

picture, still in its embryonic state, the art film. Have they fully succeeded? I think not, despite all that is interesting in their work. In any case, their compositions seem destined to remain remote from the great public, limited to narrow circles. Many artists (Milhaud, and, among the critics, Prunières) believe that in order to achieve a true art work the music should precede the film and that the actors should be governed by the sound of the music which is to accompany the performance. This may be suited to films related to pure dancing but for works of intense dramatic action necessitating a large cast, realization seems a little more difficult. But the attempt should certainly be made.

By Raymond Petit

UNEXPECTED DEVELOPMENTS IN GERMANY

THE union of Germanic and Austrian elements in North Germany is an important feature in recent musical developments. Driven by economic pressure from Vienna, musicians and authors are pouring into Berlin, where the spiritual and artistic tension is so great that every outside stimulus is welcomed with joy.

To be recorded at the head of the page is Arnold Schoenberg's appointment as professor of a master-school at the Berlin Academy, a fact which, of course, will not be without special consequences. These, it is to be hoped, will take quite another form from those made known to us in Vienna. The earlier Schoenberg who fostered so high a degree of conscience in his pupils, converted them into pessimists. They hardly dared to advance a step for fear of repudiating the words of their teacher. Today Schoenberg recognizes himself as one of the "arrived". His philosophy is more cheerful, and no matter how highly he values versatile ability (which for him means an ability grounded in counterpoint), it is to be assumed that he will not draw too tight a rein on the creative fervor of his young followers.

However, one of his faithful band, who for a long time seemed to be retarded rather than advanced by the master's teachings, as a result of this discipline, has produced a masterpiece. The name of Alban Berg has long been known to the initiated, but how many of his works had reached the larger public? One knew

that this composer had a capacity for theoretical analysis which might endanger his creative work. Who had expected of him the expression of elemental passion? But in *Wozzek* one must recognize the most interesting attempt yet made toward the new opera.

The hope of finding in the form of opera any solution for the new music had long been abandoned. For Berlin and Germany, *Wozzek*, for some time to come, has now shifted the burden from concert music to the field of opera. Considered impossible to present, it was ideally produced. Despite the protests of reactionary spirits, a work which denies the old tradition of bel-canto and relentlessly pursues its own direction in a search for truth, has miraculously achieved not only a first night success, but an enduring place in the opera repertoire. All those to whom music is not an art for secret societies, sects and clubs will find extraordinary significance in the immediate and direct effect of this opera on the great masses. *Wozzek* is undoubtedly the most remarkable attempt in the field of opera since Debussy's *Pelléas et Melisande*, with which it has certain features in common. And although in its completely atonal character its origins point back to *Tristan* and bear witness to the teachings of Schoenberg, it is, in the truest meaning of the word, an independent and original work.

German concert music is also eagerly seeking what is new. In fact, perhaps too eagerly, for certain composers feel impelled by their reputations to produce immature, unfinished work. However one can discern even here a line of positive development. There is an attempt, on the one hand, to bridge the gap between instrumental and vocal music, as witness the madrigal choruses of Krenek, Petyrek and Hindemith. Here is a return to an older technique and an older style which can also be traced in the new instrumental music. Is this fashion of returning to a pre-Bach era an indication of reaction? If we consider another important new development such a fear proves groundless. For our composers are once again concentrating on an orchestral style that promises to liberate us from that dryness of chamber-music built so rigorously on the dogma of linearity, from which we have suffered too long. A larger creative vitality refuses to be confined by counterpoint which so limits the bounds of fantasy. Sonority again demands its rights.

Significant in this sense is a *Concerto* for orchestra, by Paul Hindemith, recently introduced by Furtwaengler. While we cannot say that the new style is fully revealed—there is still a wavering between chamber-music and the full-sounding orchestra—its evidences are promising, and from Hindemith, surely a dionysiac spirit, we may hope for a still further advance. What still unfortunately marks his work is a one-sidedness which indicates superficiality and haste. He has, however, revealed certain definite values of an important character, as in his *Serenades*, in which the soprano voice is framed by the viola, oboe and cello. This peculiar investiture is a step toward the expression of a new romanticism not at all related to the past.

While conductors, singers and directors oppose the new music, the International Society carries its development still further. At its meetings chamber-music is fostered, musicians of all countries find a hearing. A violin sonata in three parts, by Karol Rathaus, shows a mingling of the old tradition with the new spirit. An evening of compositions by the Viennese, Rudolf Reti, who failed at the earlier music festival in Prague, presents us with a new personal style not easy to characterize since his music is born of ecstasy, and his gestures are often cramped.

What deep roots Strawinsky has struck in Germany was demonstrated by a Strawinsky festival recently held in Frankfort, at which the only new work was the piano *Serenade*, written in the manner of the piano sonata, a piece which pays tribute chiefly to the contrary spirit that now animates this composer.

One thing is obvious, that even today when economic conditions exclude the "big sensations" from the concert halls, the musical life of Germany continues still varied and prolific.

By Adolph Weissmann

WOZZEK, AN ATONAL OPERA

ALBAN BERG'S *Wozzek* was produced at the Berlin State Opera House last December, under the direction of the genial young Erich Kleiber, with all the circumstance of a "sensation." The premiere occurred during a crisis brought on by a conflict with the composer Max von Schillings, who was director