

The chief characteristic of this new score is that of power. Not since Berlioz have such magnificent ensembles been written. In violence of energy they surpass those of *Le Roi David*. What is especially remarkable is that this force is much less dramatic than lyric. Exactly here is to be found the distinction which sets Honegger apart from Strauss, with whom it is so natural to compare him. In everything he writes Strauss shows himself a man of the theatre; he always places his art at the service of the drama. Honegger, on the other hand, does not blindly follow the outlines of a dramatic situation. It is when nothing happens on the stage, in the voice of a whole people raised in thanksgiving, that his gifts are most manifest. Through his sensual and turbulent music, there flows the great lyric inspiration of the Bible.

By Henry Prunieres

RUSSIA'S NEWEST COMPOSERS

FROM the time of Michail Iwanow Glinka, the father of its national music, Russia has been rich in great talents. Generations of composers have rapidly succeeded one another, each presenting to the world brilliant names. Glinka was followed by Alexander Dargomizky, who laid the foundation of Russian declamatory operatic style. After Dargomizky came the famous *Five* with Moussorgsky, Borodin, Rimsky-Korsakow, Balakierew and Cui. Then Tschaikowsky appeared, the first to place Russian music on a world plane. Rimsky-Korsakow founded the so-called "new Russian School" which included Alexander Glazunow, Anatol Liadow and others. At the same time Sergei Iwanowich Taniew began composing and after him came Sergei Rachmaninow, the gifted Alexander Scriabin and Nicolai Medtner. Not all of these men have finished their careers, yet we already have an entirely "contemporary" generation of Russian composers headed by Igor Strawinsky and Sergei Prokofieff and counting in their ranks such important figures as Nicolai Miaskowsky, Samuel Fineberg and others.

There is today, however, an even newer school, a group of talented youths either just beginning their work as composers or trying their strength in first, but already promising attempts.

One of the chief representatives of this young group is Alexander Cherepnin, son of the noted composer Nicolai Cherepnin, who has been living abroad. Being richly endowed and at the same time an excellent pianist, and finding himself recently in the center of musical Europe, he has succeeded in establishing a very good reputation and has been able, thanks to that, to publish the majority of his compositions. His particular gift is an unusual lightness and elegance of style and a complete modernity of artistic figures and forms. The list of his works is already long and covers a wide range of composition, from powerful dramatic pieces to small piano preludes.

His contemporaries in years and in tendency are Leonid Polowinkin and Wladimir Kriukow, who live in Russia. Polowinkin received his education in composition from the composer and pedagogue, Georgi Katuar, in the Moscow Conservatory and proved himself to be the talented possessor of taste and a distinct harmonic style. Like Cherepnin he is a very good pianist but so far his activity has been confined to Moscow. He has written two excellent piano sonatas, a whole series of piano preludes appearing under the common title of *Events*, a group of romances for voice with chamber orchestra and chorus accompaniments, and has recently been at work on an opera.

Wladimir Kriukow, a pupil of Nicolai Miascowsky has just finished his course at the Moscow Conservatory. He is more prolific than Polowinkin and has written an opera, *The King in the Market Square* (after Alexander Blok), a symphony, several symphonic poems, several piano sonatas, a series of piano pieces, a number of romances and many other works. He began by imitating Scriabin but finally adapted this inspiration to his own creative style. His compositions have great depth and personal feeling. On the other hand he falls at times into a salon lyricism. So far his best composition is his opera, which combines the refinement and intricate harmony of Scriabin with the dramatic manner of Wagner.

With Kriukow one should speak of Wassily Shirinsky, also a pupil of Miascowsky, who has not yet completed his course at the conservatory. Shirinsky, an excellent violinist, is a member of one of the best Russian quartets. His few compositions are

mostly for string instruments. Shirinsky's style has elegance; his works are marked by a charmingly peaceful lyricism and a delicacy of feeling.

Wessarion Shebalin is much younger than his comrades. He has just begun his musical education in the Moscow Conservatory under the guidance of Miascowsky but he seems nevertheless to be one of the most promising of young talents. By birth he is a Siberian. Less than two years ago he appeared in Moscow bringing strength and freshness of conception and composition from his native land. Several influences are already felt in his work—Borodin, the French, his teacher and others,—but behind these a powerful individuality is discernible. Shebalin has written a string quartet, a little *Quasi-Sonata*, a group of very fine romances, and very recently, a symphony. Shebalin's ability is remarkably self-contained and shows a resistance to the passing influences of fashion.

Alexander Mosolow, also a pupil of Miascowsky in the Moscow Conservatory, is the greatest modernist among his comrades, a true exponent of the left wing. The list of his compositions is long but it is rather difficult as yet to form a final opinion about him. It seems to me that a certain intellectualism and pedantry are present at the expense of originality.

Alexander Abramsky, one of the very youngest pupils of Miascowsky, also belongs to the number of gifted musicians inclined to modernity. Abramsky has distinguished himself as a musical critic, a rare ability among these young men, and has acquired a fine and distinguished literary style.

Moscow now stands definitely at the head of the musical movement of Russia. Leningrad has few forceful creative minds. Of the youngest composers in that city, I can only mention two, Walerian Bogdanow-Berezowsky and Georgi Rimsky-Korsakow. Bogdanow-Berezowsky showed very agreeable musical qualities several years ago. He is now writing a good deal and has conducted his compositions in public. The grandson of the famous Rimsky-Korsakow has founded a circle of devotees to quarter-tone music, in which direction his chief interest lies.

By Victor Belaiev