

THE SYMPHONIES
of
ANTON BRUCKNER

by
GABRIEL ENGEL

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THE KILENYI BRUCKNER MEDAL

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To

MARTIN G. DUMLER, Mus.D., LL.D.

PREFACE

The publication of this book marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of *The Bruckner Society of America, Inc.*

The author, the late Gabriel Engel, was the editor of the Society's magazine *Chord and Discord* from its inception to the date of his death on August 1, 1952. He contributed numerous essays of lasting value to the magazine and also wrote the articles on Bruckner and Mahler contained in the *Encyclopedia of Music and Musicians* as well as two monographs: *The Life of Anton Bruckner* and *Gustav Mahler — Song Symphonist*.

He analyzed the symphonies and *Quintet* of Anton Bruckner in the hope that his effort would aid in clarifying the message of the Austrian master.

The dedication of this modest volume to Dr. Martin G. Dumler, President of *The Bruckner Society of America, Inc.*, whom the late Gabriel Engel held in great esteem, is in accordance with the oft expressed wish of the author.

FOREWORD

The aim of this concise monograph is to present Bruckner's symphonies as a unified artwork logically evolving. While analyzing the symphonies separately, it stresses the principal features determining their common individuality.

The controversy over the relative validity of the "original" and "revised" versions is not entered upon. Instead there are set forth in a brief preliminary discussion the origin and nature of Bruckner's orchestral language, involving what is perhaps the most decisive (yet hitherto neglected) internal evidence in that fascinating case.

A new grouping of the symphonies is suggested. An analysis of the *Quintet* is appended because it is Bruckner's sole instrumental work in a larger form generally regarded as worthy of a place beside his symphonies.

INTRODUCTION

Bruckner's *First Symphony* is the awakening cry of the spirit of a giant symphonist. Though he was already forty at the time of its composition, the unbridled enthusiasm of an ambitious first opus infuses the work with convincing sincerity. His *Mass in D Minor*, composed a year earlier, proved him not only a master in the field of ritual music, but an adept orchestrator with strikingly progressive tendencies. The resourceful instrumental idiom revealed in the prelude to the "Et Resurrexit" in that work is an eloquent symphonic prophecy. Examination of over a dozen Bruckner compositions penned in the course of the two preceding decades reveals that the dominant features of the orchestral language of his entire symphonic cycle were firmly rooted in his own fantasy. They show him to have been from the outset an orchestrator of linear tendencies, a tonal draughtsman, whose ideal of orchestral tone prescribed the rigid economy of instrumental volume and coloring indispensable to the framing of a fundamentally polyphonic message.

Already in his early twenties Bruckner, steeped in the composition of sacred music, was laying down the idiomatic foundations of his future symphonic labors, as yet mere hopes and resolves, quickened by rare, reverential hearings of his great forerunners, especially Schubert. Instinctively, he recognized the broad vistas of harmonic progress they had laid bare. Marking the vivid effect of their most novel usages, he ventured an

even more daring application of some of the principles involved. Thus to the harmonic richness of Schubert's lightning transformations from major to minor (and vice versa) he added a wealth of subtle enharmonic nuances scarcely glimpsed by his short-lived "romantic" countryman.

In his "Amens" he recreated the charming melodic cadences of Haydn and Mozart, clothing them with fresh interest through frank dissonances. How disturbing these "Amens" seemed to his contemporary publishers (who "corrected" them for public consumption) may readily be seen by comparison with the original manuscripts, which still display Bruckner's grammatical "errors." Many melodic and harmonic features characteristic of his symphonic idiom were nurtured in his early church music. Particularly noteworthy among these are the impassioned sixth and octave leaps in his melodies. Ascending, they spread an air of fervent aspiration; descending, they suggest prayerful humility, literally mirroring the act of a penitent sinking to his knees in worship. From the same source also Bruckner drew those step-wise, parallel progressions of the outer voices in their gradual, resolute rise to a climax; those moments of full major tonic grandeur bursting out of fortissimo unisons; those broad-winged melodic flights in sixths above sustained organ-points; even that typical rhythmic characteristic, the division of a measure into alternate two and three-note phrases, so prevalent in his symphonies that it has come to be widely known as "Bruckner Rhythm."

THE MINOR TRILOGY*

- I Symphony, C Minor (1866)
- II Symphony, C Minor (1872)
- III Symphony, D Minor (1873)

*The validity of this grouping is attested by the fact that all of Bruckner's outstanding compositions during this period were also in minor. These include the three Masses: No. 1, D Minor (1864); No. 2, E Minor (1866); No. 3, F Minor (1867).

FIRST SYMPHONY (C MINOR)

I. ALLEGRO. (2/2).

Often subtitled "Storm and Stress" the *First Symphony* reflects a powerful conflict between the individual message of a symphonic genius and the traditional means available for its expression. The highly characteristic nature of the opening theme, skipping with carefree abandon over a stubbornly punctuated tonic bass, caused Bruckner to call the work "Das kecke Bese!" (The Saucy Maid), a nickname that has clung to it ever since.

Allegro. (molto moderato) $\text{♩} = 60$.

The musical score is presented in three systems. Each system consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is C minor (three flats). The time signature is 2/2. The first system begins with a piano (p) dynamic marking. The second system also begins with a piano (p) dynamic marking. The third system also begins with a piano (p) dynamic marking. The music features a prominent, rhythmic bass line and a more melodic, skipping treble line.

A burst of spontaneous song, marked by rugged rhythm and sharply etched orchestral setting, this

melody at once evidences Bruckner's inventive genius. Eluding all expectations of cadence it leaps tauntingly on and speedily rears itself to a towering climax. In the virtually self-evolving growth of this very first theme into a larger thematic structure (usually called theme-group) is revealed the dominant principle of Bruckner's symphonic melody-treatment.

A brief heroic episode (a series of stirring fanfares over a rapid, blustering motif in the basses) marks the attainment of the first peak of power.



The leading motifs here presented become the chief driving forces of the whole movement.

A subtle interlude, drawn from the opening theme, descends like a narrow mountainpath winding down to a sunny Upper Austrian valley. In this calmer atmosphere is born the second theme, a song of ardent love in the violins above a transformed fragment of *Laendler* melody.





The artist who glimpsed this vision of beauty is clearly the same who penned the celebrated "Zizibee" double-theme of the *Romantic* a decade later.

The third subject, a daring trumpet theme heralded by an exultant march motif, proves especially surprising as the sequel to a love theme.

Breit.



In later years, pressed for an explanation of the precipitant nature of this music the composer merely said with a sigh, "I was head over heels in love in those days." Yet in all respects, save its careful observance of smooth transitions between contrasted passages, this first section displays the chief features of Bruckner's individual symphonic style.

The development section, despite a brevity sprung from an over-anxious subservience to traditionally sanctioned proportions, sets forth an abundance of familiar

thematic life in fresh guise. The tale unfolded in this concise first development section is a spiritual forecast of those told in lavish detail in the corresponding sections of the later symphonies. Already here Bruckner treats the recapitulation as more than a formal restatement of the principal themes. He senses the peril to artistic integrity lurking in the traditional recapitulation of themes. In his later symphonies the recapitulation is to assume a revolutionary significance as the actual climax of the development section. In the *First* he strives to make it a logical sequel familiar, yet surprisingly fresh in its wealth of supporting thematic detail.

Like a skillful novelist, reserving his most telling utterance till the last, Bruckner purposely denies the end of this initial opening movement conclusive character. The tale of the symphony itself is far from ended; it has but reached a moment of high suspense, during which it must remain poised until the turbulent air is calmed for the profound, soul-searching revelation of the coming *Andante*.

II. ADAGIO. (4/4). ANDANTE. (3/4).

The "Adagio Composer", some called him twenty years later, when instant acclaim greeted the premiere of the slow movement of his *Seventh* at Leipzig. Yet the moving qualities of that grand *Adagio* were already richly present in the slow movement of the *First*. Bruckner, in despair at the unhappy outcome of his life's chief love-episode, here poured out his sorrows in the sustained melodic language for which he was to

become universally famous. Far more than the other three movements of the *First* it was an expression impelled by inner necessity, a fervent prayer for solace, rising out of the abject confession of the sufferings of a stricken soul. Its noble message is the wresting of ultimate spiritual triumph from deep, personal tragedy. Traditional form, employing two contrasted song-themes, is eminently suited to the framing of such a message.

Adagio. $\text{♩} = 76$

The musical score consists of four systems of staves. The first system features Horns (Horn. *pp*), Violins (Vl.), and Celli (Cell. *pp*). The second system includes Horns (Horn. *pp*), Violins (Vl. *p*), Celli (Cell. *pp*), Oboe (Ob. *breit*), and Strings (Str. *pp*). The third system shows Horns (Horn. *mp*) and Strings (Str. *cresc.*). The fourth system includes Horns (Horn. *pp*), Violins (Vl. *f*), Celli (Cell. *pp*), and Strings (Str. *pp*).

A song of warm consolation follows upon the gloomy first subject.

Out of this, in turn, issues a melody of childlike joy, its spontaneous charm enhanced by the new rhythm in which it is framed.

Andante. $\text{♩} = 52$

III. SCHERZO. (3/4). *Lebhaft* (Lively); TRIO. (3/4). *Langsam* (Slow).

The Scherzo reveals Bruckner an instinctive master of that concise form quickened and perfected by Beethoven. A shadow hovers over the opening theme, qualifying the merriment inherent in its dancing rhythm.

Lebhaft. $\text{♩} = 80$

A boisterous unison-passage provides the element of

contrast in the first portion. The graceful, placid, purely Austrian theme of the *Trio* at once proclaims the composer a countryman of Schubert.

A musical score for Violin and Horn. The Violin part (Viol.) is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It begins with a melodic line of eighth notes. The Horn part (1. Horn) is written on a single staff with a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It provides a harmonic accompaniment with sustained notes and some rhythmic patterns.

IV. FINALE. (4/4). *Bewegt und feurig* (With life and fire).

The stern opening notes of the *Finale*, thundered forth by the full orchestra, blot out completely the scene of the dance.

Bewegt und feurig. ♩ = 126

A musical score for the Finale section, consisting of two systems of piano accompaniment. The key signature is two flats (Bb) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked 'Bewegt und feurig' with a quarter note equal to 126 beats per minute. The first system starts with a forte (f) dynamic. The music is characterized by dense, rhythmic patterns in both the treble and bass staves, with many notes beamed together, creating a powerful and driving sound.

They are an ominous reminder that the path of victory, barely glimpsed in the heroics of the opening movement, is beset with a world of hostile elements

still to be overcome. As in the first movement, here also, three contrasted themes are presented.

Ruhig. $\text{♩} = 84$

1. Viol.

p dolce

Str.

mf deutlich hervortretend

ff

Brief, sharply defined, these contain felicitous motifs for Bruckner's predominantly contrapuntal style of development.

fff

The impressive closing hymn of triumph and the long-delayed return to the tonic key are especially daring features. In later years Bruckner himself, commenting upon the abrupt nature of this sudden conclusion set down in a moment of sweeping inspiration, remarked, "I didn't care what anybody would say; I just composed as I wanted to."

SECOND SYMPHONY (C MINOR)

The six years separating the creation of Bruckner's first two symphonies brought the most radical changes of his career. During this period he ventured to seek his fortune in Vienna, then the world's acknowledged musical metropolis. He even sought as organ virtuoso to gain the applause and riches usually denied to all musicians save master pianists and fiddlers. It was at London, whither a futile concert tour had taken him in the summer of 1871, that he began his *Second*. Musical experts of the Austrian capital had passed adverse judgment on the score of the *First*, pronouncing the thematic material too free, the instrumental coloring too coarse, the dynamic contrasts too violent, the symphony, in short, "unplayable". The effect of their criticism upon the shaping of the *Second* is best summarized in Bruckner's own words: "They frightened me so, that I feared to be myself." Though now generally regarded as a work inferior to the *First* in emotional appeal, the *Second* proved, as a result of that very criticism, a more plastic creation.

I. MODERATO. (2/2).

The opening theme marks the first appearance in Bruckner of those broad-winged, songlike melodies characterizing his later symphonies.

Moderato.

Viol. *p*
mf Celli.
 Horn.
 Horn.
 Horn.
 Fl.
 Cell.
 Horn.
cresc.
 Cell.
mf

An expressive dialogue between cello and horn beneath a soft *tremolo* in the violins, it is imbued with a centralized power, bearing within it the seeds from

which springs the varied musical life of the entire movement.

In place of the customary smooth transitional passages Bruckner in this section employs the novel device of setting off the successive theme-groups from each other by full pauses. "This ought to be called the 'Rest Symphony'," remarked one of the musicians contemptuously at the first rehearsal. The nickname caught on at once, to become a permanent sneer among the invectives heaped upon Bruckner by his detractors. Pressed to explain these pauses the composer naively said, "When I want to present a new, momentous idea I must stop to catch my breath."

This opening movement reveals a definite intensification in the polyphonic nature of Bruckner's ideas. The double-theme which introduces the second group is a deeper-voiced, more impassioned expression than the corresponding *Laendler*-haunted song-theme in the *First*.



In the development, remarkable for its resourceful, effortless counterpoint, familiar thematic fragments attain full exploitation in a world of ingenious combinations. Hitherto subordinated motifs blossom into full-blown melodies. An abrupt pause at the very summit of power; a last moment of introspection reflected in

the initial motif framed in tender woodwind and cello tones; then the coda, a brief, blustering, dynamic passage, dominated by the pointed rhythm first marked by the trumpets in the opening theme-group.

II. ANDANTE. (4/4).

The *Andante*, a radiant song of inner communion, begins with a yearning theme ardently voiced by the strings.

The musical score consists of three systems of staves. The first system features a single staff for the 1. Violin and a grand staff for the strings (p Str.) and cello (cel.). The second system continues the string accompaniment and introduces a horn part (Horn) in the right hand of the grand staff. The third system shows the string accompaniment continuing with a more active rhythmic pattern.

This melody is enhanced by an accompaniment itself of almost independent song-like nature. The second theme, a highly individual Brucknerian concept, is a duet between plucked strings and a solo horn. Unusual harmonies clothe it with mysticism.



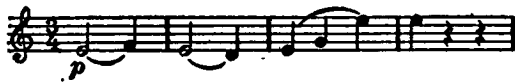
Alternate variations of the two themes, amid increasing harmonic richness and rhythmic variety, mark the unfolding of the movement. Appropriately, the ecstatic "Benedictus" theme of the *F Minor Mass*, in symphonic garb, dominates one of the most eloquent moments, devoted to the soul's contemplation of super-earthly things.

III. SCHERZO. (3/4). *Maessig Schnell* (Moderately fast).

Sudden and violent contrasts sway the *Scherzo*, which alternates between a vigorous, stamping motif and a sinuous, rather lyric phrase.



The *Trio* is a gracefully swinging *Laendler*, sprung from the very heart of Bruckner's rustic homeland.



This was the movement that prompted his delighted adherents to call the symphony the "Upper-Austrian". Bruckner here again proved himself an instinctive mas-

ter of the *Scherzo*-form. In it he had found a ready, perfect vehicle for the expression of some of his life's most vivid experiences, the landscape, the songs, and folk-dances of his native countryside.

IV. FINALE. (2/2). *Ziemlich schnell* (rather fast).

Formally, the *Finale* is a somewhat unusual combination of sonata and rondo, sprung from the composer's desire to develop each of his themes. Not content with espousing the generally impetuous character of traditional symphonic *Finale*-form, Bruckner effected a clear relationship between the thematic material of the opening and closing movements. Thus he achieved a true symphonic summing-up, immeasurably strengthening the unity of the entire work. That this was one of the principal tenets of his artistic creed is witnessed by the increased care with which he constructed similar summations in his subsequent symphonies.

Drawn from the opening theme-group of the first movement, three distinct motifs, ingeniously welded into a polyphonic unit, introduce the *Finale*.

The image shows the beginning of the musical score for the Finale. It consists of two staves of music. The top staff is for the first violin (1. Viol.) and the bottom staff is for the second violin (2. Viol.). The tempo is marked 'Ziemlich schnell.' and the dynamics are marked 'p' (piano). The music is in 2/2 time and features a polyphonic texture with two distinct motifs introduced by the violins.

At first sounded with the utmost restraint, all the pent-up forces of conflict are gradually loosed as the music ascends toward a summit of rhythmic and tonal

power. From the *Scherzo* itself stems the ensuing theme, a resolute outburst by the full orchestra eloquent of a determination to sweep aside all obstacles.



Moments of comparative calm, based on a reminiscence of the swaying figure in the second theme of the opening movement, relieve the grim atmosphere of battle.



Throughout the composition of the *Second* the mood of his then recently completed *E Minor Mass* was still strong upon Bruckner. Most dramatically, after an extended passage in the *Finale* marked by violent, exhausting conflict, the orchestra is suddenly hushed—and like the very voice of Faith (for Bruckner devoutly believed Faith the soul's only hope of eternal salvation), the *Kyrie* theme of the *Mass* sounds the promise of surcease from earthly trial and tribulation.

The song-theme group is introduced by a Brucknerian double-theme, a *Laendler*-inspired melody in "Bruckner Rhythm" shedding its sunshine over an expressive song in the viola.



An air of firm resolve sways the third theme-group. The heroic burden of fanfares is tempered with the more gracious strains of a devout chorale. "Bruckner Rhythm" remains an influential factor. Especially majestic in its promise of ultimate triumph is the sudden reappearance of the initial theme inverted in the trombones.



While Bruckner's first two symphonies retain, in all essential respects, classic lines and dimensions, examination of the score of the *Third* reveals a form broadened far beyond the utmost dimensions of the sonata structure employed by Beethoven. The soundness of this magnification is attested by its integral origin. In place of the classicist's brief contrasted themes, skillfully bridged by interludes, Bruckner sets forth in straightforward fashion three independent theme-groups, each consisting of well-contrasted motivated portions. Yet it

is Bruckner's broadening mode of thematic development in the *Third* that is mainly responsible for the unprecedented length of the opening and closing movements. Here, for the first time, he grants each motif the full expression which its individual nature justly demands. The result, a huge development section, acquires convincing unity through the mastery with which the separate paragraphs are gradually reared aloft towards a towering climax, doubly surprising and impressive because it proves to be the recapitulation itself!

In this, as in all the Bruckner symphonies that followed, the opening and closing movements must be regarded as logical sequels, indispensable and supplementary to each other. Conflict, triumph, and apotheosis constitute their content, while invincible faith, supporting the heroic soul through its every trial, cloaks the whole in the spirit of affirmation which fore-ordains the ultimate victory. Hence the first movement closes, as does that of Beethoven's *Ninth*, in the midst of conflict. There follow interludes setting forth the communion of the soul with God (*Adagio*) and a retrospect of the joys of existence (*Scherzo*). As the opening movement ends, the central theme, at first sounded mysteriously out of infinite distances, has arrived at the heart of the battle scene, to stand revealed as a mighty warrior armed for the decisive fray yet to come.

II. ADAGIO. (4/4, 3/4), (Quasi Andante).

This is the first of Bruckner's celebrated long slow movements. In place of the tragic bitterness characterizing the *Adagio* of the *First* and the mystic, contem-

plative quality dominating that of the *Second*, this section is swayed by an air of soaring, unquestioning faith. It begins with a deep, noble song of communion, suggesting a prayer uttered by one worshipping on bended knee.



The answering theme, a consoling melody framed in a new, quickened rhythm, is like a message of encouragement from Above.



So subtle is the initial re-creation of the opening theme in a fresh rhythmic pattern that it might at first be mistaken for a wholly new idea.



Yet it is but the first of the varied thematic restatements which constitute traditional *Adagio* framework.

The melodic and harmonic magnificence of this section reflects the decades which Bruckner spent in the baroque splendor of ancient cathedral surroundings. More overwhelming with each symphony grows this air of grandeur, suggestive of the mighty, domelike structures of the Houses of God which nurtured and mirrored Bruckner's lofty spiritual aspiration.

III. SCHERZO. (3/4). *Ziemlich schnell* (Rather fast).
TRIO. (3/4).

The *Scherzo*, a delightful expression of every phase of the *Laendler* spirit, is full of Bruckner's typically naive humor and laughter. Prominent in the melodic line is a motif drawn from the initial (or central) theme of the symphony.



A swinging *Laendler*-melody provides a happy contrast to the whirling, leaping abandon of this beginning.



The Trio, also a sunny *Laendler*-melody especially

Langsamer.

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: Violin (Viol.) and Trumpet (Trp.). The tempo is marked "Langsamer." (Ad libitum). The key signature has three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The Violin part is marked "dolce" and features a melodic line with a long, sweeping phrase. The Trumpet part is marked "mf" and "p" and features a more rhythmic, melodic line. The score is written on two staves, each with a treble and bass clef.

(Goellerich) asked him to explain the glaring incongruity of these two melodic lines. Pointing to the crepe-decked doorway of a house they were just passing Bruckner said, "From the mansion opposite comes the sound of dance-music and merrymaking; here on this side lies a man on his deathbed. Such is life. That's the thought behind my theme."

Not until the whole epic plot of the work has been unfolded and the heroic soul has emerged victorious on the final reutterance of the opening or central theme amid the full splendor of massed instruments, does one realize how masterfully Bruckner planned every detail of this symphony before proceeding to set it down. A true mystic, for him this theme was to tell the beginning and end of all. Its component elements were to govern every episode of the gigantic drama performing through four movements, attaining apotheosis in a final expression, like a revelation of the Prime Source framed in the utmost tonal majesty.

THE MAJOR TETRALOGY*

- IV Symphony, E Flat Major (1874)
- V Symphony, B Flat Major (1876)
- VI Symphony, A Major (1879)
- VII Symphony, E Major (1883)

* Bruckner composed only two other outstanding works during this period, both in major. They are: The Quintet, F Major (1879) an analysis of which appears at the end of this book; the Te Deum, C Major (1881).

FOURTH SYMPHONY (E FLAT MAJOR) ROMANTIC

Toward the close of his arduous career Bruckner, at length become famous, was awarded an honorary degree by the University of Vienna. He was puzzled by the Greek word "Melipoeos" inscribed upon his diploma. Scholars whom he asked to interpret the term were divided between "tone-poet" and "tone-craftsman". Bruckner preferred the latter, though more prosaic translation, insisting that the former smacked too much of "program" music.

It is likely that the few touches of realism (bird-calls, wood-murmurs, etc.) in the *Romantic* were influenced by the sensational apparition of Liszt's symphonic "poems" in the concert world. Yet Bruckner was no more a romanticist than Beethoven, who warned against a too literal story-background interpretation of the *Pastorale*, his lone symphonic venture beyond the strict borders of absolute music.

I. RUHIG BEWEGT. (2/2). (*Tranquillo, con moto*)

As the solo horn sounds the opening theme midst an ecstatic tremolo in the strings, it seems as though the very lips of Nature open in fervent, hymn-like song.

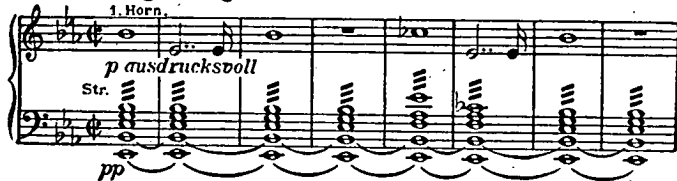
Ruhig bewegt.

1. Horn.

p ausdrucksvoll

Str.

pp



This simple, superb melody, created out of a single interval (a fifth), is one of the most expressive of Bruckner's thematic inspirations. Veiled in deep mystery by the distant murmur of strange, supporting harmonies, it breathes the grandeur of a majestic *adagio*. The veil lifts as new voices (woodwind, strings) take up the theme in imitative dialogue. With broad pulse unaltered, it rises to a summit of sonority, generating fresh motivation as it rises. This ascent, portrayed in gracious melody, framed in "Bruckner Rhythm", forms the second portion of the opening theme-group.



Quickened by successive recurrences of this rhythm the pulse of the music speedily approaches *Allegro* character. There ensues a veritable burst of jubilation amid a wealth of melodic fragments rising and falling as though sounded antiphonally from heaven above and earth below.



The whole universe seems to glory in this sunrise!

Re-echoing at increasing distances the music subsides, merging with the cosmic mists whence it first issued. Thus, without a trace of welding, are joined into a perfect thematic unit three distinct melodic conceptions. Poetically alone is the achievement of this unity simple to grasp. The spiritual message underlying the entire theme-group is like an unbroken spell. Even when its last echoes have died away, there persists a hymn-like aura which surrounds the new theme, the song of the birds.



This *Zizibee* (titmouse) love-duet, one of the most famous of Bruckner's numerous double-themes, is an apt tonal reflection of the yearning of man's soul for union with Nature.

So plastic is the structure of the movement, so natural and inevitable the advent of each fresh idea, that one readily understands why the *Romantic* has been the most popular Bruckner symphony with music-lovers for over half a century. The composer himself, perceiving its unusually felicitous union of clear-cut form and simple, ingratiating melody, came to regard it as the ideal introduction to his gigantic later symphonies. Poetically, at least, it is the actual introduction to the three symphonies which followed, exploiting thoroughly the spiritual wealth discovered in a swift, brilliant revelation in the *Romantic*.

II. ANDANTE. (4/4).

The *Andante*, as usual with Bruckner, presents a typical adventure of the spirit on earth, involving ever-present pain and suffering. A song of unrequited love, one of the most wistful of symphonic slow movements, it remains nevertheless fundamentally an expression of affirmation. Even the deep melancholy of the opening theme, eloquently voiced by the cellos, is relieved by a motif of hope and surcease, whispered by the violins.

Andante.

The image displays the beginning of the 'Andante' movement in 4/4 time, marked with a tempo of 'Andante'. The score is written in B-flat major and consists of three systems. The first system shows the piano accompaniment with a treble clef and a bass clef. The treble clef part starts with a piano (*pp*) dynamic and features a series of chords and eighth notes. The bass clef part starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic, marked '(gesangvoll)', and features a simple, melodic line. The second system continues the piano accompaniment, with a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking in the bass clef part. The third system shows the first violin part (*1. Viol.*) with a piano (*pp*) dynamic, playing a simple, melodic line.

The plaintive tale of love continues in a series of song-paragraphs, much like a recitative against a background of plucked strings. Bruckner's genius for instrumentation unerringly selects the poignant voices of the violas for a telling role in this section.

mp (deutlich hervortretend) *cresc.*

Str.(pizz.)

Str.

pp

tr

tr

The final, irrefutable promise of surcease is expressed in a lofty revelation midst nobly mounting utterances by the trombones.

III. SCHERZO. (2/4). *Bewegt* (Con Moto). TRIO. (3/4). *Gemaechlich* (Leisurely).

Strikingly romantic in its vivid descriptive quality is the Scherzo, marked by stirring fanfares of hunting horns framed in irresistible merry melody and harmony.

Bewegt.

p

3

3

3

3

3

A second subject, ingratiating with its touch of chromaticism, provides a happy contrast.



The gracefully winding *Trio* is an idealized Upper-Austrian peasant dance, fragrant with delicate harmonic turns, executed in the magic spirit native before Bruckner to Schubert alone.



This *Scherzo*, in reality the second composed for the *Romantic*, was substituted for the original in order to heighten the romantic air of the symphony. A delightful creation, perfect in every detail, it is a universal favorite.

IV. FINALE. (2/2). *Maessig bewegt* (Moderately lively).

It seems almost superfluous to warn listeners not to give too literal attention to Bruckner's own explanation of the content of the *Romantic*. The tones in which the symphony is set are far too vast and deep for any such naive picturing as: "A citadel of the Middle Ages — Daybreak — Reveille is sounded from the tower — The gates open — Knights on proud chargers leap forth — The magic of nature surrounds them." This is but childish afterthought on the part of a man whose creativeness was purely musical, whose delvings into literature scarcely ventured beyond Gospel and the prayer book.

Particularly in the *Finale*, framed in elaborate sonata-structure, is revealed the superficial inadequacy of the description "Romantic" for this work. The grim conflict which it presents is the decisive struggle in which the spirit, beset with earthly dangers, overcomes all obstacles on the path to ultimate triumph.

Against a weirdly pulsing background in the lower strings a brief motif whispered by a horn suggests dire forces rousing.



Fanfare echoes of the "Hunting Scherzo" intensify the air of growing portent. Suddenly all the pent-up elements of strife burst loose with savage power in the giant-paced main theme.

Breit. (Hauptzeitmaß) $\text{♩} = 66$

ff *(breit)*

After a powerful climax this tempestuous mood gives way to one of wistful retrospect framed in a novel melodic recreation of the opening theme of the *Andante*.

Sehr mäßig.

pp *p* *pp* *sif.* *zart hervortretend*

A cheerful, reassuring melody scatters the impending shadows.

The dread spirits of conflict, still unvanquished, once more rear their dread heads out of the grim-voiced trombones.

ff

Bruckner's *Romantic* is a symphony of Nature — as viewed by a true mystic. Perhaps no composer has

given this concept of Nature clearer verbal shape than the Bruckner disciple Gustav Mahler. The devout Bruckner might have shrunk in horror from Mahler's pantheistic doctrine of the spiritual union of Nature with Man, but essentially it was the same as his own.

Mahler said: "That Nature embraces all that is at once awesome, magnificent, and lovable, nobody seems to grasp. It seems so strange to me that most people, when considering Nature in Art, think only of flowers, birds, woods, etc. No one seems to give thought to the mighty underlying mystery, the god Dionysos, the great Pan."

FIFTH SYMPHONY (B FLAT MAJOR) TRAGIC

The first notes of Bruckner's *Fifth* are played by plucked strings; the second theme is tinged with the same instrumental color; in fact, plucked strings play a notable part in so many salient moments of the work that it was nicknamed the "Pizzicato Symphony". Many know it as the "Church" or "Faith" Symphony because of the abundance of its choral passages. Bruckner sometimes called it the "Fantastic", but fearful of programmatic misinterpretation, preferred to speak of it merely as his "contrapuntal masterpiece". Perhaps no name describes the symphony more aptly than the "Tragic", proposed by Goellerich, the composer's authorized biographer.

Better acquainted than anyone else with the circumstances surrounding the origin and execution of the work he was able to penetrate beyond such externals as style and color to its spiritual roots. He saw the *Fifth* as the deeply personal expression of a genius doomed to utter loneliness by the scorn and neglect of a misunderstanding world. He caught in the *Adagio* the true spiritual keynote of the work. Its brooding main theme was the despairing utterance of abandoned genius. Through the mighty blare of triumph trumpeted forth by redoubled brass in the *Finale* he saw the transfigured image of the man who found the strength to wrest peace from his agonized soul through renunciation.

In the *Fifth* the characteristics generally regarded as typical of Bruckner's symphonic style find their most convincing expression. Far more than any of his other symphonies it is a polyphonic work, the composer's proud description, "my contrapuntal masterpiece," testifying to the extraordinary care with which he had fashioned its many-voiced strains.

Double-themes previously employed by Bruckner as separated incidents of only local significance assume in this work a progressive, cyclic role. From the first and second theme-groups in the opening movement he has drawn two sharply contrasted motifs and united them to form the remarkable double-theme which begins the *Adagio*. The pulse of the upper melody (4/4) conflicts with that of the lower one (6/4). The result is more than a bit of subtle rhythmic counterpoint; it is an unforgettable tonal portrait of spiritual desolation. In the *Scherzo* the two motifs part once more, each assuming the leading role in one of the two divisions of the movement. In the *Finale* they are welded together again, inseparable at last in the framework ideally suited to the exploitation of the double-theme—the double-fugue.

The principal motifs of the *Fifth* haunted Bruckner many years before he felt his mastery of their possibilities equal to their symphonic shaping. A manuscript fragment of a B flat Symphony sketched in the fall of 1869 reveals in essence the pizzicato introduction to the first two theme-groups and a main theme with the same rhythmic contour as that of the *Fifth*, not to mention the downward octave-leap which is perhaps the most striking characteristic of the *Finale*.

I. ADAGIO. (2/2). ALLEGRO. (2/2).

The *Fifth* begins on a note of almost hushed awe, like the mystic invocation to a Muse too lofty for more familiar hailing. The listener senses at once that he is about to experience a mighty adventure of the spirit. This concise *adagio* introduction, the only one in all the Bruckner symphonies, is an integral portion of the work because it presents the very origin of the main ideas to be exploited. They are heard in the process of creation: tone, to rhythm, to harmony, to melody. The mysterious measured plucking of the basses intensifies the initial air of spiritual uncertainty portrayed by the other strings as they grope upward one by one towards the light.

Adagio.

pp

2 Viol.

4 Viol.

8va bassi

The interruption by a softly uttered chorale fragment is the first glimpse of the path leading to that light — Faith.

At first hardly more than an element of devotional coloring, it assumes thematic shape in a reinforced repetition. Like a halo it hovers over the sturdy motifs which immediately take form beneath it. Issuing out of the central theme of the *Romantic* this majestic, marchlike fragment ascends step-wise, its merged romantic-religious flavor suggesting some heroic figure,

come his mother-tongue. To other nineteenth-century composers it was a more or less academic cultural idiom; to him it was a living language, capable of expressing a world of emotional nuances.

II. ADAGIO. (4/4).

The song of earthly sorrow which begins the *Adagio* is aptly framed in the poignant tones of the oboe.

Adagio

mp dolce mf

mp Str.

A lyric interpolation in keeping with the earnest dramatic burden of the entire work, triumph over suffering through renunciation, it yields gradually to strains of increasing hope.

Sehr breit.

f (Str.)

mf

Brighter and brighter grows the light surrounding the uplifted spirit. Finally the very gates of heaven seem to open as the golden voice of the trumpet sounds its radiant message of indomitable Faith, scattering the last cloud of doubt.

III. SCHERZO. (3/4). *Molto vivace*. TRIO. (2/4). *Allegretto*.

The heroic source motif made its appearance in the opening *Adagio* in major guise. Inverted and quickened, but still in the brighter mode, it was the first to enter the scene of conflict presented in the initial *Allegro*. Transformed into minor it assumes the dominant voice in the melancholy double-theme of the slow movement. In the Scherzo it is now reborn, appearing as a carefree, lilting melody, though still in minor.



IV. FINALE. (2/2). *Maessig bewegt* (Moderately lively).

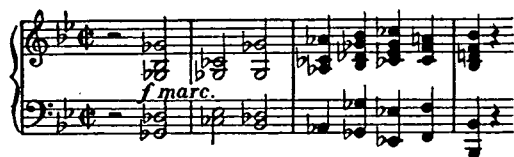
In his conception of the *Finale* as the scene of highest dramatic intensification Bruckner went beyond his fore-runners, endowing the symphony with the crowning stamp of formal integrity. Convinced from the outset that the *Finale* should present the resumption and successful termination of the spiritual conflict entered upon in the opening *Allegro*, he strove to make it the most dramatic and majestic section of the symphony.

The task he set for it was to scale summits of power loftier than any attained in the previous movements, a goal of supreme spiritual triumph, resolving and clarifying all that had gone before. This *Finale*-conception, already impressively formulated in the *Third*, bore its most splendid fruition in the *Fifth*.

After a brief retrospect, the *Finale* plunges into the herculean task necessary to the final resolution of the conflict. The two opposing forces, originally heralded in the opening *Adagio*, now make their last and decisive appearance. One is a disturbing, rebellious influence, characterized by octave-leaps and a rough, sharply pointed rhythm.



The other is a sturdy chorale, infinitely more heroic in this final transformation than in its original guise.



Each is destined in turn to become the subject of a fugue, unfolding the tale of tremendous spiritual struggles, through which the Soul (as here) gathers added strength with the advent of each fresh subsidiary theme. A charming song-theme in an ingenious polyphonic setting relieves the mounting tension.



At length the tide of conflict is turned, the goal of all this striving glimpsed. In hushed awe the Soul pauses suddenly before the dazzling revelation. Out of the silence rise golden voices singing the song of eternal promise. At first sounded in impressive grandeur by the brass it is softly re-echoed in accents of deep devotion by the strings. Thus on a note of unshakable affirmation begins the celebrated double-fugue, presenting the final inseparable union of the conflicting themes.

SIXTH SYMPHONY (A MAJOR) PHILOSOPHIC

The *Fourth* and *Fifth* were still unperformed. The premiere of the *Third*, conducted by Bruckner himself, had proved a pitiful fiasco. Loneliness, increasing illness, and financial trouble filled the composer's cup of misery to overflowing. Yet he found in unremitting work the necessary courage to carry on. The cheerfulness dominating the first movement of the *Sixth*, largely written during a long period of painful sickness, is eloquent of the resignation that had settled over Bruckner's soul.

In content this movement is definitely related to the

Romantic, to the radiant message of which (the union of Man and Nature) Bruckner here added a more human quality. The spiritual wealth amassed in the *Fifth* yielded rich interest in a calmer, more philosophic outlook. The sunrise in the *Romantic* is more brilliant, but that of the *Sixth* issues from a deeper ecstasy. It is shot through with delicately varied instrumental and dynamic shades and subtle melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic nuances.

I. MAESTOSO. (2/2).

Bruckner regarded this symphony as his most daring expression. It abounds in phrases framed in "Bruckner Rhythm". The very opening notes, struck off by the violins in sharp staccato style, present that characteristic rhythm in lively form as a pulsating background for the main theme.

Drawn softly from the lower strings, this theme begins with a sighing question. Almost a paraphrase of

the main theme of the *Romantic*, it suggests at once a definite community of content between these two works.

When the next theme-group is introduced by a doleful strain in square rhythm over a plucked accompaniment in triple-rhythm borrowed from the *Adagio* of the *Fifth*, we divine that the *Sixth* also constitutes a reflective sequel to the more dramatic struggles of the spirit portrayed in the preceding symphony.

Bedeutend langsamer

The first system of the musical score shows a piano accompaniment for strings (p Str.) in the lower register and woodwinds (Ob., Viol., 1. Horn.) in the upper register. The music is in a key with three sharps and a 3/4 time signature. The tempo is 'Bedeutend langsamer'.

The air of gloom that hovers over the opening bars of this song-theme group is but the fleeting shadow of a painful reminiscence, swiftly dispelled by the cheery sway of the melody which bursts from it.

The second system of the musical score shows a piano accompaniment for strings (p sehr zart) in the lower register and woodwinds (Ob., Horn., Cell.) in the upper register. The music is in a key with three sharps and a 3/4 time signature. The tempo is 'Bedeutend langsamer'.

Even the third theme-group, dominated by a pound-

ing unison passage in "Bruckner Rhythm", bristles with warlike intent. Vainly it searches every plane of tonality for a scene of conflict, only to succumb to the calm, richly harmonized episode, which terminates the exposition.



This air of peace also sways the development section, devoted to a eulogy of the wonders of Nature. Familiar song-themes rise on ever-broadening wings, the tide of melody surging irresistibly upward toward a climax. The listener, on the alert for some subtle bridge leading to the traditional recapitulation, suddenly realizes that he is in the midst of that restatement. Yet nothing abrupt has occurred. In this opening movement, for the first time in symphonic literature, the climax of the development and the beginning of the recapitulation actually coincide. That this remarkable innovation in sonata-form was no mere flying ship in Bruckner's workshop is convincingly proven by its increasingly convincing reappearance in his subsequent symphonies.

II. ADAGIO. (4/4).

The slow movement begins with a yearning love-song, the bright counterpart of the plaintive message

presented in the corresponding section of the *Romantic* and intensified to deep gloom in the *Fifth*.

Adagio, (sehr feierlich)

et oct. bassi

A shadow crosses the sunny path of this three-voiced melody when the oboe intrudes its counterpoint of plaintive sighs.

A mournful phrase in the horns threatens to revive the memory of unrequited love (Bruckner's life abounded with instances); but the new-found spiritual antidote, philosophic resignation, easily counteracts all bitterness. The second theme is a soaring, untroubled love-song.

Sempre *dim.*

An ominous, gloomy contrast to all this yearning is the third subject, a march-like theme of funeral cast.

Grave.

pp Pke. Str. mf dim.
et oct. bassi

The central portion of the movement is occupied with a resourceful contrapuntal exploitation of the opening theme, its varied restatements resulting, as usual with Bruckner, in a subtle mingling of rondo and sonata form.

III. SCHERZO. (3/4). *Ruhig bewegt.* TRIO. (4/8).

The magic play of elfin spirits characterizes the beginning of this rather impressionistic *Scherzo*, the first of a series of Bruckner *Scherzi* to portray the witchery of Pan entangled with the very roots of Nature.

Ruhig bewegt. (Etwas gemessen.)

pp C. Fl. Kb. 2. Viol. 1. Viol. 2. Viol. mf

The *Trio* unfolds a fresh aspect of this extraordinary gayety. The woodwind advances fragments of melody based on the opening theme of the *Allegro*, while mischievous harmonic interruptions issue from plucked strings or horn groups in sharply punctuated rhythm.

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: Violin and Cello/Double Bass. The Violin part is written on a single staff with a treble clef and is marked "Viol. pizz." and "mf". The Cello/Double Bass part is written on a single staff with a bass clef and is marked "Celi. Rb." and "mf (sehr bestimmt) Horn.". The music is in 4/4 time and features a complex, rhythmic pattern with many beamed notes and rests. The key signature has one flat (B-flat).

IV. FINALE. (2/2). *Bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell* (Lively but not too fast).

The comparatively calm atmosphere prevailing over the *Finale* is one of the most individual features of this symphony. The virtual absence of conflict is wholly consistent with artistic integrity. Since the opening movement advanced no conflict, the *Finale* has none to resolve. Lacking the dramatic character of other Bruckner closing sections, it remains nevertheless a *Finale* conforming in essential respects to the accepted meaning of the term. All its thematic factors (and there is an unusually rich store of these—fanfare, chorale, march, and song) move swiftly and smoothly along. Drawn together at last, as though by some mysterious inductive power, they become merged into the jubilant reentry of the opening theme of the symphony.

SEVENTH SYMPHONY (E MAJOR) LYRIC
I. ALLEGRO MODERATO. (2/2).

The long, soaring song-theme which opens the *Seventh* is a spontaneous union of three distinct melodic segments.

The image shows a musical score for the opening of the Seventh Symphony. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system has a piano part on the left and a cellist/horn part on the right. The piano part begins with a *pp* dynamic and features a series of chords in the right hand and a single note in the left hand. The cellist/horn part enters with a melodic line starting on a whole note, marked *mf* and *breit*. The second system continues the piano accompaniment and the cellist/horn melody. The key signature is E major (three sharps) and the time signature is 2/2.

It is closely related to the main theme of the *Romantic* which it resembles in harmonic and instrumental color, but its employment of additional melodic elements from the opening bars of the *Fifth* and *Sixth* lends it far wider scope. In short, this broad-winged theme unites the chief thematic elements of the three preceding symphonies, integrating them in a new, final expression of unforgettable beauty.

Beauty of song, the ideal proclaimed at the outset and unwaveringly maintained throughout, is the chief factor accounting for the popularity of the *Seventh*. Its huge proportions result from the use of larger thematic structures in place of the concise motivated blocks char-

acterizing the three earlier works of the major tetralogy. This popularity, the unprecedentedly huge proportions of the work notwithstanding, proves that an orderly array of beautiful ideas, possessing all the vital characteristics necessary to the maintenance of interest in an extended orchestral composition (abundant melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, instrumental, and dynamic variety), will always prevail over any objections that may be raised against such a work from an academic viewpoint. The successful employment of a longer singing theme in the *Seventh* represents the fulfilment of Bruckner's individual principle of thematic construction, involving the complete subjugation of form to content.

Whereas the first theme, a homophonic composite of three ideas, is an invocation to Song, the second, predominantly polyphonic, is more mobile, its apparent peacefulness disturbed by restless fundamental harmonies.

The image displays two systems of musical notation. The upper system features a single staff for the Oboe (Ob.) and a grand staff for Horns and Trumpets (Hörn. Trp.). The Oboe part begins with a melodic phrase marked *pp* (pianissimo) and *ruhig* (calmly). The Horns and Trumpets part provides a harmonic accompaniment. The lower system continues the musical material, with the Oboe part marked *mf* (mezzo-forte) and the Horns and Trumpets part marked *dim.* (diminuendo). The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and dynamic markings.

Spinning itself out in little rhythmic turns, it evades cadence repeatedly. Not even a complete restatement in inversion can shake off this restlessness.

The third theme-group consists of two contrasted melodies—one a sharply rhythmic idea of satirical cast, the other a wistful concept of pastoral flavor.

The image displays two musical staves. The upper staff is a grand staff with a treble clef and a bass clef, both in the key of D major (two sharps). It contains two parts: 'Holzbr.' (woodwinds) and 'Str.' (strings). The woodwind part begins with a sharp rhythmic motif, while the string part provides a more wistful accompaniment. The lower staff is a single treble clef staff labeled 'Viol.' (Violin), starting with a dynamic marking of *p* (piano) and continuing with a melodic line that mirrors the wistful character of the string part.

Of all these themes only the satirical one is a really hostile element, contesting the sway of song in the development. In that section the appearance of the opening-theme exclusively in inverted form is a subtle piece of artistry, reserving the forthright restatement of the theme for the recapitulation proper, where it appears completely fresh. As in the *Sixth*, the climax of the development and the return of the main theme coincide, enhanced thematic freshness rendering this phenomenon in the case of the *Seventh* even more effective.

II. ADAGIO. (4/4). *Sehr feierlich* (With great solemnity).

For this celebrated *Adagio* Bruckner adopted the

general features of the classical variation form, but abandoned as unsuited to his message the florid filigree-passages widely cultivated by his forerunners in varying their slow themes. He chose rather to inject a touch of sonata-form through the interpolation of concise passages of thematic development. Using familiar melodic elements he recreated them into delightfully fresh thematic structures.

This gigantic earnest Adagio is generally regarded as a "funeral ode" in honor of Wagner whose death occurred while the composition was in the making. The inexpressibly mournful opening theme, set for a choir of Bayreuth tubas, eloquently supports the movement's accepted nickname, "Adagio of Premonition".

Sehr feierlich, (aber nicht schleppend.)

The image shows a musical score for the beginning of the Adagio movement. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system has a tuba part (labeled 'Br.') on a single staff and a piano accompaniment on two staves. The tuba part begins with a melodic line marked *p* *sehr ausdrucksvoll*. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The second system continues the tuba part and piano accompaniment, with dynamic markings *cresc.*, *p*, and *dim.* indicating changes in volume and expression.

Yet the actual "funeral music" (according to Bruckner himself) does not begin until close to the end, where it is ushered in by a jarring cymbal crash. "At this point,"

said Bruckner, "the shocking news of the master's death reached me."

Two broad-winged song-themes, totally contrasted in mood, alternately sway the entire content. The first, the funeral theme, progresses from stately solemnity to majestic affirmation on the impressive three-chord "Resurrection" motif from the *Te Deum*. The unfolding of this motif's tremendous latent power evokes the movement's supreme climax. Climbing steadily from plane to plane, the span of its wings constantly broadening, it becomes a mighty universal "Credo" sweeping aloft to the very gates of heaven.

The second theme, like a radiant melody sung by Cherubim, presents a unique combination of charm and nobility.

Moderato (sehr ruhig.)

The image shows a musical score for a Moderato section, marked "sehr ruhig." (very calm). It consists of two staves: a Violin (Viol.) staff on top and a String (Str.) staff on the bottom. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 3/4. The Violin part begins with a dynamic marking of *p* (piano) and features a melodic line with several slurs. The String part provides a rhythmic accompaniment with a dynamic marking of *p*. The score includes dynamic markings of *cresc.* (crescendo) and *dim.* (diminuendo) across the measures. The notation includes various note values, rests, and slurs.

III. SCHERZO. (3/4). *Sehr schnell* (Very fast); TRIO. (3/4). *Etwas langsamer* (Somewhat slower).

After this contemplation of Eternity the *Scherzo* seems like a rude awakening to earthly things. The opening theme, a bit of bizarre realism for Bruckner, sounds its drab Reveille, a melodic paraphrase of the crowing of the cock.

Trp.

pp Str.

mf

col. str.

In a moment all is feverish motion; the constantly increasing agitation finds vivid outlet in a wild dance-orgy.

The *Trio* is an idealized, nostalgic *Laendler*-melody, eloquent of Bruckner's inextinguishable love for his Upper-Austrian homeland.

Etwas langsamer.

cresc. sempre

mf

dim.

IV. FINALE. (2/2). *Bewegt, doch nicht schnell* (Lively, but not fast).

A majestic dome-like structure is the *Finale*, the very order of its themes suggesting an arch. The opening subject is a martial concept, literally the lyric initial theme of the symphony arming for battle.

Viol. *pp*
p *zart, doch bestimmt*
p sehr bestimmt
cresc. *poco ritard.*

Martial rhythm underlies even the prayerful chorale-theme that follows.

pp immer sehr zart

A "third" theme, in reality the opening subject now fully armed, completes the array of spiritual forces involved in the conflict about to take place.

Schwer
ff sempre marc.

In the development section which presents this conflict, all the material set forth is granted resourceful exploitation in a number of fresh melodic recreations, varying from gentle playfulness to titanic grandeur.

RETROSPECT AND FAREWELL

VIII Symphony, C Minor (1885)

IX Symphony, D Minor (1894)

EIGHTH SYMPHONY (C MINOR) THE GERMAN "MICHEL"

Salient structural features, revealed in progressive development in the preceding symphonies, attain supreme representation in the *Eighth*. Chief among these are: the continuous generation of fresh thematic life out of a few given motifs; the exploitation of this cumulative content through a vital polyphonic idiom; the logical shaping of a vast symphonic structure, culminating in a grandiose climax, the welding of the principal themes of all four movements into a single choir of triumph. Spiritually also, the *Eighth* marks the summit of Bruckner's symphonic expression. In this work, at last, is unfolded in full tonal grandeur the sublime Christian epic of human suffering, humility, and transfiguration through Faith that had been Bruckner's symphonic message from the outset. Not the somewhat theatrical *Third*, not even the *Fifth*, that mighty austere utterance of his middle years, had pierced so deeply into his soul for its roots. The tragic implications of the *Fifth* were but passing clouds beneath the radiant sun that shone steadfastly over Bruckner's tetralogy in major keys.

The portentous opening movement of the *Eighth* ushers in a change in his spiritual world no less drastic than the sudden sunrise of the *Romantic*. The *Fourth* seems literally to have sprung from Bruckner's ecstatic happiness in Wagner's recognition; the *Eighth*, con-

ceived immediately after Wagner's death, is an eloquent witness of the grim impress made upon Bruckner's spirit by that event. The rude shock of the cymbal clash climaxing the "Adagio of Premonition" in the *Seventh* was more than Bruckner's realistic record of the moment of his great friend's passing; it was also the herald of a rude awakening in his own creative world, a dawn less roseate, but ushering in a more sapient and human view of life.

The contemplation of Death, looming before him like a grim spectre, and the realization of abject solitude, conjuring up the panorama of a lifelong struggle against adversity, determined the tragic, introspective content of his new symphony. C Minor, the key which he had adopted for his *First* and *Second*, beckoned to him out of the dim past with the promise of more significant revelations. The pointed rhythmic contours of the main theme of the *First* seemed to bristle with new life unbounded, clamoring for expression. Reaching back to this initial work he also gathered up in the course of retrospect the essential wealth of the intervening symphonies. Thus Bruckner consciously made his *Eighth* an intensely personal expression, almost a spiritual autobiography in tone.

The tragic caste and unusual length of the opening section made inadvisable the traditional juxtaposition of a correspondingly grave, extended slow movement. Faced with a similar problem in his *Ninth*, Beethoven had interposed a fleet, stirring *Scherzo*, thus not only relieving the spiritual tension aroused by the first movement, but also freshening the listener's mind for the

weighty revelations of the slow movement to follow. Therefore, Bruckner also decided to accord his *Scherzo* second place in this symphony.

The first movement in its original form was completed in the latter part of 1884 in Vienna. Before continuing on to the *Scherzo* Bruckner experienced a miracle. The *Adagio* of the *Seventh*, given its premiere at Leipzig on December 30, was hailed by experts as a symphonic masterwork. At once the elderly, shy professor of counterpoint became the most discussed figure in the realm of serious music. He had long since reconciled himself to a life of obscurity, sighing, "Surely I am the most incurable idealist to go on composing at all." Nevertheless, his happiness in this wholly unexpected world-fame was unbounded. He re-experienced this brilliant triumph over long prevalent adversities in the fictitious person of the typical Upper-Austrian rustic "Michel", whom he subsequently named as the hero of the *Scherzo* of the *Eighth*.

Much of the naive "Michel" story, however, was a mere afterthought. The original manuscript at the point of the first entry of the "Michel" motif bears the notation "Almeroth". Carl Almeroth, a lovable, genial Upper-Austrian, was one of Bruckner's dearest friends. A native of the charming little town of Steyr, where Bruckner composed the *Scherzo* and later movements of the *Eighth*, he (and not the symbolic "Michel") was the character the composer intended to embody in his lumbering, sturdy, good-natured motif. Doubtless it occurred to Bruckner afterwards that Almeroth's nature was typically Austrian. Thereupon he evolved

the rest of the "Michel" background for the symphony, carrying some of the incidents over into the *Finale*. As a valid commentary on the Promethean happenings reflected in the score it is certainly inadequate. Not unless one is willing to concede Bruckner that peculiarly Mahlerian trait of symbolism, is the miraculous transformation of "Michel" to "St. Michael", allegedly celebrated in the closing triumph of the symphony, in the least plausible.

Letters Bruckner wrote to the critic Helm and the conductor Weingartner years after the work was finished are the chief authorities for the details of the "Michel" legend. Said Bruckner to the former with special reference to the *Scherzo*, "My Michel typifies the Austrian folk-spirit, the idealistic dreamer, not the German spirit, which is pure *Scherz* (jest)." Thus unconsciously, perhaps, he made his "Michel" a species of self-portrait.

A representative portion of Bruckner's commentary on the *Scherzo* follows. "Michel, pulling his cap down over his ears, presents his head, crying 'Punch away! I can stand it!' Wearied by the showers of buffets he yearns for rest. He swings about him with all his strength scattering his enemies, and emerges victorious. (*Trio*) Michel dreams of the country — He longs for his sweetheart — He prays — Sighing, he awakens to rude reality."

And in the *Finale*: "Michel, from a place of concealment, steals a view of the pomp and ceremony (*The meeting of the emperors*) — He is pursued and captured by Cossacks — The trombones begin a funeral

chorale for him — He squirms away and disappears with a chuckle high up in the flutes.”

The absence of reference to “Michel” in Bruckner’s remarks concerning the first slow movements is added proof of the synthetic nature of the legend. One is reminded of his inability to “remember” the imagery underlying the *Finale* of the *Romantic*. Poetic commentaries easily might be adduced to “illuminate” the content of the *Eighth*. So vast is its scope, however, that cosmic imagery alone may conjure up an even remotely adequate verbal parallel. Like Beethoven’s *Eroica* it defies and beggars “description”. It stems from the inmost depths of absolute music, the arcana of which no verbal abracadabra may pierce.

I. ALLEGRO MODERATO. (2/2).

The identity of the tonic is veiled as the opening theme is first presented in lightly sketched outline against a mystic background (string tremolo tinged with sustained horn-tone).



What a strange, yet masterly theme this is! Occurring scarce three full measures in animated tempo, it consists of the four motifs of the symphony, one of them the more rhythmic pattern formed by the union of the other three. This rhythmic profile at once commands the centre of attention. Set forth in relief

through a series of uninterrupted recurrences it is the vehicle upon which the three tonal motifs grope upward through modulations to the light of definite tonality.

Since all the thematic life of the symphony is drawn from these motifs, they are eminently worthy of analysis. They are

- a) Two tones a second apart. This interval dominates the heroic passages.
- b) Two tones a sixth apart. This interval, notably prominent in Bruckner's most heartfelt inspirations, governs those particularly expressive moments of the *Trio* (Scherzo), *Adagio*, and *Finale*, given over to songs of yearning.
- c) A lyric group of five closely-knit tones, the chief melodic element of the first theme-group and the source of numerous subsequent passages filled with tender ecstasy. The first movement, *Adagio*, and *Finale* close with this motif.
- d) A rhythmic framing of a, b, and c. To the relentless persistence of this grim motif is due in great measure the deeply tragic undertone of the opening movement. Especially impressive is its appearance as pure rhythm (on a monotone in the brass) at the climax of this section, a passage Bruckner aptly called "Death's Annunciation."

The lyric motif (c), at first the sole melodic phrase, at once spreads its wings. Inverted and augmented it bursts into flight, preparing the advent of outspoken "Bruckner Rhythm".

Viol.
Hörn.
cel.
mf

Descending in a stream of impassioned phrases this first predominantly melodic expression of the symphony resolves in a graceful cadence midst imitative echoes (woodwind) bearing the motif's original rhythmic contour.

The mode of thematic structure in this opening group, aside from the vastly richer motivation of the later work, is essentially that of the *Romantic*, a steadily rising edifice of uniform theme-blocks. Furthermore, this process in the *Eighth* goes on in a highly dramatic atmosphere. Levi, the eminent conductor who pronounced the work "the crown of nineteenth century music," was the first to recognize the perfect centralization of its gigantic framework embracing a world of subtle and delicate details of construction. Wellesz, an unexcelled authority of our own day, choosing the opening theme-group of the *Romantic* and Brahms' *Third*, has shown the superior sensitivity of Bruckner's symphonic creative process. How much greater had been this disparity had he chosen Bruckner's immeasurably more masterly *Eighth*!

In the *Romantic*, the advent of "Bruckner Rhythm" is sudden, spontaneous. In the *Eighth* it is heralded in advance. We glimpse its profile in the course of the opening theme-group. When it emerges full-blown,

shaping the pure lyricism of the second theme-group it calls for no intellectual readjustment on the listener's part. Yet the preparation has about it nothing of the traditional "bridge"; it is a new, self-evolving process, sprung from the dynamism inherent in the motif *c*.

The second theme-group begins with a song of ardent aspiration, its nobility precluding all eroticism.



Lingering sighs, skillfully drawn from an inversion of the song-theme, are stilled by the air of trust and solace spread by a fresh melodic structure previously unheard.



Thus the intellectual factors swaying the first theme-group have been balanced by their emotional counterparts dominating the second.

There is an additional feature in the human make-up which determines man's heroic nature: the will — the spiritual force that makes for human tragedy or triumph, depending on the degree in which its possession

invokes resistance to adverse, destructive influences. This heroic element is the ruling quality of the third theme-group. A restless, staccato counterpoint in the strings provides the background for an increasingly animated interchange between horns and woodwind.

Energetic motifs, derived from the preceding theme-groups, enhance the power of the ensuing string unison, striving upward toward a great climax by chromatic stages.

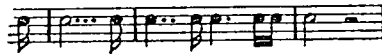
Another striking motif, a broad downward-leaping seventh in trumpets and woodwind, adds to the growing agitation.

Trumpet fanfares, obvious heralds of heroism, intensify the militant nature of this group, bringing the exposition of the themes to a stirring conclusion.

The development section presents the titanic conflict of the three main factors: the mind, the heart, the will.

The logical unfolding of such a struggle involves a climax of inextricably united elements, rendering ineffectual a traditional recapitulation of separate theme-groups. The air of suspense, mounting steadily through the violent encounters unfolded during the extended development, is maintained unabated throughout the recapitulation. Not until the last climax, at the very threshold of the *Coda*, is there a moment of relief, and then only a sombre one, described by the composer as the "striking of the clock of Death". This intensification of suspense until the end is a formal doctrine already effectively formulated in earlier Bruckner symphonies, yet never so masterfully as in the *Eighth*.

Two summits stand out along the rising skyline of the development. The first, the product of united thematic elements of the first two theme-groups, is finally sealed by means of a grandiose combination of these elements in inversion and augmentation. The second, attained just before the *Coda*, is that realistically dramatic moment which Bruckner in a new moment of foreboding, happily not realized until more than a decade later, described as his own "Death's Annunciation."



velopment section) of mind (first theme-group), heart (second theme-group), and will (third theme-group) sink to pygmied insignificance? The *Coda*, an epilogue of utter resignation, presents a sudden contrast, intensifying the tragic implications underlying the whole movement.

II. SCHERZO. (3/4). *Allegro moderato*. TRIO. (2/4). *Langsam* (slow).

The *Scherzo*, like all these lighter, fleeter-footed Bruckner movements in triple-rhythm, presents no formal problem. In a mystic atmosphere of whispered-string-tremoli pierced by horn-tone, the rustic "Michel" motive (already discussed) lumbers good-humoredly into the changed foreground.

The image shows a musical score for the Trio section of the Scherzo. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system has three staves: Violin (Viol. (geteilt)), Horn (Horn.), and Cello/Double Bass (C&B.). The second system has two staves: Violin (Viol.) and Cello/Double Bass (C&B.). The music is in 2/4 time and features a prominent eighth-note tremolo in the strings. Dynamics include *pp*, *mf*, and *p cresc.*. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat).

Inverted the motif becomes still more droll. "Michel is sleepy," explained Bruckner. A delicious bit of instrumental realism is the stinging effect of plucked strings combined with hymning, bee-like horn-tones,

portraying the rude manner in which "Michel's" sleep is disturbed by outer influences.

The *Trio*, in double rhythm, is "Michel's" *Träumerei*, filled with daydreams of his beloved homeland.



Is this not Bruckner's own dream of longing, reaching back from the imprisoning huddle of the Metropolis, the home forced upon him by circumstances, to the wooded mountainous freedom of his native Upper Austria? Fragments of yearning, folk-like strains, conjure up passing visions of the scenes of his childhood. The occasional arpeggiated voice of the harp, most rarely heard in Bruckner's orchestral family, intensifies the music's nostalgia.

III. ADAGIO. (4/4). *Feierlich langsam, doch nicht schleppend* (solemn, slow but without dragging).

This sublime slow movement, the longest in symphonic literature, rises to unprecedented heights of devotional ecstasy, over which the celestial voice of the harp hovers like a halo.

Three motifs combine to produce the opening theme of the *Adagio*. The first, a long-drawn sigh, reflecting yearning, and the second, a broad, diatonic descent, reflecting devout humility, form a question answered

by the third, an upward mounting broken major-triad, bright with the promise of splendors to be revealed. Upon a syncopated background of softly pulsing strings over a tonic organ-point of twenty measures is unfolded the heartfelt initial melody.

Feierlich langsam, doch nicht schleppend.

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system is for the strings, with a first violin part (1. Viol.) and a string ensemble (Str.) part. The second system is for the horn and tuba (Horn, Tuba). The music is in 3/4 time and features a syncopated accompaniment in the strings and a melodic line in the violin. The tempo is marked 'Feierlich langsam, doch nicht schleppend'.

So naturally have familiar motivated elements been fused into this new melodic line that their presence, readily identifiable, nevertheless makes the impression of complete spontaneity. Out of an atmosphere of restrained melancholy, the latent depth of its pathos betrayed alone by the impassioned accents of the violin G-string's upper range, the prayerful theme mounts steadily, merging with the vision of splendor (referred to as the third motif).

Ein wenig belebend.

There follows now a song of fervent gratitude, a fitting supplement of the foregoing melody.

Unmistakable in their Brucknerian quality are the hymnlike chorale fragments characterizing this passage. Ecstatic harp tones radiate from its melodic summit.

In the second theme-group the impassioned yearning and the devotional fervor dominating the two themes of the preceding group, respectively, are fused into an ardent song of hopeful longing.

Viol.
p Cello.
Ob..
mf
pp
cresc.
f
dim.

Against a background literally trembling with portentous expectation (string-tremoli) the full tuba choir proclaims the promise of Eternity.

pi
mf
dim.

Another hymnlike utterance is the soul's grateful response to the message from Above. A brief interlude in triple rhythm prepares the scene for the return of the initial theme.

The restatement of themes is nowhere a severer test of the composer's resourcefulness than in the *Adagio*. In the first recurrence of the opening theme, the bright, answering portion is intentionally omitted. As the motifs of yearning are reared to a tremendous climax,

it would seem as though the whole universe were appealing for salvation. A world of subtle polyphonic detail is heralded by the echoing horn that follows closely upon the main melodic line. Reshaped and recombined familiar motifs attain richer significance, revealing glimpses of loftier summits yet to be scaled by the indomitable spirit.

For the final restatement, embodying the triumph of the soul, is reserved the thorough exploitation of the motif of splendor, thus far intentionally omitted. Here the horn fanfare of the first movement is reborn in a more heroic guise, unmistakably reminiscent of the Siegfried-theme. Bruckner explained this as a tribute to his great friend Wagner, as yet scarcely cold in his grave. The very Heavens seem to open to the overwhelming climax ushered in by this remarkable passage. The *Coda*, reminiscent of the beginning, presents for the last time the initial sighing motif over a sustained organ-point on the tonic. Gone is the fleeting shadow of doubt that darkened the motif's first appearance. Yet the movement ends upon a note of devout humility. Resigned, but swayed by unshakable faith in Eternity, the glories of which it had beheld in revelation, it awaits the great release, the fateful signal of the "Clock of Death".

IV. FINALE. (2/2). *Feierlich, nicht schnell* (solemn, not fast).

The unlimited thematic richness of the *Finale* shows that Bruckner had steeped his soul in the motivated life of this symphony more intensely than in any pre-

ceding work. In the increased subtlety and resourcefulness of its melodic derivations from the central motifs already extensively exploited in the foregoing sections it is truly the crowning movement of the symphony. Bruckner did not merely compose the *Eighth* - he lived it. An inkling of the inspired abandon with which he set down this *Finale* may be gathered from the ejaculation "Hallelujah!" written in his hand at the point of climax in the manuscript marked by the simultaneous entry of the main themes of all four movements.

Some of the "Michel" incidents allegedly suggested by the *Finale* have already been set forth. Remarkable indeed is Bruckner's transplanting of this jolly legendary character into a scene of political pomp (the meeting of Franz Josef and the Czar at Olmütz). Is not this "Michel" who views the grand ceremony in reality the new Bruckner, now a famous musician, proudly bearing the decoration of the emperor's own order? His worship of rank and pomp can only be understood as closely akin to his devout participation in the church ritual. The emperor was to him a temporal symbol of divinity.

The harmonic foundation of the opening bars has a transitional effect, qualifying the abrupt change from *Adagio* to *Finale* character.

Feierlich, nicht schnell.

Motifs of a warlike nature serve as the backbone of the first theme-group. Prominent among these is a regular, rhythmic stamping, like the clatter of horses' hoofs, suggesting the approach of squadrons of cavalry.



Impressive instrumental coloring, horns, trombones, and tubas dominating, reflects the pomp of the occasion. Jubilant fanfares herald the great triumph now in sight. The "Michel" motive, wide-awake and armed for battle, is welded to the rest, lending the thematic scene freshness and jollity.

The second theme-group, rich in chorale fragments, is characterized by an air of prayerful devotion.



This religious fervor at this point is more impassioned than that of the chorale passages of the *Adagio*. It has a more rapid pulse and a vital supporting melodic line formed by a familiar motif descending inverted. The expressive voices of the solo horn and the violins in low register lend it added warmth.

The third theme-group presents a remarkable paradoxical combination of underlying significances.



Gracious melodies filled with the promise of peace spread reassuring wings over the disturbing burden of martial rhythm in the strings.

The contrapuntal skill with which the development is reared to an overwhelming climax, the simultaneous union of the principal themes of all four movements, beggars description. Heroic settings of familiar themes plunge the section into mighty conflict. The din of battle mounts, subsides, and mounts again to greater heights of fury. One moment we seem to be in the very midst of battle, next we catch its echoes from the distance. Chorale fragments are hurled into the breach to sustain the heroic spirit, on the ultimate triumph of which all depends.

The most impressive passage of the movement is the *Coda*, the overwhelming record of that triumph. A last powerful, austere presentation of the opening theme in the trombones; an equally heroic last appearance of the "Michel" motive in broad augmentation in the trumpets and the total stage for the great triumph is set. The gloom of the initial key, C-minor, has been transformed to the bright splendor of C-major. Now in the utmost imaginable splendor resounds the consummately welded choir of the symphony's four principal themes, the very embodiment of Bruckner's polyphonic genius.

NINTH SYMPHONY (D MINOR)

During the five years he devoted to the composition and revision of the *Eighth* Bruckner still enjoyed robust health. It was not until his sixty-fifth year, the time of his first sketches toward a *Ninth*, that the chronic trend of a dropsic condition, the dread ailment which had carried Beethoven off at the peak of his creative power, evoked the foreboding that his days were numbered.

Thereafter his existence was swayed by a single longing: to be spared long enough to finish his *Ninth*. With the inexorable advance of the disease this longing turned to prayerful obsession, in the despairing grip of which even his awe-inspired humility towards God underwent a singular transformation. The physician who attended him at the Belvedere Palace (a belated, ironic luxury which the emperor had granted him) has communicated some impression of the doomed man's religious attitude. Wrote Dr. Heller, "Often, I found him on his knees in profound prayer. As it was strictly forbidden to interrupt him under these circumstances, I stood by and overheard his naive, pathetic interpolations in the traditional texts. At times he would suddenly exclaim, 'Dear God, let me get well soon; you see I need my health to finish the *Ninth*.'"

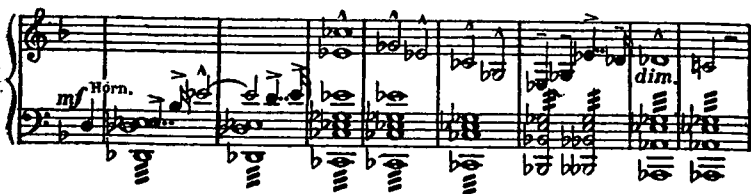
Hence this symphony might aptly be named "Farewell", rather than "Unfinished". Though the futile, tortured strivings of his last hours to formulate a suitable *Finale* show that Bruckner himself regarded the sym-

phony as unfinished, posterity has come to view its three movements as a consummate framework for one of the noblest, most inspiring revelations in tone. When the last note of the *Adagio* has died away there remains no expectation of further revelations to come. Those familiar with this close only in the "Loewe" version may regard such a view with some doubt. There Bruckner's intention, drastically altered, echoes the end of *Parsifal*, its air of resignation suggesting a sinking back to earth. In Bruckner's original manuscript the *Adagio* is marked by no such descent. Ascending ever higher it merges in an ecstasy of affirmation with Eternity.

I. FEIERLICH MISTERIOSO. (2/2). (Mystically Impressive).

The opening bars present a synopsis of the symphony's content. Brooding contemplation of the ultimate mystery, Death and the Hereafter, is suggested in this celebrated passage. Like a solemn chant is the initial motif, softly intoned by a choir of eight horns against a portentous background (tremolo).

The image shows two systems of musical notation for the beginning of the first movement. The first system consists of two staves: a right-hand staff (treble clef) and a left-hand staff (bass clef). The right-hand staff begins with a piano introduction marked *pp* and *Str. trem.* (string tremolo). The left-hand staff begins with a horn part marked *Horn* and *pp*. The second system continues the piano introduction with a tremolo in the right hand and a horn part in the left hand. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.



The grimness of its sombre rhythm is accentuated by hollow, choked trumpet-tones. Its mournful pathos midst austere majesty suggests man's last backward glance from the threshold of the Unknown. One terrifying instant of perplexity, and then the parting soul leaps aloft to meet the dazzling revelation of Eternity. Words cannot describe the splendor here attained by the horns, which have burst their unison fetters to form a golden halo of harmony. Descending they sound like jubilant angel voices bearing a wondrous message down to earth. Their cadence is the spreading of its gracious burden over all mankind. Such is the mystic underlying significance of this richly motivated introduction to the first theme-group. Yet the presentation of these motifs has achieved a purpose symphonically far more important than the mere formulation of a musical passage, however beautiful. It has released the elemental forces from which the main or central theme is to evolve.

The breathless pause at this point is a vivid record of personal reaction, the reaction of one who has beheld a miracle and is completely overwhelmed. As some-

times in a poem a fresh stanza will issue from an echo of the preceding verse, so the transfigured cadence of the opening passage lingers on in the episode that follows. Enharmonic transformations on ascending planes of tone and volume reflect growing suspense in the face of a tremendous disclosure. Downward leaping octave-intervals anticipate the dominant feature of the approaching theme.



An ominous roll in the timpani intensifies the air of agitation. The thundering unison that bursts forth with cosmic power from the summit of this dynamic interlude is the Voice first heard in the trumpet-theme of the *Third*. There speaking in the same key and rhythm, but subdued and diminished by infinite distance, it was like the herald of a miracle to come. Here it sounds the revelation itself. Thematically it also consists of two segments, a gigantic descent by octave-leaps and a broad, diatonic return aloft, gradually accelerated. The whole cosmos trembles with the irresistible force of its reverberations (timpani-roll), while plucked strings sound waning fragments of familiar motifs, gradually releasing the overwhelming tension.

Streng im Zeitmaß.

ff

G-Saite.

Out of one of these, a descending sixth, is born the song-theme introducing the second group, a prayerful melody in the violins, unmistakably Brucknerian in the spirituality of its yearning.

Sehr ruhig.

p

Str. *p*

Str. Ob. Horn.

A graceful, encircling figure enhances its charm and expressiveness. Like the corresponding song-theme of the *Seventh* it is supplemented by an inversion of itself. Directed aloft it points the way to a summit of jubilant ecstasy, the goal of the entire song-group.

The character of the third theme-group is without

precedent in Bruckner's symphonies. Hitherto the vehicle of heroic elements, destined to sustain the conflict during the development, this theme-group in the *Ninth* begins on a note of infinite world-weariness, a longing for ultimate peace so overwhelming that it seems to span the whole universe.



It culminates in a song of lofty aspiration. Despite a slight physical similarity due to a community of motivated sources, its kinship to the main theme of the song-theme group is not close. Spiritually it is a more impassioned expression.

The development presents a thorough exploitation of the themes and their motifs on a gigantic scale. Its plan, like that in the opening movement of the *Eighth*, is an ascent over a gradually rising range of mountain-

tops to a supreme summit. Darkness, the gloom of the earthbound, hovers over the first of these peaks. Occasional glimpses of radiance caught through the clouds intensify, by contrast, the dominant gloom. The motifs employed are exclusively those of the introduction to the first theme-group.

In the next paragraph the grand unison theme of the first group is the center of attention. It now becomes the material for a huge tonal structure, skillfully enriched with every resource of the polyphonic master. The austerity of this passage is enhanced by the persistent reappearance of the gloomy opening motif in march-like guise. The climax attained by the exploitation of these dramatic elements overtakes and absorbs the formal reentry or recapitulation of themes. There is no let-up in suspense until the uttermost barrier of tension is reached. An abrupt pause — and then, as in the opening theme-group, awe-inspired melodic fragments venture to open timid lips, reflecting the overwhelming impressiveness of the foregoing passage.

Not before the re-entry of the song-group does the listener become aware of the identity between the climax of the development and the recapitulation of the first theme-group, already accomplished. From the

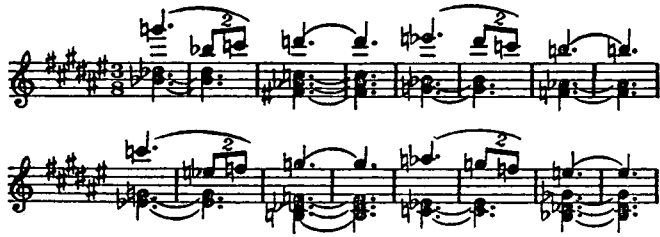
shadow of the third theme's world-weariness issued the Coda, the most austere passage of the whole movement. The brooding initial motif and the startling upward-leap that followed it constitute this last paragraph's thematic bases.

II. SCHERZO. (3/4). *Bewegt lebhaft* (Lively). TRIO. (3/8). *Schnell* (fast).

As in the *Eighth*, to relieve the long-sustained dramatic tension of the opening movement, Bruckner placed the *Scherzo* second. From every viewpoint his most vital expression in the lighter vein this *Scherzo* yields to none of its predecessors in rhythmic variety, harmonic charm, instrumental color, and perfection of welding. Referring to one of its many daring features Bruckner said, "When they hear that, they won't know what to make of it; but by that time I'll be in my grave." The heated arguments aroused among experts by the very opening harmony eloquently bore out his forecast. Whatever its grammatical nature, all were agreed upon the originality of its effect. Framed in a unique witty rhythm it is the veritable echo of Bruckner's chuckle of anticipation.

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Flute (Fl.), Violin (Viol.), and Cello (Cell.). The music is in 3/8 time and marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The Flute part is labeled "Fl. Viol. pizz." and "Fl. allein". The Violin part is labeled "Viol. pizz.". The Cello part is labeled "Cell. pizz.". The score consists of two staves of music. The first staff is for the Flute and Violin, and the second staff is for the Cello. The music features a complex rhythmic pattern with many accidentals and a driving, anticipatory feel.

Even amid this carefree rhythmic abandon there is a moment for pure melody. A nostalgic memory of youthful bliss forever vanished finds expression in a song of ardent yearning.



III. ADAGIO. (4/4). *Langsam.* (*Feierlich.*)

The *Adagio*, the most human as well as the most austere of Bruckner's slow movements, opens with a motif of infinite yearning midst utter loneliness.

Langsam. (Feierlich.)

In the impassioned voices of the violins this motif, a rising minor ninth sinking back chromatically into a

descending octave, seems the very essence of melancholy. It suggests the weary, earth-bound soul, poised before its flight into the Unknown, posing the ultimate question, "Is Death then the end?" Brooding signs issue from its perplexed cadence, insistently questing the light of Revelation. They culminate in a radiant E-major tonic harmony, a promise of the splendor of the Hereafter.

Portentous implications latent in the opening motifs are stressed in the further exposition of this first theme-group. A series of boundlessly poignant outcries by the horns is answered by savagely blaring trumpet-fanfares against an orchestral background seething with agitation.



This passage was significantly described by Bruckner as the "Motif of Fate". It is the symphony's most impressive embodiment of the startling upward-leap in the horns at the beginning of the first movement. Raised to a ninth, its eloquence enhanced by polyphonic setting, it plays an outstanding role in the thematic life of the *Adagio*.

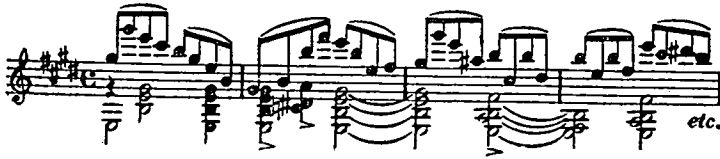
A natural sequel is the ensuing noble, placid melody which Bruckner himself called his "Farewell to Life".

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is labeled "Hörn. Tub." and the bottom staff is labeled "ritard. e dimin.". Both staves show a melodic line with sustained notes and a harmonic accompaniment of sixths.

Harmonious sixths in horns and tubas lend it unmistakable Brucknerian character. One beautiful theme follows the other in this sustained song theme-group, spreading burdens of wondrous solace, faith and gratitude.

The image shows a single staff of musical notation with a melodic line and a harmonic accompaniment of sixths.

The degree of pure lyric ecstasy here attained is matched only in the soaring 3/4 section of the *Adagio* of the *Seventh*. In its sustained character, however, the singing quality of this last *Adagio* is supreme. Dreamy echoes of the *Seventh* and *Eighth* haunt the closing measures.



Almost until his last hour on earth Bruckner worked desperately over his futile sketches toward the *Finale*, which he was fated to abandon, a mere sphinxlike fragment. Among the quavering, incoherent pen-strokes on his note-paper near the end (the author is the proud possessor of one of these precious pages) are scattered phrases from the Lord's Prayer indicating the unshakable Faith of the man in whose life and work the power of prayer had played so important a part.

QUINTET (F MAJOR)

Composed during the earlier half of 1879 Bruckner's *Quintet for Strings*, scored for two violins, two violas, and cello, represents his sole contribution to the literature of chamber-music. Aside from his nine numbered symphonies it is his only mature instrumental work in a larger form. It was first performed in 1880 in Cologne.

I. GEMAESSIGT. (3/4).

The principal melody of the opening theme-group, a genuinely romantic idea, is introduced softly in the first violin.

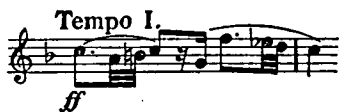
The image shows two systems of musical notation for piano accompaniment. The first system is marked "Gemäßigt" and "p.". It features a triplet melody in the right hand and a supporting bass line in the left hand. The second system is marked "sempre cresc." and "dim.". It continues the triplet melody in the right hand and the supporting bass line in the left hand.

Of the lighter lyric texture native to chamber-musical expression, it has, nevertheless, the broadly soaring

melodic line of Bruckner's symphonic cantabile passages. One of its elements, an ascending arpeggio, at first assumes an individual role in the cello; then in a resolute, staccato transformation it becomes the rhythmic and harmonic backbone of an ardent supplementary theme in the first violin.



The cadence of this theme, a brief, characteristic motif, is the source of the vigorous rhythmic life in the ensuing passage. Its dramatic possibilities are gradually revealed by the different instruments, at first alternately, then in combinations of increasing strength, leading to a powerful climax in a typically Brucknerian unison utterance.



The second (or song) theme-group begins with a

melody of delicate texture in the bright, ethereal tonality of F# major.

The image shows two systems of musical notation for piano. The first system is marked *pp sehr zart*. The right hand plays a delicate melody with a chromatic rise, while the left hand provides a supporting bass line. The second system continues the piece with similar textures, featuring a more active right hand melody and a steady left hand accompaniment.

A rather unusual harmonic phenomenon for classic sonata form, this chromatic rise, in place of the traditional dominant change, is nevertheless amply sanctioned by Schubert. Bruckner has merely postponed the entry of the dominant to achieve increased richness of harmonic color. Skillfully he leads the song theme-group over paths of ever fresh harmonic interest, until the expected tonal haven has been reached.

The short development section is devoted almost exclusively to the exploitation of the thematic material in the first group, the song theme-group being represented only by fragmentary particles in subordinated settings. The first violin, somewhat in the manner of improvisation, sounds the key-note of the preliminary portion. One by one the other instruments add their voices; then they unite in various combinations suited

to the changing contrapuntal texture of a Brucknerian development section. A warm, comforting melody in the first violin counteracts the restlessness evoked by the exploitation of conflicting motifs.

When the first violin suddenly sounds the opening theme in its original form, the recapitulation seems to have set in, but immediately the second viola, inverting the theme, contradicts this impression. New contrapuntal life now arises in an imitative conversation in the violins. Finally, the first violin, in an impassioned *Cadenza* "ad libitum", leads to the real recapitulation.

No mere repetition of ideas previously presented, this "restatement" soon strikes out along paths of fresh revelation. A triplet figure, drawn from the opening bar of the principal theme, attains special significance. A richer contrapuntal texture lends this final setting an air of fulfillment. The song-group is reintroduced in novel tonal surroundings, enriched by subtle enharmonic coloring.

The hand of the symphonic master is evident in the structure of the summary (*Coda*). The principal ideas, arrayed side by side, are finally resolved. The movement closes jubilantly with an organ-point on the tonic.

II. SCHERZO. (3/4). *Schnell* (fast).

Unlike Bruckner's hardy symphonic *Scherzi* this airy movement also shows the composer's keen grasp of the essential difference between symphonic and chamber-music. Yet it, too, is a dance of unmistakable Upper-Austrian flavor.

The outstanding thematic line, assigned to the second violin throughout the opening portion, is a curious, winding melody in *Laendler* rhythm.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for piano. The first system consists of a treble and bass staff. The treble staff features a complex, winding melodic line with slurs and accents, while the bass staff provides a rhythmic accompaniment. A dynamic marking of *p* (piano) is placed at the beginning of the first system. The second system also consists of a treble and bass staff. The treble staff continues the melodic line, and the bass staff provides harmonic support. A dynamic marking of *cresc. poco a poco* (crescendo poco a poco) is placed at the beginning of the second system. The music is in 3/4 time and the key signature has one flat.

Above it the first violin softly plays a lilting counter-theme. Cello and violas mark the rhythm, at the same time filling out the rich harmonic texture. Both themes are then inverted in the violas, the music acquiring increased harmonic and contrapuntal subtlety. The complex nature of this passage caused Bruckner to insist upon a slower tempo: "almost andante," he said in a letter. The form, as usual, is simple A-B-A, the original themes returning to bring the *Scherzo* portion to a close.

The *Trio* is a slower, more graceful, expression, also of *Laendler* character.

Langsam.

The flourishes of the second violin are haunted by the sunny spirit of "Papa Haydn". This delicate melodic line and the broader one it surrounds are both unmistakable sequels of the principal theme of the *Scherzo*, which also consists of two contrasted melodies. Yet how different are the two themes in effect!

III. *ADAGIO*. (4/4).

Of truly symphonic breadth is the opening theme of the *Adagio*, introduced in the first violin.

Ausdrucksvoll.

cresc.
p *r. H.* *legato* *dim.*

Beginning softly it soars aloft on stately wings with growing ardor, and then descends in gracious curves to become the whispered confession of a noble soul's yearning. To find another melody of such depth and purity one would have to go to Bruckner's greatest symphonic *Adagios*. A series of prayerful sighs lead to impassioned outcries.

A regular unison pulsation in the violins and second viola, almost like a living heart-beat, introduces a brighter mood.

pp *cresc. p* *cresc. dim.*
gesangvoll
pp *breit*

immer hervortretend

A melody radiant with hope and confidence appears in the first viola, the pulsation surviving in rich supporting harmonies. The total absence of any bass gives this "tenor" theme a lofty, visionary quality.

A new, livelier descending figure, at first of rather dramatic character, attains apotheosis in the violas, clothing with the splendor of a benediction the farewell reappearance of the "tenor" theme in the first violin. Ineffable peace hovers over the last phrase.

IV. FINALE. (4/4). *Lebhaft bewegt* (lively).

The closing movement can be completely grasped only in the light of the preceding sections. A lively staccato motif in the second violin over an organ-point of distant tonality dominates the beginning.

Lebhaft bewegt.

pp

Though the first theme-group is devoted to the restoration of the central tonality of the work, even the most unsophisticated ear need not shrink from the com-

plexity thereby implied. It is not the dry grammar, but rather the poetry of harmony that sways this tonal quest. It lends the entire passage an air of suspense, like the preparation for some significant disclosure. In Bruckner's symphonies such passages culminate in gigantic unison outbursts. Here the excitement subsides into a mere whisper, hushed in a "general pause."

The second (or song) theme-group, slower than the first, is dominated by a swinging, *Laendler* figure, drawn from the *Scherzo*.

Langsamer.

The image shows two systems of musical notation for piano accompaniment. The first system is marked 'p' and the second system is marked 'cresc.'. Both systems feature a treble and bass clef with a key signature of two flats and a common time signature. The music consists of rhythmic patterns and chords, characteristic of a 'Laendler' figure.

This rhythmic motif given to the first viola, provides a firm basis for the somewhat rhapsodic melody in the first violin. Later, with broadened span, it acquires the bold sweep usually associated with fugue-themes. The cello takes it up with strokes of full power; the first viola answers it in the dominant. Yet it proves to be no fugue, but rather the herald of a highly contra-

puntal development section, presenting the final and decisive conflict of the work. A brief triplet motif, derived from the very first phrase of the *Quintet*, becomes the outstanding thematic element. Motifs of the song theme, as well as a prominent figure in the *Adagio*, are also exploited.

The contrapuntal artistry of this development defies description. In the natural felicity of his polyphonic idiom Bruckner was a supreme master. Yet the convincing effect of this *Quintet-Finale* is the result of no combination of devices, however masterly. Here also, as in Bruckner's symphonies, the spirit's gradual, indomitable rise towards ultimate triumph in the face of a world of obstacles is the underlying concept.

APPENDIX

MISCELLANEOUS DATA

FIRST SYMPHONY (C MINOR)

SCORED FOR: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets (in revised version),
2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, strings, timpani.

COMPOSED: Linz, 1865/6; dedicated to University of Vienna.

REVISED: 1877 and 1884 without important changes; this version bearing the subtitle, *Linz version*, was published by the *Musikwissenschaftlicher Verlag*, Vienna, 1934, as part of the projected *Gesamtausgabe*.

REVISED: 1890/91; published by Josef Eberle & Cie., Vienna.

PREMIERE: Linz, May 9, 1868, Bruckner conducting; Vienna, Dec. 13, 1891, final version, Hans Richter conducting; Aachen, Sept. 2, 1934, *Linz version*, Peter Raabe conducting.

AMERICAN PREMIERE: Brooklyn, N. Y., 1938, Kosok conducting; Chicago, 1940, Stock conducting—first American performance by a major orchestra.

SECOND SYMPHONY (C MINOR)

SCORED FOR: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns,
2 trumpets, 3 trombones, strings, timpani.

COMPOSED: Vienna, 1871/2; dedicated to Franz Liszt.

REVISED: 1890; published by Doblinger, Vienna, 1892.

PREMIERE: Vienna, Oct. 26, 1873, Bruckner conducting; origi-

nal version: Hamburg, April 29, 1937, Eugen Jochum conducting.

AMERICAN PREMIERE: Philadelphia, 1902, Scheel conducting.

THIRD SYMPHONY (D MINOR) WAGNER SYMPHONY

SCORED FOR: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns,
3 trumpets, 3 trombones, strings, timpani.

COMPOSED: Vienna, 1873; published by Rättig, Vienna, 1878;
dedicated to Richard Wagner, hence known as the *Wagner
Symphony*.

REVISED: 1888/89; published by Rättig, Vienna, 1890.

PREMIERE: Vienna, Dec. 16, 1877, Bruckner conducting; Vi-
enna, Dec. 21, 1890, Hans Richter conducting revised version.

AMERICAN PREMIERE: New York, Dec. 5, 1885, Walter Dam-
rosch conducting; revised version: Chicago, 1901, Thomas
conducting.

FOURTH SYMPHONY (E FLAT MAJOR) ROMANTIC

SCORED FOR: Flute, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns,
3 trumpets, 3 trombones, bass tuba, strings, timpani, cymbals.

COMPOSED: Vienna, 1874; dedicated to Prince Konstantin zu
Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst.

REVISED: 1888; published by Gutmann, Vienna, 1889.

PREMIERE: Vienna, Feb. 20, 1881, Hans Richter conducting;
revised version: Vienna, Dec. 21, 1888, Hans Richter con-
ducting; original version: March 1, 1936, Hans Weisbach
conducting.

AMERICAN PREMIERE: March 3, 1888, Anton Seidl conducting; first American nationwide broadcast: NBC March 4, 1939, William Steinberg conducting the NBC Orchestra.

FIFTH SYMPHONY (B FLAT MAJOR) TRAGIC

SCORED FOR: 3 flutes (piccolo), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, contrabass tuba, strings, timpani (cymbals, triangle); in the *Finale* added brass in the Loewe edition only: 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, contrabass tuba.

COMPOSED: Vienna 1875/77; dedicated to Minister of Education Karl Stremayr; published by Doblinger, Vienna, 1896.

PREMIERE: Graz, Apr. 8, 1894, Franz Schalk conducting; original version: Munich, Oct. 28, 1935, Siegmund v. Hausegger conducting.

AMERICAN PREMIERE: Boston, 1901, Wilhelm Gericke conducting; first American nationwide radio broadcast: CBS, Jan. 15, 1933, Bruno Walter conducting the New York Philharmonic.

SIXTH SYMPHONY (A MAJOR) PHILOSOPHIC

SCORED FOR: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, contrabass tuba, strings, timpani.

COMPOSED: Vienna, 1879/81; dedicated to Dr. Anton v. Ölzelt-Newin; published by Doblinger, Vienna, 1901.

PREMIERE: Vienna, Feb. 11, 1883, Wilhelm Jahn conducting (two middle movements only); Vienna, Feb. 26, 1899, Gustav Mahler conducting (complete work); original version: Dresden, Oct. 9, 1935, Paul v. Kempen, conducting.

AMERICAN PREMIERE: New York, 1912, Josef Stransky conducting.

SEVENTH SYMPHONY (E MAJOR) LYRIC

SCORED FOR: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 4 tubas (Bayreuth), contrabass tuba, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani (cymbals, triangle), strings.

COMPOSED: Vienna 1881/83; dedicated to King Ludwig III of Bavaria, published by Gutmann, Vienna, 1885.

PREMIERE: Leipzig, Dec. 30, 1884, Artur Nikisch conducting.

AMERICAN PREMIERE: Chicago, 1886, Theodore Thomas conducting; first American nationwide broadcast: CBS, March 8, 1931, N. Y. Philharmonic, Arturo Toscanini, conducting.

EIGHTH SYMPHONY (C MINOR) THE GERMAN "MICHEL"

SCORED FOR: 3 flutes, 3 oboes, 3 clarinets, 3 bassoons (contrabassoon), 8 horns, (4 tubas), 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, contrabass tuba, timpani (cymbals), harp, strings.

COMPOSED: Vienna, 1884/87; dedicated to *Kaiser Franz Josef I.*

REVISED: 1889/90; published by Lienau-Schlesinger, Berlin, 1892.

PREMIERE: Vienna, Dec. 18, 1892, Hans Richter conducting; original version: July 5, 1939, Wilhelm Furtwängler conducting.

AMERICAN PREMIERE: Chicago, 1896, Theodore Thomas conducting; first American nationwide radio broadcast: CBS, Oct. 29, 1933, N. Y. Philharmonic, Bruno Walter conducting.

NINTH SYMPHONY (D MINOR)

SCORED FOR: 3 flutes (piccolo), 3 oboes, 3 clarinets, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 2 horns, 4 tubas, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, contrabass tuba, strings, timpani.

COMPOSED: Vienna, 1887/94; dedicated to Dear God; published by Doblinger, Vienna, 1906.

PREMIERE: Vienna, Feb. 11, 1903, Ferdinand Löwe conducting; original version: April 2, 1932, Siegmund v. Hausegger conducting.

AMERICAN PREMIERES: Chicago, 1904, Thomas conducting; New York, 1934, Klemperer conducting the original version; first American nationwide broadcast: CBS, Oct. 14, 1934, Klemperer conducting the N. Y. Philharmonic, original version.

QUINTET (F MAJOR)

SCORED FOR: 2 violins, 2 violas, cello.

COMPOSED: Vienna, 1879; dedicated to Count Max Emanuel of Bavaria; published by Gutmann, Vienna, 1884.

PREMIERE: Vienna (Winkler Quartet), Nov. 17, 1881.

AMERICAN PREMIERE: Chicago, 1899 (Spiering); first American nationwide broadcast: CBS, Feb. 11, 1934, N. Y. Philharmonic, Lange conducting (*Adagio* only).

With the exception of the *First*, composed in Linz, the symphonies were written mainly in Vienna. All the original manuscripts are preserved in the National Library, Vienna. All of the symphonies have been published in their original versions in the projected *Gesamtausgabe* (complete edition) sponsored by the library.

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