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GUSTAV MAHLER

A STUDY OF HIS PERSONALITY & WORK



PAUL STEFAN

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GUSTAV MAHLER

A Study of His Personality and Work

BY

PAUL STEFAN

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY

T. E. CLARK

NEW YORK : G. SCHIRMER



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To
OSKAR FRIED

WHOSE GREAT PERFORMANCES OF MAHLER'S WORKS
ARE SHINING POINTS IN BERLIN'S MUSICAL
LIFE, AND ITS MUSICIANS' MOST SPLENDID
REMEMBRANCES, THIS TRANSLATION
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BERLIN, *Summer of* 1912.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

The present translation was undertaken by the writer some two years ago, on the appearance of the first German edition. Oskar Fried had made known to us in Berlin the overwhelming beauty of Mahler's music, and it was intended that the book should pave the way for Mahler in England. From his appearance there, we hoped that his genius as man and musician would be recognised, and also that his example would put an end to the intolerable existing chaos in reproductive music-making, wherein every quack may succeed who is unscrupulous enough and wealthy enough to hold out until he becomes "popular." The English musician's prayer was: "God preserve Mozart and Beethoven until the right man comes," and this man would have been Mahler.

Then came Mahler's death with such appalling suddenness for our youthful enthusiasm. Since that tragedy, "young" musicians suddenly find themselves a generation older, if only for the reason that the responsibility of continuing Mahler's ideals now rests upon their shoulders in dead earnest. The work, in England and elsewhere, will now fall to others. Progress will be slow at first, but the way is clear and there are those who are strong enough to walk in Mahler's footsteps.

The future of Mahler's compositions is as certain as that his ideals will live; and it is perhaps they that concern the musical public most. In Germany their greatness is scarcely disputed to-day amongst musicians. Goethe distinguishes two kinds of music, that which aims at external perfection of texture, and that which strives to satisfy intelligence, sensibility and perception; and he adds that "without question, the

union of these two characters does and must take place in the greatest works of the greatest masters." The opinion is irresistibly gaining ground that in modern music the two composers who have attained this limit of perfection are Beethoven and Mahler.

It is therefore in the highest degree agreeable to the writer that this translation, in its present extended form, appear with a purpose worthy of it; not merely as a work of propaganda for a musician, however great, but as an extremely valuable psychological essay on Mahler's music as a whole, and as a history (in the best sense of the word) of some of the most heroic deeds that have been performed during the development of modern art. It tells, in short, "what manner of man" Mahler was.

The book has been specially revised for the present issue and many additions have been made since the appearance of the fourth German edition—the most important being concerning the Ninth Symphony, which was first heard in Vienna in June last, *i. e.*, since the latest German edition was published.

Notes have been added in a few cases where certain names might be unfamiliar to those not versed in the more "tendential" aspects of German artistic life.

Lastly, may I be allowed here to thank my friend Dr. Paul Stefan for permission to translate his admirable work, and for the valuable intercourse with him the translating of it has procured me.

FOREWORD

TO THE THIRD GERMAN EDITION

In September, 1911, this book went its way for the second time—the first time since Mahler's death.

I wrote, "he is dead." But my book referred to the living man, and I never thought it would so soon be otherwise. It has done its work for the living Mahler. Must it hardly a year later "appraise" his now completed work?

It is called "appraisal," and this is demanding something I cannot do—measuring and weighing up. For I know I should say little that would be different. The past time is too near and sticks too fast in our remembrance. And for the moment I do not wish merely to patch up. . . . So I have only added an account of the last year of his life. Faults and omissions remain.

This third time I was clearer and more composed. I renewed, improved and completed as well as I could. But the nature of the book remains unchanged. The many things that still are to be said, and that perhaps will soon be to say, about Mahler as man and artist, demand a new and larger work. The limits of this study are clear. It is still not critical, but the loud call of an enthusiast to enthusiasts. Many have followed it. So I call once again. In the name of one who will for all time awaken enthusiasm.

February the 12th, 1912.

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MAHLER'S SIGNIFICANCE

THE MAN, THE ARTIST, AND HIS ART

From Meister Raro's, Florestan's and Eusebius's Notebook of Things and Thoughts:

"Intelligence errs, but not sensibility."

Let no one expect to find in this book a "Biography," as was prophesied during Mahler's lifetime—by some in a friendly spirit, by many in mockery. As the work took form, Mahler stood in the zenith of his power, but also in the zenith of his right: the right neither to limit nor to divide himself in his intentions, his right not to be trammelled by "consistencies." His life was not one that obtruded itself on others, rather one that strove towards a given goal; a modest and hidden life, like that of the old masters of our art, a matter-of-fact life, as has been well said, a life in the world *versus* the world. And even to-day, now that it has ended, we still think of it as his contemporaries. We have not yet outgrown this feeling, and the figure of the man Mahler still vibrates in our memory, so that no calm for viewing and reviewing has come to us. What if it never should come? To survey calmly a volcano! Or, at any rate, not at once. One thing is certain, calmness is for the present not our affair. Our aim is simply to retain for a moment the last flaming reflection of this life, and my book may be called a biography only inasmuch as in describing that of Gustav Mahler it strikes sparks of life itself. It will often speak in images, for this is the only way we have of speaking about music, itself an image of presentiments and secrets

beyond the bounds of temporality. May these images be such as become comprehensible where Mahler's will controls and Mahler's works are heard. And then, when they are no longer needed, and the true sense of the works is revealed; when a few have seized their real meaning—then the veil will be drawn aside, and the goal reached; then words about a man's life will not have been wasted—disquisitions on art-matters are only too often a hindrance and a waste of time; then, life itself will have spoken, and no greater satisfaction can be given the mediator between the genius and those who wish to approach him.

This book strives little for the "Lob des hohen Verstandes" (the "praise of lofty intellect"); for the "dispassionate" judge it will have collected too few "data" and too little "information," though the author was far from despising the labour of the investigator, and the search for and examination of whatever friendly assistance and books could offer. (His thanks are due to all who have given him assistance by opening the treasures of their recollection, and it would be immodest not to acknowledge the services rendered to subsequent efforts more especially by Richard Specht,³ and also by Ernst Otto Nodnagel² and Ludwig Schiedermaier,¹ in their books and essays; to say nothing of the innumerable and admirable articles dispersed in magazines and newspapers, which were accessible only in part. The stream was for the most part none too full, and many statements examined proved worthless. I have had little regard for such externalities as formed no real part of Mahler's activity, nor have I taken pride in my discoveries or personal knowledge, but rather in preserving and ordering actual experiences. To seek for details of Mahler's life and works is to consider the subject superficially. Sympathy, emotion and enthusiasm are everything. Enthusiasm! That is the magic word that describes

^{1 2 3} The reference-number refers here, and in the following cases, to the corresponding book in the Bibliography.

the phenomenon, Gustav Mahler. Enthusiasm was his motive power, and may enthusiasm move every one who approaches him. He would have been understood, so far as it is possible to understand him at this time, had people noticed this extraordinary part of his nature, this perpetual maximum strain which perpetually struck sparks and flame from each object it touched.

He was not understood, at any rate as long as he lived; he was scarcely known, people scarcely sought to know him. Celebrated he was amongst those who worked with him at his art, or who spoke and wrote about it; to many he appeared as a transient flame seizing some one here and there as in a whirlwind, terrifying and then leaving him dazed—an experience of price only to the fewest.

The excuse may perhaps be offered that the man of genius never is recognised in his own day, that he forces his way to the front only after the bitterest struggles, and that this non-recognition is rooted in the very nature of genius. Schopenhauer says: "Merely talented men find their time always ripe for them; the genius, on the contrary, comes upon his time like a comet upon the planetary system, with whose regular and fixed order its eccentric path has nothing in common. He cannot, therefore, intervene in the existing, steady-going cultural movement of his day, but throws his works far forwards out into the path that lies before him (as the Emperor, having dedicated himself to death, hurls his spear against the enemy), which his time has then to overtake." And he points to the words of St. John's Gospel: "My time has not yet come; but *your* time [meaning the merely talented] is always ready." However well this fits, however vividly the case of Wagner lives in our recollection—and all that has been said against Mahler pales in comparison with the blasphemies against Wagner (Wilhelm Tappert's "Wagner-Lexicon" has collected them alphabetically)—I still do not wish to apply this natural law of genius in Mahler's case. In a period of

ferment and agitation, with a mania for innovation, which after all has, on the whole, drawn the moral from the Wagner persecution, we must look deeper for the reason. At least, the question must be changed to this: While others are, if not understood, at any rate exalted and proclaimed, why is nothing said about Mahler? Why are people better informed about Richard Strauss, Pfitzner, Reger? Why was not and still is not Mahler pointed out as the man he is?

This question seems to me important; to my mind, if there be a "problematical" Mahler, the problem lies here. I shall, therefore, attempt to elucidate it more carefully.

Georg Göhler,⁷ the conductor of the Leipzig Riedel-Verein, says that it is the lack of imagination of our day which estranges it from an artist so richly gifted with imagination as Mahler. That is a fragment of comprehension; but we must have the whole. What our time lacks is not so much imagination as the courage to be imaginative, courage to open its arms towards life, thought and poetry, and to realise the long dreamed-of unity of life and art. We are the slaves of technique. We can, in fact, fly; but in truth we cannot soar aloft. Novalis and his disciples still possessed this faculty. Our inward vision, our God-given certainty of belief in the exaltation of the ideal world over that of appearance, have become paralysed; we are lost in a delirium of facts. Purity, originality, naturalness and perfection are beyond our reach. We no longer believe in the reality of fairy tales—and here are some almost within our grasp. They approach us, but only create discord in us. Our time itself is incapable of naturalness; does it not overlook and disregard him who is natural in spite of it, who sings folk-songs, recreates the "Wunderhorn" and finally flout him with its surly "recognition" of "ability"? It is not capable of understanding strength of will, of respecting ceaseless work, or of esteeming the search for truth and perfection higher than success—for it acknowledges only success. And then comes a man who, both as creative and reproductive

artist, strives indefatigably after the object he has in view, who steps backward only in order to spring the further forward, one who never pauses, who follows the inspiration of each moment and who, out of the inmost fire of his spirit, out of the strength of a saintly nature, succeeds perpetually in reaching the highest perfection—what thanks could our time have for such a man? Its senses are still blunted, it has no comprehension for the rhythm of a new life, it still sees in this life (the sluggish blood of the Too-many never yet succeeded in attaining to *life*) only sin and lamentation, hurry and restlessness. At best it seeks hastily and superficially to conform itself to it, oftenest in the end condemning it as superficial. And therefore our “men of culture,” those who “acknowledge” our time, “make an end as quickly as possible of everything, works of art, beautiful natural objects, and the really universally valuable view of life in all its scenes.”

Thus Schopenhauer, our principal witness. And further (from the same chapter of his masterwork): “But he (the ordinary man, Nature’s manufactured goods) does not stay.” When he has “finished with” the intruder, he thinks no more of the matter—that would be to force him to give reasons for his frivolous position. And thus certain persons have succeeded in throwing suspicion upon the “apparent” and “manufactured” naïveté of the composer and to condemn the artist’s “restless,” “hypercritical,” “capricious” manner as sham. Thus they justified their indifference. Instead of asking whether they themselves were unprejudiced enough naïvely to consider naïve greatness, they accused the giver of trifling, of artificiality and insincerity. No, they were not to be deceived. For that is the dread of private ignorance (and public opinion), that some day it may be found out; and they forget that tenfold exaggeration is not so bad as a single failure to appreciate. The ruling spirit is not one of furtherance and hospitable sympathy; at every corner stands the schoolmaster, the hair-splitter, the professor of infallibility.

Had the educated, or that last degeneration of swollen pride and cleverness, the "good musicians," been capable of observation, of imagining naturalness and of listening naturally, it would have been easier for them to recognise Mahler's greatness; they would have remembered many similar figures in the history of our intellectual development, and the path would have been prepared for him. Or, who can enjoy the stories of the *Fioretti*—enjoy them so that he can believe them? For instance, that wherein St. Francis visited the priest of Rieti, and the people came in such crowds to see him that the priest's vineyard was completely destroyed; and how the priest then regretted having received St. Francis, who, however, begged him to leave the vineyard open to the crowd. And, when that was done, how the vineyard yielded more in that year than ever before. Or the story of the contract the Saint made with the wolf of Gobbio that ravished the land, and that now agreed to keep the peace if food were allowed it, which agreement was kept until its death. Or that of Brother Masseo, to whom the light of God had appeared, and who now rejoiced continually like a dove ("in forma et con suono di colomba obtuso, u! u! u!"). Or the legend of Brother Juniper, one of the first *ioculatores Domini*, who gave to the poor the whole belongings of the monastery and the treasure of the church, even to the altar bells.

These are symbols; but Gustav Mahler's music sings of such men, of such animals, of such delight in nature on the hill of La Vernia.

And in order that the night-aspect of his being may not lack a prelude, more than that of the day:—how many know E. T. A. Hoffmann? Hoffmann the musician had a premonition of the coming centuries; the comrade and exorciser of Kapellmeister Kreisler exhausted the demonic possibilities of his art.

Kreisler's resurrection on the plane of earthly life is Gustav Mahler. "The wildest, most frightful things are to your

taste. . . . I had the Æolian harp. . . . set up, and the storm played upon it like a splendid harmonist. In the roar and rush of the hurricane, through the crash of the thunder, sounded the tones of the gigantic organ. Quicker and quicker followed the mighty chords. . . . Half an hour later all was over. The moon appeared from behind the clouds. The night wind sighed soothingly through the terrified forest and dried the tears on the darkling bushes. Now and again the harp could still be heard, like dull, distant bells."

This, too, is only a symbol; but the counterpart of this storm resounds in Gustav Mahler.

The sunny Saint of Umbria, and the northern ghost-scorner and ghost-fleer! The notes are pressed, overtones sound at the same time and leave their secret mark. But there are other paths leading to Mahler, which few have ever followed: The folk-tune and its simple meaning; wanderers and minstrels; the musician Weber, whom people praise but do not perform; the dreamer Schumann; the conductor and philosopher Richard Wagner; the venerable figure of Anton Bruckner; all of whom went their way, the one too early, the other too late. Not as though a real connection were here found or sought. But he to whom Mahler is a part of experience builds himself bridges to his experience. He is willing to belong to Mahler, and has strengthened the grace of good-will in himself. The phenomenon Mahler must be valued according to its ethos, just like Mahler's music. Its characteristic is goodness. Bettina von Arnim begins her "Correspondence": "This book is for the good, and not for the wicked." And he who would enter this world of Mahler's must ask himself whether he is capable of receiving goodness. More than this is not necessary.

Here speaks one to whom Mahler had become a part of experience—slowly and gradually; first the conductor; then the stage-director; then the composer, formerly admired respectfully from a distance. He wishes to give again the living Mahler, not weighing nor limiting, but, standing in the shadow

of this great genius, with enthusiasm rather than with ifs and buts. As though the creator of the divinest joys were an "object" for discussion.

"Intelligence errs, but not sensibility."

WORK AND RACE

A few of the easy-going and prejudiced, in order to oppose Mahler's art and significance, have called this art Jewish; naturally in the most disagreeable sense of the word. During Mahler's lifetime this book purposely ignored them. To-day it will no longer keep silence.

Gustav Mahler was born of Jewish parents, and is, therefore, in every-day parlance, a Jew according to race. Now, many scientists are of the opinion that a Jewish race does not exist, but only two races, a blond and a dark-skinned, which are quite different species and must be differently valued. But, even assuming that this notion should go out of fashion again, that a Jewish race really subsists and that a Fritz Mauthner is "anthropologically related" to an old-clothes dealer in Polish-Russia:—what in the world has that to do with intellectual matters, with art and, in particular, with music?

On the contrary, I do not dream of passing over the life-question of a million of people with a few words, or of talking the usual nonsense about the Jewish question. And it makes no difference if people on one side or the other are offended, so long as knowledge comes of it.

Far be it from me to deny the influence of race upon the development of a culture: I was enough attacked when I emphasized Germanic influence in the nature and art of Umbria. But this *agens* is for me, as for all whose starting-point is mind and not matter (that is, who are not materialists), once again but a spiritual element: the *idea* of race. The mind builds for itself the body, and only the mind builds up the

mind. The numerous Germanic individuals, who worked in Umbria (to remain by the same example), were living members of a people, a nation, a culture. And they could thus as living elements reproduce life of their own kind. The descendants of a Jewish family, living who knows how long together with German and Slav peasants and citizens, however closely they may be penned together with other Jewish families, cannot weaken our life in active constitutive strength, in far-reaching energy, such as his parents' house transmitted to him—German culture. Neither language, nation, nor community binds him to the people of his forefathers (the "confession" may be left out of consideration); no idea of race is living in him. The Jewish element in him is a residue, physically provable, intellectually negligible. Such a man must first acquire his spiritual nature. He may be called rootless. But it is not permissible to count the dead roots and to despise them.

Frankly, the destiny of the individual must decide whether he is able to acquire a spiritual nature, whether he can open the gates of an artistic community. Many cease to be Jews because rudimentary organs have died out, few become members of the people surrounding them. That presumes a bestowing, willing nature, one that can accept and render again; an adaptation and reproduction in kingdom and possession, which is, like all things spiritual, not everybody's affair, but that of the anointed.

And such was the case of Gustav Mahler. Grown from earliest youth in the succession of Beethoven and Wagner (also of the philosopher Wagner who sought for the regeneration, renaissance of the Jews in particular and mankind in general), a pupil of Goethe, Schopenhauer and the German romantic school; then he goes the way of German music, which leads most surely to the heart of Germanism. Bruckner stands at the commencement, and the German folk-song bears him further. When he finds voice for poetry, it is, and in a most superficial period, like a presentiment of the *Wunderhorn*,

which the young man does not even know. And then he announces Death, Judgment and Resurrection in a no less Christian sense than that of the old masters of painting: the Second Symphony permits the expression that was used in an earlier issue of this book, that he, amongst the great artists, is the "Christian of our day." Again and again his works move in Christian-pantheistic and in national-German paths. Where a leading-thought grows with him, it is the proud Idea of the German philosophers. Most distinctly and most beautifully in his Eighth Symphony, which begins, though without a trace of ecclesiasticism, in the freest interpretation, with an old hymnical call upon the Holy Spirit, and allows it, the spirit of love, with the profound words of the second part of Faust, to conquer every remaining trace of earthly desire. He who wishes to characterise the great works of this great life, from the earliest popular lyrics to the renascence of symphonic art, can do so only through the development of German music: it proceeds germ within germ, from German music, and it will increase its glory and fructifying power.

That other glory of German music, that of reproduction, Gustav Mahler was one of the first to help to create; here again a pupil of Richard Wagner. The seriousness, the sincerity, the ceaseless striving after perfection that blazed in him—that is German, if German after Wagner means doing a thing for its own sake. What he has given the German theatre is history. Subverting and maintaining, he was a furtherer of the best that German masters have left behind and willed. "The genius of Gustav Mahler," said Gerhardt Hauptmann,⁷ a visionary German poet and man, "is representative in the sense of the great traditions of German music. . . . He has the demoniacal nature and the ardent morality of the German intellect, the only nobility that still can prove his truly divine origin."

Richard Wagner's writings upon Jewry in Music will be opposed to what I say, and all that he wrote when aged, em-

bittered, almost alone and conditioned by his time, against musicians of Jewish descent. We must understand him rightly! What Wagner wanted, although often exaggerating for the sake of example, was to censure the superficiality of Mendelssohn, the self-sufficiency and applause-cringing of Meyerbeer, but not because they were Jews; simply because superficiality and the rest were things that irritated him all his life long. He told also non-Jewish singers, conductors and composers what he thought of them. If he projected what he hated upon Jewry, it need not astonish us in a time of the birth of capitalism, in the awakening years of the emancipation of the Jews, during the mastery and opposition of an insufferable pseudo-intellectualism, and feuilletonistish trash, such as we can hardly imagine to-day. But he entrusted *Parsifal*, which is to be understood only through Christianity, to Hermann Levi.

To-day there may be many musicians of Jewish descent, but there is no Jewish music. So long as it is not possible to prove anything positive or negative, anything common (good or bad) to the works and activity of these musicians, so long as any really "Jewish" peculiarities are not seriously to be found (but seriously, and not in jest or out of hatred), so long will Gustav Mahler's significance belong to those amongst whom the most intelligent foreigners have long since placed it: in the succession of the great German geniuses.

CHILDHOOD, EARLY YOUTH

Gustav Mahler came from an unpretentious village. It is called Kalischt, and lies in Bohemia near the Moravian border and the town of Iglau. That he was just a native of the Royal Province Bohemia was later of importance for him, as it was the Society for the Furtherance of German Science and Art in Bohemia that brought about the publication of its countryman's first symphonies. Mahler was born in Kalischt

on the 7th of July, 1860; this at any rate is the date one usually reads and hears. It is, however, not certain. Mahler's parents, as he himself said, kept the 1st of July as his birthday, and the papers are lost. His parents, shopkeepers only fairly well to do, but zealous in matters of culture, soon moved over to Iglau. The child was quiet, shy, reserved: they would gladly have seen it livelier. Liveliness, however, came too with the comprehension of music. Musical impressions were decisive even at this early age. Moravian servants, both Germans and Slavs, sing willingly and well. Melancholy songs accompany getting up and going to bed. The bugles ring out from the barracks. The regimental band marches past. And the tiny youngster sings each and every tune after them. At the age of four, some one buys him a concertina, and now he plays them himself, especially the military marches. These latter have so much attraction for him that one morning, hastily dressed, he hurries away after the soldiers, and gives the marketwomen who come to fetch him a regular concert on his instrument. When six years old he discovers at his grandfather's an old piano, and nothing can induce him to leave it, not even the call to meals. At eight, he has a pupil in piano-playing, aged seven, at a cent a lesson. But, owing to the inattention of the learner, the teacher loses his temper and the instruction has to be broken off.

Only one thing even distantly approaches his passion for music—the reading mania. So addicted is the boy to it that often the whole day long he is nowhere to be found. He also makes frequent use of the town's musical library.

He attends the Grammar School at Iglau, and for a short time also that of Prague. Teachers and companions notice from time to time a certain indifference—not inattention, but simply a forgetfulness of his surroundings, distinctly to be remarked under musical impressions. Once he whistles during school hours a long note to himself, and awakes thereby to the effect, not a little astonished.

The family seems to have had no doubt as to what the boy's profession would be in view of his obvious talent, although a sacrifice would have to be made to allow him the necessary time for study, and there were other children to be considered. Perhaps the prudent father even had objections; Prof. Julius Epstein of the Vienna Conservatoire says that he had. At any rate, a young man of 15 came one day in 1875 to Epstein's house with his father, who asked the Professor to decide as to his talent, and at the same time as to the further course of his studies. Not very willingly, but still struck by a remarkable look in the boy's face, Epstein invited the young unknown to play something, either of his own or otherwise. And after only a few minutes he told the father: "He is a born musician"; and answered all objections with, "In this case I am certainly not mistaken."

Thus "Gustav Mahler from Iglau, aged 15," became in the autumn of 1875 a pupil in the Conservatoire at Vienna. The Director of the Institute was "Old Hellmesberger," a legendary figure in Vienna. An excellent artist of the traditional type, but also one of those "good Viennese musicians" of the old stamp, who for the young and impetuous, and for rising talents, were dangerous people, and not in the least pioneers. It will be remembered that about this time Hugo Wolf was expelled from the Conservatoire for "breach of discipline." Mahler, too, once conducted himself "insubordinately," and the same punishment was not so far distant for him. However this may be, he made rapid progress. The Annual Report of the Conservatoire for the year 1875-76 shows that he skipped the preparatory class to enter the first finishing class for piano of Prof. Epstein. In addition, he studied harmony with Robert Fuchs, and at the same time (and not in accord with the curriculum) composition with Theodore Krenn. He probably entered the last-named course on the strength of compositions submitted for examination. He entered the competition in piano-playing and composition at the end of the year, and

in both cases won the first prize; in the former for his performance of the first movement of Schubert's *A*-minor Sonata [which?], in the latter for the first movement of a piano-quintette. The report of the following year shows that Mahler attended the second finishing class in piano-playing, the second year of the course in composition, and the first year of that in counterpoint. As a matter of fact, we find his name amongst Epstein's and Krenn's pupils, but it is missing from the counterpoint class. It is said that Hellmesberger "let him off" counterpoint because his compositions showed so much knowledge and skill, and that Mahler even regretted it later. But how he mastered counterpoint is best shown in his symphonies.

In the pianoforte competition of this year (*Humoreske* of Schumann) Mahler again won the first prize. He had not entered for the composition prize.

In the third and last year, 1877-78, he is entered as composition pupil in Krenn's Third Class. He also heard lectures on the history of music, but again his name does not appear. At the "final production," on July 11th, 1878, the Scherzo of a piano-quintette of Mahler's was performed, the composer himself playing the piano-part. Then he left the Institute with the diploma that is given when the pupil passes his principal course with remarkable skill, and the secondary ones with at least sufficient success, and having won a prize at the final competition.

Simultaneously with his work at the Conservatoire, which was probably no great strain on him, Mahler completed the study of the final Grammar School course, passed his examinations at Iglau, and inscribed himself as auditor of the philosophical and historical lectures at the Vienna University. He heard, however, only a few of them, and his astounding knowledge was gained later according to his own plan. The pocket-money he received from home was increased by what he earned by giving lessons in pianoforte-playing.

Amongst his teachers at the Conservatoire, Epstein and Fuchs bear distinguished names. Epstein proudly calls himself Mahler's teacher, and tells how he from the first had a preference for this somewhat unruly and inspirational rather than hard-working pupil. We may also trust his kindness to have overlooked much that others do not usually pardon in enthusiastic youth. Krenn, who is already dead, was (according to Decsey's description) "hardworking, taciturn and dry"; and Hugo Wolf, who was also his pupil from the autumn of 1875, could certainly not have felt comfortable with him. There is no information of how the Conservatoire influenced Mahler. Years later the Institute, as "Royal Academy of Music and the Plastic Arts," was fundamentally renewed, and came under government control, and then, although only as an honorary member, Mahler was given a place on the Board of Management.

Amongst the teachers, the absence of one is noticeable whose pupil Mahler is often stated to have been—Anton Bruckner. If the annual reports are to be trusted, it appears that Mahler was not Bruckner's pupil. But in fact, for this period, they are not all too trustworthy; and Mahler himself has repeatedly given the same assurance. The explanation is perhaps to be found in the counterpoint class that he missed. Besides, he was not Bruckner's private pupil. At the University (Publica) he probably did hear Bruckner's lectures, but we can scarcely infer from this that their relations were those of Master and Pupil, especially as Bruckner showed himself there quite otherwise than at the Conservatoire. He nearly always came with Mahler into the lecture-room, and the two left it together. Bruckner, in his relation to Mahler, may be well called (in Guido Adler's words) his adopted "father-in-learning." We may even speak of friendship, although the Bruckner legend throws no light upon the matter. Bruckner always spoke of Mahler with the greatest respect—as his editor, Theodor Rättig, amongst others, affirms—often met

him, and played him various compositions of his, old and new. When Mahler had visited him at his house, the far elder Bruckner insisted upon conducting the young man down the four flights of stairs, hat in hand.

And Mahler? It is not generally known that he made one of the first piano-duet arrangements of Bruckner's symphonies. This arrangement of the Third Symphony—that dedicated to Wagner, with the trumpet-theme—was probably published in 1878 by the firm of Bösendorfer & Röttig (now Schlesinger-Lienau). It was made after the new edition of the score, which was rewritten in 1876-77, the third and final form being completed only in 1889. Mahler's piano score follows the orchestral one exactly, and attempts to keep the various parts in the characteristic pitch of the instruments, even at the expense of not being easily playable.

During his later wanderings from place to place Mahler had little opportunity for a Bruckner propaganda. In Prague and Hamburg, however, where he had concerts to conduct, he began it at once. As conductor of the Philharmonic Concerts in Vienna, he gave the first performances of Bruckner's Fifth (composed 1878!) and Sixth (composed 1881!) at these concerts. This was Mahler's way of expressing admiration. And when the Viennese made an appeal for contributions for a Bruckner Memorial, and the Director of the Opera was asked to sign the petition, he refused and said to the orchestra: "Let us play his music instead. Amongst people who would hear nothing of Bruckner whilst he was alive, and stood in his way, is no place for me."

Mahler composed much during these years of apprenticeship. In addition to his prize work, which was composed literally overnight, there was a violin sonata which enjoyed a certain celebrity amongst his friends. Also a "Northern" symphony is said to have existed, and some of the early lyrics date from this period. An opera, *The Argonauts*, was written in alliterative verse and its composition partly executed.

“Das klagende Lied,” the only youthful work that Mahler acknowledges (and that in a revised edition), was also to have been an opera.

At this period he also laid the foundations of the proud edifice of his general knowledge. He became acquainted with the philosophers, especially Kant and Schopenhauer; later Fechner, Lotze and Helmholtz were added. In Nietzsche he admired the hymnic vein. Philosophy, in particular the boundaries that touch the natural sciences, always attracted him; how attentively, for instance, he recently followed the researches of Reinke, to whom he was led, as to Fechner, by his religious instinct. Goethe, Schiller and the Romantic School were already his precious possessions, his favourites being E. T. A. Hoffmann and Jean Paul, especially the latter’s “Titan.” History, biology and psychology held his attention always. As psychologist and poet, Dostoeffsky was for Mahler a discovery.

His fiery manner of speech, his lightning-like readiness of mind, his dæmonic force of perception and absolutely amazing power of clearing up any situation with one word were remarked even then. Friends he met willingly and often. The chief of these were Guido Adler, now professor of the History of Music at the Vienna University; Rudolf Krzyzanowsky, who died as Hofkapellmeister at Weimar only a few weeks later than Mahler; the writer Heinrich Krzyzanowsky, Rudolf’s brother; the archeologist Fritz Löhr, and his since deceased brother; and a musician of genius, Hans Rott, who died unrecognised and in want on the very threshold of his career. Hugo Wolf must then have been Mahler’s friend, according to his own account, even if the two perhaps more respected than understood one another. Precisely this man, rough and difficult to handle, Mahler showed his kindness to. He was hardly Director of the Opera when Wolf’s wish to have free entry was fulfilled, and the *Corregidor* was accepted for performance. Even if it remained for some time unper-

formed, that only shows that for Mahler duty as he understood it was of more weight than a service of friendship—his duty, because he was convinced of the slender stage-effect of the beautiful opera, an opinion which proved only too well founded.

Still another friend must be named, whom I did not care to mention during his lifetime, so great was his timidity and retirement after a wonderful beginning. Siegfried Lipiner is known to all who have read Nietzsche's letter to Rohde (II, No. 196 of the year 1877): "Just recently I had a real holy-day with Lipiner's 'Prometheus Unbound.' If this poet be not a man of genius, I no longer know what genius is. Everything in it is wonderful, and I seemed to meet my own exalted and deified self in it. I bow my head low before the man who can imagine and produce such a work as this."

This man died on December 30th, 1911, after a long illness, as *Regierungsrat* and Librarian of the Houses of Parliament in Vienna. With few exceptions this was all the papers knew of him; they scarcely even knew of his translation of Mickiewicz. I recall him here to speak of Mahler's affection for him. He constantly returned to this youthful friendship.

However intimate Mahler's relations with these friends of his youth were, he was equally generous with his assistance to strangers, when once convinced of their merit. But a long and bitter time of suffering was now destined to be his own lot, in spite of certain outward good fortune.

Their rallying-point in those days was the Wagner Society, and there the Master's cause was upheld in word and deed. It is not known how far Mahler took part in the struggles of that wonderful period; he was often enough looked upon as a fanatic, because, no doubt owing to Wagner's writings about Regeneration, he was at that time both an abstainer and a vegetarian. But that he understood Wagner as perhaps none before him, his stage-direction proved to all the world, and the history of the German theatre will long keep it in mind.

The young artist gave the best of himself at the piano.

All who heard it speak of his playing with veneration. At the Conservatoire they said that a pianist of exceptional gifts was latent in him, one of those who might enter the lists with Rubinstein and Liszt. But it was on account of the spirit, not of mere technique. The enormous will-power, the genius that exhausts every possibility of the music, broke out in the pianist's spirit, as later in the conductor's power. The whole dread of the mystical abyss enveloped his Beethoven, and Mahler's friends have never again heard the last sonatas played in such fashion. He fled to Beethoven out of the sordid atmosphere of the theatre—to Beethoven and to Bach. And, however much he was plagued with performances and rehearsals, he was always ready for chamber music—the more the better. The true musician's joy in music-making enticed him, and his perpetually re-creating, ever-imparting enthusiasm lavishly poured out his gifts.

He seems to have visited the theatre only seldom, and it is right to say that he became acquainted with most of the operas he conducted later only as their conductor. This was quite in keeping with his contempt for tradition, which as a rule only gives and takes mistakes, and neither attains nor even strives after perfection.

The holiday months of the summer he spent in this and the following years at home with his parents. The landscape round Iglau is tame, and almost without beauty. It is no tragic landscape, rather one that dreams in the rear of tragedies, giving cheer and comfort. Its melancholy is subdued by its charm: gentle slopes awaken longing; wanderers fare onward, songs resound. Mahler has much to thank this neighborhood for; its voice is heard in all his early symphonies. He took the man of the soil seriously. Once he meets a shepherd and his flock—what may such a man's thoughts be? Somebody replies: About the next market-day. But Mahler becomes angry: The shepherd lives with nature, he dreams and broods; he surely has ideas of his own. . . .

His kindly sympathetic and divinatory nature brought him near to animals. He understood much of their language, and could pass hours playing with dogs. In the same way, he was devoted to children, which have the candid seriousness of animals. How many things in his works are for children and for childish genius alone! And it must have been remarked how children understood him. In the preliminary rehearsals for the Eighth Symphony, at Munich, the cordial relations of the children's chorus to him provided many an empirical confirmation of that which an observer who follows the inner nature must already have known.

In this time of his youth everything was foreshadowed that Mahler's character was to produce. Again and again it throws its light upon his whole later life. In the blossom are the fruit and the magic of the blossom. And one cannot stay long enough in the spring.

APPRENTICESHIP

The agreeable life of Vienna might have been continued—only externalities were concerned—and Mahler would probably have been led to his own creative work outside the traffic of the theatre sooner and (perhaps) more permanently. At the same time, we to-day, and especially we in Vienna, will surely not regret that things turned out otherwise, and that the young man of hardly twenty went head over heels into an apprenticeship to the trade of conducting. Rättig says he persuaded him, as he saw its necessity, to pay a visit to the inevitable Agent. And Mahler was offered an "engagement" at Hall, in Austria, then not even Hall Spa. The enthusiastic disciple of Wagner and friend of Bruckner—and a summer theatre! His parents and a few others opposed; but Prof. Epstein advised Mahler to accept, in order to make a start somewhere. "You will soon find other places," he said consolingly.

So Mahler went at the age of 19 and conducted operettas, farces and stage music in Hall at a salary of \$12.50 a month and a "gratification" of about 17 cents per performance. Whether he sought supporters in or out of the theatre is not known; anyhow, he had them. For he was always of such a striking and winning manner that he awakened enthusiasm even in earliest youth, and the same continued until the end. The Vienna "Mahler-clique," which was formerly so insulted and ridiculed, came into existence in no other manner. When genius calls, there are always some who must follow—and that others neither must, can, nor will, is self-explanatory.

But in autumn the great doings at Hall came to an end, and nothing similar was to be found. The alternative was Vienna, piano-lessons, and composition. Not till the season of 1881–82 do we find Mahler again in the theatre, this time at Laibach and apparently in a very limited sphere of action. It is related that in *Martha* the conductor once had to—whistle the "Last rose of summer." But this misery passed, too, and in the winter of 1882 he again remained in Vienna and worked at the composition of a fairy opera, *Rübezahl*. It was not completed or published, but Mahler's friends say that it was of much importance in his development. The bright humour, and the dark, biting, perverse style *à la* Callot which we know from the lyrical and symphonic works, existed already in *Rübezahl*. Especially a March of Suitors is remembered as accompanied by music in the maddest of moods. Just then—it was at the beginning of 1883—the first conductor of the theatre at Olmütz died, and Mahler was called upon to take his place. To-day, Olmütz counts as a better-class provincial theatre; but at that time things must have been in a sad way. Mahler felt outraged ("profaned"), and at once set to work to get Mozart and Wagner intrigued out of the répertoire, so as not to shame the music. He then conducted hardly anything but Meyerbeer and Verdi, also *Joseph in Egypt*, and finally the first appearance in Olmütz of *Carmen*—

but with what scorn in his heart! When he wanted to drag his people with him, and saw the indifference which at most turned the smile at the "idealist" and his enthusiasm into a grin, it was for him like harnessing a winged steed to a plough. At times they did do something for the poor idealist—the word is in theatre language an insult—but that was only out of pity for his feelings. Mahler wrote at that time to a friend: "Only the feeling that I must stand it for the sake of my Masters, and perhaps even do sometimes strike a spark of their fire from the hearts of these wretched people, steels my courage."

Perhaps things were not really so black as they appeared to the idealism of the impetuous young man. And even to-day some people in Olmütz still have a warm recollection of the Kapellmeister of their theatre.

One day, however, Mahler heard that a second conductor's post was vacant at Cassel and, having borrowed money for his fare, went to see about the place. His presence was a recommendation, and he was engaged with the title of "Royal Director of Music." He laboured for two years at this theatre, and amongst the larger operas that he conducted were *Der Freischütz*, *Hans Heiling*, *Robert the Devil*, and the *Rattenfänger*. Angelo Neumann's statement, that in Cassel Mahler was given only Lortzing to conduct, is an error; but at any rate he did not get the "classics." Between Olmütz and Cassel there lie a short season of activity as chorus-conductor of an Italian *stagione* at the Carl Theatre in Vienna and a pilgrimage to Bayreuth. There the perfection of the performances was an inspiration to him after so much ignominy, and he was shaken to the roots of his being by *Parsifal*. He said the greatest and saddest of all things had appeared to him, and he would have to carry it with him through life. After Bayreuth, he also visited Wunsiedel and the landscape of Jean Paul.

In the years 1883 and 1884 fall the "Lieder eines fahrenden

Gesellen." The First Symphony, which depends for its themes upon two of them, was also begun about this time.

In the service of the theatre, he wrote music to some living pictures representing Scheffel's *Trumpeter of Säckingen*, which was composed in two days, and, besides amusing Mahler immensely, had great success. The living pictures with the music were also produced in Mannheim, Wiesbaden and Karlsruhe.

But his theatre pleased him less and less. He could not attain to the great works he was burning to conduct. Then came differences of opinion with the Intendant, which at once (perhaps as Mahler stubbornly refused to conduct a parody on *Tannhäuser*) were stamped as an infraction of Prussian "subordination." On account of such audacity, he was viewed by the theatre-folk with pity and aversion. With the orchestra, too, he was too severe in the rehearsals, which often lasted eight hours. The worst came, however, when Mahler, who was already conductor of a chorus in the neighbouring town of Münden, was chosen by several choral societies as conductor of a musical Festival in the summer of 1885. His superior, the first conductor at the opera, must have felt hurt, and the Intendant even demanded that Mahler should decline. Even before this, Mahler had written to Angelo Neumann, the future director of the German Theatre at Prague. This typical letter was published in the "Prager Tageblatt" of March 5th, 1898. It reads:

CASSEL, 3rd December, 1884.

Dear Sir,

I herewith take the liberty of introducing myself to you. I am second conductor at the theatre here, and conduct *Robert the Devil*, *Hans Heiling*, *Freischütz*, *Rattenfänger*, etc. You will be able without any great difficulty to obtain particulars as to my capabilities from here, or from stage-manager Überhorst of the Dresden Opera, who knows me well. I desire to change my position as soon as possible, chiefly because I need more and better work, and unfor-

tunately here, as second conductor, I cannot find any that corresponds with what I am capable of. Can you make use of a young and energetic conductor who—I must evidently sing my own praises—has knowledge and routine at his disposal, and who is not without the power of breathing fire and enthusiasm into works of art, and also into the artists taking part? I shall be brief, and not take up more of your time. Kindly let me have your reply as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully,

GUSTAV MAHLER.

Cassel, Wolfsschlucht 13, Third Floor.

Neumann asked Mahler to apply again as soon as the news that he was definitely entrusted with the direction in Prague had appeared in the papers. "I do not know even to-day how it was that the form and content of this letter made such an impression upon me, and made me send a hopeful reply to the Cassel choral conductor, as I was inundated with other applications, especially for the post of conductor."

In April, 1885, Mahler handed in his resignation. It was accepted. In July he was engaged for a month's trial at the Stadttheater in Leipzig, and with enthusiasm he devoted the remainder of the summer to preparing the Musical Festival. During the quarrel he was obliged to come secretly and under all kinds of difficulties to the various societies in the district. But, in the end, everything "went." On June 29th and 30th, and July 1st, the Festival took place. The soloists were Frau Papier-Paumgartner, Bulss from Dresden, the pianist Reisenauer, the violinist Halir; the conductors being Herr Freiburg, Director of Music at Marburg, and Mahler. There were four choruses from Cassel, Marburg, Münden and Nordhausen, and an orchestra 80 strong. The programme consisted of a symphony concert, a chamber music concert, and a performance of Mendelssohn's "St. Paul." It was the last-named concert that Mahler conducted, and with such success that the departing conductor became quite a local hero. He left Cassel, honoured with laurel wreaths and many valuable presents.

The trial month at Leipzig also ended with Mahler's engagement for the season of 1886-87. Already at the end of the summer of 1885 Mahler began his activities in Prague, where in the meantime Angelo Neumann had taken over the direction of the *Landestheater*.

PRAGUE AND LEIPZIG

When Angelo Neumann took over his theatre on August 1st, 1885, it was in a rather unsettled state. But in a very short time he was able to awaken the theatrical inclination of the people of Prague. His first conductor and musical adviser was Anton Seidl, who soon took a long leave of absence, however, and went to America, where he remained.

Seidl conducted the first performance under Neumann's direction: *Lohengrin*. In the rehearsals, where everything was probably much more carefully studied than in the smaller theatres that Mahler knew, the young conductor was transported with delight. Neumann and Seidl then decided as a trial to entrust Mahler with the performance on the Emperor's birthday—Cherubini's *Water-Carrier*. The study and performance of the work went so well that Mahler was at once definitely engaged for the whole season, and given *Rheingold* and *Valkyrie* to prepare, both then entering for the first time into the répertoire of the Prague theatre. What a joy for the Master's disciple to be able at last to shape these works for him. But, before they were ready, he was given *Don Giovanni*, because the elderly conductor Slansky, who had been for 25 years in Prague, did not care about taking up this work again, "which they had never been able to make anything of in Prague"—must we recall that *Don Giovanni* was composed for Prague? What a new joy for Mahler!—and it was a splendid evening. If this wonder in tones had meanwhile suffered neglect in the town where it was first performed, it was now, thanks to Mahler's enthusiasm, reinstated amongst the su-

preme musical delights. The Dresden musical critic Ludwig Hartmann, who was present at the performance, could still revel in recollections of it years afterwards. Later, it was Brahms who recognised Mahler's commanding ability after hearing his production of the work in Pesth; and Bülow was transported with that in Hamburg. And, most recently, the unforgettable Mozart Festival in Vienna showed that Mahler had ever had a quite special standpoint in relation to *Don Giovanni*. His glowing love for art enflamed the people of Prague. Then came the *Mastersingers*, *Rheingold*, *Valkyrie*, *Fidelio*, *Iphigenia*, and—Nessler's *Trumpeter*! But the great works now regularly fall to his share.

At a Sunday concert in the theatre Beethoven's Ninth Symphony was conducted by the youthful Karl Muck. This concert, in which Mahler directed the *Liebesmahl* scene from *Parsifal*, had great success, and the Deutscher Schulpfennig-Verein made arrangements with the Director for a repetition of the works for the benefit of the Society on the following Sunday, February 21st, 1886. Mahler had this time to conduct the whole concert, as Muck had left—the Choral Symphony with the rest. There was hardly a week, "therefore" only one rehearsal with orchestra and chorus, but Mahler was still able to have a separate rehearsal of the recitative with 'celli and basses. Then he conducted the performance with real *terribiltà* and—by heart. The effect was indescribable. Mahler received an address of thanks (as Guido Adler, then professor in Prague, relates), upon which were inscribed the most distinguished names of German Prague and many professors at the University. It recalled his striving for the German masters—for Mozart, Beethoven and Wagner.

The critic Dr. Richard Batke was present at a later rehearsal of the Ninth Symphony in Prague in 1898, and I have to thank him for a score in which Mahler's directions to the orchestra are placed opposite the remarks of Wagner. It is wonderful to see how Mahler's words translate Wagner's intentions into

technical language with extraordinary terseness and exactitude. There is as yet no reference to the more recent retinting of the instrumentation.

In a letter to the Prague newspapers Neumann congratulated his conductor and expressed the hope that his career, the Prague portion of which was now completed, might everywhere be so rich in honours. This letter was at the same time a reconciliation between Neumann and his conductor, who, unbending as he was, did not always conform literally to his director's regulations.

There is also record in the following weeks of a performance of *Così fan tutte*, and of a concert in April for the benefit of the Society for supporting German law-students. In the latter Mahler conducted (by heart) Mozart's *G*-minor Symphony, the Scherzo of Bruckner's Third Symphony, and Wagner's "Kaisermarsch." Fräulein Franck of the Prague Theatre sang some songs, amongst which were a few of Mahler's. One of them, "Hans und Grete," had to be repeated. This was probably the first public performance of works by Mahler.

In the summer of 1886 Mahler had to go to Leipzig in pursuance of his engagement. But Prague still counts him as its own. The Bohemian composers are indebted to him, if only for what he did for Smetana. And at the first performance of his Seventh Symphony—this honour belongs to Prague—German and Bohemian musicians were united both in orchestra and auditorium.

Mahler's activities in Leipzig—in reality only nominally as second conductor—extended over two years from the summer of 1886. Since 1882 Stägemann had been director of the Stadttheater. He was a tireless worker, and therefore favourable to Mahler. The Stadttheater gave many operas, and had a very large répertoire which required for its maintenance numerous and strenuous rehearsals. For instance, in March, 1888, there were eleven operatic performances in which eleven different works were given: *Götterdämmerung*, *Flying Dutch-*

man, *Lohengrin*, *Freischütz*, *Euryanthe*, *Three Pintos*, *Hans Heiling*, *Merry Wives*, *Robert the Devil*, *Fidelio* and *Mignon*. In the season of 1887-88, 214 performances of 54 different operas were given, of which five were new and seven newly studied. Forty-eight evenings were devoted to Wagner. To celebrate Weber's hundredth birthday, all his operas were given in a "cycle." Later, when under Mahler *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung* were taken into the répertoire, a cycle of Wagner's operas was given. Nikisch was the first conductor; but he, when Mahler came to Leipzig, was thinking of other positions to be had, and so counted for only half. Moreover, he once was ill for six months, so that during this entire half-year the full musical responsibility rested upon Mahler's shoulders. During this time he often stayed all day from morning until late at night in the theatre. He did not lack recognition; his relations with Nikisch only improved; and though he resigned his position in May, 1888, he did so because he still wanted to be "first" somewhere or other. In Leipzig, Mahler conducted nearly all the great works in the répertoire, and also, in a concert, scenes from *Parsifal*, in which the Leipzig Riedel-Verein and the Teachers' Choral Society took part.

Dr. Max Steinitzer⁷ tells in his witty fashion all sorts of extraordinary things that happened in the Leipzig period:—"Young Mahler represented 'man as expression' amongst the many for whom man exists only as 'form.' He had the best will in the world to remain polite, but his look, when anybody said anything silly or ordinary which was perhaps quite good enough for the requirements of the moment, was only too eloquent. Before he remembered himself and got his features back again into the mould of conventional courtesy, everybody had read from them what he really thought. . . . Having full recognition for seriousness of aim, he was a warm friend of Karl Perron, an interested helper of Paul Knüpfer, and an admirer of Josephine Artner's intuitive abilities. That was towards the end of the eighties in Leipzig; and later, when I read in the

Viennese papers about Mahler's absolutism, despotism and even satanism, I often used to smile and think of the humorous, always readily sympathetic and uniform kindness which characterized his attitude in private life towards us musicians.

"True, he so detested pretension, dilettantism, coquetry with art, that his opinion was instantly noticeable, however 'correct' he might remain in outward form. The precision of expression at every moment which characterised his whole being showed itself most interestingly and agreeably in his conducting. It was an event in our lives when he took the first four bars of the Third Leonore Overture in a continual *ritenuto*: thus, in the simplest fashion, each one of the descending octaves became an element of tragic import, until finally low *F* sharp lay in majestic and rigid repose, like the waters over which moved the spirit of God. In *Don Giovanni* he began the terzet with the dying Commandant in a fairly rapid tempo and, taking it gradually slower and slower, reached such a tremendous climax that the last few bars became an *adagio* of most impressive effect. He also began the *Allegro* of the above-mentioned Leonore Overture with a real *pianissimo*, the like of which but few of us had ever heard. In short, when Mahler conducted, every bar, so to speak, gained new interest and life."

And think of the "predominantly mirthful" episodes which Steinitzer witnessed and took part in!

The most important event of the Leipzig years was his meeting the grandson of Carl Maria von Weber. The Saxon Captain Carl von Weber, whose regiment was quartered in Leipzig, became acquainted with Mahler through Stägemann, and soon asked him to undertake the completion and arrangement of Weber's opera *The Three Pintos*. Captain Weber believed in the possibility of such a completion. Meyerbeer had held a different opinion, and kept for years the manuscript which Weber's widow had given him, without carrying out the idea. Nor was Mahler easily convinced; but after

taking the remaining fragments and the grandson's plans home with him and fully considering them, he set to work with enthusiastic fervour and had the whole thing finished in an incredibly short time. "*The Three Pintos*, comic opera in three acts by C. M. von Weber, based upon the text of the same name by Th. Hell and upon sketches left by, and selected manuscripts of, the composer; the dramatic part by Carl von Weber, the musical part by Gustav Mahler," was immediately accepted by the Leipzig Municipal Theatre and performed for the first time on January 20th, 1888, under Mahler's direction. The success was great, but it was also continued. Until the summer, the opera was given fifteen times, the oftenest of all operas in the répertoire. Hamburg and Dresden soon followed, other towns somewhat later, Vienna in January, 1889. It was the first time that Mahler came into contact with the Vienna Court Opera. Even to-day the work is given here and there, though too seldom.

The relation of the original sketches to this revision has often been discussed. Public and critics found precisely those parts really Weberish which Mahler himself had composed, and were irritated at the impious innovator where not a single note of Weber's composition had been altered. The word went round that the whole was rather "gemahlt" than "gewebt," and even worse jokes were made. Thus the ever-witty in Vienna decided at once, after a lukewarm performance, that the completion had been undertaken merely that a young man might hitch his name to Weber's, and thus get himself dragged into notoriety.

The truth of the matter was shown by Ludwig Hartmann⁵ through a comparison with Weber's manuscript. In the years 1816-21 Weber had worked at this composition. In January, 1826, he was again busy with the opera, the text of which had been written for him by Hofrat Winkler (Theodor Hell) after an old Spanish humoresque. Weber's music sufficed for two acts. The third Mahler pieced together out of old, forgotten

fragments of Weber's compositions for guitar, songs and cantatas, etc., in so masterly fashion that one can scarcely believe that such a work was possible. "That Mahler should have so steeped himself in Weber's style ought to be signalized as a unique instance of affectionate unselfishness." And we must also remember that Mahler had already completed a symphony which is anything but Weberish, and had begun a second, and that the actual work is said to have occupied only a week of his holidays.

The story of the text, which Carl von Weber somewhat altered, tells how a young girl, promised in marriage to an old nobleman, is taken from him by her lover after all kinds of puzzling situations and foolery. Performances have shown that when the players maintain the lightness and movement of the piece it is quite capable of supporting the music.

The latter begins with a chorus of students. The twenty-one introductory bars are by Mahler, the chorus is taken from a "Turnierbankett," Op. 68, of Weber. Gaston's solo ("the real Weber") is by Mahler. On the contrary, the chorus No. 8, which was described as a clever imitation by Mahler, is Weber's own, and was written for *The Three Pintos*. The entr'acte which precedes was arranged by Mahler from themes of the first act. The Arietta No. 9, which resembles Ännchen's comfortings in the *Freischütz*, is a triolet from Weber's Op. 71; the coda, that of an unpublished valse composed in 1816. The especially popular No. 15, a three-part canon, is from Weber's Op. 13. In No. 17 we find, at the *Vivace* in two-four time, the last melody which Weber, already stricken by mortal illness, ever wrote.

The work is certainly shamefully neglected. But it looks as though Weber had fallen upon evil days—at least till the next "centenary."

PESTH. FOR THE FIRST TIME DIRECTOR

When Mahler left Leipzig (an Italian journey probably supervened during these few months) he had no positive offer for the following season. Negotiations were begun with Hamburg, Karlsruhe, Pesth, even with New York, but there was hesitancy on both sides. No performance of his own works was to be thought of, and the only auspicious event of the immediate past was the significant artistic and even material success of *The Three Pintos*, the entr'acte of which penetrated as far as New York. On August 18th he conducted the first performance of the opera during the imperial celebration in Prague. He began to despair of overcoming the stagnation. But between summer and autumn the decision came; Mahler was appointed Director of the Royal Opera in Pesth.

Pesth has two court theatres, a play-house (the National Theatre), and an opera-house. In January, 1888, the Intendant Count Stefan Keglevich resigned, leaving the National Theatre as a well-conducted and well-frequented house. On the other hand, the Opera provided trouble enough for both, being, as Keglevich said, "a product of the extravagant period." At the time when Hungary's independence was being emphasised on all sides, a "magnificent" opera-house was built, and it was thought that the future of Hungarian (*recte* Magyar) music was assured. But the public of Pesth, whose curiously mixed population was not yet won over to Magyarism, and furthermore tolerated a German theatre, turned a cold shoulder to the "national" opera, and went there only when Italian operatic "stars" were to be expected. The deficit became terrific, reports were sent in to parliament, and the new Intendant, Count Franz von Beniczky, could see no way out of the difficulty other than keeping down expenses. There was talk of reducing the number of performances; some of the artists were paid off. Nothing helped. The artistic negligence was correspondingly great. What with resigna-

tions and excuses, there was hardly ever a proper performance. Chorus and orchestra were thoroughly disorganized, the singers bewildered; everything seemed to be going to rack and ruin. Into this chaos came Mahler. He was to help, to hold things together, to bring head and limbs into working order, to perform miracles. And his first words were, "I shall work with enthusiasm." "Guests" and "stars" disappeared, the local ensemble had to learn and receive credit for what they were capable of. Above all, the dramatic side of the performances was to be cultivated, and only one language used, whereas until then one had sung in Magyar, another in German, a third in Italian and a fourth in French. And, as it was felt, of course, that Magyar should predominate in a Hungarian opera-house, Mahler was acclaimed as a "patriot" who battled for the Hungarian cause. But, as he was not patriotic enough to learn the difficult language himself, the actor and elocutionist Ujházy was engaged to rehearse the dramatic part with the singers, according to the director's instructions, and to superintend the stage-management. But, from the very outset, Mahler himself directed the stage rehearsals, as he did later in Vienna. Then came the unsparing vim of his work, and the miracle was performed; the theatre filled again, and once more deeds were done and results achieved. The singers' courage was tried upon a difficult task; *Rheingold* and *The Valkyrie* were prepared in eight weeks and produced in December, 1888. *The Valkyrie* had just been translated into the native language; *Rheingold* was done specially for this case. There was great difficulty in distributing the parts. But as early as January, 1889, there were given on two successive days (an order regularly observed under Mahler) "A Raina Kincse" (*Rheingold*) and "A Walkür" (*Valkyrie*). One can almost judge of the labour from the titles themselves, but both triumphed, and following the tumultuous applause for Mahler a public address of thanks was issued by the Intendant.

It would avail us little to tell in detail all that Mahler achieved in Pesth with the comparatively restricted means at his disposal. Let this suffice; Brahms is said to have remarked, "Such a *Don Giovanni* performance as they have in Pesth is not to be heard in Vienna." Mahler was the central figure in public attention. Even his symphony was given at a Philharmonic Concert on November 20th, 1889, under his own direction. The Hungarian programme described it as a Symphonic Poem in two parts. It is needless to say that time and place were not yet ripe for such a performance; witness how Mahler's activity was not understood to the fullest extent in a country but gradually accustoming itself to the music of Western Europe, although the best people admired him.

But in Pesth, as later in Vienna, the easy-going calm of many people was disturbed. They lamented and complained; and when Beniczky—a straightforward man who respected Mahler's independence and was thankful to him for his help—resigned in January, 1891, the retiring Intendant published a detailed statement for the benefit of his Director. From this it appears that in the twenty months of Mahler's directorship thirty-one works were rehearsed, of which the following were given for the first time, or revived after a long interval: *Pêcheurs de Perles*, *Fille du Régiment*, *Nachtlager in Granada*, *Rheingold*, *Valkyrie*, *Georg Brankowich* (by Erkel), Maillart's *Dragons de Villars*, *Merry Wives*, Auber's *La Part du Diable*, *Templer und Jüdin*, *Asraël*, *Cavalleria* (first performance outside Italy), Offenbach's *Mariage aux Lanternes*, *Waffenschmied*, *Tales of Hoffmann*, and four ballets. The newly studied works were *Marriage of Figaro*, *Lohengrin*, *Merlin*, *Aida*, *Queen of Sheba*, Adam's *Poupée de Nuremberg*, *Mignon*, *Don Giovanni*, *Bankban* (Erkel), *Ballo in Maschera*, *Fidelio*, *Noces de Jeannette*. Mahler's enormous activity and organising capacity were highly praised, and the continually increasing profit, which had already replaced the everlasting deficit, was given in figures. At last it reached nearly 25,000 Gulden

(about \$12,000). At the same time there appeared in the "Pester Lloyd" a more detailed appreciation of Mahler, "whose artistic tact towards the nation," whose staging (especially of Wagner) and whose educational power in general were generously extolled. "Even were the reproach possible that Mahler had not raised the Opera to the level of other royal theatres, it must be said that this could not come about in two or even twenty years, if at all. Everything might be denied or found fault with, except Mahler's artistic honesty or his extraordinary capabilities."

On February 3rd the new Intendant, Count Géza Zichy, pianist, composer and poet, took over his position. He was not in agreement with Mahler's "Wagnerian" tendency. Then the theatre ordinances were altered and the director lost his "authoritative rights." Zichy directed rehearsals. On the 4th of March Mahler gave up his post. His contract ran for eight years further, and the intendance had quite a high indemnity to pay. Later an attempt was made to get Mahler back again to Pesth. When the newspapers announced his retirement, a telegram from Pollini called him to Hamburg as first conductor, and on April 1st he was already busy in his new position. Pesth sent tokens of its appreciation after him. Count Albert Apponyi, Moritz Wahrmann, Edmund von Mihalovich and Siegmund Singer raised a subscription, principally amongst the subscribers of the Opera, and sent to Mahler in Hamburg a gold bâton and a silver vase with the inscription, "To the musician of genius, Gustav Mahler, from his Buda-Pesth admirers."

HAMBURG. THE SUMMER COMPOSER. FIRST PERFORMANCES.

Thus the director had once more become first conductor. But under Pollini in this capacity he had almost unlimited authority. In his ensemble were artists like Anna von Milden-

burg, Katharina Klafsky, Bertha Foerster-Lauterer, Ernestine Schumann-Heink, Josephine Artner, Willy Hesch, Birrenkoven, Leopold Demuth. He lacked work and variety as little as recognition or sympathetic and stimulating friends. The performances under Mahler became celebrated throughout North Germany. Amongst the principal events of the Hamburg theatre were the staging of *Der Freischütz* and *Tannhäuser*, of Rubinstein's *Demon* (for which Mahler thenceforward showed a certain partiality), the first performance in Germany of Tschaikowsky's *Eugene Onegin* (at which the composer was present and distinguished Mahler by lavish praise), Bizet's *Djamileh*, Verdi's *Falstaff*, Haydn's *Apotheker*, and *The Bartered Bride*, *Two Widows*, and *Dalibor*, by Smetana. We recognise here the same lines of procedure as during the first years in Vienna. He conducted other novelties such as Bruneau's *Attaque du Moulin* (after Zola), Franchetti's *Columbus*, the first German performance of Puccini's *Manon*, the *Manon* of Massenet and the same composer's *Werther*, *Hänsel und Gretel*, *The Cricket on the Hearth*. In Mozart, Wagner, *Fidelio*, he reigned supreme. The composer J. B. Foerster tells much of Mahler's rehearsing and conducting. His solo rehearsals with the singers were almost dreaded, but were none the less a master-school of musico-dramatic art. With inexorable severity and the fiery zeal that always possessed him, he demanded the utmost exactitude in the rhythm of the music, which on the stage he always made to flow entirely out of the rhythm of the drama. Only when everything in song, in enunciation, in tempo, in relation to the orchestra, was worked out with the greatest precision, did he leave the artists freedom to use their own individuality, testing and weighing in most cases, not meddling with or only unnoticeably directing those whom he trusted. The conductor wrought out the slightest dynamic and agogic nuances, which the stage-manager supported with those of lighting and arrangement. I have also heard from Foerster a phrase used by many other

genuine and acutely sensitive musicians independently one of the other: That everything which took shape under Mahler's fingers was as though born again. And this enormous strain of creative energy was transmitted to the nerves of the hearers. Perhaps herein lies the secret of the man who neither taught nor explained nor even allowed his earlier vehemence of gesture to appear on the surface, but rather created with the inspired impulse of the true artist. He even created often enough in a literal sense; for after unsuccessfully protesting against the acceptance of some inferior or mediocre work, and finally agreeing to it, he amazed everybody, and most of all the composers themselves, who often declared that they had not thought it possible for the music they had written so to sound or so to move people. Mahler's dæmonic intensity could strike fire out of clay, and he was almost always in such a glow himself that he forgot everything—theatre, public, artists, and all—when not specially and offensively reminded of them. Then occurred the outbursts, one of which Specht reports during the Hamburg period. Mahler had already begun with the first bars of *The Valkyrie*, and some late-comers were still noisily seeking their places. Suddenly he stopped the orchestra, turned around and said: "Don't mind me, I can wait." And silence reigned. In Vienna it was no rare occurrence, when the last bars of a movement were interrupted by "southern" applause for some singer or other, for him to turn and indignantly demand silence, even if audible only to those nearest him. And those who created a disturbance in concert-hall or theatre by late coming and early going—in the Philharmonic concerts in Vienna this is almost good form, as far as "unpopular" composers are concerned—were terrified by looks that would have shamed the Philistine, had he not long since forgotten what such a feeling is like. "Naturally"—everything is *natural* to the Philistine—he then sneers at excitability, hyper-sensitiveness, capriciousness, bad temper. But it was only the creator's wrath at the paralyzing intruder.

Amongst those who learned to respect Mahler in Hamburg was Hans von Bülow. Mahler had already heard Bülow and the Meiningen Orchestra in Cassel, and had written an enthusiastic letter to its conductor. Now it was the older man's turn to admire. And he did so with the whole fire of his temperament, and allowed no occasion to pass without singling Mahler out for praise. Such occasions presented themselves in the so-called subscription concerts of the Hamburg Society of Music-Lovers, which Bülow conducted. Mahler always had to sit in a front row, and Bülow, who liked to bridge over the distance between concert-stage and audience with words, repeatedly spoke to him from there, reached him the scores of new works, to the astonishment of the assembled public, and often seemed to be conducting for him alone. He invited Mahler to his house, and once presented him with a laurel wreath, on the ribbon of which was written, "To the Pygmalion of the Hamburg Opera-House. Hans von Bülow." When Bülow fell ill in December, 1892, Mahler at his request conducted the following concert. The illness became worse. Bülow resigned his post in 1893 and nominated Mahler as his successor. On the 12th of February, 1894, Bülow died at Cairo. The penultimate concert of the 26th was in memory of Hans von Bülow. Mahler's admirer, Dr. Hermann Behn, a passionate lover of art, spoke a few words of remembrance. After this Mahler conducted a movement of Brahms' German Requiem and the Eroica. Bülow's body was brought to Hamburg and, in accordance with his wish, cremated. The burial ceremony, conducted by the Senate of Hamburg, took place in the church of St. Michael. Klopstock's ode "Auferstehen, ja auferstehen," was sung. It was as though the spirit of the dead musician had once more saluted his friend, and at this service Mahler received the inspiration for the final choral movement of his second symphony, which contains Klopstock's verses continued by Mahler, crowning the majestic edifice. Until then no other ending attempted had appeared

worthy of the beginning. There are other cases in his works where he had similar inspirations; visions, dreams, out of which seem to speak voices from another world.

Mahler then, in 1894-95, conducted the next series of subscription concerts. They were eight in number, the last including Beethoven's "Weihe des Hauses" and Choral Symphony. On the other programmes we find the Pastoral Symphony, Schubert's C-major Symphony, Schumann's First, Bruckner's Romantic, Berlioz's Fantastique and Carnaval romain, and the Siegfried Idyll. The fourth concert was in memory of Rubinstein, with selections from *The Demon* and the Ocean Symphony.

As Mahler had found a master in Bülow, he found in Bruno Walter, now first conductor of the Vienna Court Opera, an intelligent disciple. Walter was able to mature under Mahler's example as conductor at the Hamburg theatre, and later in Vienna. He became the composer's companion. During the Hamburg period he made the four-hand piano arrangement of the Second Symphony, and has subsequently often enough shown how deeply he has penetrated into the spirit of Mahler's work, perhaps best as he rehearsed and produced the master's posthumous *Lied von der Erde* at Munich, 1911. But there were other friends, and Mahler loved to delight them with chamber music at his house. It was at the same time his relaxation from the theatre. Foerster has even yet not forgotten the impression he had from Mahler's piano-playing in the "Geister" trio. He had never before been so conscious of the supernatural element in the music. And the admirers of the conductor and artist became active and sympathetic furtherers of the composer. In these years his star was at last in the ascendant.

In the summer of 1892 Mahler conducted an ensemble (most of which, soloists, chorus and orchestra, belonged to the Hamburg theatre) at Drury Lane Theatre, London. The performances of German opera which Sir Augustus Harris

gave, together with French and Italian works, were *Tristan*, the *Ring*, and *Fidelio*. Paul Dukas has described how Mahler's reading of the Third Leonore Overture affected him. The success was so great that Harris was able to announce performances of Wagner's works in English.

In the autumn there was an outbreak of cholera in Hamburg. The theatre began later than usual, but still during the plague. Mahler held out pluckily and luckily. A year later, as isolated cases still occurred, Mahler himself fell a victim, but soon recovered.

In the summer holidays of 1893-96 Mahler lived at Steinbach on the Attersee. There, in June, 1894, in a quiet little house, the Second Symphony, which was begun during the Leipzig period, was finished. In August, 1895, after a few weeks' work, the plans for the Third were ready, and the composition completed in Hamburg. Several of the *Wunderhorn* lyrics, such as the "Fischpredigt," "Das irdische Leben" and the "Rheinlegendchen," were also written about this time—the "Rheinlegendchen," it is said, in a couple of hours. The spring now flowed uncontrollably after having long been choked.

And the flood spread out over the land.

On December 12th, 1892, at the fifth Philharmonic concert in Berlin, Frau Amalie Joachim sang some of Mahler's lyrics with orchestral accompaniment, "Der Schildwache Nachtlied" and "Verlorene Müh." It was the first attempt in Berlin. In the autumn of the same year the First Symphony was played in Hamburg, in addition to which Frau Schuch and Kammer-sänger Bulss performed "Humoresken" (*Wunderhornlieder* with orchestra). Ferdinand Pfohl wrote cordially about these works. It was of greater importance, however, that, through the influence of Richard Strauss and Prof. Kretzschmar, the First Symphony was set on the programme of the Tonkünstler Festival at Weimar in June, 1894. The Allgemeine Deutsche Musikverein founded by Liszt, which arranges the Tonkünstler

Festivals, was thereby of the greatest assistance to Mahler. Later, too, it has entered the lists in his behalf, although no work of his has figured at any Festival since 1906. At Weimar the Symphony was handicapped by its title "Titan," by a programme which shall be referred to later, by a rather weak movement (the andante), which was soon discarded, and principally by insufficient preparation. The tired-out orchestra had only a single rehearsal of the work. If we may believe the criticisms, the public was completely perplexed. But in this case, as in many others when Mahler's works were performed, it may have been the critics themselves who were puzzled.

In March, 1895, Richard Strauss conducted the three instrumental movements of the Second Symphony at a Berlin Philharmonic concert. These fragments alone made a great impression. On December 13th of the same year, Mahler himself conducted the whole work in Berlin. The Philharmonic orchestra and the Stern Choral Union took part in the performance. The success was tumultuous, however much the critics raged. The majority of these gentlemen had not thought it necessary to hear the three "already known" movements over again, and only came in time for the fourth. One even reported that the last movement commences with female voices alone. A second "Orchestral Concert of Gustav Mahler" in the same season (March, 1896) included the first movement of the Second Symphony, the First without the Andante, and the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* with orchestra, sung by Sistermanns.

In November, 1896, the second movement of the Third was performed by Nikisch at a Berlin Philharmonic concert under the title, "What the flowers of the meadow tell me." The same piece had such success in Hamburg on December 8th with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under Weingartner, that it had to be repeated. A few days later, on December 14th, the Leipzig Liszt Society performed the first and second move-

ments of the Second Symphony under Mahler's direction. Schuch made the Second Symphony known in Dresden in the season of 1896-97. In March, 1897, Weingartner conducted the second, third and sixth movements of the Third in a concert of the Royal Orchestra in Berlin. The old-fogyish audience of these concerts took fright, and the work was not produced in its entirety at that time. Weingartner, however, later again took the field for Mahler in his essay on "The Symphony since Beethoven," but unhappily not as conductor of the Vienna Philharmonic concerts, at least as long as Mahler lived.

In the last Hamburg years negotiations were begun by various court theatres with Mahler; but the Vienna Opera finally engaged him as conductor. Brahms, whom Mahler had visited at his summer residence at Ischl in 1896, was convinced of his capability as artist and man and had warmly recommended him. Mahler again visited the then ailing but still hopeful master during the last days of his life. And simultaneously with the news of his death came the notification of Mahler's engagement for the Vienna Opera. Shortly before (in March), Mahler had been acclaimed as concert conductor in St. Petersburg.

THE MASTER. VIENNA COURT OPERA. LATER WORKS
AND PERFORMANCES.

The ten years that now follow (1897-1907) are still recognised as one of the great epochs in the history of German opera, equal in importance to Carl Maria von Weber's and Richard Wagner's direction of the Dresden Opera, and Liszt's activity in Weimar. As in Bayreuth, and as a development of the Bayreuth ideal, the struggle against the difficulty of daily performance was fought out, in perpetual opposition to the nature of this richly gifted but characterless town; a "style" created, and festivals celebrated, such as can neither be disavowed

nor forgotten. And all this from a man who could have done greater things in his own branch of art—an art wholly unrelated to the transient phenomena of the stage—but who was able only on holidays and in pauses to think that he belonged in reality to his own art;—a man who had seen through and despised the falsehood and sham of the theatre in a wretched period when art is the slave of the heaviest purse; who knew by experience the miserable and degrading connection of art with business, and of inspiration with handicraft, and had seen how the daily traffic of the smaller theatres coarsens the artist, wears out the listener, and how the apparent, outward perfection of the larger ones is only disguised corruption. Salvation, salvation from the nightmare of the present!

In 1908, as I thought Mahler's work endangered because insipid "successors" were taking pains to destroy its last remains, out of which the soul had already been driven, I published a detailed history of these deeds and of the opposition to them—"Gustav Mahler's Heritage."⁶ The book was combative, and had to be so. It was not fortified with "irrefutable facts," nor did it pretend to be. For I did the work myself, and nobody had provided me with "material." And as History no longer proposes to light up past and future, but simply to be "informed," my work could not fail to gain the praise of readers who "count"—and also the blame of the "well-informed," which even went so far as to inspire a counter-pamphlet. And, while referring those who wish for details of these ten Mahler years to my earlier book, I would warn "objective" readers. Goethe once said that the real content of all history is the struggle of belief with unbelief. And he who possesses a belief in great men, in nature, and in the greatest art, sees truth where he recognises belief. To such readers I may still recommend the book; for, though the "letter" may perish, the spirit will remain.

At Mahler's advent the Vienna Court Opera was trampled by Jahn's illness. In Vienna, once in his position, the

theatre-director has every opportunity to take it easy and let things go. This is in the very air. If he is naturally self-indulgent, or should physical weakness oblige him to spare himself, it is usually the beginning of the end. His days are numbered, the charm of novelty is lost, his opponents become inexorable—and in Vienna it is always the fashion to be an opponent.

In the seventeen years of his directorship Jahn had really become old and weary. A company of splendid singers no longer formed an ensemble; discipline tottered; the répertoire consisted principally of fashionable French sentimentalities; the deficit, the continual dread of the parsimonious management, was increasing. In short, things were ripe for renovation from top to bottom. This was the work the new conductor had to undertake. On the 11th of May he conducted *Lohengrin* after a single rehearsal, traditionally one of the "good performances." It was a conquest. How different, how much more delicately and fervently, how new the well-known work sounded in all its splendour! Ludwig Speidel wrote at that time, "Mahler is a small, thin and energetic figure with sharp-cut, intelligent features, who involuntarily recalls Hermann Esser. And the conductor resembles the man, so full of energy and delicate comprehension. He conducted *Lohengrin* with material expedients which took on an almost spiritual character. He began the dreamy motive of the Prelude with extremest delicacy, and only at the climax of the work, where the brass enters with full power, he seized the entire orchestra with a swift, energetic gesture. The effect was magical. . . . He showed his mastery in every detail. He stood in living touch with the orchestra, with the chorus, with the separate soloists; for none did his signal fail. . . . There could be no more delicate and practical way of sparing the invalid director than setting such an artist by his side. Herr Mahler will work like artistic leaven in the Opera, if he is allowed to work at all!"

The Flying Dutchman was the second victory, and therein Mahler "discovered" the Opera chorus. On the 1st of August he was appointed deputy, a month later "temporary," director; another month saw him definitely director. But even before this, in the town of the faithful disciple, Hans Richter, he had freed Wagner's life-work, the *Ring*, from the customary "cuts" and mutilations. And now began a ceaseless work, the struggle against convention—a tyranny of genuine creative artistry. The clique disappeared; late-comers were forbidden entrance during the performance; the drama in the music was awakened, in Wagner's spirit, in the older works of the répertoire and especially in the great works of the German masters. The singers became members of an ensemble and learned to act without the usual operatic poses and tricks. In works that were newly rehearsed, Mahler declared war (as early as 1898!) against the panoramic display and "naturalism" of the old régime; in the Wolf's Glen only spectral shadows were viewed; in the scene of the Norns (which till then had been omitted!!) no real thread was thrown. *The Marriage of Figaro* was studied and shortly afterward radically re-studied; the revolving stage was used for the first time in *Così fan tutte*; with Marie Gutheil-Schoder, who was promptly engaged and pushed forward in spite of public and critics, came the unforgettable performances of the *Merry Wives*, and of *Hoffmann's Tales* re-created over Offenbach's head in the spirit of Hoffmann himself. Then came Haydn's *Apotheker*, Lortzing's *Opera Rehearsal*, Siegfried Wagner's *Bärenhäuter*, Rubinstein's *Demon*, Tschaikowsky's *Iolanthe* and *Pique-Dame*, Smetana's *Dalibor*, Bizet's *Djamileh*, Zemlinsky's fairy opera *Once Upon a Time*, Strauss's *Feuersnot*, Reiter's *Bundschuh*, Thuille's *Lobetanz*, Forster's *Dot Mon*, the *Ballo in Maschera* (under Bruno Walter), *Ernani*, *Aida*, *The Huguenots*, Mozart's *Zaïde*, *Fidelio*, *Rienzi*. These are only the most remarkable events of the first years, in which brilliance and beauty blossomed from ruins. In the majority

of the new works an understudy, often more than one, was ready for each rôle, so as to avoid the abandonment of performances and its unpleasant consequences. The deficit of the Opera disappeared; and, in spite of the fact that the orchestral-players' salaries were increased through Mahler's representations, there still remained a considerable profit even when the Intendant raised the price of the seats. Public and press were enthusiastic; the new singers that Mahler engaged, amongst whom were Anna von Mildenburg, Marie Gutheil-Schoder, Selma Kurz, Bertha Foerster-Lauterer, Lucie Weidt, Grete Forst, Josie Petru, Weidemann, Slezak, Mayr and Moser, were greeted in the most friendly fashion; even the "ejection" of former favourites who would not conform to his severe ideals was not laid to his account. Instead of recounting the effects of such energy on Mahler and on others, I will rather quote a few of his remarks during this period: "There is no such thing as tradition, only genius and stupidity."—"In every performance the work must be born again."—"Humanly, I make every concession; artistically, none whatever."—"I butt the wall with my head, but the wall gets a hole knocked in it."—And lastly: "Others care for themselves and wear out the theatre; I wear myself out and care for the theatre." I know that Mahler spoke these words; and even if it were not so, and had they been said somewhat differently, they are none the less true. Unfortunately, the truest is that about wearing himself out. In the fullness of his youth and strength, Mahler thought little of it when he was called upon, as in Pesth, to restore whatever was out of joint, although he can have had no illusions as to the instability of what can be done for the theatre of our time, or the fickleness of favour and applause.

In addition to the labour of directing the opera, he gladly undertook the conductorship of the Philharmonic Concerts.

He conducted them from the season of 1898-99 until 1901. The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra is the orchestra of the Opera-House, which has formed a kind of republic for its Sunday concerts. Apart from the evils of self-government and polyarchy inseparable from its constitution, it is perhaps really the best orchestra in the world, as it has often been called, and can take up anybody's glove, if it likes. But it does not always like. After Hans Richter, whose ways and tradition were dear to everybody, Mahler led this orchestra from victory to victory. And here, too, each work that his bâton touched was born again. 'All deceptions and misunderstandings disappeared, weaknesses were removed or concealed, familiar works revealed hidden secrets. The kingdom of beauty extended its boundaries as but seldom heretofore. When Mahler played an old, agreeably pedantic piece of Rameau, he was all severity, rhythm, discretion; with Berlioz, a wild, unsparing, yet inwardly controlled phantast; with Schumann, a helper and reproducer of that which the piano-composer must have expected from the orchestra; with Bruckner he succeeded by means of some secret or other in binding design and by-design so firmly together that these mighty symphonies were forced into architectural unity; there were no more gaps, nothing irrelevant, not even a trace of self-will.—And then Beethoven! He was the regent of these three years, whom Mahler honoured upon altars ever new. Revelations were the gain of his fervour. Even the audience of the Philharmonic Concerts, not always in devotional mood, so often the slaves of fashion, of position, "culture" and society, were transported. In this period, it was not only almost impossible to obtain a seat, but the concerts sometimes had to be repeated, even on interpolated dates (a thing absolutely unheard-of before or since), such as the Ninth Symphony in 1900 and a concert having on its programme the Euryanthe overture, the Jupiter Symphony, and Beethoven's Fifth. The artistic and material fecundity of

these years has not been surpassed. It is so much the more necessary to accentuate this, as the attempt is made on all "occasions" to conceal it, the lower the concerts sink, and superficiality, empty "charm" and cherished indolence seem to celebrate similar victories.

Mahler the conductor had an aim, which only Wagner before him had sought with such tenacity to attain: Distinctness. The experience of many years had given him unerring knowledge of the capabilities of each instrument, of the possibilities of every score. Distinctness, for him, was an exact ratio of light and shade. His *crescendi*, his storms, growing from bar to bar, now taking breath for a moment and anon crashing into *fortissimo*; his climaxes, obtained by the simplest of means; his whispering *pianissimo*; his instinct for the needful alternation of tranquillity and agitation; his sense for the sharpness of the melodic line; all these were elements which equally went to make up his power. Add to this his outward attention to and inward hearing of details, hidden secondary parts and nuances which others hardly noticed in the score; and lastly, a hypnotic power of will over all who had to hear and to obey, a power from God (or from the Devil, as many said—but this Devil was from God, too!). Instead of vehement gestures, however significant and realistic they might be, a glance sufficed, a quiet inflection, a mere suggestion. "Performers and listeners felt the ease and absolute certainty of this conducting, the constraining force of this will, the control of an almost supernatural force. No words can adequately describe this magical power, which must be experienced. One who is filled with E. T. A. Hoffmann's mysterious presentiments, to whom these thoughts—which perhaps reached the extremest depths, still to be discovered, of the hidden springs of music—have become a living reality, would have recognised in Mahler the realisation of such possibilities; a realisation which had been relegated to the realm of dreams. But he who has experienced Mahler can no longer compare

or weigh; what he gives is, as he gives it, a necessity in every moment. There is neither a More nor an Otherwise." ["Gustav Mahler's Heritage."]

Mahler's resemblance to the reformer, artist and conductor Wagner has already often been remarked. His demand for truth and distinctness, his taking the *melos* as point of departure, shows relationship to Wagner the conductor. I may here refer to a letter which a member of the orchestra wrote to Mahler after the first *Lohengrin* performance. This musician had played under Wagner; and he asserted that until Mahler he had never again heard the work given with the *tempi* demanded by Wagner; especially the prelude in suitable slowness, and the introduction to the third act with its *furioso*. This conducting was truly Wagnerish, because Mahler understood how to modify the *tempi* exactly as the master himself felt them. The (anonymous) writer reminded Mahler of Wagner's essay "On Conducting," in which Wagner tells how the 'cellist Dotzauer of the Dresden Opera assured him that he was the first conductor who had taken the clarinet theme in the overture to *Der Freischütz* in the same slow tempo as Weber, which Dotzauer knew from Weber's day.

Like Wagner, too, he sought, when performing Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, to free it from all mischances and dross by "touching up" the instrumentation. The first performance of the work with these alterations, which Wagner had already indicated and justified, had to be repeated. Mahler replied to the shrieks of a few critics by a printed explanation, which was distributed in the hall (the text reprinted here was edited by Lipiner):

"In consequence of certain publicly expressed remarks, it might appear to a section of the public that the conductor of the present concert had undertaken arbitrary alterations in certain details of Beethoven's works, and especially in the Ninth Symphony. It therefore seems desirable not to withhold an explanation upon this point.

“Owing to the disorder of his hearing, which ended in complete deafness, Beethoven had lost the indispensable contact with reality, with the world of physical sound, precisely in that epoch of his creative work in which the mightiest climax of his conceptions forced him to seek out new means of expression, and to drastic methods in handling the orchestra therefore undreamed of. Equally familiar as the above is this other fact that the construction of the brass instruments in his time was such as to render impossible the execution of certain successions of notes necessary to the formation of melodies. Precisely this deficiency has, in the course of time, brought about a perfection of these instruments; and not to utilise this development in order to attain the highest perfection in the performance of Beethoven’s works seems no less than sacrilege.

“Richard Wagner, who all his life strove to rid the execution of Beethoven’s works of a negligence which had become insufferable, indicated in his essay ‘On the Execution of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony’ (Complete Works, Vol. IX) the way to a realisation of this symphony as nearly as possible corresponding to the composer’s intentions, which all recent conductors have followed. The conductor of the present concert has done the same, from a conviction gained and strengthened by having lived himself into the work, without essentially exceeding the bounds set by Wagner.

“There can, of course, be absolutely no question of re-instrumentation, alteration, or ‘improvement’ of Beethoven’s work. The doubling of the string-instruments long ago became customary, and led—also a long time ago—to an increase in the wind-instruments. This serves exclusively the purpose of increasing the sonority, and in no wise is a new orchestral rôle assigned to them. In both these points, which concern the interpretation of the work both as a whole and in detail (indeed, the clearer, the further one goes into detail), proof can be found in the score that the conductor’s only intention was, not arbitrarily or obtrusively, but also

not misled by any 'tradition,' to follow the will of Beethoven into the apparently slightest detail, and in the execution not to sacrifice the smallest thing the Master wished, or to allow it to be drowned in a tumult of sound."

The matters in question were the doubling of the woodwind, the employment of a third and fourth pair of horns and (in the last movement) of a third and fourth trumpet, the emphasizing of pauses and expression-marks, the reinforcing and lessening of the sonority. Further, Mahler's remarkable experiment of performing Beethoven's String-quartet, Opus 95, by the whole string-orchestra, in order to enhance the effect of the "wretched" instruments and to make it possible to perform the work in a large hall, ended in an outburst of pedantic wrath. Even this "experiment" followed a precedent which nobody at the time cared to remember. At the Mozart Festival in Salzburg in 1891 Jahn performed the Adagio from Mozart's quintet in *G* minor with the entire string-orchestra.

Under Mahler, twenty-five works by Beethoven were performed, and fifty-two by other composers. Amongst the novelties were Bruckner's Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, Liszt's *Festklänge*, Berlioz's *Rob Roy*, Goetz's Symphony in *F*, César Franck's Variations symphoniques, *Aus Italien* by Strauss, works by Bizet, Tschaikowsky, Dvořák and Smetana. Of Mahler's own works, the Second Symphony in 1899; the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* and some of those from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (with orchestra), and the First Symphony, in 1900. In 1902, when Mahler had ceased to be conductor of the Philharmonic Concerts, he was invited by the orchestra to conduct the first performance in Vienna of the Fourth Symphony. In 1900, Mahler conducted five concerts with the Philharmonic Orchestra in Paris during the Exhibition. In 1901, at a concert of the Singakademie, *Das klagende Lied* was given, and it was repeated in 1902 with the Philharmonic Orchestra under Mahler; a week later than the Philharmonic performance, a repetition of the Fourth Symphony.

In 1905, the orchestra took part in the concert of a young "Vereinigung schaffender Tonkünstler" (Society of Composers), of which Mahler was honorary president, wherein he performed his *Lieder* from the *Wunderhorn*, the *Kindertotenlieder* and the remaining *Lieder* after Rückert. The concert had to be repeated a few days later; likewise the first performance of his Third Symphony, which he conducted in a Philharmonic Concert, had had to be repeated immediately before (end of 1904). In December, 1905, the Philharmonic Orchestra gave, under Mahler's direction, the first performance of the Fifth; in 1906 the Konzertverein gave for the first time the Sixth, also under Mahler; and in 1907 Mahler said, with the Second Symphony, farewell to the Philharmonic Orchestra and to Vienna. Until Mahler's death, only six performances of his symphonies were given by other conductors in Vienna; his *Lieder* had quite disappeared.

It should be said that Mahler, as Director of the Opera, had forbidden the members of the Opera to sing his lyrics. (After him, such propriety was not observed.) But now that death has made him fashionable, the sluices of piety are opened. Hardly a vocal concert without Mahler, and in a single winter all his symphonies (with the exception of the highly important Seventh) were performed. In Vienna, this contrast was especially painful, but also in other places it was not to be disguised. Everywhere he was "ours." A provincial paper involuntarily brought the relation of the German public to these things into the correct formula: "Seeing that Mahler died some time ago. . . it becomes the duty of conductors and public to take cognizance of his works."

His connection with the Philharmonic Orchestra was dissolved in 1901. "The Philharmoniker love peace and comfort; anything but excitement, anything but rehearsals! But Mahler was inexorable with others as with himself, never gave in, worked tirelessly, and embodied the whole nervousness of the modern man and musician. Thus, much may be explained

that was harsh in his severity. Discord arose and increased. In the theatre they were Mahler's subjects, in the Philharmonic republic they would show him who was master." ("Gustav Mahler's Heritage.").

In the few weeks of the theatre holidays the composer came into his own. In 1899 the Fourth Symphony was begun in Aussee, and completed in 1900. Several of the separate orchestral lyrics were composed at this time, for instance the first three of the *Kindertotenlieder*, and *Revelge*. In 1901 and 1902, in the quiet of a cottage near Maiernegg on the Wörthersee, the Rückert lyrics, the fourth and fifth *Kindertotenlieder*, and the Fifth Symphony. In the following years, also at Maiernegg, the Sixth and Seventh. In 1906 Mahler was at work on the Eighth. In 1908 in Toblach he completed the *Lied von der Erde*, "Chinese Songs with orchestra," which are bound together into a symphonic work. In 1909 the Ninth Symphony was composed and in 1910 the Tenth, of which part is written, but which is not to be made public. A creative mood of the greatest intensity, the almost convulsive liberation from the fullness of inward visions—that was the recreation of this man, whose body seemed to rival his mind in strength.

Here it may be briefly mentioned that Gustav Mahler was married on the 9th of March, 1901, to Anna Maria Schindler, a daughter of the Vienna painter. The Eighth Symphony is dedicated to her, this work so typical of the man and artist, and the only one that bears a dedication. One of the two children of this marriage, the elder daughter, died in 1907 in Maiernegg: the emotion of the father had been represented six years previously in the *Kindertotenlieder*. His country-house where the child's death occurred was abandoned, and Mahler passed the following three summers in Toblach (Altschluderbach) in a large peasant house. Quite near, on the edge of the forest, was Mahler's "workhouse." His grief at the death of his daughter (at whose side he wished to be buried); the knowledge of his heart-disease; a new and over-

powering revelation of nature; these are the springs from which the *Lied von der Erde* sprang. It would have been the Ninth Symphony. But Mahler held back from a "Ninth," which seemed to lead the musical world to new expectations and at the same time to be fatal to the composer; since the great "Ninths," no composer had yet completed a tenth. That is why the "Chinese Songs" do not bear this title. The next work was, in spite of all, called so, and, curiously enough, Mahler has not finished his Tenth either.

Publishers now began to interest themselves for the Director's compositions. Even before the Vienna period Hofmeister in Leipzig, upon the representations of Hamburg friends, had taken the score and piano arrangement of the Second. Earlier still, in 1892, three books of lyrics for voice and piano-forte were published by Schott in Mainz. Then in 1898 the Newspaper Company of Waldheim-Eberle in Vienna published the First and Third, "with the support of the Society for the furtherance of German science, art and literature in Bohemia," as is stated on several copies. This support was agreed to after a detailed report from Professor Guido Adler of the Vienna University. In 1900 *Das klagende Lied* was added. The sale of these works on commission was entrusted to the firm of Joseph Weinberger in Vienna. The same firm had in 1897 already received the publishing rights of the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*. The Newspaper Company obtained the Fourth in 1901, and the firm of Herzmansky-Doblinger was given the commission. The Newspaper Company also published the *Lieder* from the *Wunderhorn*. In 1904 the Fifth appeared in the Edition Peters; in 1905 Kahnt issued the Sixth, the *Kindertotenlieder*, *Revelge*, the *Tambourg'sell* and five *Lieder* after Rückert. Bote & Bock took the Seventh, and the Eighth was given the Universal Edition in 1910. The rights of all these works, also the later ones, are now in the hands of the Universal Edition; only two books of lyrics remain with Schott, and the Fifth with Peters.

About the turn of the century, the previously rare performances increased in number. The Second Symphony, in spite of the trouble critical enemies give themselves to discredit it, has made its way by its effect alone, especially since the performance by the Munich Hugo Wolf Society on the 20th of October, 1900. The Fourth was also performed for the first time in Munich (25th November, 1901); immediately afterwards Berlin followed. But, as Richard Strauss has well remarked, the turning-point was the performance of the Third at the Tonkünstler Festival in Crefeld in June, 1902. The symphony had been completed since 1896. It achieved such extraordinary success, that the work Berlin had despised now hastened from triumph to triumph, awakening everywhere the utmost enthusiasm. In Barmen, for instance, the last movement had to be repeated immediately; in Vienna, too, the whole work had to be repeated within a week. Once more, upon Strauss's recommendation, the Tonkünstler Festival in Basel (1903) gave a performance of the Second in the cathedral. On October the 18th the Fifth went on its way, beginning with a Gürzenich Concert at Cologne. Fried laid the foundations of Mahler's reputation in Berlin with a performance of the Second. The new orchestral lyrics and the *Kindertotenlieder* were sung in Vienna in January and immediately repeated, and also put on the programme of the Tonkünstler Festival in Graz (May, 1905). On the 26th of May, 1906, the Tonkünstler Festival in Essen brought the first performance of the Sixth, which Fried immediately repeated—thanks to the munificence of a Mahler enthusiast—in Berlin. In 1908 came the first performance of the Seventh in Prague (19th of September), and two years later (on the 12th of September), in 1910, the Eighth was heard for the first time in Munich. The *Lied von der Erde* was only performed (after Mahler's death) on the 20th of November, 1911, in the Munich memorial concert by Bruno Walter; the Ninth Symphony 1912 (June 23rd), also under Walter at the Vienna Musical Festival.

Mahler was one who could afford to wait; even the Eighth Symphony was ready four years before it was produced, and it was not really his fault that it was performed at last. When the first rehearsal had shown that everything sounded as he wished, he was careless of further performances. He created afresh, well knowing how long his works will live. He often said of the *Lied von der Erde* and the Ninth Symphony that he wished he could hear them both once, by himself, and then not bother any more about them. And he himself often put difficulties in the way of proposed performances when he feared that the works would not be heard for their own sake. For instance, he forbade the performance of his Seventh in Vienna during the crisis of the anti-Weingartner * protests⁶, because he wished to avoid any "demonstration" for himself. It is not by chance that, during Mahler's stage-direction, no first performance of his works was given in Vienna. We have already told how he acted with his *Lieder*. In truth, not every artist, especially nowadays, has this careless patience, this confidence, this superiority. But he who is sure of the future need have no care for the present.

In spite of all, Mahler must have loved his works. And it was his greatest joy to hear that some one, of whose honesty he was assured, had taken pleasure even in one of his lyrics. And nothing gave him more delight, no honour was dearer to him, than a worthy performance of his works.

These figures and events were purposely anticipated. That which is now not to be described, but only suggested, the grandest period and the tragedy of Mahler's directorate and

* It is not our purpose to tell of the anti-Mahler machinations of Weingartner during his directorate of the Vienna Royal Opera as Mahler's successor. But it is necessary to mention them, as they are several times referred to in the present work. Such hints as are given (which sufficed for the musicians who remember those days of dishonour) find for the most part a fuller telling in "Gustav Mahler's Heritage"—*pace* Dr. Stefan, an admirable piece of historical writing. In the cases which occur I have, therefore, given the latter book as a reference. [Translator's note.]

at the same time of the present-day German theatre, tolerates no digression.

I have often read and heard that it is neither possible nor permissible to take the theatre of to-day so seriously, still less to mention its tragic aspect. But, after Richard Wagner and Bayreuth, even the most exalted mind can no longer despise the theatre as such. And precisely this disdain of the theatre should oblige those who take art seriously to contemplate for a moment this destiny of Mahler's, even if they should be attacked by the snobs, and even if those philosophers who sail in the smooth waters of journalism shrug their shoulders and then set their course for eternity with an air of sublimity. For Mahler had sought to realise Wagner's dream of the unity of the sister arts in the drama. And if we are thankful to Reinhardt, to the Munich Künstler-Theater, to Hagemann,* and to all who have freed the stage from the yoke of every-day life, how much dearer to the wanderer in the land of beauty must this man be who first, though misunderstood and despised, did these deeds, whilst the spirit urged him to other works?

In the book "Gustav Mahler's Heritage" I have shown how Mahler's ideal was founded upon the yearning of a century, upon the strivings of enlightened minds; how Alfred Roller's art came within his reach. The naturalism of the illusion of reality was wrecked on canvas and paint, and by the size of the huge stages. And, as every work of art demands its own particular form and its true material, the theatre demands the style of the theatre, demands the style of its time, which had realised the unity of tone, light and colour, after the models of the romantic period. Roller lay as a possibility in Mahler's path and in that of the plastic arts. A chance realised it. In the house of his young wife and of her step-father, Carl Moll, Mahler met the leaders of the Vienna Secession, Klimt,

* Dr. Carl Hagemann, founder of the Mannheim Ideal Stage, and now director of the German Schauspielhaus in Hamburg; well known by his writings upon modern stage management and decoration. [Translator's note.]

Metzner, Roller, Hoffmann, Moser. Mahler was planning a new staging for *Tristan*, Roller brought him his own. The director was enthusiastic; Roller was engaged for the Royal Opera, and the work of the two men began.

Mahler's and Roller's goal was to renew the répertoire from the foundation. The best works of the German stage were reborn in riper artistry, and their eternal value was proved by the fact that they showed new beauty in the new style. *Tristan* was the beginning. And as the second half of Mahler's directorate closed, Gluck's *Iphigenia*, a Mozart cycle, *Fidelio*, *Euryanthe*, *Rheingold*, the *Valkyrie*, *Lohengrin*, Goetz's *Taming of the Shrew*, were produced, and the whole of the *Ring*, Weber's *Oberon*, and many other things, were planned. Then come the novelties, amongst which are Wolf's *Corregidor*, Charpentier's *Louise*, Verdi's *Falstaff*, Pfitzner's *Rose vom Liebesgarten*; various works newly rehearsed; all this with ever-increased rehearsal and care in preparation—an achievement whose quantity alone demands admiration. And had these conquests, these victories of imagination over the stage “as it of course is,” over the resistance of a court theatre—had all this not been in Vienna, the whole world would have known and spoken of it. Out of the experiences of this time I quote a few lines from my earlier book, where I cannot alter the form they have assumed. These quotations speak of what affected me most deeply—the new *Tristan*, *Fidelio*, and *Don Giovanni*.

“*Tristan und Isolde*. Even during the prelude earth sinks, and only music remains. The mysterious delicacy, the lashing impetuosity of the strings, contrasting storm and calm, are controlled by Mahler as perhaps never before. Breathless stillness draws the glance to the stage. The curtain divides. A section of a ship's deck, with a protecting canopy. Semi-obscure, as if to suggest Isolde's gloomy, revengeful woe. The dominant tint orange, apparently realistic; for the royal ship the softened rusty red of North Sea sailing-ships; and

still ideal colour, conveying to the vision the unity of mood of this wildly upflaring scene, fluctuating between death and the most vivid consciousness of life. Such a psychology of colour was already familiar to old-time science.—Kittel-Brangäne seeks in every way to comprehend the superhuman traits of her mistress. The oftener one sees the Isolde of Anna von Mildenburg, the greater is its living reality. She is the greatest tragic singer of the German stage. She possesses the gift of tragedy. To understand her acting is to approach the Greeks. She raises her arm, turns her head, kneels; and the artist knows more by intuition than he haply might learn from Nietzsche or Burckhardt. One first realised this in her Isolde. To imagine her, followed by Mahler and Roller into the uttermost depths, is to imagine the Vienna *Tristan*. Schmedes, or now and again Winkelmann, personates the hero, the one accentuating his masterful strength, the other his suffering. Both were schooled in Bayreuth. Tristan enters through a narrow opening, accompanied by heroic sonority of the brass—destiny. They taste the wine. A terrific climax is worked up to the close of the act. The next shows a fairy-like castle with a marble balcony. The night is close with expectation; the dominant tint, lilac-blue. Notice here the complement of the earlier orange, the ripening completion to the promise of love, at the same time the evocation of sweetness, of twilight secrecy now become colour. In the far distance the sea, the dark-blue sky full of stars. The music becomes almost visible, grows plastic in its indescribable perfection, at the same time as though transported into another world. Isolde, stamping out the torch, signals with the veil, to the rhythm of the orchestra—then united and surrendered to Tristan. A vivid streak across the sky—daylight and treason. Cold light of morning. Lastly, the group from Melot to Brangäne, with the erect and then stricken Tristan in the midst. Then the issue: The chill emptiness only harsher; a cold sunlight bathing desolate ruins. Tristan lies at the foot

of a protecting tree in the middle of a meadow. The earth of his ruined home receives him before he enters the real rest of the *Liebestod*.

"*Fidelio*. It opened with the pleasing, but not at all comedy-like overture in *E*. One has only to feel the bitter, nowise idyllic mood that Mahler discovered therein, and lend expression to it. But the first scenes really contain much that is idyllic, and Mahler accentuated this mood by uniting them as far as the march in *B* flat in a special decoration—a small room in the gaoler's house. The stage-picture narrow and intimate in a mysterious half-light; only at the quartet, "Mir ist so wunderbar," a "faint ray" of hope lights up the room with gold. Rocco goes out to bring the Governour his letters, the curtain is closed, the march played quickly (*vivace*), in whose sharp rhythm the drum awakens tragic expectation. With the last bars, the new scene opens. The soldiers are hastily marched out, Pizarro-Weidemann already bullying them. He is proudly clad in menacing red. (Wilde says that even a costume can be dramatic.) The scene is a dark prison-court with blackening walls, only on the left of the spectator a few branches peep over, as though in derision. The light cannot be strong. The prisoners issue from a hole in the wall, scarcely daring to breathe, their song a mere fearful whisper: "Wir sind belauscht mit Ohr und Blick"; the shadow of the sentry patrolling the wall on the left falls over the stage. The act closes almost inaudibly, in indescribable sadness.

"In the next Florestan's dungeon is a frightful, black vault. Here, too, the eye receives the effect of the terrible drama and of the raging music. Anna von Mildenburg as *Fidelio* incorporates Beethoven's "Immortal Beloved," whose spirit hovers over the dark abyss of the work. Boundless joy of liberation; Leonore and Florestan prepare to mount towards the light. Now the curtain falls. The *G* of the last chord leads at once into the first bar of the Third Leonore Overture, which stands here and can stand nowhere but here, as a symbol of the whole;

suffering and fidelity, longing and joy, spiritualised and shorn of stage-effect, again pass before our spiritual vision purged of all earthliness. Stage and absolute music complete one another; and as the "symphony" intensifies the effect of the opera, the ensuing jubilation on the stage is a further exaltation following upon the orchestral music, heightened a hundred-fold by the joyousness of the scene—an open landscape flooded with sunlight, into which a corner of the prison wall barely protrudes. The full width of the Opera stage is cleverly utilised to add unlimited visual scope to the exulting *C*-major of the music, and to proclaim love's redemption unto the ends of the earth.

"*Don Giovanni*. The overture begins with brazen might and goes over into an orgiastic tempo. (*Allegro molto*, the "absolute allegro" of Wagner's essay "On Conducting.") The curtain rises and the stage is shown without side-wings, in whose stead are "towers," high prisms covered with grey cloth, which, with a simply ornamented ground cloth, form the frame wherein the whole piece is played. (The fixed stage-decorations of the Teatro Olimpico at Vicenza bear a certain resemblance to them.) Here, in December, 1905, are the towers of the Munich Künstler-Theater and of the Mannheim Ideal Stage. So it is here, confronting the eternal problem of human passion, uninfluenced by any naturalistic mood, that Roller simplifies, idealises, invents a style. But the towers are not immovable; they "take part," conforming to the changing stage-pictures. At about the height of a story window-like openings are made, and the sides of the prisms that face inward are removable; thus windows in buildings, or loggias and niches, can be produced.

"The first scene shows a terrace, bounded at the back by a balustrade; the towers on the left belong to the palace of the Commandant. In the background is a park, darkling over which is a deep-blue southern sky; from left to right mount shadowy black cypresses. Starlight. The terrace is en-

livened by red azaleas picturesquely grouped. The intensity of colour is heightened through having the whole prospect cut out of black and blue velvet, that is, not painted. The background for the Champagne Aria is a baroque palace in a garden overflowing with colour. Don Giovanni salutes the arriving guests from one of the towers. The finale is played in a brilliantly lighted hall. The towers are niches; in the middle of the stage three tribunes are placed for the musicians. Elvira's chamber (beginning of Act II) is supposed to be in one of the towers on the right; Don Giovanni's serenade was accompanied by Mahler on the cembalo, and the recitatives also. A dark hall on the ground floor of Donna Elvira's house; the only light on the stage shines through the scarcely opened huge portals. Elvira sings her aria of shame and dread in the modest room of an inn, by the flickering light of a dim lantern; she too is following after the seducer. The churchyard is steeped in blue-grey; the moonshine weirdly lights up the monuments. In the middle the mighty equestrian statue of the Governour; the two rear towers are monuments. In the background, towering cypresses. The scene of the letter-aria is a narrow room, still hung with funeral decorations. The background, covered with black velvet, bears a portrait of the Governour; six candelabra with burning candles. Sudden change—a broad, red-tinted hall in baroque style, with dining tables and musicians. Don Giovanni, in white embroidered silk, sits feasting. Elvira warns once more; hurrying away, she staggers back, flees across the whole stage uttering a frightful shriek—and the stone guest appears and drags Don Giovanni into the depths. The sextet, in which virtue celebrates its triumph, is omitted.

“Anna von Mildenburg is Donna Anna, and plays the part according to E. T. A. Hoffmann's tale. She loves the knightly villain, the victorious man, and through all thoughts of revenge seems to will but one end to the now executed deed—that the feeble Don Octavio will fall for her honour, and that

Don Giovanni, for the second time a bloodstained victor, will not fail to overcome the now unprotected woman. The tragedy of enforced duty and untamed desire was expressed in masterly fashion. Incomparable too was Frau Gutheil's Elvira, in every glance all devotion and still without ever sacrificing her dignity."

The last resuscitation, *Iphigenia*, showed Mahler, who grew with each completed work, on entirely new paths. (The work had not been given since 1894!) "Filled with our knowledge of the Greeks, he departed Gluck's intention from French classicism, to which it was outwardly forfeit. The stage, too, took on the style of the antique. Frau Mildenburg and Frau Gutheil resembled, both separately and together, the most exquisite Greek statues; a ring-dance seemed to have been charmed from some Greek vase. The scenes rose to view and passed 'just like antique bas-reliefs' [Goethe]. The contours and arrangement of the stage supported this illusion of reliefs, which was here revealed earlier than in the Munich Künstler-Theater. A bright curtain formed the background; only at the close the unveiled prospect of the harbour of Aulis was seen. The music chiselled in heroic proportions, note by note."

Not one of those who savoured Mahler's art with delight—and they were the true aristocracy of Vienna—not one could have said to what unknown realms of beauty this path, conquered step by step, might have led. Much later, I heard Mahler say to a young musician, in dismissal of admiring comments: "All these were only essays, we had to feel our way forward; the real achievement would have followed." We, his companions, felt, of a truth, how much *might* have followed! But the end was near.

It is very likely that in other places, too, the general public would have failed to recognise such art. But it would at least have been respected. In Vienna it was outraged. The reasons for this Viennese peculiarity may be found in Kürnberg-

ger,* the application to this case in "Gustav Mahler's Heritage." But Mahler himself was partly at fault. He had been upright and harsh, had disdained "society," had written neither "Explanations" nor other *feuilletons*.⁶ He had also, by living in his work, lost touch with the world. And to nobody does the world pardon this less than a theatre-director. Thus there arose, fomented by a certain public opinion, a revolt against the man who had scourged private slothfulness. Dissatisfied theatre-goers, seekers after "change," all kinds of unprincipled, undisciplined folk, rabidly attacked him with the meanest, most shameful devices. Disgust seized Mahler, the high-minded man and artist. Suddenly, in the summer of 1907, he resigned his position. At the news of the threatening danger, an address was presented to him containing a vehement protest against the senseless grumbling and stupid outbreaks of rage. It was signed by poets, writers, musicians, painters, scientists, members of parliament, noblemen, art-loving citizens. The second demonstration for the departing man was occasioned by the magnificent performance of the Second Symphony which Mahler conducted in November, 1907. It was the greatest—an unforgettable—celebration. But perhaps the farewell at the station was more affectionate still. As the hour of his departure became known from mouth to mouth and from man to man, hundreds collected in the early morning on the platform. On the 9th of December Mahler left for America. For several years he was to conduct opera for a few months each year: the composer, longing for freedom to live at last for his own work, had accepted the offer.

One just reproach may, perhaps, lie against Mahler. He thought he could celebrate festival performances amid the daily traffic of the theatre. Such performances, in which he himself arranged and rehearsed every slightest detail, demanded

* Kürnberger, Ferdinand, novelist and publicist. The most important modern writer of German Austria. Censured severely Austrian indolence. See his "Siegelringe" (political *feuilletons*). [Translator's note.]

his whole strength. And while the improvisatorial will of the omnipresent conductor carried all before it and wrought wonders to-day, to-morrow, in his absence, there would be a mediocre performance before an indifferent audience of subscribers. In his pamphlet on "The Vienna Court Opera," written as early as 1863, Wagner declares artistic perfection incompatible with daily performance. This has been corroborated time and again; for after Mahler, when his best productions were destroyed, his festival performances abjured by his successor, the mediocre daily performances only became worse.⁶

Mahler's characteristic farewell letter reads as follows:

"To the esteemed Members of the Court Opera!—The hour has come which sets a bound to our common activities. Departing from a scene of action that has grown dear to me, I now bid you farewell.

"Instead of a Whole, finished and rounded out, such as I had dreamed of, I leave behind only patchwork, incomplete, typical of man's destiny.

"It is not for me to express an opinion on what my labours may have signified for those to whom they were dedicated. But in such a moment I may venture to say of myself that my intentions were honest and my aim lofty. My endeavours could not always be crowned with success. No one is so delivered over to the refractoriness of his material, to the perfidy of the object, as the executive artist. But I have always put my whole soul into the work, subordinated my person to the cause, my inclinations to duty. I have not spared myself, and could, therefore, require of others their utmost exertions.

"In the press of the struggle, in the heat of the moment, neither you nor I have escaped wounds and misunderstandings. But when a work was successful, a problem solved, we forgot the difficulties and troubles, and all felt richly rewarded—even though outward signs of success were wanting. All of us

have advanced, and with us the institution for whose welfare we worked.

“And now, my heartfelt thanks to you who have stood by me in my difficult, often thankless, task—who have helped me and fought by my side. Receive my sincerest good wishes for your future careers and for the prosperity of the Court Opera-Theatre, whose fortunes I shall continue to follow with the liveliest sympathy.—Gustav Mahler.”

It was no robust man that now left Vienna. The terrific agitation of his life and experiences; of his work in the theatre, which had almost always begun with a clearing away of refuse and the re-erection of a new edifice from the foundations; of his visionary recreative work, which he had so often to interrupt in the struggle against misunderstanding and vulgarity, especially in the last years; all this had wasted him away, and his heart had become diseased. Later this was to be fatal to him.

Hagemann has described Mahler's departure to America as a tragedy of culture. The term is exact. However great his success, an artist and man like Mahler could not count there for that which he was; and on this side all good Europeans thirsted after his knowledge. It is a disgrace for the German world and for his Austrian home, that Mahler did not then find a post where he, internally free, would have been the cause of a thousand good things. He would have been a bestower, for that he was obliged to be.

In America, Mahler conducted twice each month at the theatre various works of Mozart and Wagner. Later, a new Philharmonic Society was founded in New York. It placed a new orchestra of his own at Mahler's disposal, with which he gave in 1909–10 forty-six concerts, and in the following season forty-eight of the proposed sixty-five. Then he fell ill. At the theatre he had conducted only a few further performances.

In Europe he conducted latterly performances of his sym-

phonies in Munich, Amsterdam and Paris. In the summer of 1910 he prepared the first performance of the Eighth in Munich. Then he went to Toblach, where the Tenth was composed. He was cordially saluted on his fiftieth birthday (7th July, 1910). And we thought, especially after the triumph of the Eighth in September, that it was a new dawn. But it was blood-red evening.

AN INTRODUCTION TO MAHLER'S WORKS

“Audisti opprobrium eorum, Domine, omnes cogitationes adversum me.” Are not we, in whom the Eighth Symphony is a living memory, reminded of these words of a seeker after the living God: “Domine, exaudi orationem meam—Et clamor meus ad te veniat. De profundis clamavi ad te. . . . Veni, sancte spiritus!”

But it is only the inscription on an old Tyrolian house in the village of Alt-Schluderbach, where Mahler lived three summers: “Thou hast heard their reproach, O Lord, and all their imaginations against me.” It is striking that the very house that sufficed for Mahler’s not easily satisfied requirements for solitude and quietness should bear precisely this sign. As it often happens, to him that has ears to hear, a divine dispensation, a supernatural voice, seems to make itself heard in such a coincidence.

For there is perhaps no living musician except Pfitzner who has been more wounded by silence and indifference, and certainly none more violently abused, than Mahler. The mad chain extends from those unproductive theory-teachers who knew from the first that Mahler’s “boundless will” could be realised only by a Beethoven, to the just discharged operetta-composer⁶ who dared to write of the Sixth, that the harmonic and thematic work in it were “equally null.” I have already attempted to explain why such arrogance should be vented

precisely on Mahler. But, on the other hand, the number of admirers increases too. Men of such different natures as the East-Prussian musician Otto Ernst Nodnagel; the French artist and observer William Ritter, Catholic and antisemite as he calls himself; his compatriot General Picquart, a liberal politician; the conservative conductor and writer Georg Göhler; the radically modern composer and theorist Arnold Schönberg; Alfredo Casella, the Italian enthusiast in Paris, Bruno Walter of the Vienna Opera and Oscar Fried of the Berlin Society of Music-Lovers, these last two Mahler's anointed disciples; all these men point to Beethoven and in his name speak of the value of Mahler's works for the future. But can these with their *For*, or the opponents with their *Against*, bring conviction? No, at any rate not with words (which could at most speak of technical perfection). School-masters and quacks may dare approach Mahler's music with their censorship—but of his art only this art itself can speak, only performances. And the impartial have their pleasure in them, and would continue to do so, did they not learn from the next morning's paper that such monstrosities could "find favour" only with snobism and misguided inexperience; that the whole is spurious, mere effect, cunning contrivance. Thus is "a system out of words prepared." Is it of any use to disprove it with words, or to attempt with words to accomplish anything, where Mahler says in his music the highest things that even music is capable of? As though Schopenhauer had not proved for us the impossibility of comparing music, the image of the world in tones, with all other artistic activity; and had not gained for us the privilege of treating art from the standpoint of intellect, thereby stating one of the most important laws of modern æsthetics, and preparing the way for a new culture which, as Nietzsche said, will see science with the eye of the artist. No, no words! What language is capable of in the consideration of Mahler's works is either "to see how far he deviates from the ordinary and what he ven-

tures" (as Ph. Emanuel Bach has stated the business of such considerations to be), or to speak subjectively and in symbols of the conviction, born of experience, with which they fill one. And if anywhere, surely here should wisdom "be placed as highest aim, instead of science; that wisdom which bends its steady gaze upon the entirety of the world."

My book has from the beginning sought to go the second of these two ways. It has shown that Mahler's is the personality which, out of its tragic tension, out of the excess of its enthusiasm, out of the primitivity and unity of its being, has transmuted all the deceptions of appearance into reality. The musician Mahler has similarly struggled as the interpreter of high works, as the tolerator and renewer of the stage. The wings of the genius grow stronger, as his will requires more strength. How Mahler's knowledge developed still remains to be indicated; it reveals the essence of him to show that he could and had to "dare" the stupendous. The symbols of experience were our starting-point. They shall be the beginning, middle and end of our considerations.

In the presence of this grave, it is not possible to do more than this.

I at any rate do not dare to do so—to-day even less than at my first attempt—recognising more and more, as I do, the greatness of the task. But I hope that we shall soon receive a small and also a larger book upon Mahler's works from Arnold Schönberg. He who knows this master's incomparable Theory of Harmony (which might equally well be called Theory of Art, or of the World)—a master because in the truest sense a creative artist; he who has enjoyed instruction from him in any form whatever, or seen his drawings after various symphonies of Mahler with the inward vision they demand, such an one will realise how much Schönberg has to say about Mahler, and Schönberg will wish to say it. Frequently in the Theory of Harmony, which is dedicated to Mahler's memory, his music is already mentioned. Ernst Decsey, too, who has

done so much for Hugo Wolf, is planning an Introduction to Mahler's works, which may be recommended in advance. I must therefore hope for the patience of new readers of this book; perhaps they will still gain, by the modesty of its suggestions, by the change from facts to symbols, by the accentuation of the unity and solitude of this life, at least for the time being, an idea of what Mahler's works are. My intention is to convert, not to understand or to judge. Intelligence errs, but not sensibility.

Almost exactly a year before his death, just as he was about to begin the Tenth Symphony, Mahler told his Parisian friend Casella some very curious things about his works. In them he distinguished three periods: The first includes the Symphonies I to IV; the second, V to VIII; the third begins with IX, although it is not clear from this whether by Ninth Symphony the *Lied von der Erde* is or is not meant. And this seems to prove, so far as I can see at present, the peculiar position of the Eighth. Certainly the Ninth Symphony surprised us, too, as did each work of this genius. But I almost think that both this work and the *Lied von der Erde* lie along the same road as the Seventh, only far beyond it. (For the latter, too, shows a new aspect of Mahler's art. It comes from a quite different world and throws a quite new light upon the earlier works, although it might be grouped with the Second, but from a different standpoint.) Frankly, we are therein quite unhistorical and probably also quite unbiological. And it would seem quite certain that the present is not the time to approach the volcano "with screws and hammers," and that the best way is to waive all questions of periods, however interesting and "authentic" they may be.

Whilst speaking of divisions, however, one thing must be noticed—that after the Fourth Symphony a distinct change takes place. Till then, Mahler's works were purely subjective; a great and intensely personal struggle with the world and the universe; desire and searching from macrocosm to microcosm;

a continued song of the joy and pain of heaven and earth, as the soul of Faust imagined them; of victory and pacification. It will be noticed that all these four symphonies call for the aid of words, so as to say "quite distinctly" what they are rejoicing and suffering about, even the First, which is only apparently orchestral music, as the first and third movements are formed out of the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, certainly not without deep significance. In the Second and Third Symphonies, apart from the movements where the voice is used, there are two instrumental movements which are taken from the *Wunderhorn-Lieder*, and which certainly fit in with the figurative content of the work. Two other lyrics from this collection are taken over as vocal movements, one into the Third and another into the Fourth. In all there is such a strong, individual life-experience, that the music demands the poet's words, which, banishing all doubt, must speak in symbols as of the universal ego. It shall be seen later that in spite of this, no "programme" is intended or implied. The two ballads from the *Wunderhorn*, "Revelge" and the "Tambourg'sell," which are outside the collection, and whose workmanship indicates a later style, close this portion of our examination.

Another lyric—this attempt at an interpretation of the highest and freest spiritual experience is not, of course, literally "exact," but even the close proximity of the dates is clear from our preceding remarks—this lyric, which for the man Mahler is a programme in itself, leads over to the works that follow, to symphonies V, VI and VII. It begins with the words, "Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen" (I am lost to the world), that is, not the cosmos, from which music can never escape, but the world in the sense of the Christian, the philosopher—worldliness. The world has lost the artist Mahler, whom she had never possessed; the "composer" who turned into music his perception of earthly and heavenly life has become a "tone-poet"; as though, moving in lofty spheres, he

has now mastered his own musical language, penetrating into it more intensely, spiritualising it, so that he now no longer needs human language. The soul of him is the same, only he struggles now with other spirits, fixes his gaze upon a new sun; other abysses open before him, he salutes the colder serenity of other planets. It is like a reincarnation upon some other plane of all-embracing life, where only the most charitable, the most chaste, and—the most sorely wounded, can be born again.

In this rebirth, the spirit clings ever closer to the—humanly speaking—eternal form of symphonic art. The resemblances between these symphonies and some of the later lyrics, as in the Fifth, merely recall a subject of similar mood; on this plane they never become thematic. The struggle is thrice renewed. Then the deepest depths are stirred and a terrible flame lays hold of the artist's whole existence, his past and his future. No gateway can withstand the searching glow of this desire. Redemption is its cry; the cry of a thousand voices rediscovers the song of longing and desire of an earlier work and extorts with superhuman strength the comforting promise: Salvation is possible; it is at work within you; that which surrounds you and falls to your lot is only appearance, an image.—These are the words and refrain of the Eighth Symphony; words once again, it is true, but now hymns, no longer lyrics.

There follows a great interruption. A pause in production. In a period of fecundity, a summer—and no great work! Then, in the next, the *Lied von der Erde*. Once again we are amongst the highest peaks. After the unspeakable brightness of the sun at the summit—the Eighth Symphony—the growing darkness, but still at the greatest and divinest elevation. Mists rise and sink. Abysses gape. Where are we being led to?

Later, this book attempts an answer. No, it dares once again to ask the same question. . .

Such a conscious struggle with the problems of existence

was hardly known in music before Mahler. Whoever has interpreted Mahler's being in each of its various modes of expression as a perpetually renewed experience of the universe, will not be astonished to find its purest expression in his music, especially in the symphonies. "Experience," to be universal, begins on the roadside and extends to infinity. Some features in the most every-day music (such as the "cries of Paris" in Charpentier's *Louise*, of which Mahler was so fond), a dance of peasants, a march of soldiers, airs from the open road, in the gaudy dress of the wandering Gypsy minstrel, a motley mixture from motley Austria—all these elements are gathered together, dignified and made part of our most lasting art-treasures. These are the "banalities" of Mahler, about which our "cultured" musicians speak in such a superior tone. Suppress these elements, and Mahler becomes untrue; it is his nature to refine such clay, to eat with publicans and sinners. Quite apart from the many places in which he represents the resistance of vulgarity, where he exaggerates it in order to employ it as a medium.

His media (of expression) and their "extravagance": that is another convenient catchword of Mahler's adversaries. But in executing the gigantic plans of these symphonies, which seek to burst the bounds of mankind, shall the composer refrain from utilising all the means over which he disposes? Has not every extension of content led, of necessity, to an extension of form?—as though that were not almost a definition of real works of art. Or do other present-day composers exercise abstinence in these matters? It would be unapt, even if they did. It ought to give us pleasure that the language of music is growing richer, whereas that of words, which a few poets and masters have in their keeping, is daily growing poorer. They who sound the retreat in the battle, who constantly whine about the lost simplicity of (say) Mozart's music, should once and for all consider that life and death forwards go. Even before the performance of the Eighth

Symphony, the "thousand executants" went to not a few heads. Pause here and reflect on this "reflection!"

But, some say, the import of the work is not on a par with the expenditure of means. For we have (thanks to the Devil) a host of learned writers and art critics who are able to gauge exactly, with infallible measures of the latest model, the spiritual content of every work past, present and future. They have always "been there," and know for certain what Beethoven wanted to express, and "in what degree" he was successful. The result is to be found in the histories of literature which children must swallow at school; the various, now even "popular" presentations of the history of music, whose stupidity disappears in comparison with their danger; and so on. So Mahler has been spitted and dissected; and, right! the spiritual bond, the "content," was not to be found which could justify, for instance, the use of song or of celesta. But life fares on swiftly, and perhaps our weighers and judges would wear their dignity better were they less lavish of estimates of value. This is no reason for surrendering the right of being enthusiastic about Mahler. One can be carried away by conviction and enlightenment; fault-finding can only sneak upon us. But at least people should be more cautious in condemning an artist who, careless of success, without changing or yielding a jot, has tirelessly striven after the highest goals. This is not a defence of a great will, where only the power to realise it counts—although it has rightly been asked how many, especially in our time, have possessed even the great will—but a warning against placing too much reliance on the infallibility of "lofty understanding."

But is not Mahler effective with small means, too? Read the score of the Fourth Symphony, where no trombones are used, individual instruments are often employed as in chamber-music, and most magical effects are conjured almost out of nothing. (See page 12 *et seq.* of the score, and coda of last movement, page 121.) Or, of the lyrical works, take "Wer hat

dies Liedlein erdacht?" with its tiny orchestra (two horns, and of the percussives only triangle); "Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen," which contains neither bassoons, drums nor trombones; and the "Tambourg'sell," where, with quite full instrumentation otherwise, flutes and trombones are omitted. The Rückert lyrics show peculiar moderation in the orchestration, that of the *Kindertotenlieder* is an absolute novelty. Need we recall the magical colouring of the *Lied von der Erde*, where only the How is considered and not the How-much? The effect never suffers. How finely everything is thought out—even the pianoforte arrangement of the orchestral lyrics, as concert performances have shown. The musician who can thus renounce may also exact; he who weighs his means so exactly cannot be called extravagant.

A few words may be said as to Mahler's means in general and a few indications given as to the grammar of his language. His themes are wide in curve, and there is no short rest followed by repetition and development. A theme extending over forty bars is no uncommon thing, and long breath is the rule. The pregnancy and distinctness of the whole are never lost. The invention always flows out of the melody; and the *melos*, even if one at first thinks of others, at the second hearing belongs positively to Mahler. People have always tried to find "reminiscences" in Mahler's music. Whenever it is possible to think of a similar passage in Beethoven or Wagner—and that only in the earliest works—in Schubert or Bruckner, it is noticed by "every ass," as Brahms said, and it is of course without the slightest importance for the whole. (Walter Scott called this occupation a favourite task of pedantic stupidity.) The outspoken rhythm of the themes is especially characteristic, being in many lyrics and often in the symphonies like a march and intentionally recalling the harsh shrillness of military marches and funeral processions. Mahler's harmony has been called "unmodern" both in praise and blame. But it has been learned from all the moderns since

Bach and Chopin, and often in the course of its development very nearly equals the most audacious of innovations, such as those of Schönberg and the young French school. The independence of the parts often leads to harsh passages. Such are most often explained by a combination of themes appearing accompanied by their original harmony. For his counterpoint becomes constantly richer and more ruthless. It seems at times as though a theme were not harmonised but counterpointed, as though there were no such thing as a superposition, but only a juxtaposition of melodic elements. But finally the whole is resolved by means of passing-notes and mighty organ-points into the old diatonic system. More "questionable" are the whole-tone scales, which race up and down, *presto*, at the end of the Fifth Symphony. In the Sixth they are masked in the horns by anticipations (score, p. 122), but are quite distinct in the first Serenade of the Seventh (score, page 120) in cor anglais, bass clarinet and bassoons, over a smoother parallel movement of the basses. The most modern progressions and formations of fourths appear. But they are almost exceptions, as though Mahler wished to show that he could do that too. As a rule he is "the last diatonic writer," as he has been called, and at times of an almost sacerdotal simplicity which derives directly from Beethoven. Precisely in the Eighth Symphony he revels in tonic and dominant of *E♭*. In general, the prudent use of modulation is remarkable, especially in the earlier works; but, when used, it is with absolute psychological keenness and significance. Wagner, too, never modulates without reason or for the sake of doing so; a fact which he specially calls attention to. Just as little does Mahler seek audacious or peculiar harmonies, simply to astonish with them or to charm with some effect of sonority. Mere sound, in contrast to the young French school, has absolutely no value for him; he is bent on giving a theme everywhere. Even the most insignificant secondary theme is absolutely plastic and vocal. His counterpoint has already

been discussed. It is specially opulent in Symphonies V and IX. The last movement of the former is an example of Mahler's art of fugue. To praise his instrumentation were wearisome repetition; even his bitterest enemies are silent here. Mahler speaks the language of every instrument and knows its limitations exactly; and he often uses them for special effects where their sound is forced, or mysterious, or raucous; for instance when the trumpets and bassoons are employed in their highest range, or flutes in their deepest. His string-writing produces all shades and mixtures in full and muted tones; sometimes the strings are struck with the stick. In all critical places the stroke and the tone-quality of the position are distinctly marked. His manner of using the wind is characteristic in marches and march-rhythms, often in the manner of military bands, shrill and piercing; and again, to exemplify the brute force of every-day life, as in the Sixth Symphony. The clarinets in *E♭* of the military band are also characteristic of Mahler, although Berlioz uses them to "encanailler" (vulgarize), which also penetrate through strings and loud wind (Berlioz' "Instrumentation," edited by Richard Strauss), and lend piercing colour to the marches. Drum and cymbals have sometimes to be struck by one player, as in the military orchestras; kettledrums, tam-tam, birch rods,* tambourine, xylophone, clapper, are also used here and there in the later symphonies and lyrics. In the finale of the Sixth there comes twice a terrific crash of the whole orchestra, reinforced by a hammer of dull, not metallic, sound. Sometimes large bells are required, and cowbells in the Sixth and Seventh Symphonies; in the latter there is a guitar; in the Seventh, Eighth, and the *Lied von der Erde*, a mandolin. The new celesta appears immediately in the Sixth and in the later lyrics, used in especially virtuoso fashion. The harp often appears solo; it not only plays chords and arpeggios, but leads

*Two "fagots" the size of the wrist, used to belabor a piece of sheet iron lying on a table.

the melody. The harp goes together with the pianoforte in the lyric "Um Mitternacht." The Eighth makes use of the harmonium, the Second and Eighth employ the organ.

In all this opulence there is nothing arbitrary, no excess. Not a single instrument can be omitted; each has its part in the work and something of its own to say. In all the multiplicity and diversity of the scores, they are not for a moment confusing; the Master is recognised at once in the clearness of the arrangement, and in the distinctness and positiveness of each direction. Just as Mahler the conductor and stage-manager used to elucidate everything with a single word, the instructions and remarks in the scores strive, despite their brevity, to exclude all possibility of misunderstanding. How well the composer hears, and how well he knows certain habits of players, such as "smudging," "going through the motions," and "shirking"! All this is to be read out of his directions in the score. For instance, in the Eighth, in a place where both choruses, children's chorus, and seven soloists enter together *fortissimo*: "It is absolutely forbidden for the representatives of the solo-parts to spare themselves in this unison passage." In all the voices there sounds entreaty, pleading, almost menace, for they sing the weighty words: "Accende, accende lumen sensibus!"

And now to the several works!

MAHLER'S LYRICS

There are forty-two of them. They are not difficult, but are only seldom sung for all that, and until Mahler's death this neglect was fairly grotesque. That they have not become domesticated in the concert-room may be explainable, but is not pardonable. "These admirable singers can shout and groan their stuff with the greatest bravura, but try them with a folk-song, and the spurious effect vanishes. Either the pieces they sing are so trivial in character that the effect

cannot be missed, or else, if we did perceive their real sense, we should chase them from their platform and sing for ourselves what we like best." Thus writes Achim von Arnim in his essay on folk-song, prefacing Part I of the "Wunderhorn" over a hundred years ago. Even to-day, when we have got so much further in music and especially in lyrical music, it is still the case that our concert singers can rarely make anything of a folk-song; and Mahler's lyrics are almost all in the spirit of the folk-song, homely, simple, but never silly, never trivial, or playfully ironical. One would think them meant to be sung by the music-lover who, avoiding the countless song-recitals of the "season," stays at home and "sings himself." But even the music-lover sings only what he sees on the programmes. And who arranges the programmes? They are decided upon according to their commercial value, often not at all by the singer but by the "manager." In Vienna, for instance, a celebrated singer might sing Mahler's lyrics so long as he was Director. Thereafter, no one found this advisable; but then the next Court Opera Director was all the more zealously favoured in making up programmes. (And well we know what these programmes look like! Even of Schumann and Brahms, it is always the same few things, which count as "winners," that are given, or else are sung in the manner of So-and-So.) Once more: It is explainable, but not pardonable.

And precisely these lyrics which could lead people without trouble to Mahler should be given to "such as have an understanding of song" to ponder over. I do not allude to their "effectiveness." (Some may recall the tasteful Mahler programmes and great success of Madame Cahier and Maria Freund.) I mean for people who themselves really enjoy and demand music. For such, Mahler's lyrics are better fitted than any others.

Most of them are culled from popular poetry; very few rest upon other poems. As Nietzsche says, in the folk-tune the

melody is the principal and universal element, the poem is born out of the melody, and not only once but again and again, which explains the use of the strophe and the presence of several texts to one melody; in the poems of folk-tunes the language is put to the highest tension in order to imitate the music; and it seems to me that Mahler's lyrics contain all these characteristics. At least, I always have the impression that the words were invented to fit the music; not the contrary, as is the case with the art-lyric. Curiously enough, I have empirical confirmation of this in the Eighth Symphony, where the themes of the Hymnus came before the words, which in that case, to be sure, rather goes to prove the primacy of the symphonic form, but which may also serve as a clew in this case. It goes without saying that there can be no question of a clumsy distinction between First and Last; the development of a work of art is something infinitely delicate and mysterious, whose beginning and end are clothed in presentiment and fulfilment. But at any rate it may help to explain why Mahler's lyrics stand so absolutely apart from all others, past or present, and why they, drawn out of the depths of music and the interpretability of the words, are so difficult to understand, though all that is necessary is to sing over the tune to oneself like the countryfolk, without troubling about the words, which come of themselves.

It would be quite false to read sentimentality, or pathos, or irony, into Mahler's lyrics. Many composers handle music of popular character with a fine and deliberate irony. Mahler's lyrics are never ironical in this sense. The artist merges himself in the work; he never feels himself superior to his tune or his text. It must be repeated here: Mahler, the leader, the organiser, so full of knowledge, is as a composer naïve. He remains so even where he makes use of the richest gifts of his knowledge in the orchestra; and his lyrics are almost without exception thought out orchestrally to begin with.

"Des Knaben Wunderhorn" provided him with most of his

texts—this collection which Arnim and Brentano dug like a hoarded treasure out of the German past. But Mahler first became acquainted with the collection at the age of 28, and it is extraordinary how the words he chose for his earliest airs resemble the old songs in form and mood, without being either forced into a certain manner or disturbed by reminiscences of others. These are the four *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* (Lays of a Traveling Journeyman). The score and piano arrangement, which appeared in 1897, bear the date of December, 1883.

In the first the *Gesell* laments: “Wenn mein Schatz Hochzeit macht, fröhliche Hochzeit macht, hab’ ich meinen traurigen Tag.” (When my sweetheart has her wedding, joyous wedding, ’tis a sorrowful day for me.) Neither the familiar walk through the fields nor the solitude of his little chamber can comfort him. “Des Abends wenn ich schlafen gehe, denk’ ich an mein Leide.” (At evening, when I go to bed, I think upon my sorrow.) Faster and slower *tempi*, three- and four-beat rhythms, alternate immediately in the four opening bars, and later throughout the whole work, but just as naturally as in old folk-tunes (Prinz Eugenius!). This regular-irregular beat is quite usual with Mahler. The mood remains “quiet and sad until the end,” as the score demands from the voice. The strings are muted; the wood-wind intones a hurrying motive. After a peaceful intermezzo (the comforting voice of nature), the melancholy of the beginning returns, but leads over from *D* minor to *G*, where it remains. All four lyrics avoid their opening key. The second begins in *D* and ends in the dominant of *B*. It is the morning walk, where the bluebell and the finch announce the beauty of the summer day. But there is no luck for the wanderer: “Nein, nein, das ich mein’, mir nimmer blühen kann.” (No, no! What I will can never bloom for me.) This melody is the theme of the first movement of the First Symphony, but in the latter it is at once extended, apart from the altered instrumentation, comes to a

climax, is imitated, but is still, in spite of its new garb, exactly the melody of the *Lied des fahrenden Gesellen*. A remark in the score indicates that the second lyric should follow immediately after the first. All four form a unity; the mood of the pieces suffices to make this clear. At the beginning of the first and second verses the harp accompanies the voice, and the words are (unusually for Mahler) here and there declaimed. Twice, thrice the orchestra soars up, lastly in *B* major. The glistening sunshine, flowers and birds call "Good-morning." Muted horns and strings die away as though disappointed. The third lyric begins wildly in *D* minor with full orchestra, in hammered-out quavers: "Ich hab ein glühend Messer, ein Messer in meiner Brust." (I have a glowing knife, a knife within my breast.) The pain lessens. Very softly: "Wenn ich in den Himmel seh', seh' ich zwei blaue Augen stehn.— Wenn ich im gelben Felde geh', seh' ich von fern das blonde Haar im Winde wehn." (When I gaze at the sky, I see two blue eyes; when I go through the yellow field, I see from afar blond tresses blown by the wind.) Suddenly, again very loud: "Wenn ich aus dem Traum auffahr', und höre klingen ihr silbernes Lachen, o Weh!" (When I start out of my dream, and hear her silvery laughter sound, ah me!) And a fresh outburst for the last time: "Ich wollt', ich läg' auf dem schwarzen Bahr, könnt' nimmer die Augen aufmachen." (I would I lay on the black bier, might never ope mine eyes.) It dies away; cor anglais and bassoon and viola once again recall the movement of the beginning, a delicate downward passage for strings, and the end is reached—a deep *E* flat in double-basses and harp, together with which tam-tam and drum are struck, and the music ceases. The fourth begins in *E* minor, in march-rhythm. "Die zwei blauen Augen von meinem Schatz, die haben mich in die weite Welt geschickt." (The two blue eyes of my sweetheart, they sent me out into the wide world.) Gradually the episode develops, that of the third movement of the First Symphony, similarly introduced and orchestrated as

there, and closes in *F* minor. The poem ends ("not sentimentally!"): "Ich bin ausgegangen in stiller Nacht, wohl über die dunkle Heide; hat mir niemand ade gesagt, ade. Mein Gesell war Lieb und Leide! Auf der Strasse stand ein Lindenbaum; da hab' ich zum erstenmal im Schlaf geruht, unterm Lindenbaum; der hat seine Blüten über mich geschneit. Da wusst' ich nicht, wie das Leben tut, war alles, alles wieder gut. Alles, alles; Lieb und Leid und Welt und Traum!" (I fared abroad in silent night, all over the darkling heather; none said good-bye to me, good-bye. My companions were love and sorrow! By the road there stood a linden-tree; 'twas there I rested first in sleep, under the linden-tree; it snowed its blossoms over me. Then knew I not how life is sore, and all, and all was well once more. All, all: Love, sorrow, world and dream!) This fourth lyric, of nameless beauty even with the pianoforte, may be recommended to all who sing; taken by itself, it is also suitable for a female voice.

The first Book of the lyrics, published in 1892 by Schott, bears a similar character to the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, and seems to have been composed about the same time. It contains two lyrics after Leander and two folk-songlike compositions from Tirso de Molina's *Don Juan*, the form of the story that was best known before Mozart's day; so Mahler had already found the source of the story of the stone guest. Of these two, the Serenade is intended for an accompaniment of wind-instruments; the accompaniment of a harp is recommended for the "Phantasie." The fifth song, "Hans und Grete," is called folk-song, but Mahler probably wrote the poem too. It is a dance-song in "easy waltz-tempo," and the beginning readily reminds one of the Scherzo of the First Symphony.

Early in 1806, the first part of "Des Knaben Wunderhorn" was published with a dedication to Goethe. On the 21st of January Goethe already published a long criticism of it in the Jena "Allgemeine Literaturzeitung." He wrote: "But this book will find its most suitable place upon the piano of the

amateur or master of music, so that the poems contained therein may enter their true sphere, either set to familiar old melodies or fitted with other suitable tunes; or, God willing, with new, significant melodies inspired by them." Mahler, at any rate, succeeded in finding these new and significant melodies sooner than other modern composers—no comparison is intended. The *Wunderhorn* gave him the words he had been seeking for. Once he had found it, he no longer needed to write poems of his own for his music. These songs are most truly Mahler's own, for they are truly naïve.

His settings of poems in the *Wunderhorn* are contained in Books 2 and 3 of Schott's and in the two Books of the Universal Edition: "Zwölf Gesänge aus des Knaben Wunderhorn." Then come, separately, *Revelge* and the *Tambourg'sell* (orchestral score published by Kahnt, piano arrangement in the Universal Edition). All these were distributed over the years 1888–1901, the period from the First to the Fourth Symphony. We shall follow the order of publication.

"Um schlimme Kinder artig zu machen." (To make naughty children good.) Cuckoo-calls in fourths, to be noticed again in the First Symphony.—"Ich ging mit Lust durch einen grünen Wald." (Thro' a green wood I strayed full joyously.) Soft, delicate chords in *D* major, a simple, charming figure for the singing of the birds. He goes to his sweetheart. A lovely change into *G* major. In the evening the lad knocks in vain. *D* major again. The nightingale sings all night long, but the sleepy lass will not stir. "Aus! aus!" (Off! off!) is the march-song of the departing lansquenet, while the maiden weeps after him. Her coaxing grows more urgent, but is always overborne by the loud "heut marschieren wir" (to-day we march). And the man has the last word: "Im Mai blühh gar viele Blümelein, die Lieb' ist noch nicht aus." (In May blows many a floweret, and love is not yet o'er.) "Aus" is repeated with intentional double meaning. Text-repetitions in Mahler's lyrics never occur merely for the

sake of the musical line, whatever may have been said about his use of music and words. Each has its sufficient significance, even its art. This should also be noticed in the Eighth Symphony.

“Starke Einbildungskraft” (Strong Imagination) is another dialogue. The girl demands that she shall be taken at the time arranged. The boy replies: “Wie soll ich dich denn nehmen, dieweil ich dich schon hab’? Und wenn ich halt an dich gedenk’, so mein’ ich alleweile, ich wäre schon bei dir!” (Now, say, how shall I take you, when you’re already mine? And when I haply think of you, it really seems to me then as tho’ I were with you.) The whole thing is easy and jolly, with marked folk-song rhythms. In “Zu Strassburg auf der Schanz” (At Strassburg on the fort) the pipe sounds, and immediately afterwards is heard the song of the captured Swiss mercenary, in a motive that recalls “Revelge.” How far Mahler’s art had progressed in the “Tambourg’sell,” where the subject is similar!

“Ablösung im Sommer”: “Kuckuck hat sich zu Tode gefallen” (The Changes of Summer: “Cuckoo’s killed himself by falling”) becomes later part of the Third Symphony. If the cuckoo is dead, the song knows what to do: “Wir warten auf Frau Nachtigall, dann fängt sie an zu schlagen.” (We’re waiting for Dame Nightingale, then she’ll begin her singing.) The series of fifths (p. 7, bars 7–9) is remarkable. “Scheiden und Meiden” (Leave-taking) brings, with swift, bold musical uprush, the confession (Wann werd’ ich mein Schätzel wohl kriegen?): “Und ist es nicht morgen, ach wär’ es wohl heut; es machte uns beiden wohl grosse Freud’.” (When shall I get my sweetheart? “And if not to-morrow, would it were to-day; ’twould surely give both of us great joy.”) The touching “Nicht wiederschen” contains the melodically and harmonically remarkable line, “Ade, ade, mein herzallerliebster Schatz” (Farewell, farewell, my dearest love).

“Selbstgefühl” (Self-esteem); the words “ich weiss nicht

wie mir ist" (I know not what I feel) survive even to-day in Steiermark. With "Der Schildwache Nachtlied" (The Sentry's Nightsong) begins the series of lyrics with orchestra; a real ballade, a dialogue between the blunt, devout soldier and the seductive fay. Again the march-rhythm and the changing beat; at the close a delicate dying-away—vanishing—of the whole orchestra as in a dream (the harp-part!), accompanying the repeated words of the text: "Mitternacht, Mitternacht, Feldwacht" (Midnight, midnight, outpost), which seem spoken as though half-asleep.—"Verlorne Müh" (Lost Labor—a Swabian song). Again the maiden begs, hesitatingly, breaking down at each attempt after the first words; her lad "mag holt nit" (don't care to). The tiny orchestra is handled in masterly fashion.—"Trost im Unglück" (Cheer in Sorrow) is the farewell of two who, loving one another, would rather part than give way. So the huzzar saddles his horse and the girl sings: "Du glaubst, du bist der Schönste auf der ganzen weiten Welt, und auch der Angenehmste! ist aber weit, weit gefehlt." (You think you're the handsomest fellow in the whole wide world, and the nicest, too! But you're sadly mistaken.)—"Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht" (Who was it thought out this song) dances simply and at last joyously through the orchestra. "Das irdische Leben" (Earthly Life) evokes, with cor anglais, three horns and divided strings, a "weird agitation"; sombre, stressful activity; the hungry child is put off until everything is harvested, threshed and baked, and in the meantime starves. Such is the prudence of the "earthly life." "St. Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt" (St. Anthony of Padua's Sermon to the Fishes) is the uncouth story of Abraham a Santa Clara with an ironical turn to the subject. Goethe described these verses as "incomparable both in meaning and treatment." The Saint, finding his church empty, preaches to the fishes, and the whole finned river-folk comes to listen. "Sharp-snouted" pike that fight the whole time; stockfish, eels and sturgeon, who go to make the best dishes of aristocrats and are therefore

aristocrats themselves; even crabs and turtles. But the sermon ended, "ein jedes sich wendet. . . . die Krebse gehn zurücker, die Stockfisch bleiben dicke, die Karpfen viel fressen, die Predigt vergessen" (each one turneth about. . . . The crabs walk backward, the cod stay thick and awkward, the carp eat all they come on, forgetting the sermon). And Mahler repeats: "Die Predigt hat g'fallen, hat g'fallen." (The sermon gave pleasure, gave pleasure.) The fishes come swimming along to the rolling, rowing movement of the music. One can almost see how their stupid bodies rock, how they move their fins, gape around, and then (violas, 'cellos and basses with springing bow) stupidly turn away. The piece is taken over into the Second Symphony as scherzo. Then follows the exquisite "Rheinlegendchen" (Rhine Legend): "Bald gras' ich am Neckar, bald gras' ich am Rhein" (I reap on the Neckar, I mow on the Rhine). The effect of the very small orchestra must be noticed—one flute, one oboe, one clarinet, one bassoon and one horn, besides strings. Then the gloomy "Lied des Verfolgten im Turm." (Lay of the Prisoner in the Tower.) The maiden who loves him sings outside, but the prisoner renounces her, so that his thoughts may remain free.—"Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen" (Where the beautiful trumpets blow) is for me perhaps the greatest of all; these strange passages in major where the ghostly lover appears, the approach of morning, the sobbing nightingale, which frightens the maiden still more so that she suddenly bursts into tears; the change into minor at the first glimmer of daylight when the stars go out; the close. "Allwo die schönen Trompeten blasen, da ist mein Haus, mein Haus von grünem Rasen." (And where the beautiful trumpets blow, there is my house, in the greensward below.) Once again, as in despair, the trumpet sounds.—The "Lob des hohen Verstandes" (Praise of Lofty Intellect) is the contest between nightingale and cuckoo, with the ass as umpire. The nightingale does well, but the critic cannot take it in, whereas the cuckoo sings

“gut Choral und hält den Takt fein inne” (holds well the tune and keeps time most exactly—the time in which the ass brays “He-haw!”). The last of these series of lyrics are the chorus for women’s voices, from the Third Symphony, and “Urlicht,” from the Second. Outside the set are the two masterpieces “Revelge” (says Goethe: “Incomparable for those whose imagination can follow”), and the “Tambourg’sell” (“a poem whose equal the comprehending reader will have difficulty in finding”); especially the “Revelge,” the march and fight of the drummer beyond death, has become through its music more especially “quite incomparable.”

Mahler felt himself at home amongst the poems of the *Wunderhorn*, found in them his own self again. We must respect the feeling that led him to Rückert later, just as we respect that which leads old and new composers back to Heine. I confess myself incapable of following Rückert’s poems in the same way; for it seems to me, despite all their beauty of form and sentiment, that they almost always play with their subjects. Recall a lyric by Eichendorff, Mörike, or Liliencron, and you will see what I mean. My delight in the four Rückert lyrics “Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder,” “Ich atmet’ einen linden Duft,” “Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen,” and “Mitternacht” (“Look not into my songs,” “I breathed an air so soft and mild,” “I am lost to the world” and “Midnight”) is thereby somewhat interfered with, although just the last two have great importance as confessions of Mahler’s art:—solitary, world-forgetting, yearning for heaven.

The death of his two children gave Rückert “material for endless poems.” Of the “Kindertotenlieder”—which appeared posthumously—Mahler, with the taste of a connoisseur and artist, chose five, in which a really profound sentiment lies, and welded them into a Whole which thus became a new work of art. Everything is ennobled by the purity, simplicity and sincerity of the music. It is characteristic of Mahler that he had finished this composition at a time when even the possi-

bility of a similar misfortune happening to himself did not exist. The first, "Nun will die Sonn' so hell aufgehen" (And now the sun will rise so bright), seeks in vain for consolation in the Universe. Again and again a double stroke of the *Glockenspiel* sounds like a doleful reminder, "Ein Lämplein erlosch in meinem Zelt" (Within my tent a little light is spent), and dies gently away with the greeting to the sun: "Heil sei dem Freudenlicht der Welt" (Hail, joyous light of all the world). In the second, the eyes of the dead children brighten again—*only* eyes before, *only* stars now. In the third, the voice with its empty fourths, deep, muted, as though speaking alone, joins the sorrowful cor anglais melody. The glance seeks the vanished child on the threshold, beside the entering mother. A violent outbreak of grief, and all becomes silent again, only a low *G* of the harp is struck. Then violins and horns begin a hurrying melody, "Oft denke ich, sie sind nur ausgegangen" (I often think, they are but gone abroad). A furious storm; the children would never have been allowed out in this weather. Anxiety is vain to-day. The *Glockenspiel* is heard again, and over the celesta and violins sounds in major "like a cradle-song" the message of hope and lasting peace.

In these *Kindertotenlieder* Mahler has rescued the most valuable part of Rückert; his veiled, often enough masked sentiment; a bitter, chaste, masculine way of feeling. He thus exercised his power over this poet's words, as over the *Wunderhorn* in earlier years. But in this case it was possible only to his far maturer art.

Some day, when Mahler is better appreciated, the "klagen-des Lied" will again be remembered, which he began at 18 and completed at 20. It is for soprano and tenor solos, mixed chorus and orchestra, and may therefore be called a choral work; but in its arrangement it betrays the original intention of making it an opera. In the orchestral prelude, the themes follow one another just as in an opera overture. Then begins the story:

Beim Weidenbaum, im kühlen Tann,
 Da flattern die Dohlen und Raben;
 Da liegt ein blonder Reitersmann
 Unter Blüten und Blättern begraben.
 Dort ist es so lind und voll von Duft,
 Als ging ein Weinen durch die Luft.
 O Leide! O Leide!

(By the willow-tree, where cool the wood,
 The daws and the ravens are flying;
 With leaves and blossoms covered yon
 A fair-haired horseman is lying.
 'Tis all so mild and balmy there
 As went a weeping thro' the air.
 O sorrow! O sorrow!)

A minstrel goes by, sees a bone shining through the grass, keeps it and carves a flute out of it as out of a reed: and, as he plays, it is the lament of the murdered knight that resounds—he had been murdered by his brother in order that the latter might win a great lady. The minstrel carries the song of lament into the world. He comes to the hall of the newly-married pair, where the second part begins, as in the theatre, with rejoicing in chorus and orchestra. Once more the baleful flute is played, and loudly accuses the king of fratricide. The marriage festivities cease; the castle sinks into the earth. O sorrow!—The words are by Mahler, after an old German story. They are as sure and effective as the music, in which the young artist for the first time trusts his wings and already soars on high. Even if the score, so tardily published (not till 1899), betrays many alterations by the mature, ever-improving master, this first form must still have had strength enough to restrain Mahler from putting it away from him, as he did many other youthful works. Perhaps he respected it because it showed him how strong he was, and that he might still go forward as he had begun. The instrumentation, the setting of the chorus, are admirable.

MAHLER'S SYMPHONIES

However important his lyric compositions may be, Mahler is primarily a symphonist. But he makes use of his mastery over the human voice also in his symphonies. He does so in five of the ten great works we are to examine. What was for others exceptional, the use of song and chorus, is for him a new form. After Liszt, Bruckner had let the instruments speak alone. Bruckner was the last composer beyond whom he had to go.

At the outset the movements follow each other like great songs; at first comes an interchanging, a variation, of the first and second themes. The old form, a garment already outgrown, is thrown round the young giant's body, who feels it as a fetter to every movement. And he weaves for himself a new garment after the pattern of the old, such as had served his predecessors, and thenceforward his power is unrestrained when he hurls the titanic themes one amongst the other, knots and binds them together, when he recommences the ended play of the development, mastering with courageous grasp the arts of the old teachers. The symphony of Beethoven was carried by Bruckner into Wagner's aura. Mahler, whose nature it was to widen existing bounds, bears it on still further. Where Bruckner worshipped, Mahler is tempted, wrestles with and subdues the tempter, and only after the visions in the wilderness comes transfiguration on the summit of Tabor.

But have not interpretations of this struggle influenced the new form? Is not this form conveyed allegorically into the music? Do not Mahler's compositions follow programmes, overt or hidden? Did not *they* decide the new form?

A chance has made such questions possible. In the main Mahler has always advocated the view stated by Hoffmann-Kreisler: "Music opens for man an unknown continent, a world that has nothing in common with the exterior world of

sense that surrounds it, and in which he leaves behind all determinate feelings in order that he may give himself up to indescribable yearning." But like Bruckner (in his later years) Mahler, at the beginning, believed that the "programme" possessed a certain potency whereby his music might be brought nearer to the listener. He thus came to the "programme as a final, ideal elucidation." He wrote these words himself in 1897 to Arthur Seidl and showed the difference between his programmes and those of Richard Strauss, which he calls "a given pensum," without intending to advance an estimate, and even expressly pointing out the importance of Strauss. This explains why the programme of the First Symphony was not issued for the performance at Pesh in 1889 (probably it did not then exist), whilst in Hamburg and Weimar Mahler, evidently to counteract the legendary "enormities" of the work, gave out the following: "Part I. The Days of Youth. Youth, flowers and thorns. (1) Spring without end. The introduction represents the awakening of nature at early dawn. (In Hamburg it was called 'Winter Sleep.') (2) A Chapter of Flowers (Andante). (3) Full Sail! (Scherzo).—Part II. Commedia umana. (4) Stranded. A funeral march *à la* Callot (at Weimar, 'The Hunter's Funeral Procession'). The following remarks may serve as an explanation *if necessary*. The author received the external incitement to this piece from a pictorial parody well known to all children in South Germany, 'The Hunter's Funeral Procession.' The forest animals accompany the dead forester's coffin to the grave. The hares carry flags; in front is a band of Gypsy musicians and music-making cats, frogs, crows, etc.; and deer, stags, foxes, and other four-footed and feathered denizens of the forest accompany the procession in comic postures. In the present piece the imagined expression is partly ironically gay, partly gloomily brooding, and is immediately followed by (5) Dall' Inferno al Paradiso (*allegro furioso*), the sudden outbreak of a profoundly wounded heart."

The whole is entitled "Titan."

And now call to mind Jean Paul's "Titan" and his endless aberrations and chastenings! The only relation between them is expressed by Jean Paul's remark *about* the romance: It really should be called "Anti-Titan," because every would-be scaler of heaven finds his hell therein.—If one thinks of all the other hints at words and works of Jean Paul (and considers that the *Andante* is now removed), one must ask, What has all this to do with the First Symphony? It was nothing but an accommodation to the demands of the day, a concession which ended in confusion. The whole was understood so much the less.

I have recalled this "programme" only to check, once for all, the talk about Mahler's earlier works being "programme-music"; as for the later ones, even those "best informed" could not, even if they would, pretend to think so, after Mahler had withdrawn all programmes whatever, however much it might have interested them to know "who was being buried" during any given funeral march. In general, the hearer who interprets rather than listens likes nothing better than to investigate what the composer "meant" by his works. Of course, he meant nothing whatever. But by means of a symbol, an image, one may better understand his works. Beethoven's headings and instructions, and Schumann's titles, are intended to be thus understood, and in this sense Mahler's symphonies can here and there be described in words; often the words of the vocal movements themselves invite it. I always regret, for instance, that the titles of the movements of the Third Symphony should have been abandoned. They were, formerly: Pan awakes; summer's advent—What the flowers of the meadow tell me—What the beasts of the forest tell me—What man tells me—What the angels tell me—What love tells me.—Originally this was followed by the last movement of the Fourth Symphony, as may still be recognised by the thematic relationship. These titles are certainly not

necessary for the "understanding" of the work; but it may be significant that they were revived on the programmes of the Berlin performance in 1907—that is, after Mahler's vehement declaration against "programmes" before the Munich Hugo Wolf Society in 1900. Naturally, they must be taken only as images for the recipient, not as programmes for the creator, who with ever-increasing vehemence demanded music, only music. Bruno Walter puts the matter finely: "If we understand the titles Mahler gave his works in the mystical and only possible sense, we must not expect any explanation of the music by means of them; but we may hope that the music itself will throw the most penetrating light upon the sphere of emotion which the titles suggest. Let us be prudent enough to free these titles from an exact meaning, and remember that in the kingdom of beauty nothing is to be found except 'Gestaltung, Umgestaltung, des ewigen Sinnes ewige Unterhaltung.' (Formation, Transformation, Th'eternal Mind's eternal recreation.) Should we attach to those grammatical schemes fixed names, the 'transformation' would prove us wrong in the next minute. We must not think of that 'which the flowers of the meadow tell,' but of everything that touches our hearts with gentlest beauty and tenderest charm." On being requested to do so, Mahler himself once even undertook a similar supplementary interpretation after a private performance of the Second Symphony.

When the notion of Mahler's programmes, and the still more dangerous one of the "suppressed programme," are once cleared away, the pure musical form remains behind, which is derivable solely from the development of the music, from the unity of the work, and from the character of the great creed. Bruckner, not Liszt, is Mahler's forerunner, but only a forerunner. And, as with Bruckner, Mahler's symphonies followed each other, careless of time or success, and he was obliged to hold them back for years. He never became doubtful of himself, not even under the influence of the greater effective-

ness and "productiveness" of the theatre, the way to which would have been short enough for him. These creations awaken but slowly out of the score. Mahler's time was not yet come, that of certain others was ever with us.

On attempting to sketch a picture of these works, I am able to give only what the present moment allows; any final judgment, any entering into details, is forbidden by time and circumstances for many years to come. Where impressions are set forth, they must be taken only as images; they follow no secret programmes.

First Symphony (*D* major). The work of a lyrist in his twenties (completed 1888), at a time when the younger men were disciples—if, indeed, they ever shook off the bonds of discipleship. Richard Strauss had not yet written *Tod und Verklärung*. . . And in these same eighties this symphony was written, a work of such originality (quite aside from all "interpretations" and "interlineations")—musically a feat that might have been convincing, had any one known of it. Perhaps not a symphonic masterwork, but one of emotion and invention; of sonority, of personality. And still only a beginning. How beautiful the introduction is, suggesting the melancholy of the Moravian plains over a long-sustained *A*, down to which the minor theme in oboe and bassoon dreamily sinks! Thereupon the up-striving fanfare of the clarinets; the fourth becomes a cuckoo-call in the wood-wind, a lovely song in the horns; then, still over the pedal *A*, a gradual rolling movement, first in the divided 'celli and basses, like the re-awakening of the earth after a clear summer's night. The tempo quickens, the cuckoo's call becomes the first notes of the first *Lied eines fahrenden Gesellen*: "Ging heut morgen über's Feld" (O'er the fields I went at morn). The whole melody, here in symphonic breath, is sung softly by the strings, turns into the dominant, mounts in speed and strength, sinks back *pianissimo*, and is repeated. An actual repeat-sign; save in

the scherzo-form, there is only one other example of this in Mahler, in the Sixth Symphony. A kind of development-section follows, but it really rather confirms the theme. The leap of the fourth now becomes a fifth, developed melodically through major and minor; the "awakening" is repeated, the harp taking the tune; once again *D* major over the pedal *A*. A new tune in the horns; modulation, livelier play of the motives with many an unrelated succession of ideas. Suddenly, in the wood-wind, a theme of the last movement, immediately followed by a Brucknerish climax, on whose summit is heard the introductory fanfare, then abruptly the horn-theme and the fourths of the commencement. Then comes a kind of reprise altered as Mahler nearly always does in later works (preferably shortened, not recommencing with the beginning!). Merrier still, ever livelier until the end; always in the principal key. The *Lied des fahrenden Gesellen* fixes the entire character; no secondary theme, scarcely a development. But the music, dewy fresh, strikes the goggles from the nose of the peering critic. There follows a merry, dancing scherzo, an Austrian *Ländler* like those of Bruckner and Schubert, exquisitely harmonised and scored. A horn leads into the oldentime Trio. The *fahrender Gesell* has discovered a hidden village where people are happy as of yore. But precisely this merry-making recalls his own sad flight from love. After a long pause begins the third part with the rugged canon "Frère Jacques." Muted drums beat out the "fourth"; it sounds like the rhythm of a grotesque funeral-march à la Callot. A muted double-bass begins, a bassoon and 'cello follow, then bass tuba and a deep clarinet. An oboe bleats and squeaks thereto in the upper register. Four flutes with the canon drag the orchestra along with them; the shrill *E*-flat clarinet quacks; over a quiet counterpoint in the trumpets the oboes are tootling a vulgar street-song; two *E*-flat clarinets, with bassoon and flutes, parodistically pipe wretched stuff, accompanied by an *m-ta*, *m-ta*, in the percussion (cymbals attached to the big drum, so

as to sound thoroughly vulgar) and in the strings (scratched with the sticks). Discordant every-day life, which never lets go its hold. Then harps and wind take up a soft *D*, treat it as dominant, add the major third of *G*, and the violins sing the lay of the sheltering linden-tree.—Deliverance: “Da wusst ich nicht wie das Leben tut, war alles, alles wieder gut.” (Then knew I not how life might be, and all again was well with me.) But the barrel-organ canon straightway starts up again, dies away finally and leads directly into the last movement. Raging, a chromatic triplet rushes downward, a theme from the development of the first movement announces itself, everything ferments and fumes, clinging fast to the key of *F* minor. Over a pedal on *D* flat, the 'cello movement and the “fourth” motive from the first part now sound triumphantly in *D* major. This relationship and similarity of the themes in different movements is still more emphatically developed by Mahler than by his predecessors. An even louder climax, where seven horns must be heard above everything, even the trumpets. They sound like a chorale from paradise after the waves of hell. Saved!

Here is art, understandable in images, but still, at least in intention, severely symphonic. [A “programme” is unnecessary. Apart from the digressions of the last movement, the work is not more difficult for hearers than for players, and one which stimulates a genuine interest in Mahler.] It arouses a desire to become acquainted with his other works.

On the other hand, the **Second Symphony** (in *C* minor) requires a very large orchestra (ten horns alone); the percussion employs five extra musicians besides the two drummers; organ, alto solo and a mixed chorus are added. It is a symphony of destiny. Mahler's subsequent explanation implies (in the first movement) the death of a hero, who is fallen in Promethean struggle for his ideal, for the knowledge of life and death. Abysmal depths are stirred. A well-nigh endless funeral march rises sharp and trenchant from the restless,

declamatory basses. Consuming lament in the wood-wind. Then suddenly the change from minor to major, so characteristic of Mahler, in horns and strings; very softly, a first promise of consolation. But, quick as lightning, the convulsion of the beginning returns. The rolling basses sink down into inaudibility. A lighter secondary section; modulation; the basses burst through the march-rhythm, the passionate raging is renewed. Development. In the funeral march a chorale is heard, which swings forward from gloomy resolution to joyous promise, and is repeated in the last movement. But here only despair may triumph. A repeat in the principal key, much shortened, the motives crowded together as though afraid to spread themselves. Harps and basses introduce the coda, which slowly advances, but only to speak an epilogue: *Impavidum ferient ruinæ*. The chord of *C* major immediately goes over to *C* minor. (Sixth Symphony!) A swift descending run, and the colossal movement ends. A long pause. Then an intermezzo in *A* flat; remembrance and retrospect. The strings begin a dance-tune. A horn leads to the key of *B*, changing *E* flat enharmonically into *D* sharp. Lively, youthfully gay triplets over an unmoving bass. Once more the dance-tune, with a counterpoint in the 'celli. After a subdued variation of the mobile theme, the dance-melody creeps back for the third time, this time *pizzicato* in the strings and lengthened by interpolated imitative measures. Further on, more grandfatherly enjoyment.

The next movement (*C* minor), a scherzo in form, is St. Anthony of Padua's sermon to the fishes. A second typical figure; the hero in manhood goes forth into the world, and sees how stupidity and vulgarity, like the fishes of the legend, are incorrigible. The trio, beginning by a *fugato*, mounts from step to step, *C-D-E*, reaches a point of repose, and sinks back into *C*—it was only another sermon to the fishes. Return of the scherzo. An outcry of disgust, and then even the tireless progression of this movement refuses to flow onward.

It ceases in *C*; and, without interruption, the alto solo begins in *D* flat: "O Röschen rot! Der Mensch liegt in grösster Not! Der Mensch liegt in grösster Pein! Je lieber möcht' ich im Himmel sein." (O rosebud red! Mankind lies in sorest need! Mankind lies in sorest pain! The rather would I be in heaven!) And will not be turned aside. "Ich bin von Gott, und will wieder zu Gott; der liebe Gott wird mir ein Lichtchen geben, wird leuchten mir bis in das ewig, selig Leben." (I am from God, and must to God return; my kind Father will give me a light, shall light me to eternal, blessed life.)

Attacca the fifth movement. A new affliction; death and judgment are at hand. But the storm of the orchestra is interrupted by reassurances. Distant horns spread the terror of the last day. Quite softly, march-like, the chorale of the first movement sounds. A reference to the coming "Resurrection" motive is heard. "The dead arise and march forward in endless procession. . . . The cry for mercy and grace sounds terrible in our ears." Fear and hope struggle in all hearts. "The Great Call is heard; the trumpets of the apocalypse sound the summons; amid the awful silence we seem to hear a far, far distant nightingale, like the last quivering echo of earthly life. The chorus of the saints and the heavenly host begins almost inaudibly: 'Auferstehen, ja auferstehen wirst du!' (Thou shalt arise, arise from the dead.) The splendour of God appears. . . . It is no judgment; there are no sinners, no righteous. . . . There is no punishment and no reward. An irresistible sentiment of love penetrates us with blest knowledge and vital glow." The chorus, with soprano solo, begins *a cappella* with indescribable effect. It sings Klopstock's ode; an alto proceeds with Mahler's words: "O glaube, mein Herz, es geht dir nichts verloren! Dein ist, was du gesehnt, dein was du geliebt, was du gestritten. Mit Flügeln die ich mir errungen, werde ich entschweben. . . . Sterben werde ich, um zu leben." (Oh, believe, my heart, to thee shall naught be lost! Thine is, what thou didst long for,

thine, what thou hast loved, for which thou strov'st. With wings that I myself have won, shall I soar upward. . . . I shall die, that I may live.) With the peal of organ and bells amid the jubilation of the orchestra, this "Resurrection Symphony" ends.

It has always borne eloquent witness for Mahler's art, for its truth and beauty. How exactly it represents Mahler as man and artist is confirmed by the fact that he returns in the Eighth Symphony, though on a higher plane, to this same circle of thought.

While he makes Man the subject of the Second, in the **Third Symphony** (*D* minor) it is with and of Nature that he speaks. Of still wider scope, in it stones, trees and birds take on life (in Fechner's sense), and the Soul of the Earth sings to mankind. An imposing first movement stands alone; its performance fills three-quarters of an hour. There is a cyclopean succession of march-rhythms in most audacious harmonisation. Rigid, motionless nature. Pan awakes but gradually. The marches grow ever harder and ruder in the development, as though something especially evil were smuggled in. Soli in drum and kettledrums mark sections. The usual altered and shortened repetition, inexhaustible in new invention, new gayety, which however must still undergo purification. Pause. The other movements form a unity. A lovely minuet follows: "Was mir die Blumen auf der Wiese erzählen" (What the field-flowers tell me), idyllic, still tranquil.—Third movement, the "Ablösung in Sommer"; now it is the animals of the forest that converse together; they hear the horn of the passing mail-coach; the speech of the men within is incomprehensible. There has been laughter enough at this post-horn; but what has here grown out of the well-known tune of the trumpeting coachman, especially where the horns enter and the *E*-flat clarinets make the echo, shows how Mahler could ennoble an old melody, which seems almost to have been taken from the language of the beasts. With a merry fanfare, the Austrian military

signal "Retreat," the coach departs, and the forest talk recommences, but now altered and more excited. The animals become rougher and coarser, squalling and wrangling tirelessly together; the horn is once more heard in the distance, and the animals amuse themselves with running about until the end. People who are friends of nature, which should really be always in our thoughts, will only need to listen to this scherzo "with variations," and everything will become "understandable."

Once again comes the human voice, a contralto solo. A motive heard at the beginning of the symphony, and the mysterious chords that followed it, introduce Zarathustra's "Drunken Song." Man gives voice to his deepest longing and desire: Eternity. Without a break follows a lyric from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. A choir of boys intones its bim-bam with the bells, and a female chorus sings:

"Es sungen drei Engel einen süßen Gesang;
 Mit Freuden es selig in dem Himmel klang,
 Sie jauchzten fröhlich auch dabei,
 Dass Petrus sei von Sünden frei.
 Und als der Herr Jesus zu Tische sass,
 Mit seinen zwölf Jüngern das Abendmahl ass;
 Da sprach der Herr Jesus: Was stehst du denn hier?
 Wenn ich dich anseh', so weinest du mir!"

(Three angels were singing a dulcet song,
 Full joyous the sound rang thro' heaven along;
 And full of joy were they to see
 That Peter now from sin was free.
 And as the Lord Jesus at table sate,
 With his twelve disciples the supper ate;
 Saith Jesus: "Wherefore standest thou here?
 I see thee shedding many a tear.)"

A contralto voice alone (magna peccatrix):

"Und sollt' ich nicht weinen, du gütiger Gott?"
 (And should not I weep, Thou merciful God?)

The chorus of angels:

"Du sollst ja nicht weinen."
(Nay, weep thou no more.)

The contralto replies:

"Ich hab' übertreten die zehn Gebot."
(The ten commandments have I broke.)

But the remedy is there:

". . . . Liebe nur Gott in alle Zeit,
So wirst du erlangen die himmlische Freud'.
Die himmlische Freud' ist eine selige Stadt,
Die himmlische Freud', die kein Ende mehr hat!
Die himmlische Freude war Petro bereit't,
Durch Jesum and Allen zur Seligkeit."

(. . . . Love thou but God for evermore,
For thee heaven's joys shall be in store.
The joys of heaven, that have no end,
Blest city, whither thou dost wend!
The joys for Peter and all the rest
Prepared by Jesus in heavenly rest.)

Bells, harps and the whole orchestra, except the violins, which do not play in this movement, exult. That is what the angels have to tell. And Mahler dares go straight from the land of Zarathustra into the Christian heaven. Both are images, and only the love of that desire and that heaven is meant. The last movement speaks of this love; a sweet, noble, serene adagio: since Beethoven there are but few that can compare with it.

After this work Mahler wrote a shorter and more peaceful one, his **Fourth Symphony**, in *G* major, which is usually considered to be gay. But it only *becomes* so; it has to struggle through many a cloudy moment; in its bright noonday we are often stricken with a panic dread. The work is, as far as material is concerned, easy to perform. Wood-wind and strings are fairly numerous; there are, however, only four horns; trombones, none at all. The instrumentation is

masterly in the extreme, and Mahler's art was scarcely ever greater than in this modest work. In any case, the Fourth should often be played and studied. At the very beginning, there is a satisfied but almost cautious gaiety. The movement is exposed quietly and with ease; it is developed with greater freedom and variety than any preceding work. Three bars of the introduction also play an important part. Suddenly comes the repeat, entering in the very midst of the first part, and with it the friendliness of the commencement returns; towards the close it becomes an almost Mozartian jubilation. In the second movement, a scherzo in character, is a slow violin tuned a whole tone higher, which sounds sharp and piercing like a countryman's fiddle. Only one being can play thus—Death. He is very good-natured, and lets the others go on dancing, but they must not forget who is making the music. When he lets his bow fall, the other players try to overtake him; they are in major, but even that sounds creepy enough, as in the sermon to the fishes. Then the piece becomes somewhat livelier (Trio), but the ghostly theme returns and remains. Another violin enters, less piercing (not tuned higher). At last the glassy tones die away. The third movement, poco adagio, begins "peacefully," with an almost supernatural composedness. Constantly more lively variations of the theme, which, suddenly reaching an allegro molto, return as suddenly to the calm of the beginning, transfiguring it. Only once, near the end of this part, the theme of the last movement is betrayed. It begins "very complacently," and a soprano solo sings, with childishly gay expression, "absolutely without parodying," to words from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* that we are now really in heaven:

“Wir geniessen die himmlischen Freuden,
Drum tun wir das Irdische meiden.
Kein weltlich Getümmel
Hört man nicht im Himmel!
Lebt alles in sanftester Ruh’.

Wir führen ein englisches Leben,
Sind dennoch ganz lustig daneben,
Wir tanzen und springen,
Wir hüpfen und singen."

(The delights of heaven we're enjoying,
The pleasures of earth destroying.
No earth-born riot
Is heard in heaven's quiet!
All live in reposeful delight.
A life like the angels we're leading,
Yet merriment reigneth exceeding:
We dance and we spring;
We leap and we sing.)

Slackened in tempo and reflectively, accompanied by flutes, horns and harp in fifths and octaves:

"Sanct Peter im Himmel sieht zu."
(St. Peter looks on from his height.)

These bars, used as a refrain, are exactly the confession of sin, "Ich hab' übertreten die zehn Gebot," from the Third Symphony. Even here a residue of earth; the saints are reflective. But the inhabitants of heaven feast at ease. St. John brings them his little lamb, St. Luke the Evangelist his ox; Herod is the butcher. As in the fairy tales, the animals all come to life again at once. Game, fish, vegetables and fruit are to be had for nothing, "the gardeners allow everything": a real peasant-paradise of the middle ages. Immediately after the refrain, the music recommences as in the first movement with the harness bells, the strings are struck with the bow-sticks, the bass jars in fifths, and only the refrain can in the least restrain the heavenly boisterousness. When it has sounded for the third time, the movement modulates quietly, almost mysteriously, from *G* into *E* flat. A graceful dance-tune goes past, as though the heavenly music were being played somewhere quite near:

Kein' Musik ist ja nicht auf Erden,
 Die unserer verglichen kann werden. . .
 Elftausend Jungfrauen
 Zu tanzen sich trauen. . .
 Cäcilia mit ihren Verwandten
 Sind treffliche Hofmusikanten. . .

(No music on the earth is there
 That ever might with ours compare.
 Eleven thousand virgins
 Are dancing without urging;
 Cecilia and all her relations
 Are excellent court musicians.)

Even St. Ursula, austerest of saints, smiles at the dancing. She smiles the "smile of the prelates," as Mahler once said, the kindly, stony smile of old church monuments, the smile of the conqueror.

Mahler's next symphonies, the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh, form a unity by themselves, in the same way as the first four. Bruno Walter tells of a dream he once had, in which he saw Mahler striving upward at constantly shifting points of a mountain. This dream is a "true one." After the struggling of the Second and Third, the truce with the gentle warning of the spirits in the Fourth, the life of the earth surges so much more tremendously in the Fifth, and demands to be traversed. This latter work begins with the epilogue after a great sorrow, and surmounts it. But, in the Sixth, fate has no mercy; it is the only work of Mahler's that ends in the wildest despair. In the Seventh he is on the mountain-tops, far from earth, and as though convalescent looks down upon it from above. The triple struggle with the spirit of heaviness: at the same time a struggle with his own technique, with the new means which bring ever greater knowledge. Here again I have "interpreted"; there is not the slightest trace of a "programme." The form becomes, especially in the Sixth, the regular "classical" one. And the possibility of speaking in images will guide us more easily through these difficult-works.

The Fifth Symphony opens with a long, gloomy fanfare in *C* sharp minor, which leads into a stern funeral march. A turn into *A* flat (*G* sharp as dominant of *C* sharp). Then an episode of passionate lamenting, with *ostinato* double-basses. The funeral march returns altered, and dies away in a passage that bears a distinct resemblance to one of the *Kindertotenlieder*. A second episode, a variation of the first, and a coda of a few bars only ends the song-like and expository movement. Like a great development of it, the second rages forward. The theme is developed from a viola-part of the earlier second episode. Then the secondary section in the episode itself, exactly in the tempo of the funeral march. The repeat after the exposition, which still stands in the small score, is cancelled, and the development begins. It is interrupted by a quotation from the funeral march. In the repeat, the cutting "ninth" motive of the beginning binds everything together, effaces and displaces the themes. In a new cropping out (so to say) of the coda, two intensifications into *D*; at the culmination a chorale, from which the victory of the last movement shines. Close in minor, will-o'-the-wisp-like. A terrific scherzo indicates the turning. In immensity of projection, in harmonic and specifically contrapuntal art, it is something theretofore unheard-of, even in Mahler. The melody does not disavow the character of a dance-tune. The fourth and fifth movements also go thematically together. An almost feminine Adagietto, scored for strings and harp alone, is immediately followed by a Rondo-Finale. This is one of the most complicated movements in Mahler's works. The second principal theme is taken as fugue-subject, and forces ever new motives into the fugue. One of these seems, characteristically enough, to be taken from the "Lob des hohen Verstandes." When the fugue begins for the second time, a counterpoint shows one of the principal themes of the Eighth Symphony. This time the renewed Adagietto proceeds from it. A development on the gigantic scale of the whole symphony; third, entirely

altered, repetition of the rondo; triumphant finale with the chorale as in the second movement, and close in *D* major after exultant whole-tone passages.

The **Sixth Symphony** (*A* minor) was marked "Tragic" at the first performance. A major triad which turns, *diminuendo*, into minor, borne on chiefly by tapping drum-beats, goes through the whole work as leading-motive, appears like a force of destiny, and at the same time a symbol of harmonic restlessness. The old form of the symphony is perhaps more closely adhered to than in any other symphony of Mahler's, even though powerfully intensified. The apparatus is specially large; brass and percussion dominate the orchestra, and the very weight of the tone-masses seems directed against external foes. It is the most passionate, most despairing of works, one that struggles with and strives to surpass itself. Both the relationship and also the similarity in character and shadowy colour of the motives are even more marked than usual. Nowhere a liberating major which remains for long. Mysterious twilight tones mingle with the merciless march-rhythms of the first movement. Celesta, divided strings and cowbells sound distantly like an *Æolian* harp on quiet mornings, as the passing wind strikes it; a chorale is heard; but everything is drowned by the crude weight of the rush forwards. In the *Andante*, which brings back more seriously the same mood as the *Adagietto* of the Fifth, is a chary repose. For a moment it even becomes pastoral-*idyllic*. In the *scherzo* a grim humour flashes out. But it is not frank. A "grandfatherly" Trio is a place of refuge amongst the scurrilous succession of ideas. The returning *scherzo* is yet more ghostly. A finale which lasts half an hour surpasses all the outbreaks of the first movement. The first development is broken off by a fearful crash of the whole orchestra, with a dull blow from the hammer falling, like a falling tree. The march-rhythm of the commencement introduces a further development. It seeks tranquillity. A second crash falls. Repetition of all fear and

dread; each attempt to pierce the night of despair is vain amid this ceaselessly raging storm. A long, rigid pedal on *A* sets a goal. The movement becomes slower and slower; the leading-motive major-minor and the beating blows of destiny triumph.

In the **Seventh Symphony** (*B* minor), which has been little played in the four years since the first performance, Mahler's art has become still more perfect. It shows the highest mastery of technique and the maturity of an heroic conquest. The advance beyond the Sixth seems to me immeasurable. The effects are magical. The work, distinguished by the two movements called "Nachtmusik" as interludes, is a single great Nocturne; less a Nocturne in Hoffmann's sense—as it seemed to me at the performance at Prague—than one out of the land and art of Segantini. And curiously enough, when Mahler wished to "vindicate" the cowbells at a rehearsal in Munich, he explained to the orchestra that they were not intended to depict anything pastoral, but rather to signify the last greeting from the earth that still reaches the wanderer on the loftiest heights. The mood is given in the first bars of the Introduction. The unity, the momentum and intensification of this movement are rare, even with Mahler. First, Night-music, like a march; scared birds cry out in their sleep. A Scherzo, "shadow-like"; Trio, somewhat lighter. Wild and mad to the end. Another Intermezzo, second Night-music, with guitar and mandoline, like a serenade; free variations. And then the Finale, like an early morning walk when the sun is rising over the mountain snow: a symbol for those who have had the experience.—Like distant mountain-peaks, just before the first light of the sun strikes them, the summits of this music are great and near; with the most splendid lines, folds, abysses and contrapuntal intersections between one and the other. The morning bells of the valley are already awake. As intoxicated, it presses ever onward and upward. Recollections out of the night are borne up into the brightness.

The pinnacles gradually grow purple, and morning light transforms the weird aspects.

The more deeply this symphony affected me, the more I liked my symbolical interpretation. A work, leading upwards and forwards, pointing towards a new land and a new future of music. May this experience more and more often become that of all listeners.

The **Eighth Symphony**, in *E* flat, with the greatest apparatus Mahler ever made use of (besides the largely increased orchestra there are two mixed choruses, a chorus of boys and seven soloists), is the fruit of the growth in discernment and maturity of the man and artist in the course of twenty years. It is a return to the problems of the Second; wherein was announced the promise of self-gained protection against death and annihilation, the certainty of immortality, as a reply to the question of death; while in the Eighth, after ardent supplication, salvation through work and love is revealed by a mystical chorus from a world where all things transitory are but an image. The union of the Latin church hymn with the last scene in Part II of Faust is, in spite of the dominating chorus, a Symphony, which is proved by the clearly defined sonata-form of the first movement—a symphony which employs the human voices as instruments *without treating them as such; they do not vie with the orchestra, the choral writing itself being of the most wonderful sonority. Faust's course to heaven is the reply and fulfillment of the hymn *Veni, creator spiritus*, † here overflowing with desire, in the impetus of a march-rhythm, then carried to the climax of a fugue. Sainly hermits on the slopes above begin at the words: "Waldung, sie schwankt

* Wagner has already said this of the *Missa Solemnis*. It seems only here to fit exactly.

† The Hymnus "Veni, creator spiritus," according to one tradition composed by Charlemagne, not to be confused with the Whitsuntide Sequence "Veni, sancte spiritus," is generally attributed to Hrabanus Maurus, Archbishop of Mayence (776-856). Mahler composed a less familiar reading of the text.

heran." And now heavenly visions come floating, which recall (as to Goethe) the churchyard frescoes in Pisa, or Dante and Swedenborg. Pater ecstaticus (perhaps St. Francis of Assisi) and Pater profundus (Dominick) first, then—the verses of the Pater seraphicus are passed over—the angels bearing the earthly remains of Faust. The "gerettet" (saved!) is exactly the counterpart of the "accende lumen sensibus," and the grandiose resemblance that exists between the themes of the first and second parts becomes quite clear in its relationship. When the angels sing: "Uns bleibt ein Erdenrest, zu tragen peinlich," it is an exact repetition of the motive "in-firma nostri corporis." Everywhere begins a triumph of redemption through the medium of supplication. One of the penitents, otherwise called Gretchen, points out the newcomer, who quickly resigns himself to the celestial force and is borne thereby. It sounds as at the "Imple superna gratia, quæ tu creasti, pectora." The wise become fools in heaven; the maiden, transfigured by love, has become wise. She prays now: "Vergönne mir, ihn zu belehren" and the hymnus "Veni, creator spiritus" is intoned. From word to word, from tone to tone, the unity is knotted together. All that is transitory is but an image.

A last climax, a final culmination, leads from the first whisper of the *chorus mysticus* to a new outburst of undreamed-of glory of sonority; and following the significantly repeated "ewig" and "hinan," the ever-onstriving song of supplication of the first beginning, now as a broad, joyous chorale, comes to rest in the majesty of heaven.

How incessantly Mahler penetrated into the meaning of these last verses of Goethe, which most people simply accept, and seemed to find in them the arcana of artistic creation, is shown in a letter written to his wife in 1909:

"Now the interpretation of works of art is quite another matter, as you know from the plastic arts. The *rational* part, *i. e.*, that which has to be separated from the intelligence, is nearly

always the inessential part, and in reality only a veil which covers its form. So far as the soul has need of a body—nothing can be said to the contrary—the artist must take his means of representation from the rational world. Wherever he has himself not yet penetrated to clearness, or, as should be said, to completeness, the rational elements overgrow the artistic and inconsistent ones, and demand urgently an explanation. ‘Faust’ is, it is true, a proper mix-up of all these things; and, as its creation occupied the whole of a long life, of course the stones out of which the edifice is erected are quite unequal and often enough have remained merely material. The result is that one must approach the work in various ways and from various directions. But the principal thing, all the same, is the artistic unity, which cannot be expressed in dry words. Truth is imparted differently to every different person—and for everybody differently at different epochs; just as with Beethoven’s symphonies, which are for everybody—and at every different time—constantly something new and different. Shall I tell you then in what state my ‘rationality’ finds itself as concerns these last verses of ‘Faust’? At any rate I shall try—I don’t know whether I shall succeed or not. Well, I take these four lines in the most intimate connection with what precedes: on the one hand as a direct continuation of what goes before, on the other as the apex of the enormous pyramid of the whole work, which has shown us a whole world of figures, situations and developments. Everything points—at first indistinctly—from scene to scene (especially in Part II, where the author himself had so far ripened) and ever more consciously to this one end; unspeakable, hardly realised, but ever ardently perceived.

“Everything is only the *Image* of something, whose realisation can be only the *insufficient* expression of that which is here required. *Transitory* things may perhaps be described, but what we feel and surmise and never *reach*, that is, what can here never become *realised*, but which is durable and im-

perishable behind all appearance, is *indescribable*, and that which draws us forward with mystical power—what every creature, perhaps even stones, feels implicitly to be the centre of its being: what Goethe here calls, once more in an *Image*, the '*eternal womanly*'—that is, the element of *repose*, the *goal*; in opposition to the eternal longing, striving, forwards-straining towards this goal—that is, the '*eternal manly*' characteristics. You are quite right to designate it as the might of love. There are innumerable conceptions and names for it—only think how children and animals, how lower and higher mankind live and exist—Goethe himself brings here, and more clearly the nearer he approaches the close, an endless ladder of these images to representation:—Faust's passionate search for Helena, still again in the Walpurgis Night; for Homunculus, for the still unborn; through the various forms of being of higher and lower order, ever more consciously and more purely represented and expressed, up to the *Mater gloriosa*—this is the personification of the eternal womanly.

"Therefore, directly succeeding the final scene, Goethe speaks personally to his hearers and says:

"*All transitory things* (such as I have showed you on these two evenings) are but *Images*; of course, *insufficient* in their earthly appearance. But there, freed from the flesh of earthly insufficiency, they will be *realised*; and then we shall no longer need such transcriptions, such comparisons, such images for them. There these things are *done* that I have tried to describe, but which are in reality *indescribable*. And indeed, what? I can only say it once more by means of an image:

"The *eternal womanly* impulse has *drawn* us *onward*; we are there, we repose, we possess what we on earth could only strive after and desire. The Christian calls it '*eternal felicity*,' and I must make use of this beautiful and sufficient mythological idea as the means of my expression—the most adequate attainable to this epoch of mankind.

“I hope I have expressed myself clearly.* In the case of such infinitely delicate, and (as said above) *unrational* things, the danger of being led astray by mere words is constantly near. That is why all commentaries are so odious.”

THE LAST STAGE AND LAST WORKS

In September of 1910, the general rehearsals for the Eighth Symphony began in Munich. Mahler came from Toblach after a cold and rainy summer, worn out with work and already more than half ill. But he at once regained his wonderful strength, and those who were present at these twice daily renewed exertions, felt with pleasure how the work was growing with each. The choruses came from Vienna and Leipzig, then came the soloists. But theirs was nothing compared with the joy of the children from the Central Sing-Schule in Munich, who had long since closed a firm bond of friendship with Mahler. In the streets they greeted him with shouts, and he had praise and affectionate sympathy for them on every occasion. For both performances the twice three thousand seats—so many people does the great Exhibition Hall hold—were sold out. Friends, admirers, judges, enemies, had come

* It is difficult to render the point in a translation. In his letter, Mahler underscored the words printed here in italics, which are those of the *Chorus mysticus* that closes the Second Part of “Faust”:

Alles Vergängliche
Ist nur ein Gleichnis;
Das Unzulängliche,
Hier wird's Ereignis;
Das Unbeschreibliche,
Hier ist's getan;
Das Ewig-Weibliche
Zieht uns hinan.

One has a wonderful feeling of “reading between the lines,” in a literal sense.
[Translator's note.]

from all parts of the world. It was shown here for the first time that this generation really had an idea of what a man like Mahler signified. And as on the evening of the 12th of September he stepped before his thousand performers and raised his bâton, the jubilation of the festive crowd hindered the commencement for minutes. Then all became still. And then. . . the last notes died away. All was still for an instant. And then the storm broke loose from performers as well as hearers and continued for nearly half an hour. Nobody moved until Mahler had appeared again and again. Then all was over with the good manners of the children's choir. They ran down to meet the quite helpless victor, seized his hand and rained flowers upon him. Outside the carriages were waiting, but when Mahler came, with happiness such as he had hardly ever before experienced written on his features, he could only slowly find his way through the still excited crowd. The joy on the second evening was no less. It seemed as though Mahler had at least reached the summit of his life and fame. It only seemed so. Tired, he departed from Munich that had given him so much. (And it would be unjust here to forget the services of Mahler's manager, Mr. Emil Gutmann, who stimulated, arranged and carried the performances through. Mahler often enough lost courage and patience.) The "critical" reflection of these days was without brilliance. The old friends remained, but the old opposers were there, too, even if they now spoke with incomparably more respect. What is said in this book about the relation of genius to its time and its adversaries was repeated exactly. I call to witness the Strassburg University Professor Robert Holtzmann, whose essay on "Mahler's Eighth Symphony and the Critics" fitly characterises the inextricable confusion. Holtzmann takes note of a question certain opponents have recently brought forward—that of race. For on this occasion some of the more rabid of his enemies accused him not only of Jewish but also of superficial Romanish

music-making. The true essence of German art was said to be unattainable to this man, who had worked and created at the very centre of the circle of German culture. Holtzmann finds sagacious words to meet the foul-mouthed materialism and gall of such theories, and others to warn against setting an exaggerated value upon the opinion of the critics at all. Some day it will be necessary to say more about the status of writing on musical subjects.

Mahler remained a short time in Vienna, and acquired an estate in the mountains of the Semmering, where, near the town, but still in the quietude of nature, he intended building a house, a place for him to work. The whole winter he and his were busy with the plans. As early as October this time he left for America. There began the second season of the Philharmonic Orchestra under his direction. In the first year forty-six concerts had been given by the Society, which Mahler had completely transformed after having taken it over in a state of serious artistic and material difficulties. This time there were to be sixty-five, as the greater number of concerts promised a greater gain. Mahler agreed, for an only slightly increased salary, and the weight of a multifarious activity soon weighed upon his shoulders. Had this been the only weight! Whilst attacks of the illness (angina) of the previous summer and autumn recurred, troubles also arose with the committee of the Philharmonic Society. Mahler was certainly no easy-going master in America either. In the service of the works he demanded everything attainable, and he did not seek to do so by means of social manoeuvres, which all his life long he had never known. He also let fall many a sharp word, which, although unpremeditated and as quickly forgotten by him, were remembered and intensified by those they struck. Amongst the ladies of the committee—ladies had brought together the means for the undertaking—there were ambitious ones who sought to make their influence felt. If this emphasis upon material influence was perhaps typically

American, one is still reminded of Vienna and other towns in the Old World when an American newspaper wrote: "Perhaps if he had gone to afternoon teas, he would have been more popular, and would have been alive to-day." Very American, too, was the preponderance of the Musicians' Union, which treated purely artistic matters only too often from the standpoint of a local trade union. But at the same time, it is only just to recognise that Mahler's greatness was also realised in America, that he had loyal admirers there as everywhere, and also new and no less faithful friends; and that Mahler, although he spoke depressingly of many transatlantic matters, still preferred his work in New York to a "Gastdirigieren" (traveling-conductorship) from town to town in Europe, or to being an inactive spectator in Vienna.

But in the middle of February fresh confusion arose. In the irritation, his old heart-disorder reappeared, which, through the excessive strain and perpetual insufficiency of a heroic life, and not least through the struggle against stupidity and malice, had already been observed in Vienna. Then came another attack of angina. Though ill with fever, he still conducted on the 21st—and then broke down. There still remained seventeen concerts, which were taken over by Mahler's leader and friend, Theodore Spiering. On account of heart-disease, the patient's state was recognised as hopeless. But the journey to Europe was risked in order to try a serum treatment in Paris. It was, however, without result. The journey was undertaken at the beginning of April, and during the whole month the illness developed from day to day. At last Frau Mahler called the Vienna Professor Chwostek to Paris. It was a relief for Mahler to speak German again with a doctor; in fever the use of French was difficult for him. This doctor could see no hope either, but expected an alleviation if the invalid should visit some familiar neighbourhood. Even the mere announcement that he could travel lent him new courage, if perhaps only apparently. In Vienna many

friends had expressed their sympathy: professors at the university, the orchestra of the Opera, artists of reputation sent him messages, and gave him pleasure therewith. Mahler's feeling at having returned amongst friends confirmed the doctor's opinion. He well knew that he was in danger, perhaps even gave himself up. In such a condition it is but human to encounter fate by flight. With the greatest difficulty he was brought to a sanatorium in the neighbourhood of Vienna. The tearful remarks about this last journey had better have been left unsaid. Mahler did not wish to die "only in Vienna." And even if he had, what an honour for the town that had now even allowed him to live in it!

On the 18th of May, all hope was suddenly given up, the decline began in the afternoon, and an inflammation of the lungs led rapidly to the end. At eleven o'clock at night, Gustav Mahler died. He had not reached the age of fifty-one.

Now, of course, every one's conscience was awakened, and in the flood of oratory that poured over Mahler's bier were to be heard expressions of respect, regret and affection. In the prepared and even unprepared articles that were published, many beautiful things were said of him. But still more distortions; and not a few remained incorrigible even in the face of death. Others, too, especially in mercurial Vienna, behaved merrily, as though they had been on Mahler's side from the first, and had never behaved scurvily. Gustav Mahler was dead; he could now disturb no more; he might be as great a man as people pleased.

Meanwhile the body was brought for burial to the cemetery of Grinzing, a little village suburb of Vienna, at the foot of the nearest hill of the Viennese Forest. It was placed in the tiny chapel, just big enough to hold the coffin and the first wreaths. The remainder, from everywhere where Mahler was known and loved, were so numerous that they had to be placed along the whole path to the grave of Mahler's little daughter, for he had wished to be buried beside his child.

Three inscriptions have remained in my memory: "The rich one, who has caused us that deepest grief—no longer to possess the saintly man Gustav Mahler—has left us for life the imperishable ideal of his work and works." From Arnold Schönberg and some of his pupils. "The grieving Fourth Gallery of the Vienna Royal Opera, in ineffaceable remembrance. Figaro; Fidelio; Iphigenia; Tristan." "The Teaching Staff and Pupils of the Central Sing-Schule, Munich; to the Composer and Conductor of the Eighth Symphony."

Mahler had wished for a simple burial unaccompanied by word or music, and people were thus deprived of their "spectacle." In order to deter those who "wanted to have been there," and also because the small church and cemetery of Grinzing did not allow it, both were closed, and admission was allowed only to the holders of entrance-cards. And even then many who had them were obliged to wait outside the church. Thence the coffin was carried through streaming rain to the burial-place, and immediately on arrival interred without further ceremony. The crowd, still many hundreds, was scarce able to speak. The rain had ceased, a wonderful rainbow became visible, and a nightingale's voice was heard through the silence. Then fell the last clods, and all was over.

A splendid memorial was immediately to be raised. None of marble or stone. Mahler had often spoken of the lot of poor and unrecognised masters in his art. And it was in a certain sense fulfilling his wish to undertake the care of such as deserved support. Even before the funeral, a number of wealthy friends had collected, at first amongst themselves, without intending to make their action public. But as the result sufficed, an appeal was issued for an international foundation which bears Gustav Mahler's name. The details of arrangement and administration are not yet definitely determined, and this will not be easy to do, as it is intended to prevent any later intrusion of professional and academical music; for the present Frau Alma Marie Mahler, who has

chosen Dr. Richard Strauss, Busoni and Bruno Walter as advisers, will ward off the danger.

And one other statement. In the Regiecollegium of the Opera, Kapellmeister Schalk proposed that no performance should be given on the day of the interment. Director Gregor and the other members agreed; but sanction from above was not forthcoming in time. And neither during his illness nor after his death did the Court once think of the man who had exhausted himself during the ten years he served the Imperial Opera, and brought honour and wealth to the institute. Needless to say, the corporation of Vienna also kept silence.

Mahler's works will now profit by performances worthy of them and their composer; to be sure, they are also at the mercy of that sensationalism which masquerades as "piety." Everywhere during last year celebration festivals, performances *In Memoriam*, took place. Is it not typical that in Vienna after Mahler's fiftieth birthday not a single thing of his own was performed? whereas now no less than six symphonies and *Das klagende Lied*, to say nothing of countless *Liederabende*, were given in a single winter. Even the Philharmonic Orchestra, which year in, year out, diligently held aloof from Mahler, desired to show that it is not the last amongst orchestras, and waited upon its subscribers with a symphony. Or that, after Munich, no town was able to fulfill the "enormous" requirements of the Eighth Symphony so long as Mahler lived, and then, during the season 1911-12, no less than fifteen performances were counted. . . . Composers will see what they have to do. Thus the neglect of years was to be made good; it is to be hoped that it will not provide an excuse for continuing that neglect a season later.

We have already mentioned the posthumous works in this book; let us now consider them in detail.

Mahler used to say that his works were anticipated experiences. That is in keeping with his visionary nature and

confidence. There was a time when he enjoyed the triumph of the Eighth Symphony; the last September days in Munich were its summit and end. The work itself was completed in 1906. The suffering and bitterness of farewell are foreshadowed in the *Lied von der Erde*.

Mahler received from his friend, the late Hofrat Dr. Theobald Pollak, the collection of old and new Chinese poems which Hans Bethge has arranged and put into verse, "Die Chinesische Flöte." A splendid, delicate, yet earth-born perfume of melancholy rises from these pages. It is as though one had entered into a kingdom of hopelessness, whose numbing atmosphere one cannot escape. Mahler was so impressed by the book, that he chose seven of these poems and translated them into his language. He not only clothed them with music; he also remodelled Bethge's words, as he felt and needed them. A tenor and alto (or baritone) sing them. The strength of the orchestra is midway between the lyrics and the symphonies.

At the beginning stands the "Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde" (Drinking-song of the Woefulness of Earth), after the great Li-Tai-Po. A horn-theme rushes by, the orchestra after it; the voice of a tenor mocks in drunken words the nothingness of mankind in the midst of the ever-flowering earth. And he praises the wine that brings forgetfulness. "Dunkel ist das Leben, ist der Tod." (Sombre is life, is death.) The line recurs three times—also thematically. The music hovers between grandiose contrasts of wild intoxication and sweet, reflective melancholy. In the general lines, in working-out, combinations and character, it resembles a short first movement of such strength as Mahler loved. It is also the one that most resembles the idea one had of his music. For already in the second number, "Der Einsame im Herbst" (Tschang-tsi) (The Lonely One in Autumn), a marvellous exoticism makes itself felt, which is of endless charm precisely because one feels Mahler in it at every moment. This lonely

one laments the withering of nature in fog and frost. "Es gemahnt mich an den Schlaf. . . . Sonne der Liebe, willst du nie erscheinen, um meine bitteren Tränen mild aufzutrocknen?" (It reminds me of sleep. . . . Sun of Love, wilt thou never appear to dry my bitter tears with thy mild ray?) The whole is in the manner of an Andante; accompanying the dragging string-figure the wood-wind sighs over long organ-points. The words are sung by a contralto. Deep melancholy dies quietly away, to be suddenly banished by a gaily agitated movement. "Von der Jugend" (Li-Tai-Po) (Of Youth) this third poem is called, at the beginning playful, gay and joyous. The singer (tenor) has a beautiful picture before him: a small porcelain pavilion where friends sit pleasantly together "drinking, chatting, several writing verses." Suddenly a change into minor; in the water they see the reflection of all this. But serenity soon regains the upper hand. How beautiful, that everything should be standing on its head in the porcelain pavilion. It is already past, whispering, shadowy, and still so full of soul and meaning; but the reflection of youth, now only the reflection, cannot be effaced. He who has seen it prepares himself for farewell; he must imagine that everything has its reflection in the water. Again a charming lyric begins "Von der Schönheit" (Li-Tai-Po) (Of Beauty), almost a minuet. Young girls are plucking flowers by the riverside. Boys are exercising their horses by the water's edge. And the fairest maiden sends long looks full of desire after "him." "Ihre stolze Haltung ist nur Verstellung. In dem Funkeln ihrer grossen Augen, in dem Dunkel ihres heissen Blickes schwingt klagend noch die Erregung ihres Herzens nach. . ." (Her haughty pose is a mere pretence. In the sparkling of her great eyes, in the dark depths of her ardent glances, there trembles the dolorous vibration of her agitated heart.) As a minuet once more (which alternates with a melody almost credibly Chinese) the music dies away. In the middle section the steeds prance in, pant and rear.

They are almost visible—but it is only the reflection, the picture in the water.

“Der Trunkene im Frühling.” (One Drunken in Spring-tide.) (Li-Tai-Po.) A poem almost without equal. A bird speaks to the drunken one, who is oblivious of the world, of the spring; penetrating through the wild, captivating song, the melody of a single violin, which affects by its simple goodness. Out of deep dreaming (the words are by Mahler and quite in Mahler’s style) the drunken one listens. “Der Vogel singt und lacht.” (The bird sings and laughs.) But the man, to whom the wonder of the blossoms has nothing to say, drinks and sings and sinks again into sleep. “Was geht denn mich der Frühling an? Lasst mich betrunken sein!” (What care I for Spring? Let me be drunk!) Mad, delirious harmonies, audacious even for the composer of the Seventh Symphony; quite stormy until the end.

And then the last word, “Der Abschied” (The Farewell), put together from two of the poems (the first by Mong-Kao-Jen, the second by Wang-Wei) by Mahler himself and considerably altered. It is the lower-voiced singer that has this number. (I would decide in the second part for a man’s voice: even “Der Einsame im Herbst” should be sung by a man, however wonderfully Frau Cahier seized the spirit of the work at the first performance.) The music is here naught but expression, and well-nigh rhapsodical speaking, sighing, lamenting and pining. Long calls of the oboe and flute resound in the approaching night. The wind blows gently. Everything breathes sleep. “Die müden Menschen gehen heimwärts, um vergessenes Glück und Jugend neu zu lernen.” (The weary folk fare homeward, forgotten joy and youth to learn afresh.) And in the dark a man awaits his friend to say farewell. The friend comes and goes again, for the last time, solitary into the mountains.

Ich suche Ruhe für mein einsam Herz!
 Ich wandle nach der Heimat, meiner Stätte!
 Ich werde niemals in die Ferne schweifen.
 Still ist mein Herz und harret seiner Stunde!
 Die liebe Erde allüberall blüht auf,
 Blüht auf im Lenz und grünt aufs neu
 Allüberall, und ewig, ewig blauen licht die Fernen.

(I seek repose for my lonely heart!
 I travel toward my home, my dwelling-place!
 I never shall roam afar.
 Still is my heart, and waiteth for its hour!
 Around me everywhere the dear earth blooms,
 It blooms in Springtime and again grows green
 Around about, and ever, ever glow blue, distant hills.)

This "ewig" (ever) is heard ever deeper and softer. And with it dies away this penetrating lament, over uneasy chords on the celesta, without having found the peace of a final chord. What a mystery are these words and this music! What a tremendous mystery! "Sombre are life and death."

Did Mahler depart thus, unconsciously uttering this decision with the hypnotic power of his genius? Many things lead us to think that he had, though so young in years, measured his own days; that he had grown out of a world that he had read to the heart of, and which could mean nothing more to him. But he to it? Was it capable of appreciating the fullness and purity of his being and his actions? Did it not find "the same everywhere," and the "good" in the first or even the first that comes? What could appearance signify to him?

Laments and questions! The **Ninth Symphony**, which was performed for the first time at the Vienna Musical Festival in June, 1912, by Bruno Walter, follows in the path of the *Lied von der Erde*. A brazen resignation; a supernatural solitude, beyond joy and pain; a farewell without bitterness. Mahler's orchestra, alone, speaks it; an orchestra more per-

suasive than ever before, by means of its art, however, not through amplitude of apparatus. The old form is completely retained, only yet further enriched. Perhaps most wonderfully in the first movement, andante, *D* major. Everything that was previously great in Mahler's works here grows new, convincing, and profoundly moving out of the heart of nature and art. For a comparison we may best take the first movement of the Seventh. There is a curious quotation from the *Kindertotenlieder*. Then follows, as second movement, a Ländler, in the last as formerly in the first of the symphonies; this time wild, ironical and rough. And then another derision of the world in the Rondo-Burlesque of the third movement. According to the form, it might be a Finale; it even recalls the Finale of the Fifth. The ascent to the end and climax is titanic in its might. Then follows peace, absolute and overwhelming peace: the last movement, adagio, *D* flat major, is a distinct farewell, and bears a remarkable resemblance to the last song of the *Lied von der Erde*.

And there is still a **Tenth Symphony**, even if not completed, and which will not be published. What can, what could it still have to say? It is frightful that Mahler should have died so young, but after the *Lied von der Erde*, after this "Ninth," we can understand his almost organic yearning for peace and a new life.

This death was an enigma, just as this life was, as all life is. Perhaps we shall understand it better later. For this inexhaustible wealth whose name is Gustav Mahler does not belong to music alone. We know to-day that he was one who was destined to be lord and leader; one whom we must follow. It was a duty to combat for him. It is a joy to be certain of his victory. Intelligence errs, but not sensibility.

A CONVERSATION ON THE NIGHT OF HIS DEATH

AN EPILOGUE

We were going along the shore of the lake in the May twilight. The great city was far distant. Pinetree trunks were flaming in the last rays of the sinking sun. Frau Agnes was joyful.

"To-morrow, he will be dead," I thought.

She sang a few bars of Brünnhilde. I was astonished to thus hear the soulful lyrical voice. Then she said: "Often I hate Wagner. But I should like to sing his music, to be able to sing it on the stage. For the artist he gives the greatest happiness and the richest outlook."

I nodded. The Prelude to *Lohengrin* descended in my imagination. We had to speak of its tones; and once more I saw the man who had unsealed it for the living.

"Outlooks into the future," I said, "are opening themselves to-day—perhaps—(such as with Kokoschka; and Arnold Schönberg follows proudly his own path forwards). But during these days, the whole future seems to me to be veiled.

"He who is to leave us, opened the outlook into the past: He taught us, in the highest sense of the word, the development of the opera. It is to him that we owe Beethoven, Mozart, Gluck and Weber. And I, Frau Agnes, have not lived in vain. For I have heard and seen all these things, I have experienced them and borne witness of them. A few years, and nobody will believe it, nobody seize it. And it also will belong to the past."

"Tell me more; more," she said.

"I think of *Fidelio*. Every tone, every beat, every step, every gesture, was tragic, supreme, a redemption—was

Desire, Woman, Man and God. I think of the symphony *Leonore*. I think of streaming sunlight; of the jubilant Beethoven in the last scene of all, that of the liberation. I think of *Don Giovanni*; of the velvet splendour of a southern starlit sky; of a gay castle; of a conversation in a churchyard at which we shuddered; of the cutting sonority of the cembalo (he played it himself); of the raging finale, all blood-red and hellish. I think of *Euryanthe*. It had become all law and splendour; the whole present shone in it. I think of *Iphigenia*. There stood the Chevalier Gluck and celebrated his right as though through Nietzsche and Hofmannsthal. He who is on the point of leaving us, he it is that created what none of us who hoped for such festivals of German art had ever dreamed of. Here was the attainment and the end, the summit of ten years of work, possible through this man alone. Here was a master, a creator, a consummator."

Frau Agnes asked: "What path led him so high? And how was this possible for him, after twenty years of the theatre?"

"Because he had seen through the theatre. Because he had grown up from his own music. Because the present blazed in him and was fanned by past and future. Because he formed a thing of his own out of what was foreign, and something for the distant future out of what was his own. What the lyrics and symphonies contain is, for us, for all, and for you because for the best, still buried treasure. Those who judged, explained the musician by means of the conductor and the interpreter. Those who seek knowledge will learn to interpret others by interpreting their own selves. Only he who was himself a sun could, like him, look so steadily at the sun; who, himself a Titan, unloose Titans. Only he who had faith, could endure his daimon.

"How beautifully you, Frau Agnes, sang his *Urlicht* from the *Wunderhorn*, this turning-point of the Second Symphony! That is the way to his nature, as I have perceived and pro-

claimed it in the feast-days that my life has vouchsafed me. And you must not ask, not doubt; great kingdoms open themselves only to faith, submission and patience. Those who belong to the church invisible belong to him, and must belong to him. Do you remember what you said at the close of Reinhardt's Second Part of Faust? That here we must despair of words, that all words were no solution, and that still no music on earth could lead into this heaven? But you will learn, like the twice three thousand in Munich, to experience in this Eighth Symphony the heavenly music to Faust's consummation. It will be ever-present to us in these verses. We shall ever demand these works and melodies redeemed by striving—when the time is no longer one of transition, when it no longer worships the critic; in an approaching time when wisdom will be knowledge, in that of the next great liberation. We feel it coming. We are helping, you, I and love. For all are building who have grace and good-will. All, all are laboring for the work. Amen."

We went home; after hours of profound emotion, during which we had thought of what must come, the midnight was passed. The musician with the chiselled head of a young saint came to meet us. "He is dead," he whispered, and stood in the uncertain grey of the morning twilight.

APPENDIX

I. The Works of Gustav Mahler

1. Choral and Orchestral Works

- Das klagende Lied Universal Edition
for soprano, alto and tenor soli,
mixed chorus and orchestra.
- Symphony No. 1 in *D* major Universal Edition
for large orchestra.
- Symphony No. 2 in *C* minor Universal Edition
for large orchestra with chorus and
alto solo.
- Symphony No. 3 in *D* minor Universal Edition
for large orchestra with female chorus
and boys' chorus, and alto solo.
- Symphony No. 4 in *G* major Universal Edition
for large orchestra and soprano solo.
- Symphony No. 5 in *C* sharp minor Edition Peters
for large orchestra.
- Symphony No. 6 in *A* minor Universal Edition
for large orchestra.
- Symphony No. 7 in *E* minor Universal Edition
for large orchestra.
- Symphony No. 8 in *E* flat major Universal Edition
for large orchestra, two mixed cho-
ruses, boys' chorus, and seven soloists.
- Das Lied von der Erde, a Symphony Universal Edition
for tenor and alto (or baritone) soli
and orchestra.
- Symphony No. 9 in *D* major Universal Edition
for large orchestra.

2. *Lyrical Works*

a. With pianoforte accompaniment. Schott & Co.

- Frühlingsmorgen (R. Leander)
- Erinnerung (R. Leander)
- Hans und Grete (Volkslied)
- Serenade aus "Don Juan" (Tirso de Molina)
- Phantasie aus "Don Juan" (Tirso de Molina)

From "Des Knaben Wunderhorn"

- Um schlimme Kinder artig zu machen
- Ich ging mit Lust durch einen grünen Wald
- Aus! Aus!
- Starke Einbildungskraft
- Zu Strassburg auf der Schanz
- Ablösung im Sommer
- Scheiden und Meiden
- Nicht wiedersehen!
- Selbstgefühl

b. With orchestral accompaniment. Universal Edition

From "Des Knaben Wunderhorn"

- Der Schildwache Nachtlid
- Verlorne Müh'
- Trost im Unglück
- Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht
- Das irdische Leben
- Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt
- Rheinlegendchen
- Lied des Verfolgten im Turme
- Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen
- Lob des hohen Verstandes
- Es sungen drei Engel einen süssen Gesang
- Urlicht (Alto Solo from the Second Symphony)

Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen (Gustav Mahler)

- Wenn mein Schatz Hochzeit macht
- Ging heut' morgen über's Feld

Ich hab' ein glühend Messer
Die zwei blauen Augen von meinem Schatz

Kindertotenlieder (Rückert)

- ✓ Nun will die Sonn' so hell aufgeh'n
- ✓ Nun seh' ich wohl, warum so dunkle Flammen
- ✓ Wenn dein Mütterlein
- ✓ Oft denk' ich, sie sind nur ausgegangen
- ✓ In diesem Wetter

From "Des Knaben Wunderhorn"

- Revelge
- ✓ Der Tambourg'sell

Five Lyrics (Rückert)

- Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder
- ✓ Ich atmet' einen linden Duft
- ✓ Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen
- Liebst du um Schönheit
- ✓ Um Mitternacht

3. Arrangements

C. M. von Weber, Die drei Pintos C. F. Kahnt
Mozart, Die Hochzeit des Figaro C. F. Peters

"Arrangement of the Vienna Royal Opera."

J. S. Bach, Suite from his orchestral works . . . G. Schirmer
Arranged for concert performance, the continuo-part filled out.

N. B.—The publishers' names here given refer to piano arrangement and so-called "miniature score." In the case of the Kindertotenlieder, Revelge, Der Tambourg'sell, and the lyrics after Rückert, the full score is published by C. F. Kahnt Nachfolger, Leipzig, and of the Seventh Symphony by Bote & Bock, Berlin.

II. A Few Books About Mahler

(Newspaper and magazine articles are here omitted, as they are only with difficulty accessible.)

1. Ludwig Schieder mair. "Gustav Mahler." Leipzig, 1900.
2. Ernst Otto Nodnagel. "Jenseits von Wagner und Liszt." Königsberg, 1902.

3. Richard Specht. "Gustav Mahler." Berlin, 1905.
4. William Ritter. "Études d'Art étranger." Paris, 1905.
5. Ludwig Hartmann. "Weber-Mahler. Die drei Pintos." Schlesingers Opernführer, No. 80.
6. Dr. Paul Stefan. "Gustav Mahlers Erbe. Ein Beitrag zur neuesten Geschichte der deutschen Bühne und des Herrn Felix von Weingartner." Munich, 1908.

(And its pendant):

- Paul Stauber. "Das wahre Erbe Mahlers." Vienna, 1909.
7. Dr. Paul Stefan (*edited by*). "Gustav Mahler, ein Bild seiner Persönlichkeit in Widmungen." Munich, 1910. With contributions by Auguste Rodin, Conrad Ansorge, Gerhart Hauptmann, Guido Adler, Angelo Neumann, Max Steinitzer, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Hermann Bahr, Oskar Bie, Julius Bittner, Alfred Roller, Marie Gutheil-Schoder, Hans Pfitzner, Anna Bahr-Mildenburg, Ferdinand Gregori, Max Burckhard, Carl Hagemann, Oskar Fried, Stefan Zweig, Romain Rolland, Richard Strauss, Arthur Schnitzler, Georg Göhler, Max Schillings, Max Reger, Paul Dukas, Bruno Walter, Alfredo Casella, William Ritter and Gustav Klimt.
 8. Dr. Paul Stefan. "Gustav Mahler. Eine Studie über Persönlichkeit und Werk." Munich. First edition, September, 1910. Second enlarged edition, November, 1911. Third and Fourth enlarged and thoroughly revised editions, March, 1912.

Two other important works about Mahler are in preparation and may be mentioned here:

Arnold Schönberg. A Lecture on Gustav Mahler, held in Prague in May, 1912; an English translation of which has been undertaken by the writer.

Richard Specht. A large Biography of Mahler.



