

now, have not been ready for Indian music. Today we feel kinship with primitive man and respond to it for the first time.

Crude and primitive this music may be, but, throbbing with intense energy, its wild insistent rhythms, its barbaric dynamics fascinate us. One is reverent before its spirit, for the Indians' music is most often a part of their ritualistic dances—Rain-dances, Corn-dances, War-dances—and acquires therefore a religious, or at least a symbolic significance. This is great and unconscious art, which finds its roots deep in the past, in aeons of racial unity and race-tradition. In the early-morning atmosphere of the Far West one's senses are reborn. One marvels anew at sunset and sunrise and at those two eternal phenomena—melody and rhythm. And one sees in the simple strength of Indian music, wild, yet ordered, a complete expression of the soul of a great race.

By Frederick Jacobi

ANOTHER SCHOENBERG DITHYRAMB

OF all living composers who have achieved international fame, the troublesome fellow is still Arnold Schoenberg. We have pretty well got the hang of Stravinsky—or think we have. He no longer shocks, alarms, or puzzles by his riddles and his wild capricious ways. Not always does he even amuse. Signs are not wanting that his once scandalous *Sacre du Printemps* will shortly be heard by audiences with the same equanimity that they mete out to the *Fingal's Cave* overture. Of course Stravinsky may yet turn about and astonish those of his critics who, like Mr. Ernest Newman, have already appraised his worth and designated his permanent place in the cosmos. The composer of *L'Oiseau de Feu*, of *Petrouchka*, and of *Le Sacre* (with its few "great pages" soaring from a trivial undergrowth), this one-time Antichrist of music turned *bon petit maître*, numbers his years, let us not forget, at only two and forty.

Schoenberg at fifty has been extravagantly praised and as hotly denounced, but, save for those who long ago consigned him to everlasting perdition, I am not aware that anybody has attempted the final summing up. The composer of the *Five Pieces for*

Orchestra and of the *Pierrot Lunaire* still baffles critics who have no desire to stamp on him as a limb of Satan, still terrifies the tenderer souls who really believe, little as they may admit it, that the cycle of music ended with the *Vier ernste Gesaenge* of Johannes Brahms.

Expressed opinion of Schoenberg has divided sharply. On the one hand are those critics who, refusing to disregard the history of music as one more mad and negligible Cassandra, give heed to her story. They recall the abuse heaped upon Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, Wagner. They are aware that less than half a century ago a leading music critic of Boston declared that Sterndale Bennett could write a better symphony than Brahms's second; that another reviewer of the same city held that the composer of *Till Eulenspiegel* must be insane; that even the late James Huneker classed Debussy among his musical anarchists.

Remembering all this and much more from the long testimony of history, certain critics of Schoenberg have written of him in purple and swollen praise. What these eager appreciators forget is that history has other counsels of error. A certain Stephen Phillips, a bare quarter of a century ago, was hailed almost at his *début* as an abiding glory to English poetry. Dante, Milton, the Greeks were wrenched from their spheres by habitually sober critics and trotted up to make obeisance before this talented young genius. Today who in the starry universe bothers an instant about Stephen Phillips? But to the Schoenberg dithyramb considerations of that sort mean as little as the warnings of history to his scandalized detractors.

This is prefatory to the admission that I, though baffled by Schoenberg, yet open-minded and desiring guidance, have before me a little book by Paul Stefan, the eminent Viennese critic, entitled *Arnold Schoenberg: Wandlung, Legende, Erscheinung, Bedeutung*, that is prefaced by a *Selbstbildnis* the sight of which would give a nervous child fits; that I read it with my heart full of hope, and put it down still baffled.

Herr Stefan writes of the life, theories, and attainments of his subject; he sketches his development; he briefly analyzes his works. The book is interesting, informative, valuable for reference. But when Stefan, who is no devil's advocate, but quite the

contrary, has said all of his well considered and appreciative say, have I any further clue as to what is the real inwardness of this author of strange, enigmatic, exasperating compositions? Says Herr Stefan, for example, "The magic of the song *Herzgewaechse*, poem by Maeterlinck, lies in the wonderfully delicate atmosphere, in the extraordinarily difficult leading of the soprano, which, rising steadily, reaches the high F (Queen of the Night!), and in the disposition of the accompaniment: celesta, harmonium, and piano." Now, that is all very well if you look at the thing that way, but I remember that when I heard it I didn't, and here Herr Stefan in the matter-of-courseness of his own faith, gives me no reason why I should.

In the section entitled *Bedeutung* I read: "Schoenberg is an ecstatic and a believer—but not from extravagance, from joy in the extreme, by no means yielding to temptation; but because, obedient to a duty, he must seek what might bring more of sorrow than of happiness. He destroys in an instant a slice of his own self, while, obeying the call of a problem, a problem that only he can solve, he seeks and forms the new." From a passage of this sort I get nothing which starts the scales in descent from my ears. I gather that Herr Stefan, expounder and panegyrist, has much to say of interest for those who already have passed the barriers that separate the later Schoenberg from the music of an earlier day and so at least have some basis of comprehension to work on. But to the lesser breeds without the law of the cryptic Viennese musician, the book tells nothing positively helpful. In time the scales may yet fall and I may hear Schoenberg steadily and hear him whole. But whether I then find myself accepting or rejecting, it will be small thanks to this little book. Not here is Paul Stefan the missionary who turns the unconverted heathen toward the burning faith which is Arnold Schoenberg.

By Pitts Sanborn

PLACING THE CRITICS

AN amusing thing where professional criticism of music is undertaken is the readers' estimate of the critic. The only thing more amusing, if the truth could be known, would be the