-E, which becomes at the end a kind of dematerialized extension of the tonic chord. The brightness of the two middle movements, named "Youth" and "Beauty," with their pentatonic scale formula, led on to the intensity of the final section, "The Farewell," wherein Miss Sten sustained even in inaction the emotional exaltation of the situation.

E. Clyde Whitlock,
Fort Worth Star Telegram

GUSTAV MAHLER:

DAS LIED VON DER ERDE

Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, Alfred Wallenstein, Conductor; Set Svanholm and Eula Beal, Soloists, Jan. 16 and 17, 1947.

Gustav Mahler's great song-cycle, "Das Lied von der Erde," occupied the attention of Alfred Wallenstein and the Philharmonic Orchestra last night.

Contralto Eula Beal and tenor Set Svanholm were soloists for the tender and bitter soliloquies from Chinese poetry to which Mahler set the music which many consider his finest. Even those who cannot go all-out for his symphonies have to succumb to its final bittersweet moments, whose whispered syllables of resignation and farewell closed his own life.

Mildred Norton,
Los Angeles Daily News

GUSTAV MAHLER:

LIEDER EINES FAHRENDEN GESELLEN

Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Eugene Goossens, Conductor; Donald Dickson, Soloist, Jan. 17 and 18, 1947.

Eugene Goossens returned to the Symphony Concerts Friday afternoon and put on a program of such positive musicianship and such constant interest that it will stand on its own merits and match any other program of the season. Donald Dickson also made a sure place for himself with Cincinnati Symphony patrons by the fine way he interpreted Mahler, Mednikoff, Massenet and Rachmaninoff.

Dickson has a brilliant baritone voice that has the Wagnerian tenor quality in the top notes — which does not mean that his scale was at any time uneven. Dickson had unlimited power and he colored soft tones so that they were exceedingly beautiful. His interpretation of the four songs in the Mahler "Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen" established him a future favorite. His German was clear and so easily understood that the English translation in the printed programs was unnecessary. Goossens and the orchestra gave him sure support and the audience enjoyed each song so much that they interrupted the cycle with positive applause and called Dickson back to the platform many times.

Howard W. Hess,
The Cincinnati Times-Star

Works of Mahler's youth, between engagements as chorus-master for the Italian opera season in Vienna and director at the Cassel opera house, the song-cycle seems influenced by dramatic association with the stage. Mahler wrote both the words and the music; the tunes were simple and folklike and might appear trivial except for the effective orchestration, which was Mahler's real idiom. . . .

The instrumental coloring is kaleidoscopic, and the orchestra played it so-fashion. The melodic line is simple but emotional, and thus Dickson sang it, his voice well-controlled from a tenor-like G, all the way down to a full-blown A.

John P. Rhodes,
Cincinnati Enquirer

ANTON BRUCKNER:

NINTH SYMPHONY

Boston Symphony Orchestra, Bruno Walter, Conductor, Jan. 24 and 25, 1947.

Every time a work of Bruckner is performed, and that sadly is not often, the whole question of "Bruckner and Mahler" is brought up again. Those two late romantic composers of the 19th Century are regarded as great by some, and by others as negligible. At any rate, while the music of Bruckner and Mahler is still hotly disputed, the fact remains that Mahler is not frequently performed here, and Bruckner even less so.

The Bruckner Ninth shares with its fellows those typical Brucknerian qualities of remarkable orchestral counterpoint, soaring expression, vast formal scope and towering visions. It is really a great symphony in its facture and in what a noble if naive and peasant soul succeeded in expressing. It is at once austere and intimate, general and personal, passionate and tender as, in the greatest of all paradoxes, great works of art can be.

If the first movement is the most heroic of the three, the closing adagio, rapt and exalted, is the peak and crown of the Symphony. Surely it is true that while the Ninth, from a formal point of view, may be unfinished, no finale could follow the adagio, which was Bruckner's valedictory. Incidentally, Mr. Walter gives us this week not the Ferdinand Loewe edition, but the "Urtext," the original score as Bruckner left it.

As last week, Mr. Walter's conducting is an almost miraculous blend of expression genius, consummate orchestral technic and profound scholarship.

CYRUS DURGIN,
The Boston Globe

The controversy over the two versions of Bruckner's Ninth Symphony is mild compared to the hostilities over Bruckner himself. To his supporters he is a genius of the first order, to his detractors, a gifted but clumsy peasant. Here again, it is useless to join in the fray. If your predilection is for the Bach-Haydn-Mozart line you still cannot deny that Bruckner, for all his debt to Wagner, had individuality and was a master of composition and orchestration. If you belong to the other wing, you will not mind, will indeed revel in, his episodic style, his verbosity, his surcharged emotion.

Regardless of sides, there was no disputing the masterly quality of yesterday's performance, which was as persuasive a statement of Bruckner's case as can be imagined. Dr. Walter left no beauty unrevealed, no climax understated. His success repeated that of last week, with ovations again from audience and orchestra for every number. . . . .

L. A. SLOPER,
The Christian Science Monitor

As a community we may be said to enjoy an acquaintance with great music. Some of it, thanks to our present-day habits, has become almost a drug on the market. It was an unusual experience, then—and for a fortunate few a rather crushing and shattering one — to be brought face to face at yesterday's Symphony Concert for the first time in 33 years with one of the greatest things in all music. The work in question, the Ninth Symphony of Bruckner, was restored to us (in its original, unedited form) by Bruno Walter, and no hand would have been worthier for the task.

To give Dr. Koussevitsky his due, he has planned more than once to revive the Bruckner Ninth; but intention is one thing and accomplishment another. Accordingly, to Mr. Walter our deepest gratitude. The three movements of the Symphony which Bruckner left unfinished on his deathbed, and which he desired to dedicate to "the dear God," are not easy to take in at a first hearing. Nor would many yesterday have remembered the three previous performances in Symphony Hall between 1904 and 1914. The advantage lay with those who have been able to familiarize themselves with the work through its recording, while only last year Mr. Walter broadcast it from New York.

The tremendous first movement is a direct descendent of the first movement of Beethoven's Ninth, and Bruckner, alone among subsequent symphonists, was able to wield the thunderbolts of the Jove of Bonn. Will the last trump sound in more awful accents than the chief theme? Yet there are few things in music more beautiful than the group of melodies that bring the needed contrast. Surely no one yesterday could have had any difficulty with the scherzo, which an early critic called the ugliest piece of music ever written, though many may have found the long adagio a hard nut to crack. In this music Bruckner tried to piece the veil which separates us from the Beyond. You may find some of it cryptic, but blind is he who cannot see in it celestial visions. Mr. Walter, who

conducted as a priest before the altar, had his reward, if he so considered it, in the cheers that accompanied his final return to the stage. He had given us a performance that we will not soon forget.

WARREN STOREY SMITH,
The Boston Post

GUSTAV MAHLER:

FIFTH SYMPHONY

Philharmonic Symphony Society of New York, Bruno Walter, Conductor, Feb. 6 and 7, 1947.

With a managerial storm bursting over its head, the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra went its blithe way in Carnegie Hall last night with a memorable concert led by Bruno Walter.

Except for the usual speculative chit-chat in the lounge at intermission time, the concert moved ahead as if the main thing in music was music and the main people in it the musicians.

Twin-featured on last night's program were Artur Rubinstein's stirring rendering of Chopin's E minor piano concerto and a no less stirring reading of Gustav Mahler's Fifth Symphony.

For both the Mahlerites and Rubinsteinites were in clover last night; whether the two were always one and the same was hard to say. Probably Artur's friends outnumbered Gustav's.

But the ovation following the long-shelved Mahler masterpiece really did every true Mahlerite's heart good last night. This seemed like one of the biggest tributes yet given the music of this lonely and tragic genius.

It is no news that Mahler's case in New York is still an uphill struggle. What is always news is a great performance of one of his symphonies and still greater news, a warm reception.

Opinion, as usual, was divided as to whether this acclaim went to a great symphony or a great conductor. My feeling is that it went to both, with some extra warmth, no doubt, to Mr. Walter.

And Mr. Walter deserved it—first for the courage of rendering so huge and controversial a score; second, for the devoted attention given it. For only a disciple could show the loving care he did.

The man made you feel the importance of the slightest phrase. He seemed to be saying all the time: "Don't fail to notice this and this and this. Everything counts in this music."

I agreed with him last night. I felt more strongly than ever that Mahler was always giving his best to his music, that he never slurred over a phrase or took short cuts to the grand finales.

Granted the symphony is long; many say it repeats itself, and that what is repeated is often childish and banal. Actually there is less repetition in Mahler than in most classic composers. He is always saying new things.

Maybe he says too many of them, or, as my neighbor remarked last night, maybe "he talks too much." The answer is to hear Mahler more often in readings that overlook nothing in bringing out the power.

Mr. Walter's reading, for instance. More of that kind of performance and Mahler's symphonies would soon become daily concert bread to local fans. . . . .

LOUIS BIANCOLLI,
N. Y. World Telegram

Bruno Walter, the incomparable interpreter of Mahler, chose the Austrian composer's Fifth Symphony to begin his seasonal engagement as guest conductor with the Philharmonic-Symphonic Orchestra in Carnegie Hall last night. It was a triumphant occasion for all concerned: composer, conductor and orchestra, for no performance of any work, no matter how superb, could have elicited the prolonged ovation tendered Mr. Walter and the orchestra, had the music itself not been worthy of the extraordinary discourse accorded it.

All of Mahler's symphonies are difficult to perform, but none probably makes such inordinate demands on the brass choir which is employed in this work for purely expressive objectives to a degree unparalleled in any other symphonic product by a first-rate composer.

Mahler's mastery of his resources reaches a climax in this symphony. His command of the architectonic aspects of his art, his utilization of dissonant counterpoint for emotional intensification reach new heights of accomplishment here, heights hitherto unattained in his earlier symphonies. Since Mahler stubbornly maintained that this C sharp minor symphony had no program it would be both futile and overweening to formulate one for him; but this music surely encompasses a wide gamut of human attributes as it unfolds its lengthy course—the desolation of the funeral march, the anguished despair of the second half of the first movement, the characteristically Mahlerian ironic humor of the scherzo, the touching inwardness of the adagietto and the joyous abandon—culminating in

the radiant affirmation of the concluding chorale.

All of these moods were suggested by Mr. Walter in a mannenr which only he, among living conductors of Mahler's music, can conjure from the intricacies of the printed page. No other interpretative musician has his profound perceptive insight into the azygous creative world of this still often misunderstood composer. Nor could a finer account of this score from the technical and tonal aspects be imagined than that vouchsafed by the Philharmonic last night. Here was a truly miraculous transvaluation into meaningful, unfailingly, sensuous sounds of a composer's inmost thoughts.

JEROME D. BOHM,
The New York Herald Tribune

What Mr. Muench did recently at a Philharmonic-Symphony concert for Berlioz of the "Symphonie fantastique" Bruno Walter did last night, on the same podium, in Carnegie Hall, with Mahler's Fifth symphony. The hour-long symphony made the first half of a notable program completed by the performance of Chopin's E minor concerto by a master pianist, Artur Rubinstein.

We do not believe that a more eloquent performance of Mahler's immense score than this one could have been given. Its revelation was the result of a lifetime of devotion to music and of a profound inner faith in Mahler's message. We leave aside for the moment estimates of the worth of the symphony itself, in its formidable length, breadth and thickness. The point is that Mr. Walter believes to his last fiber in this symphony; he knows and loves its every note. He conducted with the passion of a crusader, and so struck fire from the orchestra and did everything that interpretive power could do to impose the music upon the audience.

That this achievement was to be was shown instantaneously, with the opening trumpet calls of the "marche funebre." For a great performance, in music or drama or on the forensic platform, reveals itself in the inflection and architecture of the very first phrase. In those preliminary flourishes, which later enter so importantly into the scheme of the entire opening movement, there was felt the inevitable progress and summation of the entire work. . . . .

The symphony and the performance were long and roundly applauded.

OLIN DOWNES,
The New York Times

GUSTAV MAHLER:

FOURTH SYMPHONY

Cleveland Orchestra, Bruno Walter, Conductor; Desi Halban, Soloist, Feb. 20 and 22, 1947. Broadcast over Mutual Broadcasting System on Feb. 22, 1947. Rebroadcast over WOR on Feb. 24, 1947.

Bruno Walter, distinguished musical advisor of the New York Philharmonic Symphony, Desi Halban, Viennese soprano, and the Cleveland Orchestra thrilled a capacity audience at Severance Hall last night with a gorgeous performance of the Gustav Mahler Fourth Symphony. . . . .

Director Walter who knew Mahler in his Vienna days and has written a book in that connection, brings to this Fourth Symphony a sympathy and uncanny expressive art that points its haunting beauty, its occasional peasant jollity, its dramatic episodes and its shifting lights and shadows with a feeling of expectancy and reality that make up for its overlong score. He etched the ever fluid and glowing melodic line with clarity no matter where or how it shifted through the orchestral choirs. And in Miss Halban with her nicely-ranged soprano of fine texture, he had a most artistic collaborator.

ELMORE BACON,
The Cleveland News

Yet one had ample opportunity to taste to the full the typically Viennese character of the music, its effusive up-beats, its warm, leisurely flowing melodies, its wistful humor, and above all its extraordinary scoring, where color demands are so specific that the solo violin in the eerie second movement is asked to play on an E string tuned a tone higher. Miss Halban sang the folkish strophes of the last movement with sensitive and appropriate feeling.

HERBERT ELWELL,
The Cleveland Plain Dealer

. . . The part was rendered with understanding and taste by Desi Halban, an Austrian singer new to Cleveland.

The rest of the Symphony is integrated with this mood of happy simplicity. There are mystical overtones, such as in the second movement, where Death, the mediator of all this bliss, is pictured as a good-natured fiddler who is sure to get his fee in the end.

A somewhat humorous effect is produced by having the fateful fiddle tuned

up a tone, giving a kind of queer stridency. Concertmaster Thaviu did well by this episode.

The work presents the familiar Mahlerian compound of flavors: A German folkiness in the melody, a sugared Viennese harmony and figuration occasionally bordering on the frivolous, a highly individual sophisticated and witty orchestration, and a general atmosphere of mellifluousness. . . .

Nothing could exceed the loving care which Walter devoted to the proper realization of the lines of his revered master. The Symphony's many beauties seemed persuasive under his hands, and the audience manifested an unusual enthusiasm at the end, some of which was also intended for Miss Halban and the orchestra.

ARTHUR LOESSER,
The Cleveland Press

GUSTAV MAHLER:
LIEDER EINES FAHRENDEN GESELLEN

Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati, Conductor; Blanche Thebom, Soloist, Feb. 23, 1947.

The easy harmonies and conventionalized sentiments of nineteenth century Romanticism fell on grateful ears Sunday afternoon as an audience of 4,000 persons gathered for the thirteenth subscription concert of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra at Fair Park Auditorium. This audience had been hearing things less dulcet and caressing, to say the least. It was a beautiful, impeccably styled concert that Antal Dorati arranged and still lovelier concert that he delivered. Of no little help were Blanche Thebom, Metropolitan Opera mezzo-soprano, as soloist for Brahm's "Alto Rhapsody" and Mahler's "Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen" and the Dallas Male Chorus, which participated in the Brahms work.

. . . Miss Thebom sang them with compelling intensity, met their vocal exactions and their emotional contrasts with complete success. The orchestra under Mr. Dorati found Mahler's plangent accompaniment another opportunity for some of the season's best playing.

JOHN ROSENFIELD,
The Dallas Morning News

Her performance in the Mahler songs was similarly breathtaking. She imparted color and drama to the composer's laments, sorrowings supposedly stemming from one of Mahler's numerous frustrations in love. Miss Thebom understands about such matters as phrasing and she takes the high and low points of a song with equally expressive ease.

CLAY BAILEY,
The Daily Times Herald

GUSTAV MAHLER:
FIRST SYMPHONY

The Philharmonic-Symphony Society of New York, Efrem Kurtz, Conductor; March 20, 21, and 23, 1947. The last performance was broadcast over CBS.

One of the tests which conductors welcome, if only for the reason that they furnish abundant opportunities for display of batonic skill, are the symphonies of Mahler. Of these the First is one of the best. It is deeply saturated with the folk element which is a sympathetic characteristic of this composer, and it is possibly the least laden with bombast.

Mr. Kurtz approached this music with evident sympathy, especially in the pages which have the unmistakable reflection of nature, and the Hansel and Gretel-like fragments of song.

OLIN DOWNES,
The New York Times

Everything was well performed and at the end of Mahler's First Symphony there was cheering.

Indeed, one is not accustomed to such transparent tonal textures, such clear balances and blends of sound in the rendering of Mahler as Mr. Kurtz produced. The desire to treat this composer as emotionally profound has imposed, I think, a certain obscurity upon even the scored sound of his symphonies. Mr. Kurtz has approached the matter more realistically, though with an obvious love for the music. By loving it and playing it cleanly he has turned the First Symphony from an unconvincing essay in profundity into a thoroughly convincing descriptive piece. This listener, for one, is pleased with the transformation.

What the work is descriptive of we have been forbidden by the composer to guess. So be it. The pastoral style remains unmistakable in the first movement. So does the gypsy night club style in the third (ostensibly a funeral march). Later there is a passage that, whatever its original intent, may have been, would be ideal to accompany a conflagration in the films, with love being reborn out of the ruins.

VIRGIL THOMSON,
The New York Herald Tribune

GUSTAV MAHLER: *FOURTH SYMPHONY*

Boston Symphony Orchestra, Bruno Walter, Conductor; Desi Halban, Soloist, March 21, 22, and 25, 1947. The last performance was broadcast over ABC.

First as disciple, then as a colleague, and an intimate friend of Mahler, Mr. Walter ultimately became the composer's greatest prophet. To him fell the responsibility and honor of first performing, after Mahler's death, "Das Lied von der Erde" and the Ninth Sylphony. Without exaggeration, it may be said that everything in the way of profound comprehension and special knowledge of Mahler's musical idiom is possessed, and uniquely so, by Bruno Walter.

As the Fourth is the shortest and the lightest in texture of all nine Mahler symphonies, so it is the most untroubled. The grotesquerie which pervades it is naive and serene rather than demonic. Yet, as in all Mahler, melancholy lies just beneath the surface. And over the whole symphony hovers that nervous restlessness which is expressed by a constant flow of counterpoint, from instrument to instrument of the entire orchestra.

CYRUS DURGIN,
The Boston Daily Globe

Yesterday's concert was memorable for the ingratiating performance of Mahler's 4th Symphony, perhaps the best possible introduction to the works of that composer. Under the expert guidance of Mr. Walter, who is probably the world's leading interpreter of Mahler, the 4th Symphony yesterday could be regarded as an acid test.

Mahler is a composer whose name is too frequently coupled with that of Bruckner. Actually it should be possible to form independent judgments of the music of either composer without having both of them thrown at you like a pair of Siamese twins. This 4th Symphony is one of Mahler's happiest and least troubled creations. Its intimate charm is something very special among musical compositions, and a fine performance of it is something to cherish.

Mr. Walter was fortunate in his choice of a singer, as we were lucky to have him as interpreter of this music. Miss Halban sang the music of the finale simply, gracefully and clearly. As was to be expected under the circumstances it was a performance without exaggeration or parody, in the spirit in which Mahler conceived it.

ALEXANDER WILLIAMS,
The Boston Herald

At the concerts of this week Mr. Walter is playing the Mahler Fourth with Desi Halban as soprano soloist. Previously we had heard the entire symphony but once, in March, 1945, and the last two movements three years before, both times from Richard Burgin. In view of the fact New York has been hearing the work at intervals since 1904, the various conductors of the Boston Symphony may be said to have been singularly remiss, for the Fourth is a masterpiece, though not without flaws.

The trouble with both Bruckner and Mahler is that they never could learn that enough is better than a feast. Even trifling cuts in the first and third movements of the Fourth Symphony would make it a work of unqualified delight, in spite of the fact that the four movements offer little contrast. They are all on the leisurely side, the only measures approaching real excitement occurring in one of the variations in the third. Hearing this division yesterday, as set forth hypnotically by Mr. Walter, there was a temptation to proclaim it the most beautiful slow movement since the Cavatine in Beethoven's B flat-major Quartet. No other among Beethoven's successors had the secret of this quiet intensity, this almost unbearable sweetness. And yet we would not go far astray in calling Mahler the father of the modern symphony: in his disregard of symphonic conventions, in his capriciousness and whimsicality, in the astounding clarity of his orchestration and his "horizontal" writing. In the first movement of the Fourth we find the earliest example of neoclassicism, and that Shostakovitch has sat at the feet of Mahler is common knowledge.

Desi Halban was the soloist yesterday in the fourth movement, a setting of a folk poem that depicts a peasant's or a child's naive concept of heaven. Miss Halban has, indeed, the light, floating almost child-like voice that this music requires. Yet some still gratefully recall Cleora Wood's performance of five years ago. At the end of the Symphony yesterday there were cheers for all concerned.

WARREN STOREY SMITH,
The Boston Post

GUSTAV MAHLER: FOURTH SYMPHONY

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Bruno Walter, Conductor; Desi Halban, Soloist, April 11 and 12, 1947.

Mr. Walter gave a superlative reading of the score, and his evident love for and admiration of it clearly was reflected in his influence upon the orchestra. Every detail was so clarified, every nuance so affectionately considered, it would be difficult to imagine a finer interpretation. Withal, only the slow movement impressed this listener as truly great music, and the depth of emotion in it, its eloquent tenderness made listening a joy.

FELIX BOROWSKI,
The Chicago Sun

Between that and the Strauss you knew the textures and colors of Mahler's Fourth Symphony would be in sympathetic hands. I don't mean Mr. Walter's, of course. He is the supreme master of Mahler in our time. I mean the orchestra's, for that orchestra achieved one of the most remarkable performances I have heard it play, and I have been listening to it for 20 seasons. It was a performance of tenderness, of power, of wit, and it so superbly sustained the line that spans the shifting Mahler moods that if you insisted on calling the symphony long, you could only steal a phrase and make it, too, "the symphony of heavenly length."

Perhaps Mahler's symphonies really are "mystery plays rooted in earth and reaching for heaven." The Fourth is a lovely thing, with glinting brilliance, extraordinary tonal textures, particularly in the second movement where the solo violin is sometimes tuned a note higher than normal tuning (which is why John Weicher used two instruments), and a slow movement of such profoundly moving sadness it must reach to heaven for comfort. So the soprano, who was beautiful Desi Halban, quiet as a good child in white, enters to sing the reassuring song of heavenly bliss from "Des Knaben Wunderhorn," a song which in its way wraps up the whole symphony by singing, "Our conduct, while truly seraphic, with mirth holds voluminous traffic." For this is music for men, which reminds them of angels.

CLAUDIA CASSIDY,
The Chicago Tribune

ANTON BRUCKNER: SEVENTH SYMPHONY

San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, Pierre Monteux, Conductor; May 22, 23, and 24, 1947.

Alfred Hertz used to play the symphonies of Anton Bruckner when he conducted the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra 20 years ago, but, in all probability, none of them had been performed here since that time until yesterday afternoon, when Pierre Monteux directed Bruckner's seventh symphony at the War Memorial Opera House.

It was a welcome revival for many reasons. For one thing, Bruckner reminds you that composers, performers and audiences once had leisure. The modern composer Roy Harris has written a "Time Suite" in which the basic formal element is the minute, and Morton Gould, the well known radio musician, has excused his use of the word "symphonette" (in place of the conventional "sinfonietta") on the ground that, with two syllables less in the title, he can get an extra half-measure into the music. But no one ever held a stop-watch over Anton Bruckner. He was free to develop his ideas as spaciously and grandly as the architects of those baroque Austrian churches in which his spirit was most at home.

Every work of Bruckner is an act of religious faith, whether or not it is associated with a religious text. To be sure, his symphonies have other positive qualities, too—a sonority, and a kind of provincial heavy-handed force that led Bruckner's biographer, Werner Wolf, to call him a "rustic genius"—but the main thing about this composer is that he was a genuinely serene human being. He knew what it was all about and he knew it was good, and that is something worth clinging to in our more nervous and fearful time. . . . .

With Bruckner a symphonic movement is an accumulation of episodes, and there are joints and fissures between. His music unfolds like pages in a diary; you can see where each day's ideas stopped and the next day's began. For this reason people sometimes find Bruckner longwinded. But this long-windedness is not so much a matter of time consumed as of a kind of flaccidity in the organization of the time. Bruckner's seventh symphony is a good deal shorter than Beethoven's ninth, with which Monteux will end the San Francisco Symphony

season next week, and nobody ever complains that Beethoven's ninth is too long.

The performance was big and broad, laid down the hugh lines of the piece with appropriate weight, was crisp and clean throughout, and achieved the apocalyptic climax of the slow movement with the true accent of glory.

ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN,
San Francisco Chronicle

GUSTAV MAHLER:

SECOND SYMPHONY

New York City Symphony, Leonard Bernstein, Conductor; Schola Cantorum, Hugh Ross, Conductor; Ellabelle Davis, Soprano, Nan Merriman, Contralto, Soloists; Sept. 22 and 24, 1947.

Mr. Bernstein and the City Symphony did full justice—for an orchestra gradually coming up in the world—to the Mahler work. There were two soloists, Ellabelle Davis, soprano, and Nan Merriman, contralto. Besides, the Schola Cantorum, in serried ranks, delivered the choral parts of the last section, where the composer required "the word" to complement his instrumental expression. . . . .

In any case, the performance was most musical and finished, and it is to Mr. Bernstein's and his co-workers' credit that it came off as well as it did. Both Miss Davis and Miss Merriman were superb in the delivery of their parts and the chorus sang effectively.

ROBERT BAGAR,
New York World Telegram

The richly-wrought musical tapestry of Mahler's "Resurrection" Symphony unrolled at the City Center last evening, as Leonard Bernstein led the N. Y. C. Symphony in its first concert of the new season.

As usual, the Mahler proved too much of a very, very good thing. It is too bad that present-day concert practice is to do things complete or not at all. While this custom prevails Mahler will likely remain in the revival category—a big production number undertaken infrequently and with a certain amount of trepidation.

And audiences are the losers thereby, for the "Resurrection" Symphony has moments of seraphic loveliness, and in its maestoso moods it is quite overpowering.

The Bruckner Society (which also interests itself in Mahler) would be horrified, but some irreverent conductor might well revive for Mahler's benefit the custom that flourished in Beethoven's day, of performing separately the movements of a large work. As musicology it might not be sound, but it could make Mahler a great deal more accessible.

Last evening the orchestra played the work with zeal and devotion. The soloists, Ellabelle Davis, soprano, and Nan Merriman, contralto, performed so prettily one wished they had had more to do. The dry, unresonant properties of the hall, which often make the orchestra sound thin and watery, last night proved admirable for this heavily-scored work, which in more resonant halls (and especially with a violently energetic conductor like Mr. Bernstein) becomes a noisy blur of thick brass and cloudy overtones.

JOHN BRIGGS,
New York Post (Copyright 1947)

Even for those who do not take the Mahler gospel on faith, this is a work to be heard and re-heard as often as a symphony orchestra, a chorus and two soloists can be marshaled into doing it—which is, approximately, once a decade. It has, in its quieter, more introspective passages, some of the most beautiful music ever written, by Mahler or anyone else; for which the listener must pay the price, in the "epic" pages of the score, of enduring even more of the most bumptious, empty noise ever contrived.

. . . . This is hardly a score to be delivered unembarrassed by a pick-up orchestra (which, essentially, the City Symphony is) and more rehearsals would have smoothed rough spots, improved the blend of sound. But it was a major accomplishment for Bernstein to deliver the work, from beginning to end, with as much articulation and clarity as he managed, and, withal, an insinuating mood at many places. In addition to Miss Merriman's luscious singing, Ellabelle Davis, soprano, and the Schola Cantorum performed affectingly in the last section.

IRVING KOLODIN,
New York Sun

The New York City Symphony opened its fifth season, and its third under the conductorship of Leonard Bernstein, last night at the New York City Center. The program was dedicated to the resurrection of Palestine, and began with a work by a Palestine composer not previously unknown here.

Mr. Bernstein's interpretation showed a notable understanding of this music; the performance was well integrated and

balanced and expressive. Miss Davis and Miss Merriman sang with pleasing tones and interpretative sympathy; the choristers sang commendably, and at the close the participants avoided an impression of overstraining in striving for culminating climax.

FRANCIS D. PERKINS,
New York Herald Tribune

Mr. Bernstein added that he wished to dedicate it (Mahler's Symphony No. 2) also to the memory of Fiorello H. La-Guardia, who, as Mayor, brought about the organization of the City Center and the New York City Symphony. At the conductor's suggestion the audience rose and stood in silence for a minute before the second half of the concert began. . . .

Mr. Bernstein and the orchestra gave both works expressive performances. In the Mahler, Ellabelle Davis and Nan Merriman contributed artistic solo singing and the chorus of the Schola Cantorum, Hugh Ross, director, did a good job with its share. Mr. Bernstein made the Mahler symphony as dramatic as he could, sometimes dramatizing it excessively. But it was lively, crisp, mettlesome playing.

HOWARD TAUBMAN,
The New York Times

ANTON BRUCKNER: *EIGHTH SYMPHONY*

Boston Symphony Orchestra, Serge Koussevitzky, Conductor; Boston, Nov. 7 and 8, 1947, New York, Nov. 13, 1947.

Years ago, the mere mention of Bruckner would have brought on a stampede toward the nearest exit. Today the Austrian composer, who has been called half-peasant and half-mystic, is rated by many sound critics as the "Fourth B" of music. Hardly anybody now slips out of the hall between movements. . . .

But the center of gravity — both in weight and quality — was the huge Bruckner symphony last night. Even the half-hearted Brucknerites in the audience had to admit every phrase of the hour-long epic was crammed with high-powered brilliance.

On that point the symphony is almost tailormade for Mr. Koussevitzky's orchestra. Fortissimos come like cloudbursts and the long stretches of scoring for massed strings bring out the band's known flair for unctuous speech. And there are plenty of spots for Mr. Koussevitzky's brass units to go to town on all valves.

There may be room for argument as to whether last night's performance snared every potentiality of the score on the poetic side. A few places called for deeper probing, and one or two passages, deceptively naive and childish, were overstressed, almost inviting the charge of banality often brought against Bruckner.

Those were small matters beside the over-all effect of the reading. With his known gift for the dramatic, Mr. Koussevitzky managed to pack excitement into all four movements.

The big moments were worth waiting for in the Eighth Symphony—moments like the blunt, square-toed buffoonery of the Scherzo, the eerie crescendo of the Adagio just before the brasses blare out a lush Wagnerian motif, and the piling sonorities of the finale.

LOUIS BIANCOLLI,
New York World-Telegram

The program was unusual, beginning with the vast Eighth symphony of Anton Bruckner, undoubtedly that composer's greatest work in the classic form. Contrasting with the fundamentally Germanic score were two of the most sophisticated and skillfully organized works of the Frenchman, Maurice Ravel.

These scores called for completely different interpretive approaches. They tested variously the powers of the orchestra, which remains unrivaled for the glow of its tone, its technical precision and finesse and consummate virtuosity which it has attained under its present leader. As a result Bruckner came out differently than he ever had before in the writer's experience, the difference being thrown into the stronger relief by the effect of the Ravel pieces which followed.

For the symphony was not traditional Bruckner. The tempi were mostly faster than those adopted by German conductors; the orchestral tone was lighter in texture and in color more luminous than it was deep and rich in baroque style.

At the same time, in point of rhetoric and sheer orchestral effect, the score never sounded more gorgeous and dramatic. Dr. Koussevitzky, if memory faithfully serves us, made advantageous cuts which remedied the discursiveness of various pages—a defect which can lessen the effect of Bruckner's grandest pas-

cages when they come. It was striking, also, to hear the grand phrases given a suppleness and a sensitiveness of nuance which at moments made one think of Franck. (Indeed there are analogies between the music of the Austrian and the Belgian mystics, both organists, both apostles of the faith.)

And what a symphony! Only the last movement is irremediably weak. The others are all masterpieces. There is the inner drama of the soul that supplicates and cries out in its need, "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief." The peasant laughter and smack of the soil are in the inimitable scherzo. The slow movement, which is as the vision of John of Patmos, is perhaps the supreme flight of Bruckner's spirit. Then one asks, "Is Dr. Koussevitzky's conception, profoundly felt, that of Bruckner?" and must leave that question, in the light of a new interpretation, for the present unanswered. Let it suffice that the symphony was given a singularly eloquent and effective performance.

OLIN DOWNES,
The New York Times

In these days it probably is necessary to make cuts in the monumental scores of Bruckner, with their long sequences and what Felix Weingartner called "terraced progression." Mr. Koussevitsky accordingly does make cuts in three movements, leaving only the scherzo intact. But why does he find it essential to cut out anything of the adagio which, to make a very unoriginal observation, is the finest movement of the four? Surely no audience would grow restive while music of such celestial beauty was going on!

Yesterday's performance was indeed a miracle of orchestral magnificence, with all intricate details, wealth of counterpoint coming out in superlative clarity and detail. As in the Schumann Concerto, everything "sang" all the way. The brass sections, which are the foundation of Bruckner's orchestra, covered themselves with glory— and, probably, exhausted themselves at the same time, for the Austrian composer demanded a lot of hard blowing. The quality of the four "Bayreuth tubas," especially, was rich and poised.

CYRUS DURGIN,
The Boston Globe

GUSTAV MAHLER:
FIRST SYMPHONY

Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Reginald Stewart, Conductor; October 29, 1947.

By repute, Mahler's work is ever ponderous, abstruse, overlong. But if the audience harbored any such impression, they were soon disabused. The first two movements are pastoral impressionisms of an engaging character, climaxing in the full majesty of high sun.

Focussing the third movement is a supposedly burlesque funeral march, said to lampoon the obsequies of a hunter and scored with appropriate sound and fury, satirically phrased. While the finale, marked "sturmisch bewegt," works up to a fine frenzy of storm and stress.

A trifle long—a modicum repetitious—but all in all, we are hoping that Mr. Stewart will continue the public education along Mahlerian lines. Last night's was a spirited and revealing interpretation and was received with every sign of satisfaction.

HELEN A. F. PENNIMAN,
The Baltimore News-Post

Concluding the concert, the Baltimore Symphony gave Mahler's "Symphony No. 1" a fine performance, achieving mellow tone and varied shading under Mr. Stewart's direction. The first three movements were especially successful.

In Mahler's music, one may find the spirit of the Vienna of Schubert, Beethoven and Haydn, yet it is a Vienna grown old. Perhaps Mahler's scores contain a prophecy of the mood of today, and perhaps that is the reason we may feel closer to him than did his contemporaries.

His "Symphony No. 1" seems to depict the warm colors and atmosphere of the Austrian countryside, yet there are dead leaves on the landscape.

One of his themes suggests a rough peasant dance, yet all is not simply joy. A sinister undercurrent suddenly whips the music into a frenzy.

A waltz brings back the memory of carefree times, but the dancers turn to ghosts, and the ballroom floor is covered with dust. Ironically, Mahler builds a funeral march on the folk theme of "Frere Jacques," but this is no funeral for a hero.

There are bird notes, but spring is past; distant hunting calls, but the hunt is over.

WELDON WALLACE,
The Sun (Baltimore)

ANTON BRUCKNER:

QUINTET

Little Orchestral Society, Thomas Scherman, Conductor; November 3, 1947.

The great music of the first half of the program was the opening piece, the Bruckner Quintet for strings, scored for chamber orchestra. This score may have its weak places; in the sum it is noble music, chanted rather than merely vibrated by the strings.

OLIN DOWNES,
The New York Times

The Bruckner Quintet for Strings (comprising two viola parts) was played by the full string orchestra, the last movement being omitted for reasons of length. It is a warm and tender work, Bruckner at his sweetest and most continuous. The Adagio is particularly satisfactory, but the whole work is more than agreeably inspired.

VIRGIL THOMSON,
New York Herald Tribune

GUSTAV MAHLER:

DAS LIED VON DER ERDE

Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, Conductor; Set Svanholm, Tenor, and Louise Bernhardt, Contralto, Soloists; November 6 and 7, 1947.

The capacity audience at Severance Hall last night was fairly stunned to silence for a short period following the intensely emotional and dramatic close of the Mahler "Song of the Earth."

Director George Szell and the Cleveland Orchestra had the assistance of Louise Bernhardt, contralto, and Set Svanholm, tenor, in presenting this monumental work. And so emotionally gripping was the finale of the "Abschied" with its haunting "Eternity," a mere whisper at the close, that it was nearly a minute before the pent-up enthusiasm of the big audience could be demonstrated in applause.

Even though "The Song of the Earth" starts out with a drinking song there's death in the shadow of the wine cup. There's a hint of tragedy, too, throughout this symphony of song—a melancholy born of the Chinese philosophy of sorrow permeating the poems Mahler chose for this work. The two soloists, making their Cleveland debuts, were particularly suited to the unfoldment of this great work.

Director Szell brought to this six-part symphony a keen insight into its depth, its sometimes long drawn out, gorgeously beautiful revelation of the utter futility of things mundane. And he particularly pointed the sweeping phrases of the Mahler message. The Mahler music sometimes rose to Wagnerian heights of splendor. And in the final movement offered a funeral march to end all funeral marches.

Seldom do we hear music as beautiful as the fourth movement, a Song of Beauty, which Miss Bernhardt sang with fine artistry. A mandolin is used in this with the harps and other instruments. Her fine contralto, warm and resonant, brought out all the beauty, too, of the "Lonely One in Autumn" and provided a haunting view of heartache and sorrow in the finale.

The Svanholm tenor, of fine quality and of Wagnerian power, was particularly sensitive in the Youth song and the fifth movement drinking song. Through the Mahler magic the solo parts seem to be merely another voice of the orchestra, outstanding, but still definitely a part of the whole.

ELMORE BACON, *Cleveland News*

The symphony concert conducted by George Szell at Severance Hall last night was especially notable for the presentation of Gustav Mahler's "Das Lied von der Erde," in which the Cleveland Orchestra had the assistance of two excellent artists, Louise Bernhardt, contralto, and Set Svanholm, Metropolitan Opera tenor, first heard here last spring as Lohengrin. The hall was packed with an enthusiastic audience.

Mahler's swan song of romanticism has never sounded more poignantly expressive or more troubling to the spirit. Dripping with sorrow even when it lifts its head and tries to be gay through the tears, it is long in its singing of Weltschmerz" and autumnal nostalgia. And it begins over again many times after it seems to conclude. Yet who with any soul in him would not wait out the long waits to hear its many heavenly pages?

Beautiful production from Miss Bernhardt's full-bodied contralto gave her part a mellow glow, and she wove it through the mystic tonal web with the most sensitive artistry, rounding her eloquent phrases with complete assimilation of style and content.

The more exuberant portions allotted to Svanholm were sang with robust elan and the virility of true tenor quality, infinitely more attractive than when his voice is amplified. Behind the soaring

voices was an orchestral fabric of wondrously varied nuances, all receiving loving attention and effective projection from Szell and his musicians.

A modified version was used of Steuart Wilson's English translation of the Chinese poems on which the symphony is based. Few of them came through with any clarity, more of them being audible in the contralto than in the tenor part. Skillful as he is, Mahler sometimes covers the voices with too interesting instrumentation, but of course he cannot be blamed for weakness of a translation which must replace "ewig" with a word like "ever."

HERBERT ELWELL,
Cleveland Plain Dealer

"The Song of the Earth" has an elusive beauty, a mystical quality. Composed in the imminence of death, it seems to view that adventure as a kind of boundary which outlines the joys of life all the more clearly.

The long last movement, sombre and serene, but with many tonal shreds and wisps, ends in effable peace: it is a climax, but of the depths rather than of the heights. This is Mahler's greatest work, many think, and it may be that history will prove it to be one of the great works of its time.

Set Svanholm, tenor, and Louise Bernhardt, contralto, besides evincing thorough vocal competence, sang their parts with thoughtful sympathy. Surely this is the highest commendation that can be given singers in such a work as this. Miss Bernhardt earns a special credit for her sustained effort in the final "Farewell."

The orchestral performance seemed generally admirable; it seemed in the first movement as if Svanholm occasionally had to strain to hold his own against a heavy instrumental background. Possibly the orchestra is often more important than the voice, yet it seems a pity to compromise the distinctness of the words.

ARTHUR LOESSER, *Cleveland Press*

GUSTAV MAHLER:

KINDERTOTENLIEDER

Little Orchestra Society, Thomas K. Scherman, Conductor; Karin Branzell, Contralto. New York, December 1, 1947.

Mahler's "Kindertotenlieder," familiar to local audiences chiefly through Antony Tudor's ballet "Dark Elegies," are as intense in their sadness as the Schubert work is in its joy. Karin Branzell sang them, for the most part, beautifully. . . . Myself I find the work touching and musically interesting, as well. It is not musically easy, however. . . .

VIRGIL THOMSON,
New York Herald Tribune

GUSTAV MAHLER:

FOURTH SYMPHONY

Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, Conductor; Dorothy Maynor, Soloist; December 4, 1947. First performance in Rochester.

So far as this reviewer knows, Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 4 never has been played in Rochester. One wonders why, after hearing Leinsdorf's comprehending and persuasive interpretation, which opened the program.

Your humble servant is no anti-Mahlerite, but never until last night has he been an enthusiast over the music of the Austrian composer, a controversial figure whose works have aroused either bitter condemnation or violent praise. Here is a symphony which creates no listening problems whatever.

There are no profound utterances, only one glorious song from start to finish, the Viennese flavor present always. The first movement suggests peasant dances, the second is fascinating with imaginative use of the wood-winds and the fiddle tuned a whole tone higher than usual, producing a piercing effect; the third entrancing beautiful in its Schubertian lyricism and simplicity.

It is not a choral symphony in the usual sense, but Mahler, who depended frequently upon voices to express himself, incorporates in the final movement a solo for soprano voice, setting of a poem from "The Youth's Wonder-Horn," this particular one a delightfully naive picture of the joys of Heaven.

Miss Maynor sang this deceptively simple finale with brightness and aliveness of spirit, the balance of voice with orchestra good. Our gratitude to Leinsdorf for this item overflowing with charming melodies and many moments of astounding beauty, with its masterful orchestration.

NORMAN NAIRN,
Democrat & Chronicle

Erich Leinsdorf knows how to provide novelties, as well as solid classical fare, on his programs, and the spice of variety marked last night's Philharmonic concert in Eastman Theater.

There was provided another effective demonstration of the progress of the orchestra, which played extraordinarily well, while Miss Maynor, the celebrated Negro soprano, sang like a seraph. It was, in a word, an evening of unusual musical interest and beauty, and the large audience made the welkin ring with its applause at the close of the performance, as conductor and soloist were repeatedly recalled to acknowledge the tribute paid by a delighted house.

The feature of the concert was the Fourth Symphony of Gustav Mahler, the curiously controversial Austrian composer and conductor, who has his violent detractors and his equally passionate admirers. Last of the line of Viennese "classical" composers, he completes the Romantic symphony form handed on to him by Schubert and Bruckner. But if acquaintance with Mahler's music was confined to his symphony No. 4, which was first given in Munich in 1902, one would wonder why there has been heaped on him so much extravagant praise and so much bitter condemnation, for this score came to the ear with the gentleness of a Spring zephyr, filled with folk-like airs, and almost constantly, therefore, melodic. Its pastoral quality is persistent, and although it tends to monotony its spirit and mood are that of a reverie.

Much of the symphony is lyrical and there are moments of lofty eloquence, the final movement being featured by the introduction of some verses from "Des Knaben Wunderhon," which are sung in heavenly fashion by Miss Maynor, the celestial timbre of whose voice has no counterpart on the concert stage. The symphony is too long, yet it is shorter than Mahler's other symphonic works, and its performance was of a calibre to bring out all that is best in the score which Mr. Leinsdorf obviously loves. He conducted it with the utmost concentration and warmth, and the musicians under him, and Miss Maynor, contributed their share to a presentation that stands as a striking success.

A. J. WARNER,
Rochester Times-Union

ANTON BRUCKNER:
EIGHTH SYMPHONY

Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, Conductor, December 11 and 13, 1947.

We might imagine the Bruckner Eighth a Germanic Old Man River flowing along, sometimes at ease, sometimes troubled, sometimes amid towering peaks and hoary crags peopled with the legendary gods, sometimes traversing the gentle fields amid the plain people.

It is true that it is lengthy. But as compensation Bruckner offers music that has a depth, an emotional tension and a gorgeous coloring that few modern writers can produce. The troubled heart of mankind is revealed in the opening dramatic gropings. And the Adagio stands out as a melodic outpouring that is hard to match for sheer beauty.

There are episodes of gay peasant rollickings, and brassy Wagnerian blasts from the Brucknerian Valhalla. And in the finale there are places where hugh climaxes lead one to look for the end, only to find there's more to come. Director Szell and the orchestra deserved the high acclaim they recevied for a magnificent performance. By the way, only a few short bars were snipped out of the score.

ELMORE BACON, *Cleveland News*

The audience showed marked enthusiasms also for Szell's reading of the Bruckner symphony, and with good reason, for here was an interpretation rare in those qualities of relaxation and perspective necessary to hold in focus a work so monumental and so leisurely in its songlike eloquence.

This milestone in musical evolution demands something foreign to modern listening habits. It is without sharp contrasts in movement. It is grandiose, prolix and phenomenally distended. Yet, presented with such mastery and understanding as Szell and the orchestra displayed, the work retained a message for modern ears. One could, in fact, feel at home in the great nobility of its mellow brass choirs and the wonderful peacefulness which could exist only in the spaciousness of its cathedral-like structure.

HERBERT ELWELL,
Cleveland Plain Dealer

GUSTAV MAHLER:
FIRST SYMPHONY

Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Thor Johnson, Conductor; Jan. 2 and 3, 1948.

Mahler's symphonies (as, in fact, do Sibelius's) sometimes keep the listener on tenterhooks—waiting, as it were, to see what comes next. It all depends on the conductor, whether Mahler's moods or his methods of composition are the more apparent. Less adept musicians than Johnson often reveal the skeletal joint-

[illegible] in the Austrian composer's works, and by a process of pedantry, manage to make them seem incredibly long.

There were no weighty lengths in Mahler's First Symphony yesterday afternoon (there was one fairly sizeable cut in the last movement, which did not detract from the overall effect). The music was theatrical and good theater -- but never stagey. The players caught their cues, dove-tailed and underlined each others' speeches, and avoided any prima donna impulses to steal the show.

The music is handsome, if ever the word applied to music; it is colorful and it is [illegible]. In fact, there are moments of such sheer beauty that the susceptible listener almost winces with the sensuousness of it all. The first movement yesterday was other-worldly, and at times in the second movement icy fingers trailed down one's spine. The ecstasy of crashing rhythms toward the close made sitting still almost impossible.

JOHN P. RHODES,
The Cincinnati Enquirer

But, whatever the individual opinion of the merits of this first symphony may be, there can be a degree of unanimity in the statement that the orchestra has seldom played better and that the presentation was a labor of love on the part of Mr. Johnson. Perhaps some of the irony purported to be contained in the third movement — the so-called Callot funeral march—was missed; but on the other hand there was sheer beauty and edifying restraint in the second movement and a noble climax in the finale.

J. H. THUMAN,
The Cincinnati Times-Star

ANTON BRUCKNER:
THIRD SYMPHONY

New Haven Symphony Orchestra, Paul Hindemith, Conductor; Jan. 12, 1948.

Anton Bruckner's Symphony No. 3 in D Minor, was superbly presented by Mr. Hindemith and the orchestra, the director evidently keenly feeling the Wagnerian influence in the Bruckner work. The unusual parts for the horns were very dramatically revealed in this exposition of a theme in double-rhythm as the composer sought to present the various life impulses controlled by the over-powering Prime Source. There are both the depths and the heights presented, with light and airy dance themes running concurrently with sober themes expressing the sterner side of life . . . the vivacious third movement contains a gay folk dance which in turn is followed by the majestic finale, the Allegro movement which sums up the total of Bruckner's interpretation of the complexities of life.

F.R.J., *New Haven Journal-Courier*

GUSTAV MAHLER:
DAS LIED VON DER ERDE

Philharmonic - Symphony Society of New York, Bruno Walter, Conductor; Kathleen Ferrier, Mezzo-Soprano, Set Svanholm, Tenor, Soloists; Jan. 15, 16, and 18, 1948. (The last performance was broadcast over CBS.)

A stirring performance of Gustav Mahler's masterpiece, "The Song of the Earth," marked the return of Bruno Walter to the Philharmonic podium in Carnegie Hall last night. . . .

Still, the highlight of the evening was the Mahler reading. There Mr. Walter was on special ground. One felt a personal interest in the score, the concern of a friend and devoted disciple who treasured the memory of Mahler.

This is Mahler's testament of life and death, brimming on one side with a fierce love of life and on the other with the spectacle of vanishing youth and beauty that haunted him all his life.

Mahler was obsessed with the flight of time, and his despair as artist and man was over seizing the glow of the moment and making it last. No composer ever expressed such nostalgia for things passed and passing.

And Mr. Walter knew how to give every nuance its full due of poetry. This was music warm with humanity and helpless protest, and one felt it in every fibre of last night's reading.

Miss Ferrier ought to make a permanent addition to the vocal wing of New York music. The voice is warm and vibrant, easily produced, and capable of rich applications of color . Phrasing and diction both showed a sure grasp of style and content.

Mr. Svanholm's resonant voice sounded even bigger and brighter than it does at the Metropolitan. The full tones came through with the impact needed to heighten the effect of the grim outcries of Mahler's text.

But then they all sang well last night, the soloists in the actual vocal line, the orchestra in making the accompaniment sound like one varicolored voice — and Mr. Walter, whose guideline you could follow like a voice through every phrase.

LOUIS BIANCOLLI,
New York World Telegram

Making his first appearance of the season as conductor of the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall last night, Bruno Walter wisely included on his program Mahler's "Lied von der Erde"; for few would dispute the fact that Mr. Walter is incomparably the most discerning interpreter of the Austrian master's music and especially of this work, perhaps the most touching, aside from his Ninth Symphony, of all his symphonic products.

The occasion was further distinguished by the debut here of the young English mezzo-soprano Kathleen Ferrier, who delivered the contralto solos. Miss Ferrier, known here hitherto through London Decca phonograph records, which indicated that much was to be expected of her, proved to be a singer of uncommon ability. Her voice is a fine, voluminous one which has been cultivated with exceptional care. Her scale throughout the range employed was even, and there was no deterioration of quality in the rapid sections of the fourth movement, "Von der Schoenheit," where most singers who attempt this music are troubled by problems of breath control. Miss Ferrier's phrasing was exemplary and her claim to complete artistry rests not alone on the unsullied beauty of tonal texture with which she invested her lines but on the unfailing perceptiveness and inwardness which pervaded her conception of this music with its blend of hopeless despair and resignation.

Set Svanholm, who returns to the Metropolitan next week as a matchless Siegfried, sang with the utmost assurance and with flawless musicianship. His tenor voice sounded rather inflexible in the opening "Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde" and in "Von der Jugend," but with the fifth section of the work, "Der Trunkene im Fruehling," he achieved greater vocal elasticity and therewith greater musical conviction.

JEROME D. BOHM,
The New York Herald Tribune

Bruno Walter, back from his European triumphs, returned to conduct the Philharmonic-Symphony in Carnegie Hall last evening. Orchestra members rose as a tribute to the first appearance this season by the orchestra's musical chief, which tribute Mr. Walter proceeded to justify by a performance of uncommon excellence.

The principal feature of the evening was Mahler's "Das Lied von der Erde," a work for which Mr. Walter has special affinity, since it was he who conducted its first performance, in Munich in 1911. Mr. Walter also has led it twice previously with the Philharmonic, in 1934 and 1941.

As performed under Mr. Walter's direction, "Das Lied von der Erde" is an absorbing musical experience, and one which, thanks to Mr. Walter's friendship with the composer, may be regarded as definitive. Like most of Mahler's works, "Das Lied von der Erde" is wonderful to listen to and difficult to write about. The poignant work, rich with exotic overtones of the Orient, and conceived in a sort of exhilaration of despair, seeks to express the inexpressible, and comes very near to succeeding.

JOHN BRIGGS,
New York Post (Copyright 1948)

One's reasons for admiring the "Lied von der Erde" are doubtless generally shared. The lyricism of the poetry has an inspired parallel in the completely lyrical nature of the scoring both for voices and orchestra. Tenor and contralto—last evening the mezzo-soprano, Kathleen Ferrier—carry the burden of the song. But the orchestra also, with its remarkable devices of coloring and of dramatic accentuation, sings its song, and intersperses the final verses for the woman's voice with an interlude which is a "lied" of its own. The very melodic writing needs no translation or commentary to exert its immediate if sometimes obvious and sentimental appeal. Sentimental or not, the complete sincerity of the music is unquestionable and affecting.

Saying this, one adds reluctantly that the performance, for one reason or another, began to fall before it was over. This at least was the reaction of one listener who is not a perfect Mahlerite. Was this only due to certain characteristics of the performance? Both soloists were deficient in diction. Svanholm, the tenor, could only shout, in the opening verses, against heavy orchestra, and in this Mr. Walter did not spare him.

But Mr. Svanholm was prevailingly hard-voiced and lacking in variety of tone color. Miss Ferrier had but recently emerged from a bad cold. Her voice became freer as she went on. She could not, however, give the full significance to her text and music. Some time before the end was reached "Lied von der Erde" was becoming langweiling, lachrymose, old-fashioned.

OLIN DOWNES,
The New York Times

There was Mahler at the Philharmonic-Symphony last night in Carnegie Hall, but no Mahler "problem"; for the work was his "Lied von der Erde," about which virtually all shades of opinion are in agreement. If it is not the greatest music of the century from Central Europe, it is the last great music written there. As delivered by Bruno Walter, with masterful grace and comprehension, it was food for the mind and balm for the spirit.

With texts from "The Chinese Flute" as the unifying factor, Mahler's response to the states of mind expressed by such words as "Sehnsucht" ("Longing") "Seele" ("soul"), "Leben" "Tod," "Herz" and virtually every other key word of German lyric poetry—down to and including "ewig" ("eternity")—has a cleaner structure and a longer line than anything in his purely orchestral writing. It is doubtful, for all of that, that he ever invented elsewhere the sensitized, compelling and wholly personal ideas that flood this score; but even so, their course is better channeled, a stream straight through from the source to the sea.

It was a great return to the Philharmonic for Walter, who gave this work its world premiere in Vienna thirty-seven years ago, and has lived to see it accepted into the fraternity of the works that endure. The Mahler who said, "My time will come," has, in Walter, a champion who has seen that, for "Das Lied von der Erde," at least, those were words of prophecy, not merely of hope.

IRVING KOLODIN, *New York Sun*

ANTON BRUCKNER:

SECOND SYMPHONY

Kansas City Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Efrem Kurtz, Conductor; Jan. 27 and 28, 1948. (First performance in Kansas City.)

Not quite the biggest, nor yet by any means the smallest audience of the season, braved the near-zero weather last night to hear the eighth program on the Philharmonic subscription concert schedule. Those who turned out were well rewarded. They heard, most of them for the first time, the great Second Symphony of Anton Bruckner, . . .

The playing of the Bruckner symphony last night was, so far as Conductor Efrem Kurtz has been able to discover, the second performance of that work in America, although it is something like seventy years old. Its only previous reading in the current records was by the New York Philharmonic in the middle '20s, when Willem Mengelberg, the Dutch conductor, held the post there.

A single hearing of the symphony serves to revive, but not to explain, the mystery of why Bruckner's great orchestral works, so highly esteemed in Austria and Southern Germany, have been so slow to move beyond their native borders. Most of the symphonies are of great length; the Second is perhaps the shortest of the nine. But many others are long, too—Beethoven's Third and Ninth, for example, and the Schubert C major.

Perhaps the Bruckner symphonies seem dull to outlanders. The Second, undoubtedly has its dull spots; but so have most symphonies, if you pick the spots out of their context and quote them singly, as a politician does when quoting from a rival candidate's speech.

Yet throughout the Bruckner symphony last night there were many beautiful episodes. Some of them were not worked out as we are accustomed to hear themes worked out by Brahms or Beethoven; and some were worked to excess, *a la* Wagner. But the work typical of most carefully-written works in the late romantic period of the nineteenth century, abounded with melodies, beautifully intoned by a master instrumentalist. There is no doubt that Bruckner had almost a Wagnerian ear for sound; almost every phrase is placed in the orchestra to the best effect, and his use of alternating strings and winds, if not highly original, is most effective and agreeable. The symphony is quite long, as modern symphonies go—almost an hour. But leisure was a mark of the composer's age; while the Victorian novelists were writing long novels, the Germans and Austrians were writing long symphonies and operas. Bruckner was guilty, too, but not uniquely so.

Mr. Kurtz gave the symphony the most careful preparation, and emerged with one of the greater reading triumphs of the season. The tempi were always interesting, and the climaxes well planned and executed. The close attention the audience gave to the long slow movement was evidence of interest unusual in an unfamiliar piece of abstract music.

C.H.T., *The Kansas City Times*

INDEX TO CHORD AND DISCORD

VOLUME 1 THROUGH VOLUME 2, NO. 4

Subject and Author	Vol., No., Page
ADLER, F. C.—AN EMINENT BRUCKNERITE BY GABRIEL ENGEL	I-3-23
AUDIENCE, THE NEW, BY R. G. GREY	I-3-3
BRUCKNER, ANTON	
Anton Bruckner: Simpleton or Mystic? by Geoffrey Sharp	II-4-8
Bruckner and the New Generation	I-2-6
Bruckner Appreciation—Via Radio?	I-6-20
Bruckner as Colorist by Th. Otterstroem	I-2-20
Bruckner Chronology	II-2-55
Bruckner Festival in Linz (1936)—British Comment	I-8-22
Bruckner in England (1935)	I-5-20
Bruckner's Musical World by Felix M. Gatz	I-8-16
Bruckner on the American Radio	II-2-57
Bruckner on Records by Paul Hugo Little	II-3-55
Bruckner Study: *Das Kecke Beserl* by Gabriel Engel	I-7-12
Bruckner Symphonies Getting More Attention by Pitts Sanborn	II-2-45
Bruckner World Premieres	II-2-56
Brucknerlad: A Symphonic Odyssey by Gabriel Engel	I-5-1
Concerning Beethoven's True Successor by Frederick Stock	I-4-7
Bruckneriana, International	I-6-21
Life of Anton Bruckner by Gabriel Engel	II-1-1
Music of Anton Bruckner by Wolfgang Stresemann	II-4-17
Performances in America, Pioneer Bruckner	II-2-56
Prometheus Unbound by Gabriel Engel	I-8-1
Schubert and Bruckner by L. H. and Hans Tischler	II-4-23
Tonerl Turns Composer	I-4-12
Toscanini and Bruckner by Max Smith	I-3-12
The Turn to Bruckner by H. T. Parker	I-3-8
Walter, An Interview with	II-4-54
Walter Sees Bruckner as a Prophet by Louis Biancolli	II-2-47
Word to Anti-Brucknerites by Th. Otterstroem	I-1-5
BRUCKNER MEDAL OF HONOR, THE KILENYI	I-4-Cover
AWARDS:	
Professor Max Auer	I-5-28
Philip Greeley Clapp	II-2-12
Dr. Martin G. Dumler	I-5-27
Eugene Goossens	II-3-14
Maurice P. Kessler	II-4-7
Otto Klemperer	I-8-21
Serge Koussevitzky	I-8-21
Erich Leinsdorf	II-4-66
Professor Franz Moissl	I-5-28
Charles O'Connell	I-8-21
Eugene Ormandy	I-8-21
Artur Rodzinski	II-1-51
Frederick A. Stock	II-1-51
Arturo Toscanini	I-6-Cover
Bruno Walter	I-5-27
BRUCKNER, WORKS	
Symphonies of Anton Bruckner (I-IV) by Gabriel Engel	I-10-1
Symphonies, The Message of Bruckner's by Felix M. Gatz	I-8-19
Symphonies I, II, VI—Lest We Forget by Philip Greeley Clapp	II-4-1

Subject and Author — Vol., No., Page

Symphony No. I by Gabriel Engel — I-3-10, I-7-12
Symphony No. IV by Gabriel Engel — I-9-1
Symphonies No. IV and VII by Philip Greeley Clapp — II-3-39
Symphony No. VI — I-7-11
Symphonic Tetralogy (IV-VII) by Gabriel Engel — II-1-39
Symphony No. VIII by John N. Burk — I-9-6
Symphony No. VIII by Pitts Sanborn — II-3-23
Symphonies No. VIII and No. IX by Philip Greeley Clapp — II-4-41
Symphonies No. VIII and No. IX by Gabriel Engel — II-2-31
Symphony No. IX (Original Version—American Premiere) — I-6-14
Symphony No. IX (Original Version) by Max Auer — I-4-8
Symphony No. IX (Original Version) by Willi Reich — I-6-15
Symphony No. IX by Louis Biancolli — II-4-36
E Minor Mass, American Premiere — I-8-5
E Minor Mass, Thoughts on, by Robert Simpson — II-4-30
Mass, Romantic, or Sacred Symphony by Mrs. W. Beckman — I-1-8
Te Deum by Gabriel Engel — I-7-9
String Quintet by Gabriel Engel — II-3-9

BRUCKNER AND MAHLER
Attitude toward Composers Changes by Warren Storey Smith — I-10-28
Americans Discover Bruckner and Mahler by Philip Greeley Clapp — II-2-17
Bruckner and Mahler by Bruno Walter — II-2-1
Case for Bruckner and Mahler, The — I-8-23
Bruckner and Mahler, Their Spiritual Message by Mary R. Ryan — I-10-25
Bruckner and Mahler on WQXR and WNYC (1937), with short sketches of both composers by Gabriel Engel — I-9-31
Gabrilowitsch on Bruckner and Mahler — I-4-18
Mann, (Thomas), on Bruckner and Mahler — I-4-7
Reaching for the Stars by Nora Waln — II-2-48
Their Time Shall Come by Philip Greeley Clapp — II-3-1
Thiess, Frank, on Bruckner and Mahler — I-5-26
Van Loon, Hendrik Willem, on Bruckner, Mahler and Wolf — I-10-27
Wassermann, Jakob, on Bruckner aand Mahler — I-5-26
Unknown Bruckner, Mahler Works?, Why Not Excerpts of by Warren Storey Smith — II-2-49
Radio Talks by Gabriel Engel — I-9-1

CRITICAL COMMENT
Sides and Asides — I-1-16
Symphonic Chronicle (see under this entry)
Verdict of the Public — I-9-28

DEMOCRATIZATION, A NOTE ON, BY GABRIEL ENGEL — I-3-9

DUMLER, MARTIN G. — I-1-4
Dumler's *Stabat Mater* by Gabriel Engel — I-7-27
Dumler's *Stabat Mater*, Premiere — I-7-40
Dumler's *Te Deum* by Gabriel Engel — II-3-27
Dumler's *Te Deum*, Premiere of — II-4-90

Elektra, MUSIC BECOMES, BY GABRIEL ENGEL — I-3-6

EUROPEAN ECHOES — I-2-22

Gurrelieder, LEOPOLD STOKOWSKI ON THE — I-2-17

LAGUARDIA BROADCAST — II-4-89

MAHLER, GUSTAV
Bodanzky Pays Tribute to Mahler — I-8-32
The Conductor Gustav Mahler by Ernst J. M. Lert — I-9-10
Gustav Mahler by Franz Werfel — II-4-49
Gustav Mahler the Mystic by Max Graf — II-4-51

Subject and Author	Vol., No., Page
Koussevitzky on Mahler	I-1-15
Mahler and Dostoevski by Curtis Swanson	II-4-67
Mahler and the Student Critic	II-4-82
Mahler as a Potential Public Favorite by William Parks Grant	II-2-27
Mahler Chronology	II-2-57
Mahler in England (1935)	I-5-19
Mahler—Last of the Romantics by Winthrop Sargeant	II-1-35
Mahler on American Radio (First Nation-wide Broadcasts)	II-2-58
Mahler on Records by William Parks Grant	II-3-63
Mahlerian Misconceptions by Warren Storey Smith	II-4-61
Mahler's Art: A New Survey by William Parks Grant	I-5-14
Mahler's Music in Wartime Britain by Jack Diether	II-4-71
Mahler's Musical Language by Gabriel Engel	I-1-12
Mahler's Use of the Orchestra by William Parks Grant	I-10-15
Mahler World Premieres	II-2-58
Music, Mahler, and Mysticism by Ernst Lert	I-8-6
New Light on Mahler by Willi Reich	I-4-19
"Peace Conference of Amsterdam" (Holland Honors Mahler and Mengelberg) by Olga Samaroff Stokowski	II-1-27
Sanborn, Pitts, on Mahler	I-10-15
Symphonic Problem in Mahler's Works, The, by H. Tischler	II-3-15
Why Mahler, Too? by Warren Storey Smith	II-2-13
Mahler Medal of Honor, The Kilenyi	I-6-22
Awards:	
Artur Bodansky	I-8-21
Philip Greeley Clapp	II-4-29
Ossip Gabrilowitsch	I-8-21
Hans Kindler	II-4-48
Otto Klemperer	I-9-28
Serge Koussevitzky	I-8-21
Willem Mengelberg	I-8-21
Dimitri Mitropoulos	II-3-82
Eugene Ormandy	I-10-30
Erno Rapee	II-4-89
Fritz Reiner	II-4-60
Artur Rodzinski	II-4-75
Moses Smith	II-4-48
Bruno Walter	I-8-21
Mahler, Works	
Symphony No. 1 by Gabriel Engel	II-3-47
Symphony No. 1, Symphonic Poem or Symphony?	I-4-15
Symphony No. 1 on Records by William Parks Grant	II-4-76
Symphony No. 2 by Jack Diether	II-3-45
Symphony No. 2 by Gabriel Engel	I-7-19, I-9-3
Symphony No. 2: A Verdict of 1933 by A. W. Hepner	I-4-21
Symphony No. 4 on Records by William Parks Grant	II-4-76
Symphony No. 8 by Paul Stefan	II-4-65
Symphony No. 10 by Frederick Block	I-2-22, II-3-43
Kindertotenlieder by Gabriel Engel	I-9-3
Das Lied von der Erde by William Parks Grant	I-6-10
Mass, The Concert	I-8-21
Met-Empsychosis (From Impresario to Director) by Ernst Lert	I-7-1
Mozart as a Music Dramatist	I-5-25
Orchestral Balance and Instrumental Color, Evolution of Modern	I-2-13
Paper Trumpets by R. G. Grey	I-1-15

Subject and Author	Vol., No., Page
PERFORMANCES, LISTS OF BRUCKNER AND MAHLER	
American (1932-1933)	I-2-5
Europe (1932-33), Partial List	I-3-21
1933-1934, Some Important Performances	I-4-23
1939-40	II-1-52
1941-1946	II-4-93
World Premieres, etc.	II-2-56, 59
PHONOGRAPH RECORDINGS, A NEW ERA IN	I-2-23
PROPHETS, SCRIBES, AND PHARISEES BY GABRIEL ENGEL	I-7-22
RAPEE, ERNO, MAHLER MEDAL AWARD TO	II-4-89
ROLLAND, ROMAIN	I-1-11
ROMANTICISM!, BACK TO, BY BRUNO WALTER	I-3-1
SACHS, THE IMPERSONATION OF HANS, BY FRIEDRICH SCHORR	I-10-11
SANBORN, PITTS, TRIBUTE TO MEMORY OF, BY DEEMS TAYLOR	II-3-69
SCHALK, FRANZ	I-1-10
SCHOENBERG, ARNOLD—*Gurrelieder*	I-2-16
SMITH, MAX—FRIEND OF TOSCANINI	I-7-10
STOKOWSKI, LEOPOLD, on the *Gurrelieder*	I-2-16
SYMPHONIC CHRONICLE (A RECORD OF CRITICAL AND POPULAR REACTION) I-2-14, I-3-14, I-5-28, I-6-17, I-7-32, I-8-33, I-9-35, I-10-33, II-1-53, II-2-60, II-3-73, II-4-99	
SYMPHONIC FORECASTS	I-4-1
SYMPHONIC HORIZONS, NEW, BY GABRIEL ENGEL	I-1-1
SYMPHONIC NEW DEAL BY GABRIEL ENGEL	I-6-1
SYMPHONIC RENAISSANCE, THE AMERICAN, BY R. G. GREY	I-2-1
VIENNA TO-DAY, MUSICAL, BY WILLI REICH	I-5-21
WAGNER MEMORIAL PARSIFAL BY R. G. GREY	I-3-13
WALTER, BRUNO, A MESSAGE FROM	I-7-25
WALTER, BRUNO	I-1-10

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

NEVILLE CARDUS, for many years Music Critic of the MANCHESTER GUARDIAN. Author of *Ten Composers* and several other books. His *Autobiography* appeared in September, 1947, and was selected by the Book Society as the Book of the Month. *Remembered Pleasures*, a volume of reminiscences on which Mr. Cardus is now working, is being published in part by HALLÉ in serial form, prior to its complete publication as a book.

GABRIEL ENGEL is a graduate of Columbia University. He was a Pulitzer Scholar. He is the author of *The Life of Anton Bruckner* and *Gustav Mahler, Song-Symphonist*. Since its inception, he has been the Editor of CHORD AND DISCORD. He has contributed to the *Encyclopedia of Music and Musicians*.

DONALD MITCHELL, born in London, 1925. Educated Dulwich College. In film industry before Army service. Demobilised 1946 and now busy lecturing and school teaching. Editor of the quarterly review *Music-Survey*. Contributor to *Mandrake* (Oxford) and A. L. Bacharach's forthcoming *The Music Masters*. Broadcasts and does research for the B.B.C. Made a particular study of the life and music of Max Reger.

DIKA NEWLIN, born in Portland, Oregon, on November 22, 1923, is assistant professor and composer in residence at Western Maryland College, Westminster, Maryland.

While a high school student she composed her *Cradle Song*. It was orchestrated by Vladimir Bakaleinikoff and performed by the Cincinnati Orchestra under his direction on December 28, 1935. Since that time it has received performances by other concert orchestras.

Having entered Michigan State College at the age of twelve, Dika Newlin took a full liberal arts course, majoring in French. In 1938 she began studying with Schoenberg, whose influence aroused her interest in the work of Bruckner and Mahler. She was the first ever to receive a Ph.D. degree in musicology at Columbia University. Her work there was under the direction of Douglas Moore and Paul Henry Lang. Her doctor's thesis, bearing the title "Bruckner-Mahler-Schoenberg", was published by the Kings Crown Press in 1947 and is about to go into a second edition. While at Columbia she continued to study the piano (with Rudolf Serkin, and later with Artur Schnabel) and composition (with Roger Sessions). Her one act opera, *Feathertop*, based on Hawthorne's story of the same name, won the Seidl prize for distinguished accomplishment in the field of the lyric stage. Excerpts from her second full length opera, *The Scarlet Letter*, have been played in concert.

ROBERT SIMPSON, born in London, 1921, originally intended to study medicine. After two years of medical studies, Mr. Simpson decided to turn to music. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Durham. At the present time he lectures and occasionally teaches in schools. He has composed several orchestral and chamber music works. His article, *Bruckner and the Symphony*, appeared in the February, 1946, issue of *The Music Review*, published in England.

WARREN STOREY SMITH, born in Brookline, Mass., succeeded Olin Downes as Music Editor of the *Boston Post*. His musical compositions include orchestral and chamber music works as well as songs and piano pieces. He became a member of the faculty of Faelten Pianoforte School in Boston after his graduation from that school. He was assistant music critic on the Boston *Transcript*. In 1922 he became teacher of theory and composition at the New England Conservatory.

WOLFGANG STRESEMANN, born in Dresden, studied law and music. After practicing law for several years, he decided to devote himself to music. He has written symphonies, songs, chamber music, etc., and has conducted orchestras in New York, Buffalo, and Princeton. He came to the U. S. in 1939 and became a citizen. At the present time he is music critic on the *Staats-Zeitung* in New York.

Among American artistic developments of recent years the rebirth of interest in the music of Bruckner and Mahler is second to none in significance. When *The Bruckner Society of America* was founded on January 4, 1931, performances of these two composers by our major musical organizations were not merely rare, but also ineffectual, because American music-lovers had no adequate approach to the proper appreciation of the art of either Bruckner or Mahler. Therefore the Society, having adopted as its chief aim the fulfillment of this void, published the first biographies of these composers in English and issued a magazine, CHORD AND DISCORD, devoted almost entirely to discussions of their works.

The *Society* solicits the cooperation of all who are interested in furthering this aim. Inquiries concerning membership may be directed to Robert G. Grey, Executive Secretary, 697 West End Avenue, New York 25, New York.

All contributions are deductible for income tax purposes.

Copies of *Chord and Discord* are available in the principal public and university libraries in the United States.