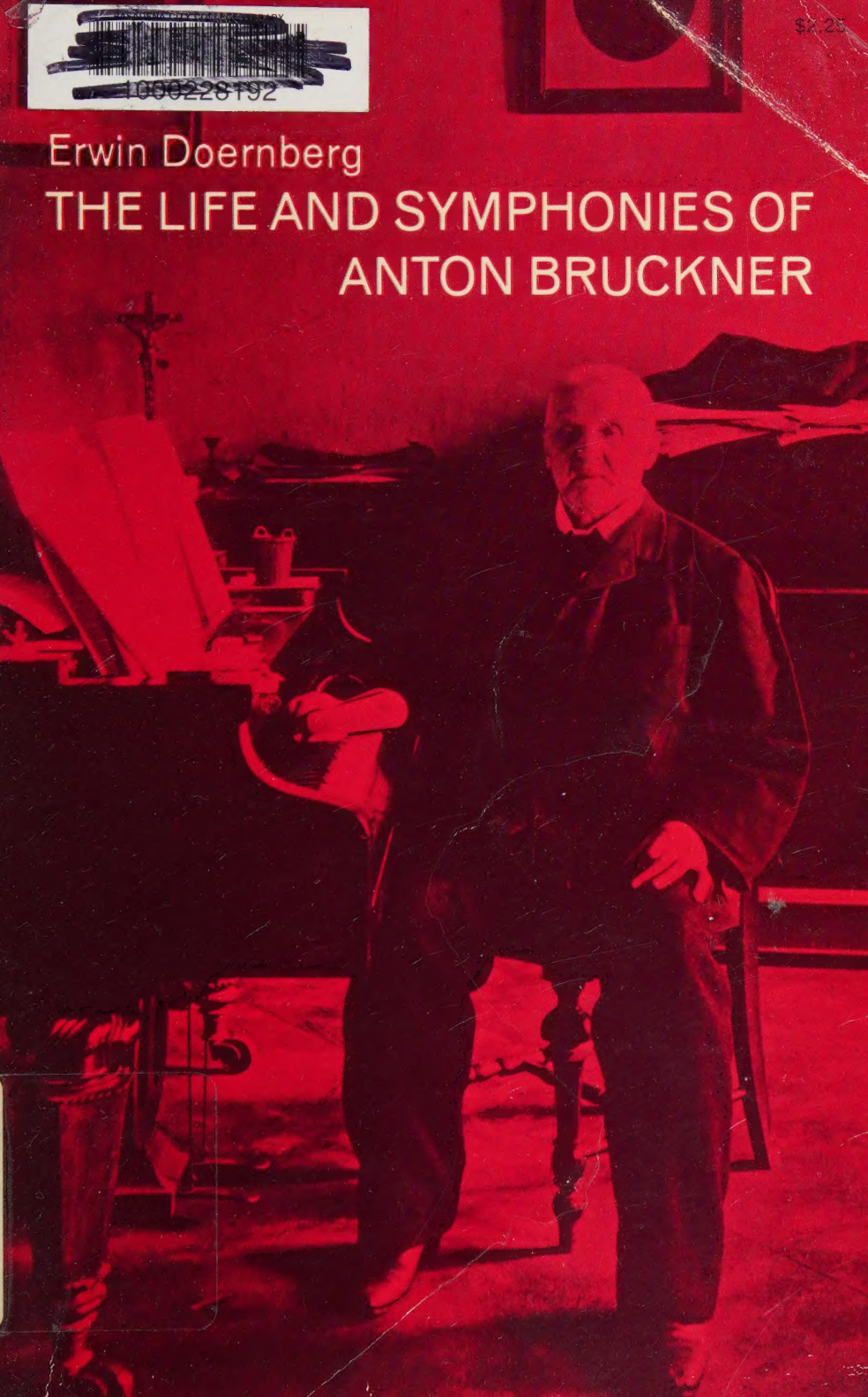
Erwin Doernberg

THE LIFE AND SYMPHONIES OF ANTON BRUCKNER



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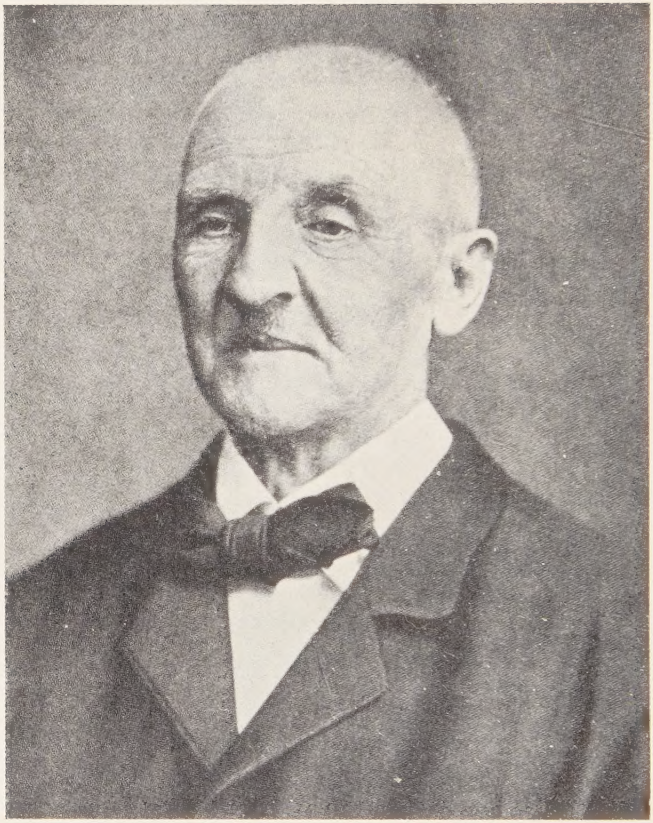

c. 1891

THE LIFE AND SYMPHONIES OF ANTON BRUCKNER

By

ERWIN DOERNBERG

WITH A FOREWORD BY
ROBERT SIMPSON

DOVER PUBLICATIONS, INC.
NEW YORK

Published in Canada by General Publishing Company, Ltd., 30 Lesmill Road, Don Mills, Toronto, Ontario.
Published in the United Kingdom by Constable and Company, Ltd., 10 Orange Street, London WC 2.

This Dover edition, first published in 1968, is an unabridged and unaltered republication of the work originally published in 1960.
This edition is published by special arrangement with Barrie and Rockliff, 2 Clement's Inn, Strand, London, publisher of the original edition.

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 68-19176
Manufactured in the United States of America
Dover Publications, Inc.
180 Varick Street
New York, N. Y. 10014

TO
STANLEY POPE

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Plates

Foreword

SOME time in the 1930's, as a schoolboy twiddling the knobs of the radio, I heard some extraordinarily spacious and noble music coming from an unidentified source in Germany. It turned out to be Bruckner's Second Symphony. The effect of its breadth and grandeur has remained with me ever since; at the time it drove me to all sorts of books on music, most of which scarcely mentioned Bruckner's name. The rest of them ran him down with impressive consistency. So I went to the scores, which was what I should have done in the first place. In those days Bruckner was almost *terra incognita* in England; if by some chance a symphony of his was played, it was inevitably dismissed as something that did not 'travel', that was for Austrians only, that was too long, formally incoherent, or plain incompetent. Performances that did occur were often bad ones—and Bruckner needs, even more than most composers, understanding interpretation. But gradually things have changed. After the war, the Third Programme gave the public more frequent chances to hear these works, and long-playing records have enabled many a young music-lover to know some of them as well as he knows his Brahms or Sibelius.

Now is the time for a book. Mr. Doernberg, in writing the first British book entirely devoted to Bruckner, has wisely directed it at the general musical reader who may be impatient with too much detail in the dissection of the music. This is not to say that the analyses are perfunctory; Bruckner is capable of the profoundest subtlety, and his utterly original sense of structure, as well as the astonishing depth of his insight into tonality, would, if they were treated exhaustively, make a vast tome in which there would be no room for a biography. So the chapters on the symphonies are concerned with pointing salient structural facts and with drawing attention to incidental beauties on the way. They provide a sound guide to the ordinary listener who needs

to find his way about and a starting-point for anyone wishing to plunge into deeper waters. Bruckner's music is a trap for the routined critic; one of its most dangerous features is its frequent semblance of the outward shape of sonata form. So long as this, in discussion of the symphonies, is treated as a mere convenience (and this is Mr. Doernberg's sensible approach), no harm is done, and Bruckner need not be falsely accused of mishandling a form whose symmetries, though they may superficially resemble those he actually creates, are really of different origin. Such a movement, for instance, as the first of the Seventh Symphony may be fully understood only by casting out all ideas about true sonata style and appreciating the gradual, organic tonal evolution of the music as a new process in its own right. Sonata terminology will then be seen to have no more than mnemonic usefulness—valuable so long as this specific function is realized, but a snare for the unwary.

Bruckner's structural originality, however fascinating, must take second place to the characteristic beauty and grandeur of his feeling, expressed in the great breadth and shapeliness of his finest themes, their emotional sequence, and the magnificence of their instrumentation. Ultimately, of course, we cannot separate the structural and expressive aspects of great music (of *any* music, for that matter); the two things are necessary to the total effect. Nowadays, when some 'composers' openly admit that they cannot hear what they write and even argue that there is some virtue in the fact, the 'effect' of a piece is often unrelated to its consciously contrived pattern. But music is sound—despite those who think such an idea naïve—and the listener should not be aware that it was ever written down. At his grandest Bruckner, like any other great composer, makes us forget the mechanics, the labour, the cunning, the mental struggles that he experienced when he tried to find a way of telling musicians what sounds to make. When he succeeds in doing this (and he is far more often successful than not) the results, gloriously spontaneous-seeming, glowing with rich humanity, remain as examples of true, complete art for the delight and solace of all who have ears, mind and heart to seize upon them.

London, April 1960 Robert Simpson

Preface

THIS book's table of contents suggests three distinct parts: a general introduction to Anton Bruckner, the biography, and a guide to the symphonies. Although this division reflects the general disposition of the material, most of the general observations on Bruckner's style are to be found in the biography. This apparent inconsistency was advisable for two reasons: firstly, it is neither desirable nor possible to separate the man from his works, and secondly, some of Bruckner's idiosyncrasies can best be explained in the framework of his life and development as a composer.

The book is intended for all the wide circle of music lovers, for those who seek genuine life and enjoyment in music and approach it with enthusiasm. When discussing technical matters, I have presumed the reader to have some knowledge both of musical forms and of harmony. Since Bruckner's works are the integration of a vast theoretical learning with deep and powerful conceptions, a minute analysis of the total range of his technical craftsmanship would go far beyond the interest and need of the normal concert-goer. I have restricted myself to discussing the bare minimum of technicalities essential for an intelligent appreciation of Bruckner's works. In these decisions I was guided not only by my estimate of the reader's knowledge but also by the awareness that an insight into the easier instances of Bruckner's workmanship is all that is needed in order to listen with attention and understanding. The rest, however, is by no means insignificant; but it can safely be supposed that learned music journals will continue to elucidate the more academic points of musicology.

I acknowledge gratefully the valuable help given to me by Miss Kathleen Hunter-Blair, Miss Anne Wall, B.A., and Mr. Alfred Batts. I am indebted, more than to anyone else, to Dr. Robert Simpson for constructive criticism and advice. His own

analyses of various Bruckner symphonies stand, of course, on a much higher level of musicological learning than mine and there have been occasions when I persisted, very inadvisedly no doubt, with my own notions. I hope readers will keep this in mind and hold me alone responsible for errors in fact or judgment.

Messrs. Hinrichsen Editions Ltd., London, Messrs. C. F. Peters Corporation, New York, and Messrs. Alkor-Edition Kassel, G.m.b.H., have very kindly given me permission to base my music quotations on the original versions of the composer's works. Mr. Bernhard Bosse of the publishing firm Gustav Bosse Verlag KG, Regensburg, has permitted me to translate extracts from the collection of Bruckner's correspondence *Gesammelte Briefe, Neue Folge.* Alkor-Edition have also contributed the photo of Bruckner's sarcophagus. I am deeply grateful to the Rev. Canon Dr. F. Linninger of St. Florian for the portrait of the composer facing page 84 and to the Rev. Father Dr. Altman Kellner, O.S.B., Regens Chori in Kremsmünster, for permission to reproduce two sketches in Bruckner's handwriting.

Last, not least, I owe gratitude to my wife for providing the conditions in which study, writing and music can be pursued in an otherwise rather busy life.

London, March 1960 E. D.

PART I

AN INTRODUCTION TO ANTON BRUCKNER

An Introduction to Anton Bruckner

I

THERE are certain composers who have rightly been recognized by posterity as being representative of the period in which they lived and worked. Even if we knew very little about the social changes in the European world during the last fifteen years of the eighteenth century, a comparison between the music of Mozart and Beethoven might bring us close to a real understanding of some essential points of that transitional period. Certainly we should be able to draw significant conclusions from the contrast between Mozart's graceful style with its frequent undercurrent of darkness and Beethoven's unfettered self-expression. In the case of Mozart and Beethoven, this observation is so patently clear as to be almost a truism. It is mentioned here to demonstrate a contrast; for no such comparison between music and period can be applied to Anton Bruckner.

Bruckner's symphonies were written during the last third of the nineteenth century. In their external form they follow some precepts of Beethoven's last symphony and Schubert's great Symphony in C major. In this respect, Bruckner's chronological position corresponds with his place in the history of music: Beethoven and Schubert before him and Gustav Mahler after him. Mendelssohn, Spohr and Schumann remain unmentioned in this connection; Bruckner was the first composer to accept

the great challenge of Beethoven's Ninth: the expanded first movement, the highly significant Scherzo, the spacious and transcendent Adagio and the supremely important Finale. Bruckner made this precept his own. By combining this classical inheritance with something of the monumental means and proportions demanded by Wagner and Mahler as the most representative figures of the later nineteenth century, Bruckner stands in line with the musical development of his time. Besides the external, formal appearance of his symphonies, there are other links with his contemporary world: his orchestration and harmony.

Important as all this is, the significance of Bruckner does not lie in the mere fact that he was a man of his time. This he shared with many other musicians who never became a problem for posterity, because posterity forgot, in charity, all about them. The greatness of Bruckner lies in the fact that a spirit speaks in his music which is strikingly individual and which is not dictated by or acquired through influences. Not only did Bruckner possess musical 'originality', that prime factor of works of lasting value, the spirit of his music is quite outstandingly, peculiarly his own and it is this which makes his place in the history of music so difficult to determine. It has been labelled with the word 'mysticism'. Since Bruckner certainly had that religious awareness which by its very nature demands direct self-expression, it is possible to talk of similarity with more familiar instances of mysticism. On the other hand, Bruckner's most important works are secular composition, absolute music, and it is therefore advisable to use the word 'mysticism' with great caution—it is probably impossible to speak of him without introducing it at all—lest one overburdens with unnecessary elaborations what is fundamentally a very simple phenomenon. What is important is to realize that the term is not necessarily restricted to the Church. Bruckner's symphonies are not at all church music; they are not 'Masses without words' or 'liturgical symphonies'—slogans coined by writers who make the distinction between the spiritual and the secular realm which in true mysticism is characteristically ill-defined or ceases to exist. Bruckner's symphonies are simply symphonies. Spiritual experience was neither consciously imposed on these works nor is it continuously evident, but spiritual experience was obviously the very root of Bruckner's being.

It may be strange to begin the discussion of a composer with the clarification of religious terminology, but here it is necessary for two reasons. Firstly, the 'mystical' element in this composer's music is unique in so far as there is nothing comparable to it in the work of any other secular, modern musician. Secondly, whenever 'mysticism' crops up—the term or the thing itself—confusion almost invariably follows, a danger to which musicologists are no less exposed than theological writers. After all, most of us know the world of mysticism only from the outside; furthermore, it is a concept which seems to lend itself all too readily to the attention of idle talkers whose verbosity reveals little distinction between substance and mere words. In the case of Bruckner, a number of bombastic books have been written in which the man and his work are artificially 'spiritualized' beyond all recognition. The most formidable work of Bruckner-mystification even subjects the music to the introduction of semi-mystical concepts such as 'symphonic waves' as Bruckner's formal element.

The era in which Bruckner lived was marked by a fashionable shallow and optimistic rationalism which—in conjunction with the equally shallow doctrine of progress—most people apparently found satisfying. Those who were too intelligent to accept simplifications or had a more acute sensibility were driven to a personal search for salvation. The ever-recurring theme of 'salvation' (*Erlösung*) on the Wagner stage, the soul-searching conflicts of Gustav Mahler and also the sweet, small and non-committal pious sentimentality in, for instance, Gounod's church music are typical musical results.

Bruckner was not in contact with these tendencies of his time. He was one of the exceedingly rare people of whom one can say that they live perpetually in a state of grace. There is little to be said on it. There was nothing extraordinary in his religious observance. There was neither a spectacular conversion nor, at any time of his life, a religious crisis. His whole being shows a personality quietly in contact with God. His faith was an entirely unsentimental, firm and masculine belief. As a Catholic musician, Bruckner was the very opposite of the Abbé Liszt, whose biographers can supply a date list of religious paroxysms which occasionally added spiritual drama to the otherwise exceedingly worldly drama of his life. For Bruckner, 'religion' was as elemental as the atmosphere in which we

breathe. At a tender age, he was called out from among the village boys for a personal blessing by a dying priest. As an old man, he dedicated his last symphony *dem lieben Gott* 'if He wants to accept it'. When he spoke of 'the demon of his life' he referred not to God or to Satan but to the leading music critic of the Viennese press.

When the soul and mind of Bruckner became eloquent, he chose absolute music—symphonies—as his main medium and we are therefore prevented from too close an interpretation in words of what we are convinced is the utterance of a God-inflamed soul. And, would it even be desirable here to destroy a mystery by discoursing on it? The fact that there is a 'mystery' in these symphonies in no way affects their value as musical compositions. So far Brahms was right when he said that Bruckner's piety was his private affair. What Brahms, as so many others, was unable to realize is the fundamental trait of a personality such as Bruckner's which would not allow of separate departments for private 'piety' and the artistic impetus of the composer. Bruckner's whole achievement is firmly rooted in his essential spirituality even in such profoundly disturbed experiences as those which speak to us in his last two symphonies.

Books and essays have been written to expound Bruckner's mysticism psychologically, philosophically, religiously. I owe to them a strengthening of my conviction that restraint is here better than elaboration. To treat Bruckner without a reference to his spirituality is unthinkable, but to unfold the mystery is the business of the conductor, not the biographer.

For the moment, my aim has been to indicate that the whole bent of Bruckner's mind was out of keeping with the period in which he lived. The full significance of this reflection is to be seen in the light of another fact: that Bruckner was one of the most modern composers of his time.

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Bruckner's life and personality stand in surprising contrast to those of almost all great composers of the recent past. Like most of the others, he began composing in his early childhood, but unlike any of them (with the one exception of César Franck) he reached the age of forty before writing a great work. His name

became widely known only when he was over sixty. He composed all through the early part of his life, but even the best of those numerous works written before 1863 cannot be said to foreshadow what he produced in later years. At a time when he had already outlived the span of Mozart's or Schubert's life, Bruckner was still writing exercises and taking courses of tuition.

Apart from his unusually slow development, Bruckner shows striking difference in comparison with most other composers by reason of his astonishing simplicity as a man. No intelligent reader of Mozart's letters, even if he were quite unmusical, could possibly fail to enjoy them; his correspondence might have qualified him for lasting fame even had he been an ordinary court musician and nothing more. Beethoven's life and his extraordinary 'entirely untamed personality' (as Goethe saw it) show a peculiar intensity which make him highly interesting even apart from his compositions. Bruckner's life and personality appear almost barren in comparison with those of Beethoven, Wagner, Brahms, Tchaikovsky—men whose life and character reflect in one way or another something of their status as composers. Bruckner seems, indeed, to cut a poor figure in comparison. His is the career of a poor village boy who, step by step, made a successful career as cathedral organist and professor of theory without at all widening his horizon. The one and only really surprising thing about him was that after completing his career as an organist he suddenly began to compose music with a range of vision which in such a man would appear quite incongruous.

The biography of an artist depends usually for its momentum on the relationship of his life and personality with his works; the life at once explaining and failing to explain the greatness of the artistic achievement. The spacious world of Bruckner's symphonies would certainly lead one to expect the composer to be a man of considerable mental span. But what was visible in Bruckner to those who have known him? A simple, devout countryman with an immense knowledge of musical theory and the ability to teach it. That was all. Because most people's judgment depends on immediate impressions, Bruckner's rural inflexion, his frequent use of upper-Austrian dialect, his servility and also, of course, his piety offered opportunity for jest to the 'intellectuals' of Vienna. An interminable number of Bruckner

stories is the result, not all of them *ben trovato*. And there can be no doubt that Bruckner's friends, particularly among the circle of his young students, were not fully aware of Bruckner's significance; their enthusiasm rarely revealed deeper insight than did the attacks of the derisive critics.

The vast number of the Bruckner anecdotes, most of them actually of an affectionate nature, depict him as a simpleton of almost idiotic calibre. Bruckner's true simplicity somehow compelled the intellectuals to render it far cruder than it really was. It is significant that mature persons who knew him well (persons like Hermann Levi or Karl Muck) have made no contribution to this kind of Bruckner caricature. It is true Bruckner's personality showed little of the power and vision which sounds in his music; but works like his are not written by village idiots. Nor would the prelates of the stately religious establishments of St. Florian, Kremsmünster and Klosterneuburg have welcomed him as they did, as an ever-congenial and beloved visitor, had he appeared to them as the embarrassing hero of those anecdotes. Even apart from the anecdotal literature, it is very unfortunate that the most prolific reports about Bruckner derive from those of his acquaintance who seem least qualified to understand so unusual a personality.

The story of Bruckner's life is the account of the struggles and trials of an awkward man who seemed ill fitted for contest with those lesser beings on whose attitude his happiness depended. Humiliation and disappointments fill many pages while little can be said about the one fact which far outweighs them: that nothing could usually prevent the composer, sensitive as he was to the reaction of the world, from continuing his work as though undisturbed. The fundamental enigma of Bruckner has always been the unaccountable capacity of this timid and apparently limited man to write music with an assurance and resourcefulness which were totally absent from his daily life.

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But to the music. As with all great music, only performance is needed to awaken interest in Bruckner's symphonies. By its very nature, the work of art exists only within its own medium, and it would not merely be wrong but quite futile to attempt a

'translation' into the medium of words. It is not for words to describe absolute music. Since Bruckner's music is marked above all by sheer beauty and power of sound, his music more than that of many another composer defies the aspirations of the writer of such descriptive comments as we read in the average programme notes.

A good performance of a Bruckner symphony never fails to enthral the audience even if many of those present hear the work for the first time and without any preparation. Bruckner did not write the kind of works which one praises euphemistically as being 'interesting', which appeal exclusively to connoisseurs and devotees of technicalities. By this distinction I mean: while the finale of Brahms's Fourth Symphony can make an immediate and strong impression on a sensitive listener who does not know what a passacaglia is, I doubt whether any work of Anton Webern can be fully appreciated by a person unacquainted with the principle of composing with a twelve-tone series. However that may be, there cannot be any doubt that the person who is enthralled by the Brahms finale would find his appreciation deepened were he to discover the form of the movement. So it is with Bruckner: the appeal and nobility of his music hides its structural complexities and the delight of the listener will be still greater when he gains an insight into the idiosyncrasies of Bruckner's style. These will be discussed elsewhere in this book; here we content ourselves with indicating some general trends. We begin with one of the composer's peculiarities which will concern the listener first of all.

Bruckner's vocabulary of directions includes frequent use of some words which are rarely to be found in musical scores, such as 'Misterioso, breit und feierlich' (noble and solemn), 'sehr ruhig und feierlich' (very calm and solemn) and the like. Such words are, as far as the listener is concerned, mere directions for the conductor and the executants, in no way different from Mozart writing the direction 'dolce', or Beethoven 'con gran' espressione' or 'con brio'. Yet there is a difference. The *dolce* of Mozart or Beethoven's *espressivo* become immediately obvious to the listener (even to some degree in poor performances by tired or indifferent conductors), but in Bruckner there are moments of a sublime quality which demand not only devoted rendering but also the intelligent attention of the audience. Full

appreciation of Bruckner's works demands a congenial spiritual disposition on the part of the listener, without which he cannot be fully sensitive to the music although, of course, he may enjoy it. For Bruckner we need something more than mere concentration, more even than that complete sensitiveness which is essential for all intelligent appreciation of music. It is perhaps understandable that some people, Bruno Walter counts himself among them, have to reach a certain age before Bruckner unfolds himself fully to them.

To find the first indication, there is no need to turn the pages of a Bruckner score; Bruckner's way of beginning a symphony is significant. The listener must hold his breath for the music to begin; all his works open softly and with sublime beauty. To miss the very first sounds of a Bruckner symphony is to lose irrevocably a great experience which cannot be recalled. The magic spell of these openings is rare in music, but one may name one familiar example: the beginning of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. That Bruckner has actually been criticized for his alleged stereotyped technique of beginning his symphonies ('they all start alike') is perhaps due to such lack of attention. It seems indeed that those critics have failed to notice the variety with which Bruckner handles even the openings of those symphonies which show a certain likeness through their usage of tremolo strings; true, these openings may look somewhat similar on paper, but how utterly different sounds the full chord of E flat major in a low position (Fourth Symphony) from the major third in E, played by the violins at the beginning of the Seventh Symphony or, again, the unison D opening the Ninth. Here are instances of Bruckner's amazing capacity for gathering all his power into a consummate quietness. Perhaps few who attend concerts are capable by nature or training to appreciate this fully; perfect stillness and total banishment of all distraction is vital. Bruckner's symphonies begin, as it were, with the silence that precedes the pianissimo of the first sound.

The spontaneous flow of Bruckner's melodic invention, the perfect purity of his harmonic setting, an abundance of contrasts, certain stylistic affinities with Beethoven, Schubert and Wagner —all these cause his music to speak to the listener directly at the first hearing. Yet, despite his obvious relations with the more familiar musical landmarks, the style of Bruckner defies easy

classification in the usual categories of musical aesthetics. This is not a question of academic niceties; it is a problem which concerns the listener as much as the historian of music. A superficial impression of his works may lead to his classification as a pure romantic; but as soon as one notices that his symphonies are charged with technical devices and with a conscious application of thorough musical craftsmanship, one recognizes a fundamental attitude towards music-making which is essentially alien to romanticism. Bruckner was not at all the romantic type as characterized by Tennyson: 'the wild poet without a conscience or an aim'. For thirty years he disciplined himself to master the entire range of all branches of theory before he wrote his first symphony, and thereafter his symphonic writing reveals a synthesis of extensive theoretical learning with his spontaneous flow of creative inspiration. The term 'synthesis' is appropriate because the two elements are inseparably intermingled; I am not referring now to the obvious contrast between an occasional passage of fugal writing and lyrical episodes but to a quite general stylistic trend which is evident throughout his work. There are indeed moments of unearthly beauty which spring from some hidden 'scholarly' deviation from a fragment of a main theme; an apparently absolutely new thematic thought may suddenly appear in a development section or in a finale and capture the surprised listener's attention without his being aware of hearing, say, an augmented inversion of two bars of a leading theme. Episodes of this kind, their thematic link undetected, have often inspired the rumour that Bruckner wrote whatever happened to come to his mind, rambling successions of disconnected ideas!

One may now ask how far the musical scholarship of a composer concerns the listener who normally seeks only the enjoyment of music. There is no general answer to such a question, but on the whole it is here supposed that the majority of the thematic events and relationships in Bruckner's music are meant to be heard and that their function is not a mere academic application of skill. There are other instances of Bruckner's craftsmanlike approach to the perfect evocation of purely sensual effects, such as, for instance, the flawless progression of all parts in his harmony or the amazing organization of tonality within the larger movements. Instances of this kind will become evident to

the listener whose ear is sufficiently trained to make the distinction, but in this field an analysis of Bruckner's technique requires far more than a rudimentary knowledge of harmony. The technical learning in Bruckner's scores is so vast that his symphonies are a veritable mine for analysts. Bruckner himself, although fully aware of the high standard of his technique, warned against overestimating the significance of technical perfection as such; in a letter of 1893 he wrote: 'Counterpoint is not genius, it is only a means to an end.' In one of his lectures, Friedrich Klose tells us, he said: 'Everything we are doing here adheres strictly to the firm laws of figured bass. There is no such thing as liberty from the rules. But if later on anyone should show me something that looks like those things we do here in school, then I shall show him the door!'

When everything in his symphonies has been analysed to the very last detail, the lasting impression is of the spiritual power and magnificent sound achieved through such perfect application of mastery of technique. Since we are dealing with living music, it may be better to take a middle course and to discuss exclusively such technical details as can be heard (as distinct from everything that can only be *seen* in the printed scores). I myself found my enjoyment of Bruckner's symphonies was greatly increased after I had taken the trouble to make but a modest examination (analysis may be too big a word) of the form and to trace the formal and thematic context of the 'surprising episodes' within the framework of the whole work in which they occur.

Above all, one should become familiar with the main themes. Bruckner could achieve an astonishing variety in the presentation of his material without making the smallest alteration in the melodic line, apart from the frequent instances of inversion and augmentation. A thorough knowledge of these themes enables the listener, though surely not always at a first hearing, to recognize them in all the changing circumstances of their setting; strangely enough, in Bruckner's ways a literal quotation of part of a memorable theme (with different instrumentation, harmony or by augmentation) may be less easy to recognize than the substance of a theme in the normal technique of far more elaborate variation followed by other composers.

We have already mentioned that Bruckner is reputed to have

written immensely long works simply by drifting along, from one episode to the next, with but occasional and usually unlucky attempts at some formal disposition. No doubt, an unprepared listener, even if possessing the patience required for Bruckner's expansive music, will have some difficulty in recognizing the formal organization of some of the finales. That may be so. Only, the conclusions derived from the premisses of unfamiliarity and an impatient frame of mind should not be offered as a critical assessment. Even such a simple analysis as that provided in the third part of this book will suffice to reveal that, on the contrary, the evidence of the scores reveals a remarkable formal discipline.

4

We have already touched on the problem of Bruckner's status among romantic composers. In the last paragraph I indicated that he is not simply 'one of them'. Rewarding and interesting as it may be to examine the formal and technical aspects of other romantic compositions, those of Bruckner alone demand such an analysis in order to be fully appreciated. The attitude of Schumann and Mendelssohn, for instance, towards inherited classical forms is not without interest, but to follow their instrumental works requires no intellectual effort whatever. The romantic period, with ever-greater concern for association with literary ideas, had seen the rapid decline of the symphony after Beethoven. This decline affected above all sonata form, the remnants of which were often lost in the undisciplined looseness of improvisation and fantasia. The development section had almost disintegrated, its function was forgotten or ignored; it was obviously considered uncongenial. Such romantic influences on the classical symphony—here indicated by a few inadequate sentences—were completely ignored by Bruckner. His conception of form derives direct from Beethoven—more specifically from Beethoven's last symphony—as if the romantic decline had never happened at all. Brahms, the direct successor of Mendelssohn and Schumann, returned deliberately in the first movements and the finales of his major works to the discipline of a Beethovenian formal conception (without making any particular work of Beethoven his model); thus he combined, with a skill characteristic of his keen critical perception, romantic leanings with the classical

inheritance. When writing his middle movements, he perhaps ceased to submit himself to this aim. Bruckner's expanded sonata style frequently incorporates a totally new view of key relationships. A perusal of the first movement of the Eighth Symphony shows, for instance, how he may begin a C minor work in an alien tonality and how long he may keep the listener in suspense until the ever-latent approaches to C minor reach their destination. In this respect he differs from Beethoven, as, indeed, from any other composer of the nineteenth century. The landmarks of sonata form are not given up but they are given a new meaning. The analyses of the symphonies in the last part of this book, however, only touch on this aspect since it requires an extensive knowledge of harmonic structure.

Bruckner certainly had points of contact with romanticism. These are to be found all through his work, particularly in his harmony and in his instrumentation, even his very themes. However, his approach is wholly alien to that of the romantics. He combined the romantic tendency towards strongly differentiated harmonies, dissonances, wide intervals in the melodic writing and complex tonal relationships with a strictly systematized basic root progression which he had studied for five years with the eminent theorist Simon Sechter. Even in his later years, Bruckner frequently wrote in the margin of his manuscripts the scheme of his tonal progressions—for each instrumental part of the score—in order to impose on 'romanticism' the control of stern logic and strict theoretical rules. Friedrich Klose reports how it occurred one day to Bruckner to search all his finished works for forbidden unison and octave parallels, including the heavily scored tutti passages. Whilst Bruckner played the leading parts slowly on the piano and searched through the strings and the bass, Klose had to examine the woodwind parts. 'It was such a waste of time that in the end I no longer disclosed all my discoveries. When Bruckner noticed this and reproached me for lack of vigilance, I admitted that I had deliberately omitted to tell him of such discoveries of parallels which could not possibly be audible and I justified myself by pointing to Richard Wagner in whose tutti passages any number of such parallels between the thematic and the subsidiary parts can be found.... Bruckner answered solemnly that Wagner, the Master, was permitted such things, but not Bruckner, the schoolmaster.'

This account typifies Bruckner's approach to his art—so reminiscent of, possibly, a contemporary of Johann Sebastian Bach. It tells, perhaps, of a moment when he was exaggerating what was basically a sound principle. The episode happened during the mental crisis of 1878 and must be judged within that context. Normally, the musical result of Bruckner's unvaried practice of carefully examining his harmony is that even his strongest romantic affinity was submitted to a purifying process from which it emerged as a personal style. Not even the most striking moments of similarity between the harmony of Bruckner and Wagner can therefore obscure the basic difference which separates them.

5

Schubert alone among the earlier romantic composers has a strong affinity with Bruckner; Bruckner did not adopt anything from Schubert in the sense in which he adopted the Wagner tubas in the last three symphonies. With Schubert he had a deeper, elemental relation. Both had the natural musical genius alive in them in a similar fashion and both had the gift of effortlessly transforming the music of their Austrian homeland into artistic creation of lasting and universal value. Neither of them composed deliberately as a 'national composer'; neither of them was compelled, by sheer lack of inspiration, to escape into the virtues of provinciality. But when from time to time their melodic invention would come directly from the *genius loci*, both Schubert and Bruckner did nothing to conceal the fact. They are both excellent examples of the validity of the well-known saying of the potential universality of '*perfect* provinciality'. Bruckner's occasional Austrian tunes are not predominantly Austrian but predominantly musical, in his native land and beyond. Incidentally, their number is but modest; instances occur in some of the Scherzi and their Trios, elsewhere only very occasionally. The strongest impact is found in the Fourth Symphony; in the Third Symphony there is the second main theme of the finale and the undisguised *Ländler* of the Trio; the Fifth Symphony has only an 'Austrian' episode in the Scherzo. Neither in the Sixth nor in the Seventh Symphony can one speak of 'local' elements and in the last two symphonies there is no longer even any suggestion of them. Surveying his work as a whole, one cannot possibly say

that the Austrian element is more than a contributory inspiration. Bruckner is not an Austrian Smetana, Grieg or Mussorgsky!

The affinity between Bruckner and Schubert lies deeper and is not confined to such occasional homely tunes in their respective works. The two composers have in common an elemental relationship, not easy to define, with the very spirit of music which causes Schubert's instrumental music to speak at times almost the same language as in Bruckner's symphonies. This does not imply the influence of an earlier composer upon the later one. The Trio to the Scherzo in Schubert's String Quintet could have been written by Bruckner, the Trio in Bruckner's Fourth Symphony could have been written by Schubert. Schubert's String Quartet in G major contains a few bars in the first movement which are quite amazingly Brucknerian. The affinity between them is rarely one of such perfect identity, but Schubert's music contains anticipations of Bruckner on many a page.

Much of what Bruckner and Schubert have in common defies strict definition, however clearly it can be felt. Yet, it is interesting to examine certain, specific similarities between them. Both of them were apt to become enraptured by the beauty of their music and on such occasions neither of them would hesitate to avoid 'heavenly lengths'. Just as Schubert was in no haste to abandon a lovely motif, so Bruckner would never leave a rewarding fragment of a theme before he had exploited its every possibility. In this, they both differed notably from Beethoven with his technique of repeating short motifs in his later style, as, for instance, the twenty-three repetitions of the Trio theme in the Ninth Symphony or, even more strikingly, the amazing series of fifty-one repetitions of a short motif in the Vivace of op. 135. Schubert and Bruckner liked to treat their motifs in a kind of isolated development independent of the development section proper, particularly on their first appearance and again in the codas. So it sometimes happens that Schubert will exhaust the possibilities of a theme, or a motif, during the exposition and arrive at the development without further resources; this never happens to Bruckner, whose highly important developmental sections invariably stand in perfect proportion to the other major parts of the disposition of the whole movement, exposition and recapitulation plus coda; the development sections in Bruckner are always exclusively concerned with true developmental treatment

of the thematic material. What both composers have in common in this respect is the inordinate length which neither of them avoided. It is easy to criticize them for their reluctance to end a passage, or a work, with due speed. But is it not just as easy, and very much more rewarding, to accept their idiosyncrasies and participate in their delight in exploiting the thematic invention?

The similarities go further. Both Schubert and Bruckner liked to use arresting modulations. Schubert apparently discovered the secret of his amazing magic instinctively, and only afterwards thought of taking a course of lessons with the theorist Simon Sechter, whereas Bruckner studied with Sechter for years before composing works in which he then applied the well-learned rules of root progressions to his remote modulations which were nevertheless no less inspired than those of Schubert. The result was that Bruckner's surprising modulations, controlled by the sovereign command of a definite system, can often be more easily analysed. Schubert's incredible attainment despite his lack of such a systematic theoretical grounding does not, therefore, imply mere experimenting. Of Bruckner we know the theoretical background, of Schubert that he had the ability to achieve similar results. The explanation must be sought in Schubert's genius.

There are, of course, harmonic features in Bruckner's music which have no parallel in Schubert, such as pedal points (inspired by the organ), or—in Bruckner's later works—the advanced complexities of harmony which belong to the dawn of twentieth-century music. After all, owing to Schubert's premature death they were contemporaries only during the first four years of Bruckner's life, from 1824 to 1828. As we have mentioned, the real comparison lies less in specific similarities than in a deeper, fundamental affinity.

6

Apart from Schubert, there is only one other romantic composer notably akin to Bruckner, namely Richard Wagner. Here again it is important to remember that there is not the slightest connection between Bruckner and Weber, Mendelssohn or Schumann. It was only during his slow years of development that Bruckner wrote Album Leaves for piano, conventional pieces for male chorus and so forth in which he was wholly

dependent on the average 'salon romanticism' fashionable at the time. Since in those years his compositions were but mediocre, they are inferior to anything in romantic music which has survived the subsequent changes in taste; it is both unrewarding and unnecessary to search them for stylistic influences. In fact, these early works and titbits are painfully confined to influences. As soon as he began to write with assurance, he ignored most of the earlier romantic composers (to whom he might then have turned before the formation of a style of his own) as if he had never heard their music. Bruckner's link with romanticism is his link with Schubert and Wagner, nothing more.

His relation with Wagner was quite unlike his connection with Schubert. Wagner's extraordinary influence on Bruckner and its musical results sprang from the strangest combination of circumstance. I shall not here elaborate on what belongs strictly to biography; but it would be well to mention the main factors.

The decisive discovery of the work of an older master, that overwhelming experience which a composer usually lives through during his early, formative years, was unknown to Bruckner until he was forty-one years old. This alone is psychologically significant. The formative influences which are normally overcome by composers before their opus 10 are usually of a purely aesthetic and technical character; Bruckner's realization of Wagner was a sudden, eruptive psychological event. In middle life and after long years of painstaking study of musical theory, Bruckner became from one moment to the next a great composer—after hearing Wagner's opera *Tannhäuser*. He then wrote his first great work of instrumental music, which—and this is the point—bears no trace of the work which had actuated its creation. The details are to be found in Part II. This summary is only to indicate the unique character of Bruckner's relation to Wagner, unique in its sudden beginning as in all its consequences.

When discussing the relations between Schubert and Bruckner, I stressed the fact that theirs was above all a basic union, so that traceable instances of the 'influence' of the one upon the other are far less important than the profound elements of music which were common to them both. With Bruckner and Wagner it is the reverse. As personalities, the two men were so different that they do not bear comparison. The artistic aims differed no less and, for the moment, it is enough simply to state their

general trends. Wagner's whole being was devoted to the creation of music dramas which were, negatively speaking, a firm and considered rejection of 'absolute music'. Bruckner's medium was precisely that absolute music which Wagner proclaimed to be a thing of the past. The range, that is to say, the limitation, of Wagner's influence upon Bruckner was determined by these differences in mentality and aims. Consequently, it is at once less profound and more definable than the relation between Bruckner and Schubert.

In speaking, for instance, of the intricate influence of Wagner's harmony on Bruckner, we must again recall the biographical facts. When Bruckner heard Wagner's music for the first time, he was not a young student liable to be overwhelmed by novelty, but a mature theoretician. The impact of Wagner's harmony was from the outset conditioned by his own unfailing certainty of judgment. On the other hand, it was not his theoretical study which had given him the power to compose with sovereign assurance but the impression of a Wagner opera. Hence, the result of the combination was that the years between the First and Third Symphonies were filled with a wave of Wagnerian impact, tempered but never absent. The crest of the wave is the first version of the Third Symphony, the very work which also reveals for the first time Bruckner's magnificent individuality. From then Wagnerian harmony becomes integrated with Bruckner's own style. In details the influence is always traceable, in its total musical effect it is entirely remoulded. From a purely technical point of view, the most obvious example of this influence upon the Sechter-trained Bruckner is his adoption of the enharmonic changes. Although these are extensively used by Schubert and although their existence was, somewhat grudgingly, acknowledged by Sechter, Bruckner took them straight from Wagner's scores.

Wagner's most acceptable gift to Bruckner was the large orchestra. Bruckner's genius demanded monumentality and in Wagner's orchestra he found his medium. Here again he did not simply imitate or 'follow' Wagner; with the amazing certainty of his new-found self-assurance he took only what suited his own very different spirit and intentions. His happy choice of the tubas is to be seen at full advantage in the mellow beauty of their passages in the last three symphonies. However, instruments

which Wagner used for his play of effects are absent from Bruckner's scores: bass clarinet, bass trumpet, cor anglais, piccolo, triangle, etc. Even the harp occurs only in one work of Bruckner's, the Eighth Symphony. Apart from the choice of individual instruments, any comparison with Wagner's scores shows Bruckner's idiosyncrasy of frequently contrasting instrumental groups. Orchestration of this kind is also to be found in Wagner, for instance in the Prelude to *Parsifal*, but Bruckner certainly adopted his manner from the organ, not from Wagner. Although he was deeply indebted to Wagner for his instrumentation, here too the differences are far more striking than the similarities. It is only rarely that we come across a short passage in Bruckner which sounds Wagnerian. The final impression is, indeed, that the contrast between the two is more revealing than the occasional moments of strongest similarity.

Yet, there is another aspect of Wagner's influence on Bruckner —not on Bruckner's music but on his life. Bruckner's devoted affection for his beloved 'Master' led to the immediate consequence that he came to be regarded, mistakenly, as belonging to the party of the *Neo German School*, the Wagnerians. Bruckner was deeply grateful to Wagner for his awakening through the impressions of the *Tannhäuser* performance at Linz, for the creative power derived from his music. This gratitude was immeasurably deepened when Wagner accepted the dedication of Bruckner's Third Symphony. Characteristically, Bruckner never uttered a word about Wagnerian affairs unless they were a matter of direct concern to himself. Bruckner's real attitude to Wagner is to be discovered in his scores and not in his effusive adoration. His contemporaries, however, were oblivious of this.

The result was a vicious circle: Bruckner proclaimed his devotion to Wagner in and out of season; Vienna was the stronghold of the anti-Wagnerians, and Eduard Hanslick, the most influential newspaper critic, originally friendly towards Bruckner, became from one day to the next his most determined and devastating enemy; Hanslick's hostility made Bruckner popular with a group of Wagnerian music students who remained quite unaware of the fact that Bruckner was not at all a Wagnerian composer. Thus, friends and foes saw to it that Bruckner was labelled a Wagnerian. It never occurred to Bruckner that his constant invocation of Wagner's name was the last

thing that could help him. Instead of boasting of his music, he boasted of Wagner's friendship, such as it was.

The two groups who hurled abuse at each other in the names of Wagner and Brahms were but little concerned with strictly musical matters. The main contention was the central Wagnerian concept of the 'Music of the Future', the music drama, the *Gesamtkunstwerk*. It was not the controversy simply of the narrow circle of musicians but a public issue. Vast numbers of people wholly unqualified to form any serious judgment deemed themselves irrevocably committed as fervent partisans of either Wagner or Brahms; neutrality was regarded with contempt and the world looked askance at any who changed sides. As is usual with controversies which arouse public excitement, on both sides frustrated eloquence found invective far easier than constructive contributions to the cause so ardently upheld. Wagner added much to the noise with his essays and pamphlets. Altogether, the Wagnerians were more prolific in their publicity than the conservatives. Brahms did on one occasion give his signature to a manifesto directed against the Neo Germans, but in later years he left that sort of thing to his 'Brahmans'. Whereas Wagner flew into a rage when someone was tactless enough to mention Brahms's name in his presence, Brahms took it more calmly, described himself jokingly as the best of Wagnerians and quietly saw to it that Wagner's handwriting should not be missing from his remarkable collection of manuscripts.

Bruckner strayed into the battlefield and became the only casualty. Hanslick's hostility and the active devotion of Bruckner's group of Wagnerian students conspired to justify Bruckner's deeming his life a martyrdom. The real issue of the controversy meant nothing to him and it is more than likely that he was not even fully informed about it. His approach to Wagner's works was inadmissible to a Wagnerian: he enjoyed the music and cared nothing for the drama. Only on startling occasions did some happening on the stage rouse his curiosity. After a performance of the *Walküre* he surprised a friend with the question: 'Why actually is Brünhilde being burned?' He loved *Tristan and Isolde*, but his copy was an edition without words. His favourite place in the opera house was the extreme end of a balcony where the stage was hardly visible but from where he could look into the orchestra pit. He regarded Wagner's works

simply as musical compositions and nothing else. It was to the music he listened, and, as he listened, the music sowed its seed in his fertile mind, touching his creative faculties.

As we have said, the main proof of Bruckner's independence of the Bayreuth philosophy is his own work. He wrote symphonies, undisturbed by the central Wagnerian doctrine that with Beethoven's Choral Symphony (as interpreted by Wagner) the era of absolute music had ended. Berlioz's *Fantastic Symphony* of 1829 and Liszt's *Mountain Symphony* of 1849 had inaugurated the age of programme music which alone was allowed to exist in the shadow of the great music drama. Bruckner wrote his symphonies as if he had never heard of the controversy.

Bruckner's young students, of course, were aware of the problem and it worried them. The logic of their thought was determined by blind belief in the Wagnerian doctrine; since only poor Brahms wrote in the archaic ways of absolute music, and since Bruckner was devoted to Wagner, his symphonies could not possibly represent absolute music. *Ergo*, they have a programme. They kept asking Bruckner for the hidden 'programme' of his symphonies until the composer kindly obliged by telling them some stories. The finale of the Eighth Symphony—one of his greatest movements—was explained by him: 'Finale. Our Emperor was in those days visited by the Czar at Olmütz—strings. The Cossacks on horseback—brass, military music. The trumpets: fanfare when Their Majesties met. . . .' When making the attempt to improvise some stories for the Fourth Symphony, Bruckner's resources as a poet dried up before he had revealed the 'key' to the Finale and he had to confess: 'Well, now, that Finale—what I thought when writing that Finale? I really can't remember it any longer.' The stories were somewhat tenuous by Wagnerian standards, but the friends considered themselves satisfied at least on the crucial point: Bruckner was indeed totally different from Brahms! He *had* thought about something when composing! Since Bruckner's stories were obviously inadequate, his friends made up more formidable programmes. Franz and Josef Schalk wrote notes providing a 'programme' for the Seventh and Eighth Symphonies, particularly in the case of the Eighth a commentary so bombastic in its adolescent, pseudo-philosophical wordiness that Bruckner's worst enemies could not have improved

on the ridiculous effect of this rubbish. Even Bruckner, usually not very critical in such things, was alarmed by the pompous nonsense and angrily asked the author why on earth, if he felt in the mood for 'making poems', he must drag in his symphonies.

In his own eyes, his relationship to Wagner was a constant source of happiness to him. He always dwelt on the memory of any occasional kind word from the adored 'Master' and was unaware of the fact that his greatest hindrance in Vienna had been his Wagnerian affiliations. It is strange that not a single one among the few truly intelligent people in contact with him —friends or enemies—ever noticed that, notwithstanding Wagner tubas and other influences from Wagner, Bruckner was much more a 'Schubertian', if indeed we must bracket him with anyone else. However, it would hardly have helped Bruckner if his affinities with Schubert had been discovered in Vienna; in Vienna, Schubert's great Symphony in C major—at long last performed—had been met with a frigid reception!

Part II will mention Bruckner's frequent journeys from Vienna to Bayreuth on the one hand, to the monastic houses of St. Florian, Kremsmünster and Klosterneuberg on the other. It would be quite useless to determine to which of the two utterly different spheres he 'really' belonged; obviously he did not experience the contrast as most of us would. When visiting the stately monasteries, he stayed as an ever-welcome guest within the enclosed parts and it is unlikely that he saw much of the palatial, secular wings of these immense buildings built for visiting royalty which are shown to the tourists. Obviously he fitted in with the regular canons, although he never contemplated for a moment to stay with them permanently, let alone to take monastic vows. Certain trends in his personality, particularly his single-minded attitude to the concerns of his daily life, could easily lead to the wrong conclusion that he was meant for the religious life. Certainly, it is far less easy to picture Bruckner in the bustle of the Bayreuth festivals. Once again, contrasting worlds are integrated in Bruckner's work rather than in his strange personality. Bruckner's symphonies can hardly be said to reflect the calm and the spiritual equilibrium of the cloisters. Occasional episodes alone in these immense works bear witness to the fact that the majestic spectacle of the baroque church of St. Florian as seen from the organ loft belongs to Bruckner's life,

just as other episodes reveal his admiration for Wagner. A clear appreciation of Bruckner's work as a whole should prevent us from rashly assigning him to a category.

7

These introductory paragraphs have summarized a few of Bruckner's main characteristics. They have failed to define his place in any of the convenient categories in the history of music during the nineteenth century. All that can be said of influences or leanings points unfailingly to one conclusion: his individuality. The definition which we failed to give is often handed out with great readiness by habitual critics of Bruckner and by uncritical enthusiasts—the 'Brucknerites'. An objective approach—which by no means implies cold detachment—leads to a recognition of the points which Bruckner has in common with the well-known 'categories', and there the matter ends. There is not, for that reason, a 'Bruckner problem'. Anton Bruckner's work represents, after all, the greatest symphonic achievement after Beethoven.

Nor, for that matter, does the fact that he was so slow to be proclaimed put his greatness in doubt. Such delays for longer or shorter periods are not unknown in musical history. We find it difficult nowadays to understand that several successive generations with a highly developed musical culture forgot practically all about Johann Sebastian Bach and that even after the rediscovery of such works as the *St. Matthew Passion,* Bach's *Kunst der Fuge* was long regarded as an abstract construction unfit for playing and sensual appreciation. There were any number of people with a profound understanding of music, Tchaikovsky among them, who were convinced that Beethoven's last quartets were the musings of an unhinged mind; and those who were too genteel for so severe a verdict talked vaguely about 'decline'. Was there, for that matter, a 'Bach problem' or a 'Beethoven problem'?

A lot of utter nonsense has been written about Bruckner and much of it is habitually repeated. Part II will show that most of the almost standardized misunderstanding originates with Bruckner's contemporaries, particularly with the composer's most determined enemy Hanslick but also with his most determined

friends, all of them men of limited stature. Criticisms of Bruckner's formal dispositions were justified at a time when most of his work was only known in the form of garbled versions, but have become obsolete since the publication of the composer's original versions.

No attempt is made in this book to deny that Bruckner's works contain certain weaknesses not to be found in Beethoven. It is infinitely easy to be witty about Bruckner's sequences or such idiosyncrasies as his practically unvaried crescendo approach to a climax or his typical ending of first movements, or—the greatest joke of all—the pauses. To judge by some music critics' reportage, Bruckner's symphonies seem to be a medley of Austrian yodel tunes, Wagnerian brass and mere pauses. What has to be said about Bruckner's comparative weakness will here be mentioned in the right context and in the true proportions. I have also refrained from detecting Wagner quotations, or pauses, where there are none.

Whether or not Bruckner will ever attain the wide popularity of Beethoven, Schubert and even Brahms is a different question. The total absence of dryness and austerity in his works and the abundance of contrast makes instantaneous appreciation easy. The difficulty of Bruckner lies in his never relenting intensity; although his 'mood' can be relaxed, his degree of intensity is never lessened for an instant. Consideration of their comparative popularity cannot, therefore, be based on those works of Beethoven's, Schubert's or Brahms's which have the widest appeal, but only on such works of these masters as can make comparison at all possible : for instance, Beethoven's last quartets, Schubert's String Quartet in G major op. 161, Brahms's Tragic Overture. Bruckner's music, despite its accessibility, is not 'light music'. Also his spaciousness which asks musicians and audience for a whole hour and more of intense concentration will continue to vex some people; naturally, these will not hesitate one moment to put the blame on Bruckner.

Bruckner's music is elemental, but not simple; deeply felt but not sentimental; complex but not sophisticated; thought-stirring but not intellectual. To understand and to love Bruckner is one single mental process—a rich and rewarding experience.

PART II

THE LIFE OF ANTON BRUCKNER

I

Childhood and Education

Joseph Anton Bruckner was born on September 4th 1824 in the village of Ansfelden near Linz in Upper Austria. His father Anton [1791–1837] was the schoolmaster in the village, as his own father had been before him. Bruckner's mother, Theresia, was the daughter of Ferdinand Helm, a civil servant from Neuzeug, near Steyr. Anton was the first-born of twelve children, most of whom died early.

As was to be expected in a schoolmaster's house, the child soon received his first musical instruction from his father. Already at the age of ten he was occasionally permitted to play the organ during a service. On ordinary Sundays, the Mass was usually sung to a setting for solo voices, chorus, two violins, double bass and organ; on festival days, to the boy's delight, two trumpets were added to the ensemble. This was the church music of the village; nor was it exceptional to the general practice. The Graduals and Offertories which Michael Haydn had composed for the whole liturgical year, in response to the wish of Archbishop Hieronymus of Salzburg, and which were to be regarded by composers as a pattern, were set for a choir in four parts with organ and two violins and the occasional addition of trumpets, horns or (less frequently) trombones.

The schoolmaster's son showed signs of musical talent and the father soon realized that such lessons as he was able to give

ought to be supplemented. The child was sent to his godfather Johann Baptist Weiss, who was a schoolmaster at Hörsching near by and who did some composing.[1] From 'Cousin Weiss', as he was called in the family (he was brother-in-law to Anton's father), the child of eleven began to learn systematically to play the organ and it was at this time that Bruckner wrote his first compositions. From then onwards he was to compose music to the end of his life with an ever-increasing mastery of the technique of writing music but his genius as a composer manifested itself unusually late. Those earliest compositions, written at Hörsching, were four organ preludes; one of them contains some extraordinary modulations, awkwardly made by means of enharmonic changes. On the organ, the child made such rapid progress that he was frequently allowed to deputize for his 'cousin'. At Hörsching, Bruckner also heard for the first time Haydn's *Creation* and *The Seasons* and also a Mozart Mass, performed with the local facilities. It was probably the happiest time in Bruckner's life. Unfortunately, it came to an end all too soon when Bruckner's father, who suffered from tuberculosis, became seriously ill.

Johann Baptist Weiss was remembered with gratitude by Bruckner throughout his life. Some local slander depressed him so badly that he ended his life by suicide. One of Bruckner's last letters, written on December 10th 1895, was in answer to an inquiry from Pastor Ernst Lanninger of Hörsching:

> That is correct: from 1835 to 1837 I was at Hörsching and it was there that I first played the organ with Herr Cousin and Godfather Weiss. I pray that your reverence may kindly remember the poor man during Holy Mass and I ask the same favour of the other reverend gentlemen.[2]

Very soon after his return to Ansfelden, on June 7th 1837, the priest was called to administer the last sacraments to Bruckner's dying father. Anton assisted the priest, and when the father had breathed his last the child fainted.

The household at Ansfelden was dissolved. Through the efforts of his mother, and with the generous help of the prelate Michael Arneth, Anton Bruckner was admitted into the choir school of the great Augustinian abbey the *Chorherrenstift* of St. Florian.

[1] A *Requiem* of J. B. Weiss was edited and published by Ernst Lanninger in 1892.

[2] *Gesammelte Briefe*, p. 291.

Arneth's assistance was instrumental; Anton's voice was already breaking and he would therefore not have been any use in the choir. In the school he was to be educated so that he should later be trained for the teaching profession. The mother moved with the other children to the village of Ebelsberg.

Now Bruckner received the first methodical instruction in figured bass, in piano, organ and violin playing. But a deep impression was made on the child less by the tuition itself than by the palatial establishment, the monastic atmosphere and above all by the sound of the great organ (which the pupils, however, were not allowed to play) in the abbey church. The edifice of St. Florian, as Bruckner knew it, was begun in 1686 by the architect C. A. Carlone (a pupil of Lorenzo Bernini) and it was finished in 1715 by J. Prandauer, the architect of the even more famous baroque church of Melk. The great organ was in the main the work of F. X. Krismann, who had begun building it in 1770; it was finished after approximately four years' work. The one unsatisfactory aspect of the instrument was the wind supply; attempt after attempt had to be made to find a satisfactory solution within the technical means of the time and the problem was never really settled until 1930, when electricity was connected with the instrument. Minor alterations were made by the organ builder Schnepf of Linz in 1858–1859. Between 1873 and 1875 the organ was extensively reconstructed in accordance with the taste of the period, but immediately after the Second World War, from 1945 to 1951, it was happily restored to its former excellence. Three manuals and the pedal now represent the original Krismann organ whilst a fourth manual serves twenty-six modern stops. When Bruckner lived in St. Florian, he still played on the original instrument.[1]

When Bruckner, as a boy of thirteen, first saw St. Florian, the contrast between the modest schoolhouses of Ansfelden and Hörsching and a place of such overwhelming splendour must have impressed him as a visible symbol of the glory and the power of the Church. For a real impression of these magnificent

[1] The disposition of the organ as listed in H. F. Redlich, *Bruckner and Mahler*, p. 6, is not that of Krismann's instrument but describes the organ of 1873–1875 by Mauracher. The Krismann organ had approximately seventy stops, of which seven times two, twice three and in one case six were coupled. (F. Linninger, *Orgeln und Organisten im Stift St. Florian*, pp. 176 and 178.)

baroque edifices one must visit St. Florian or Melk; photos fail to convey the grandeur and the stylistic purity of these two finest baroque buildings in the world. Perceptive as Bruckner was in his earliest years, it was here that the foundation was laid for his lifelong and deep-rooted relation with the Church, in particular with St. Florian. Bruckner became attached to St. Florian with bonds more lasting than the span of his life: in the crypt of the abbey church, underneath the great organ, stands his sarcophagus. St. Florian was his favourite retreat in life and became his final place of rest.

The first years at St. Florian were devoted to an ordinary school education, with a good musical tuition in addition to the otherwise rather modest curriculum. The director of the school, Michael Bogner, gave instruction in figured bass; Max Gruber, who was a pupil of Beethoven's friend Schuppanzigh, was his violin teacher and the organist Anton Kattinger was in charge of piano and organ lessons. There followed the actual training for the teaching profession which was supplemented outside the religious house. In 1840, Bruckner was sent to Linz for a ten months' course comprising a variety of subjects and including musical theory and organ playing. It was during that time that Bruckner heard orchestral music for the first time, among other works Beethoven's Fourth Symphony. The church music at Linz was under the direction of J. N. August Dürrnberger and concentrated on the compositions of Michael and Joseph Haydn and also, to a lesser extent, of Mozart. Bruckner took lessons with Dürrnberger based on the latter's book on harmony and figured bass. He learned with fervent eagerness. In the course of these months at Linz, he made a copy of Bach's *Kunst der Fuge* and of a number of fugues by Albrechtsberger. The course was terminated by an examination and Bruckner obtained a certificate. This is the first, but by no means the last time that the words 'examination' and 'certificate' are mentioned in Bruckner's life. Right into his years of maturity, Bruckner always saw to it that he received a testimonial after any course of instruction, and to their formidable number he added any amount of certificates which he solicited from examiners of his own choice. Already in 1841, the Linz examination was followed by a special music test in which Bruckner excelled in the theory of harmony as he had studied it with Dürrnberger.

Armed with these certificates, Bruckner—then seventeen years old—obtained his first appointment in the teaching profession. He became assistant to the schoolmaster of Windhaag, an isolated village of some two hundred inhabitants. The job was deplorable. The yearly salary amounted to twelve florins and the duties included an excessive amount of agricultural work on the fields of his senior schoolmaster. Bruckner began his day with the tolling of the morning bell at four a.m. and ended it at nine p.m. with the evening bell. In order to supplement his hopelessly inadequate salary, he played the violin on Sundays for the dance music in the inn. The senior schoolmaster had no comprehension of the young assistant's somewhat unusual seriousness and altogether the relationship was far from happy. After two years of docile drudgery, Bruckner revolted one day and refused to cart dung. A complaint went off promptly to St. Florian and Bruckner was penalized by being transferred to Kronstorf, a village even smaller than Windhaag. The 'punishment' had been measured out to him by Propst Michael Arneth, who was fond of him; it turned out to be highly beneficial to Bruckner. Kronstorf is situated between the towns of Steyr and Enns and also not far from St. Florian. All these places, now easily accessible to Bruckner, were musically active and gave him opportunities for gaining new impressions. Even under the uncongenial conditions at Windhaag, he had managed to compose a Mass and a *Pange lingua.*

It can safely be supposed that Michael Arneth had recognized Bruckner's musical gifts or he had, at least, noticed his unusual eagerness in studying; it does seem that he had given careful thought to the transfer. Arneth was interested in music; the brothers Anton and Franz von Spaun—intimate friends of Schubert's—often stayed with him at St. Florian.[1]

In Kronstorf, where Bruckner arrived on January 23rd 1843, the living conditions and the relationship with the senior schoolmaster were pleasant and in Steyr he had the opportunity of playing a fine organ. It was also at Steyr that Bruckner first became familiar with some of Schubert's music. In Enns, he had the fortune to make contact with the organist Leopold Edler von Zenetti, a man of culture whom he had previously met in St. Florian and who gave him further instruction in musical theory.

[1] O. E. Deutsch, *Schubert. A documentary Biography* (1946), p. 281.

They concentrated mainly on figured bass which Zenetti taught after D. T. Türk's method. Through Zenetti, Bruckner was first introduced to J. S. Bach's *Well-tempered Clavier* and to his organ music.

Of course, during all this time, the musical studies were but one aspect of Bruckner's general training as a teacher and organist. Even so, one gains the impression that in musical matters Bruckner went beyond the range of the prescribed curriculum, although apparently he had no plans to specialize in music. In 1845, he passed the preliminary examination for teachers in senior schools (*Hauptschulen*) and the final examination for the teaching profession followed in 1855. Already the preliminary test of 1845 entitled him to a better position. This he found in St. Florian. He returned on September 25th 1845 and, for free board and lodging with a salary of thirty-six florins per annum he became assistant teacher in his own former school. Anton Kattinger [b. 1816], the able organist, and the wonderful organ itself helped towards further progress in his musical development. He carried on his study of theory, using now Marpurg's *Treatise on the Fugue* in the new edition which Simon Sechter, Bruckner's future teacher, had published.

Some time early in 1850, after his wife's death, Anton Kattinger moved to Kremsmünster. On February 28th, Bruckner was provisionally appointed organist, with a salary of 80 florins, which was back-dated to February 1st. His total income now amounted to 152 florins plus free board. The provisional appointment was never made definite. On his last salary receipt in St. Florian, dated December 22nd 1855, Bruckner still signed himself as 'provisional organist'.[1]

His increased earnings were not only extremely useful but psychologically essential for Bruckner. Throughout his life, Bruckner's peace of mind depended to a large degree on security. As early as 1841, immediately after his first appointment—Bruckner was then seventeen years old—he took out an insurance for his old-age pension, paying his first contribution from his miserable salary at Windhaag.

[1] I am indebted to Canon Dr. F. Linninger of St. Florian for this information. He showed me the original of the last receipt signed by Bruckner before moving to Linz. Dr. Linninger's investigations have rectified a number of facts and dates wrongly described in all Bruckner biographies hitherto published.

At Kronstorf, Bruckner had been continuously busy with composition. The return to St. Florian gave him, naturally, even more scope for writing church music. All the works of this period testify to his growing mastery of the technique of composition, but almost all of them are insignificant. However, there are two works in which something of Bruckner's destiny appears to stir. In 1849 he composed a *Requiem in D minor* which was sung during the funeral service of his friend Franz Sailer, an official in the law chancery of St. Florian, who bequeathed to Bruckner his Bösendorfer grand piano, which he had only recently acquired. This was the instrument which Bruckner used to the end of his life. The other work of significance was the *Missa solemnis* of 1854. In later years only the *Requiem* was acknowledged by Bruckner as a composition of value; as late as 1894 he looked it over in order to make corrections here and there. Apart from numerous church compositions, in these years Bruckner wrote a number of pieces for male choir. Two of these are written in the key of B flat minor, a key which was to attract Bruckner again in his maturity.

Bruckner continued his further pedagogic training in other spheres besides music. In 1851, he added a testimonial for Latin studies to his already vast hoard of certificates. In 1853, he travelled to Vienna in order—inevitably—to submit himself to yet another music examination, in organ playing and improvisation. Among those who tested him was Simon Sechter, of whom we shall soon hear more. The peculiar eagerness of collecting testimonials and certificates had become almost an obsession. He extracted from his confessor a certificate testifying to his devotion to work, and from Propst Arneth—whom he could have trusted implicitly—he requested a written guarantee that his salary was assured.

This whim of collecting written declarations was not an isolated phenomenon; it is significant as one of many indications of Bruckner's failure to find satisfaction in his life and activities or in the steady, ever-successful progress of his career. In his letters of this time, there sounds from time to time an inexplicable note of unhappiness and restlessness:

> Here I always sit in my tiny room, melancholy and alone. I have nobody here to whom I could open my heart; ever and again they misunderstand me and I must bear with these

> setbacks in silence. Our establishment treats music, and consequently musicians too, quite indifferently. . . . I can never be cheerful here and must not reveal anything of my plans.[1]

The *plans* which he mentioned in this letter were of a somewhat surprising kind. In his strange restlessness, Bruckner entertained the idea of giving up his career and studying jurisprudence —or, at least, working as a clerk in a court of law. These plans were not mere day-dreams; in July 1854, he actually applied for a vacancy, pointing out that he had occasionally assisted in the chancellery of St. Florian. As may be expected, even for this he had made sure of a testimonial and he attached it to his application. Fortunately, he was refused and had to remain an organist. There is no indication that Bruckner was greatly disappointed. In the same year he arranged another organ examination for himself, under the Court Conductor Ignaz Assmayr of Vienna, formerly of Prague.[2]

We shall have to say more about Bruckner's tendency towards melancholy and depression. These early instances are not fully explained, although they undoubtedly sprang in part from Bruckner's unhappy love for a sixteen-year-old girl, Antonie Werner, for whom he was too old. Also the death of Michael Arneth on March 24th 1854 must have affected Bruckner deeply; in him he lost the man who had watched over his early development. The *Libera* composed by Bruckner for Arneth's funeral service sounded again through the church of St. Florian in 1896 when the composer himself was laid to rest. Arneth's successor was the prelate Friedrich Theophyl Mayr, for whose induction service on September 14th 1854 Bruckner composed the *Mass in B flat minor* which has already been mentioned; Bruckner finished the work on August 8th.

However much he had achieved and worked, in 1855, when the legal profession had apparently ceased to tempt him, it

[1] *Gessammelte Briefe*, pp. 19 and 20.

[2] E. Wellesz has interpreted Bruckner's career as a conscious progress towards the final goal, determined by Bruckner's will-power, ambition and inner certainty. His summary of the successive stages in Bruckner's aims ignores the painful uncertainty of Bruckner about his destiny. Nothing was further removed from his mind during his formative years than a vision of what he was to become. (cf. *Anton Bruckner and the Process of Musical Creation*, The Musical Quarterly, 1938.)

occurred to him that perhaps his musical studies had not been systematic enough.

One of the authorities present at his organ examination in Vienna two years earlier had been the eminent theorist Simon Sechter [1788–1867]. He was by general consent the most important teacher of the time. The *summa* of Sechter's methods is contained in his textbook *The Principles of Musical Composition*[1] (published in three volumes, 1853–1855) and, also, in his already mentioned edition of Marpurg's *Treatise on the Fugue*. Sechter was a theoretician, but apart from this—or, perhaps, not too far removed from it—he composed and published numerous compositions. An additional collection of some five thousand fugues is extant in manuscript. His published works include piano pieces, waltzes, songs, masses, two string quartets (one of them called *The Four Temperaments*) and he even produced a burlesque opera entitled *Ali hitsch-hatsch*, unexpected for so forbidding a theoretician. On Assmayr's advice, Bruckner went to Vienna to show Sechter his *Missa solemnis* and was accepted as a private pupil. It is interesting here to remember that earlier, in the last year of his life, Schubert had thought of taking instruction from Sechter. It is not quite clear whether or not the first lesson of the proposed tuition actually took place.

However, before Bruckner could avail himself of this opportunity to perfect his theoretical studies, a decisive change occurred in his life.

[1] *Die Grundsätze der musikalischen Komposition.*

2

Cathedral Organist at Linz

At Linz, the cathedral organist Wenzel Pranghofer had died and applicants for the position were to play before a commission on November 13th 1855. Bruckner had not put his name down and had no intention of doing so, but he nevertheless went to Linz that day in order to hear the candidates play. There were two of them and both failed the test of fugal improvisation. Dürrnberger had noticed Bruckner's presence and asked him to come forward. After some hesitation Bruckner consented to play and was brilliantly successful. However, this was only the preliminary test and the final decision was to be made, with other, new candidates taking part, on January 25th of the following year after the sifting of written applications. By the middle of December Bruckner's application had not been received. Once again he had to be pressed :

> While other people embark on activities, you sit at home and do nothing. You must cultivate the acquaintance of Dom Schiedermayr and of the burgomaster. But the most important point is : you must send your application soon. Your indifference annoys me. You don't seem to have the first idea of how to set about things in the world today.

At the same time, Bruckner was also advised to dress more carefully when meeting influential people and not to appear again

'in your overcoat from which there was even a button missing, and with a scarf round your neck'.

At last, Bruckner wrote his application and took part in the test. There were three other candidates. The result of the competition was that Bruckner was chosen. The lengthy and very formal minutes of the examination board stated:

> ... Anton Bruckner was asked whether he could take on the theme in C minor which Paupie had refused as being too difficult; he accepted immediately and improvised a strict fugue on it. In addition, he executed with such exceptional ability and accomplishment a difficult chorale accompaniment demanded of him that it was a delight to listen and once again his mastery of the practical handling of the organ was fully established with all honours (as indeed the skill of his renowned church compositions would lead one to expect).... Truly A. Bruckner alone can be considered to be the perfect and worthy person for this position, with his long, meritorious and persevering studies and his extensive technical learning....[1]

The two other candidates had, so the minutes report, tried in their own way to overcome difficulties: as speedily as they had dared, they had disregarded the given themes and had made a hasty transition to a recital of carefully prepared 'improvisation'.

Thus Bruckner, then thirty-two years old, became cathedral organist at Linz. He continued his life with his familiar habits, playing the organ and persevering with his studies. Due to the personal influence of the Bishop of Linz, Franz Joseph Rudigier, he was given leave during Lent and Advent for journeys to Vienna, to Simon Sechter. The bishop was deeply impressed by Bruckner's playing and even, it seems, by his personality. In later years, when Bruckner had left Linz, he frequently requested him to come to Linz and to play for him *privatissime*, and Bruckner's first biographer, F. Brunner of Linz, tells us that he invariably reacted to the organist's greeting with quite distinctive respect, 'of the kind which he would normally reserve for high dignitaries'.

The studies with Sechter—normally conducted in the form of 'postal tuition'—lasted over five years. Bruckner considered them of supreme importance and he hardly composed at all during that time. This may, however, have been at Sechter's instigation

[1] The entire text of the minutes is quoted in F. Brunner, *Dr. Anton Bruckner* [1895].

who generally discouraged free composition by his students during a course of instruction. (One wonders whether he would have asked Schubert to abstain from composing if the latter had become his pupil!) At the end of each term, Bruckner—faithful to his old whim—never failed to solicit from his teacher a written testimonial about his progress. His eagerness in these studies was so extraordinary that Sechter (who was famed for his stern insistence on hard work on the part of his students) was quite alarmed and tried to restrain his unusual pupil:

> In order to make sure that you are in good health when you come to Vienna, I entreat you to look after yourself and to have sufficient rest. Be assured that I am convinced of your thoroughness and eagerness and I would therefore be grieved to see you fall ill through excessive mental work. I cannot but tell you that never before have I known so conscientious a pupil.[1]

Bruckner himself told in later years that he used to work on the Sechter studies for seven hours a day.

The principle of Sechter's theory of harmony derives from Rameau's discovery of the *basse fondamentale*, the basic root note of each chord and its inversions. A systematic progression, by intervals of fifths or fourths, of these roots (which are not necessarily audible) governed the entire system of modulation. This system cannot be simplified and it lies beyond the scope of this book to describe it in detail. Apart from the obvious complexities of the theory's application, it must be remembered that Bruckner was already well trained when he started the studies with Sechter which were, therefore, concentrated on advanced exercises. Bruckner's complete mastery of this theory gave the creative work of his later years that peculiar purity of harmony, particularly in progressions to very far removed keys. Of course, had he not become a composer of genius, the five years spent at these studies would not have helped him to write imposing works; nor is there any indication that Sechter saw in him more than an almost alarmingly assiduous pupil. As the perfectionist of the classical theorists, Sechter was to his contemporaries the guardian of tradition; posterity remembers him as Bruckner's teacher.

By 1861, even Bruckner was at last convinced that nothing

[1] *Gesammelte Briefe*, p. 353.

could have been overlooked in his studies. He would not, of course, have been satisfied on this account without the affirmation of others and he made his usual arrangement for a special examination. This time, it seems, he had a real aim and not simply the ambition to obtain yet another formal testimonial. He wanted to obtain a certificate which would state that he was now capable of becoming a teacher at music academies. In November, the examination took place in the Piaristen Church at Vienna, his examiners being the following authorities: Joseph Hellmesberger (the Director of the Vienna *Konservatorium*), Johann Herbeck (the Director of the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde*), Otto Dessof (the conductor of the Court Opera), School Councillor Dr. Becker and Simon Sechter. It was Herbeck who summed up the impression which Bruckner made: 'He should have examined us!' From that day, Herbeck was one of his active friends.

With Sechter, Bruckner had studied a theoretical system which was largely bound up with the professor's remote predecessors such as Rameau, F. M. Marpurg, D. Th. Türk, J. Ph. Kirnberger: a theory of music of the past. Mastery of its entire range was the sum of Bruckner's vast learning and though as such it was doubtless of some practical use to him for his improvisations at the organ and for his settings of church music, by its very nature it could not be inspiring. The letter rarely gave way to the spirit. Bruckner had realized the dangers of the unrelieved barrenness of these studies and guarded himself against them by many free improvisations and frequently listening to good music. And yet, he was no nearer to writing a great work than before he had acquired such impressive qualifications for the task.

The strange spectacle of the cathedral organist who never left off studying had not passed unnoticed at Linz. A former conductor of the choral society *Frohsinn*, Anton Storch, took it upon himself to censure Bruckner in a newspaper article. Writing about a recent performance of a Schumann work, he remarked that Schumann had not been one of those sad fellows who creep around with bent head and think to have attained the final goal of art with the achievement of having studied its formal aspects, by mastering counterpoint in despaired abstraction, by straying aimlessly in scholastic deserts, and so on. Bruckner had good

reason to realize that these remarks were meant for him. He wrote to a friend about it and made this comment:

> In Linz I am the only one who studies counterpoint, but neither do I bend my head nor do I creep around. Storch must not imagine that I believed the completion of my studies to have brought me to the zenith of music.[1]

This statement is significant in that it shows how Bruckner considered his studies, assiduous and all-absorbing as they were, to be but of secondary importance. No less noteworthy is his silence over the ultimate aim of his studies; indeed, his unrewarding correspondence gives no indication at all that he had any clear idea of his destiny. The wish to obtain a certificate for possible entry into a music academy was an afterthought; it cannot have been his aim from the outset, because we know that between the first move of his studies with Sechter and the actual beginning of the tuition he had become cathedral organist.

In Linz, Bruckner befriended the opera conductor Otto Kitzler (1834–1915), who used to play the 'cello occasionally in Bruckner's church concerts. This friendship was to play as great a part in his development as did Sechter's instruction. Kitzler had none of Sechter's eminence but he was the perfect man for Bruckner to meet at that particular moment. He was a practical musician of wide and varied experience—a type of person with whom Bruckner had never before been closely acquainted. Naturally, Bruckner was impressed and—how could it have been otherwise?—he asked the younger man to give him lessons. They met regularly for instruction in form and instrumentation; Bruckner became familiar with Beethoven's world. His exercises included an orchestral instrumentation of the first movement of Beethoven's Piano Sonata op. 13. Now Kitzler, unlike Sechter, was young and his outlook modern; he also introduced his pupil to the instrumentation of the modern orchestra through the scores of Richard Wagner. Whilst under the guidance of Kitzler, Bruckner wrote a number of orchestral works including a Symphony in F minor with a strong Wagnerian influence and the *Overture in G minor*. The symphony is marked by internal thematic relationships and inversions of the main theme—hints of his later idiosyncrasies—but it really is not more

[1] *Gesammelte Briefe*, p. 35.

than an exercise. The G minor Overture is a pleasant work which, although it is sometimes performed, was regarded by the composer as a mere study. Biographically, these attempts show how under Kitzler's tuition Bruckner turned his attention to symphonic forms; moreover, in them we find for the first time an occasional instance of Bruckner's unmistakable style, as we know it from the mature works, such as the second theme of the Overture.

Kitzler's influence was supplemented by that of Bruckner's other friends, in particular the Government official Moritz von Mayfeld and his wife Betty. The former was a person of wide education and a great music lover and Betty von Mayfeld was an accomplished pianist who had earned the praise of Clara Schumann. The Mayfelds opened for Bruckner many new horizons and it was through them that he came to know *Tristan and Isolde.*

3

Bruckner's Self-discovery

In February 1863, Bruckner heard for the first time a complete work of Richard Wagner. Otto Kitzler conducted two performances of *Tannhäuser* and presented tickets to his pupil. Three months earlier, he had already shown him the score and drawn his attention to the instrumentation. Bruckner studied the score thoroughly and we may presume that he was present at the rehearsals.

This was to be the turning-point of Bruckner's life. It was immediately after the experience of the opera that he proved himself a great composer. In examining this event, we must not overlook the biographical facts. Bruckner's introduction to Wagner came after exhaustive studies in traditional theory (and Bruckner had a profound respect for tradition). Also it occurred at a time when the two sides of his nature—the pedantic theoretician and the full-blooded artist—had caused him to notice with naïve satisfaction how frequently Beethoven had offended against Sechter's rules (which admitted of no exceptions). Again, Bruckner had achieved a complete mastery of technique and a short time had sufficed to assure him of an excellent career. However, instead of showing satisfaction or pride—and what other organist had such a record of qualifications?—Bruckner was always dissatisfied, often to the extent of being acutely restless.

This then was the cathedral organist of Linz who heard Wagner's *Tannhäuser* in February 1863, a man who had spent his

years in unquestioned dependence on established authority and in the exploration of what was deemed permissible on music paper. In Wagner's score he found music which went beyond all his previous experience, and yet what he heard convinced him. Bruckner would never have become a rebel. Fortunately, the question of his becoming so did not arise, for his impression of Wagner's music led him to the simple conclusion that Wagner was, no doubt, an 'authority', a 'Master'. And so it was with the precept and the example of a 'Master' that Bruckner flung open the door to creative freedom: to that freedom which was his by right. This may sound like romantic fiction or, at least, like a trivial simplification of a complex psychological event. However, many a page in this biography will bear out that it is not an implausible simplification. So simple (I am using this word without any derogatory implication) were this man's reactions that to simplify him is impossible.

Bruckner himself never talked of the transformation he underwent in 1863; it is likely that he was not really aware of it. However, first manifestations of genius are rarely to be explained, whether they occur prodigiously early as in the case of Schubert or Mendelssohn—not to mention Mozart—or as late as they did with Bruckner.

Immediately after the *Tannhäuser* performance, this hitherto diffident, if aspiring church organist wrote a work of masterly power and confident individuality, a work, moreover, with no more than a passing trace of Wagnerian influence.

The Mass in D minor for soli, chorus and large orchestra is the significant work, the first-fruit of Bruckner's self-discovery. Here we find for the first time the unmistakable mark of Bruckner's master hand. The work was finished on September 29th and first performed in the Old Cathedral at Linz on November 20th 1864 and was so well received that a concert performance was arranged a few weeks later.

The next Mass, in E minor, which Bruckner wrote in 1866, reverted to a more liturgical style. It is set for a chorus in eight parts and uses sparingly an orchestra of wood-wind and brass. Its wealth of contrapuntal and harmonic art links the work both with the greatest era of polyphony and with the most modern trends. It has rightly been pointed out that the austere use of the instruments anticipates tendencies of twentieth-century church music.

But chiefly the work is remarkable for its searching seriousness and for its equilibrium of highest expression on the one hand and liturgical self-limitation on the other; the use of the instruments is unforgettable. Bruckner revised the work in 1882.[1]

Bruckner's activities in Linz were not confined to church duties; he was conductor of the choral society *Frohsinn,* first in 1860–1861 and again, for a short while, in 1868. For his chorus he wrote a good number of secular pieces. It seems that he must have been an excellent choirmaster. With his chorus he took part in notable festivals at Krems and Nuremberg.

It is interesting to note that in 1868 Bruckner conducted at Linz the first public performance of the final section of Wagner's *Meistersinger,* in preparation for the Nuremburg festival. He had asked Wagner for a suitable composition and Wagner had answered on January 31st 1868:

> I address myself to you both in order to convey my thanks for your very friendly note and to ask you to tell the gentlemen of the *Frohsinn* how happy I was to receive their warm message of encouragement. I should be very glad indeed to comply with their request for an appropriate composition of mine for male chorus. However, as you must realize, a work of such a nature is hard to find among my compositions. Yet, after thinking the matter over, since you mention a festival concert in which an orchestra and a female chorus will take part, I think I can offer you something appropriate. It is the closing section of my latest dramatic work, *Die Meistersinger.*

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[1] There is no 'alternative version' in which the instruments are replaced or joined by the organ (Redlich, *Bruckner and Mahler,* p. 74.) No doubt, the organ can be used as a substitute, and this is what Bruckner had to do on one occasion in Linz. One has only to listen to the work in order to dispel any notion that the organ could be used without serious loss.

Bruckner mentions the Mass in three letters (2 Dec., 1866, to Weinwurm; 18 May, 1885, to J. Burgstaller; 31 Dec., 1885, to C. F. Pohl) and invariably he refers to *Harmoniebegleitung* (i.e. wood-wind and brass). Not that he had forgotten that on one occasion he was *forced* to play the organ; on 28 Oct., 1885, he wrote to Adalbert Schreyer of Linz, praising enthusiastically a fine performance of the Mass—'it is no longer the old Linz!' There is no question of 'versions' here at all.

Another reason why it may be necessary to introduce the organ during performance under inadequate conditions is that only a truly excellent choir will maintain the pitch during the long and often harmonically extremely difficult *a capella* stretches. The entry of the instruments will lead to disaster if in the meantime the choir has come down by half a tone, or more.

> This is a bass solo, very pleasing without being really difficult, and, moreover, it requires in addition the full orchestra and chorus. Write to Schott at Mainz for a copy of the piano arrangement, two acts of which are now ready, with the third soon to follow. Most probably, the engraving of the orchestral score of the third act is also sufficiently far advanced to make it possible for you to get hold of a proof copy of the section which you will want. If not, ask Choirmaster Hans Richter, of the Munich Court Theatre, to obtain a copy for you.

The letter ends with Wagner's acceptance of the honorary membership of *Frohsinn* 'with much pleasure'.

Bruckner's reputation as organist and choirmaster stood high at Linz. When the Mass in D minor had been performed, he was generally acknowledged as a composer of unusual quality. For the first time he was mentioned in the Viennese press. Even the merits of the Mass, however, in no way prepared the world for what was to follow: that Bruckner was to turn his attention almost exclusively to symphonies and to become one of Austria's greatest composers. Between May 1865 and July 1866 he wrote the decisive work, his Symphony No. 1 in C minor.

In June 1866 Bruckner was invited, because of his performance of the *Mastersingers* Finale, to hear the first performance of *Tristan and Isolde* in Munich. While there, he showed the manuscript of his still unfinished symphony to Anton Rubinstein, a fellow guest at his hotel, and even to Hans von Bülow; but he could not summon the courage to show his music to Wagner. Bülow was impressed; his reaction on seeing the score was a mixture of surprised admiration of the ideas and alarm about the daring execution. Many years later, the work was to make a similar impression on Hugo Wolf.[1]

The first performance took place at Linz in sadly unfavourable conditions. An inadequate orchestra was assembled, consisting of the theatre orchestra, members of two regimental bands stationed in the town, and dilettantes; there were twelve violins, three

[1] Hans von Bülow never conducted any of Bruckner's compositions and the few references to Bruckner in his vast correspondence are of a sarcastic nature. Of some writer's literary style he remarked: 'he drivels words as Bruckner notes'; in a letter from St. Petersburg, as Leningrad was then called, he reported how the 'Asiatic Bruckners' molested him to include their works in his programmes. When Wilhelm Zinne, a young journalist from Hamburg, wrote him a very long propaganda letter on Bruckner's music, Bülow actually went as

violas, three violoncelli and three double basses. Quite apart from this, neither the musicians nor the provincial audience could be expected to grasp the complexity of the vast and original work. In fact there was but a scanty audience, because on the day preceding the performance the bridge across the Danube had collapsed and the people of Linz were much too thrilled by the disaster to be interested in a matinée concert. Bruckner's laconic comment was: 'It cost me a lot of money to cover the deficit.'

The First Symphony differs from its successors by its tempestuous energy; only in some episodes it has some of that solemnity and inner vision which mark Bruckner's later style. Once Bruckner had united profound introversion and boundless self-expression in a supreme and peculiar serenity, this stormy first symphony became for him *'das kecke Beserl'*—'the impudent urchin'.

In other respects, the work stands in line with the later symphonies inasmuch as Bruckner introduces in it his characteristic innovation of broadening the sonata form by the provision of a third theme in the exposition. It has been suggested[1] that the term 'innovation' should here be used with qualification and that Bruckner's 'third themes' were in fact merely independent codetta themes as they are to be found in classical precedents; that 'Bruckner did not invent a new symphonic conception, but rather expanded the classical frame'. In an abstract and purely formal sense this may possibly be true, but the fact remains that the 'third themes' are far too weighty to be regarded as codettas; they are as important as the preceding main and second themes and, like them, they are usually, in fact, a group of themes. In any case, they introduce a third sharp and balanced contrast. Occasionally they are actually followed by short codetta motifs. But, however we classify it, the 'innovation' is a legitimate and happy expansion which does no violence to the meaning of sonata style;

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far as granting him an audience: 'Although I am rather perplexed by your approval of the musical, respectively anti-musical nonsense of that crank Bruckner, I will, as an exception, offer you one hour to present your wishes: you may see me on Thursday from 9 to 10 a.m.' (13 Feb., 1887.) However, during the conversation, Bülow changed the subject immediately. Bruckner was deeply convinced that Bülow's indifference was the result of Brahms's influence.

[1] D. Newlin, *Bruckner, Mahler, Schönberg* (1947), p. 90.

in this respect, Bruckner's contribution is far less revolutionary than the new theme which occurs in the development section of the first movement in Beethoven's 'Eroica' Symphony—to name only one example of a departure from tradition in a work of outstanding formal balance.

As in all his symphonies, the second theme of the first movement fulfils the function of what Bruckner called the *Gesangsperiode*. As is usual in classical precedents, its lyricism makes a sharp contrast to the main theme; the composer emphasized this by giving the same lyrical quality to all parts of the accompaniment. There are *Gesangsperioden* in Bruckner's symphonies where it is hard to tell which of the melodious parts is the leading tune; for with Bruckner every part in a second theme does indeed sing.

Although the Adagio anticipates the peculiar intensity of Bruckner's later slow movements, it does not bear comparison with them. We have to wait for the second symphony for the full manifestation of this characteristic.

The Scherzo shows that combination, peculiar to Bruckner, of demonic drive with rustic impetuosity and the Finale is thematically linked with the first movement.

Such, briefly, is Bruckner's contribution to symphonic evolution, already embodied in his first symphony. Historically the symphony is also significant as a major work of 'absolute music', written in a modern and independent idiom, at a time when 'progressive' musicians were united in their persuasion that the Age of the Symphony was no more. Biographically, it marks the flowering of Bruckner's genius and his discovery of a perfect medium. Moreover, it was written with a deep awareness of Beethoven's status, while it laid the foundation of Bruckner's own importance as a writer of symphonies. Brahms had at that time not yet produced his first symphony and his name need not, therefore, be mentioned in this connexion.

As an isolated composition the work does not deserve exaggerated praise. It bears no comparison with any of Beethoven's or Brahms's symphonies and would probably not have survived had it not been followed by Bruckner's mature works. Its significance is biographical and historical; and though it is certainly worthy of performance it is not a masterpiece.

Many years later, in 1890–1891, Bruckner wrote an entirely

revised version of the score which concerned chiefly the instrumentation; everything in the original score that seemed excessively wild to old Bruckner was toned down to somewhat milder proportions—at the expense of the symphony's fiery vitality. The great Munich conductor Hermann Levi tried to restrain Bruckner's ardour:

> First Symphony wonderful! It must be published and performed. But please, please do not alter it too much; everything is just perfect, the instrumentation too. Not too much touching up, please.[1]

The recent critical edition of the original versions of Bruckner's works includes the 'impudent urchin' fresh and vigorous as he was at Linz. The editor, Robert Haas, true to his basic principle, was not so much guided by his personal preference but by the significant fact that Bruckner himself included both versions of the symphony in the 'sealed parcel' in which he committed his original scores to posterity. Certain small revisions made by the composer in 1868, 1877 and 1884 were accepted by the editor of the original version.

The First Symphony has a freedom unknown in Bruckner's earlier works; but even after its composition the man himself knew nothing of the liberty with which his music was inspired. It may be that for many years he had laboured beyond his strength, or that his new creative power was born of some mental crisis affecting him more deeply than we can know. Or again, simply that he was once again unhappy in his love for a very young girl whose parents would not accept him—an experience that had happened to him before. Certain it is that just after he wrote the First Symphony, Bruckner suffered a severe nervous breakdown.

Throughout the biography we shall encounter him in the pursuit of some young girl. Two letters written in 1866 illustrate his circumspect ways of dealing with the situation.

> A short while back, the saddler Tureck from Steyr was here and with him a lovely, dear girl. I have asked my former colleague Gilhofer to obtain some information. He is instructor in the prison of Garston and choirmaster of the *Liedertafel* in Steyregg. He replied: the dear thing is called Henriette Reiter, eighteen years old, speaks several languages, etc., lives with her

[1] *Gesammelte Briefe,* p. 328.

mother, Susanne Reiter, in Vienna-Josefstadt, 27 Kaiserst. The mother owns a good florist business. They say, the girl has 3,000 florins. That's of course dismally little and perhaps she has not even as much as this, or maybe she will get much more one day. Inasmuch as I am already forty-two, time is rather pressing. All the same, rather than being over-hasty, I might wait a little longer. I liked the girl very much and I wonder whether you would be so kind, since all this is absolutely necessary, to find out *from reliable sources* about her morals, pecuniary standing, from people in her neighbourhood, or at the town hall, about her property and so forth. . . .

Three thousand florins is not really very much, particularly if the girl is used to a luxurious life. (For the time being the girl need not know that I am forty-two; what she wants is thirty-six—actually I look a bit younger.)

What did you recently want to tell me about Salzburg? Which girl? Good-looking? Rich? Affectionate? Speak up openly—the time must come.[1]

The odd preoccupation with his 'dear girl's' financial status explains itself in a short letter, written three days later: 'Three thousand florins isn't very much; perhaps she will get more; think what would happen if I died.'[2]

In this same period, his letters again show signs of frequent depression: 'On principle, I live retired from the world which in its turn abandons me.' Such sentences occur here and there in the correspondence. In isolation, they seem but the expression of a passing melancholy like that which he experienced in St. Florian at the time when he thought of becoming a clerk in a court of law. But now, these moods were more frequent and often brought a kind of obsession at which times he would stand as if transfixed, counting the leaves of a tree, the logs in a stack of wood or the grains of sand on the beach of the Danube. In May 1867, Bruckner was advised to seek treatment at Bad Kreuzen. Bishop Rudigier arranged for a priest to help him.

From Bad Kreuzen, Bruckner wrote to his friend Rudolf Weinwurm:

Whatever you may think or may have thought—or whatever you may have heard!—! It was not laziness!— It was much more than that!!!—!; it was a state of utter degeneration and desertion—utter collapse of nerves and overstrain! I was

[1] *Gesammelte Briefe,* p. 74. [2] *Ibid.,* p. 76.

> in the most appalling state; you are the only person to hear of this—please keep quiet about it. Only a short delay and I should have been a victim—lost. Dr. Fadinger in Linz told me already that I might have been overcome by madness. God be thanked! He has saved me in time. . . . During the last few weeks I have improved somewhat. I am not allowed to play anything, to study or to work. Only think what a fate! What a wretched fellow I am! Herbeck sent me the score of my vocal Mass and of the symphony without writing a word. Is it as bad as that? Please find out. Dear friend, write to me.... (19 June, 1867.)[1]

Bruckner stayed in Bad Kreuzen until August 1867 and was cured. All the same, for quite a time he remained unusually excitable and some of the pathological symptoms returned in later years but in milder form and without danger.

All his life, Bruckner was prey to a nervous tension strangely in contrast to the majestic repose so frequent in his works and always dominant in pictures of him. Little of this is to be found in his letters. And this man who was racked by mental storms gave voice in a medium convincing as it was subjective to a faith which stood firm as a rock. *Non confundar in aeternum,* these words from the *Te Deum* have surely never been expressed with more jubilant, exalted certainty than in Bruckner's music. We cannot know if this deep trust was ever threatened.

Bruckner's mental stress manifested itself in yet another way. The composer, generally so single-minded, so utterly absorbed in his music, and his enforced activities as teacher, this man whose gentleness and simplicity were admired even by those who disparaged his works, was strangely fascinated by public tragedies. Thus, for instance, the Mayerling affair and the fate of Emperor Maximilian of Mexico excited him very much and he insisted on knowing all the morbid details; another favourite subject of his was Arctic exploration and the deprivations suffered by explorers. Since he had no leaning towards sadism, it seems inexplicable that suffering held for him such an unhealthy attraction. The difficulty of accounting for all this is not unlike that of explaining the dreadfully disturbed utterances in the composer's last two symphonies, which, too, remind us that the tranquillity of the old man's photographs fails to reveal the whole personality.

[1] *Gesammelte Briefe,* p. 82.

4

Move to Vienna—Journeys to France and England

The great Mass in F minor which Bruckner began just after the crisis of 1867 reflects the terror he had experienced. The *Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison* invocations are filled with an intense and haunting urgency; the affirmation *Credo, credo!* rings with ecstatic insistence and jubilation.

In Bruckner's musical development, the work marks the transition from the stormy First Symphony towards the inner strength which deepened with every new work. Beyond all doubt, it was the greatest Mass since Beethoven's *Missa solemnis* op. 123. The similarities between the two compositions, however, are purely external: the great apparatus of soli, choir and large orchestra and the symphonic conception of the larger sections (*Gloria* and *Credo*). Spiritually, the approach is entirely different. This is not the place to add to the numerous essays which have been written in order to determine whether the composition of the *Credo* testifies to Beethoven's traditional faith or its absence; needless to say, the answers have ranged from one extreme to the other. Bruckner's work demands no such search: the F minor Mass is church music.

No amount of isolated quotations can do justice to this vast work. The work has much of Bruckner's mature style as we know it in his symphonies. Frequently that most typically Brucknerian stylistic element becomes noticeable, the achievement of astounding

effects with the simplest of technical means. The *Gloria* and *Credo* end in the characteristic manner of the first movement of the Brucknerian symphony: the music arrives at a triumphant statement of the common chord of the main key and the double-dotted rhythm of the trumpets leads to an abrupt, powerful ending. The *Dona nobis pacem* anticipates Bruckner's idiosyncrasy of bringing together in the Finale echoes of the previous movements; reminiscences from the *Kyrie* in the *Dona* are traditional; but Bruckner concludes this Mass with an impressive summary of the whole work.

The *F minor Mass* is, from any point of view, no mere landmark in the composer's progress towards greatness. It is a masterpiece. Bruckner wrote it in its first version in 1867–1868 and he revised it in 1881.

Already before this Mass was finished, new events occurred. In September 1867, Simon Sechter had died and Herbeck suggested to Bruckner that he should apply for Sechter's position as professor at the *Konservatorium* in Vienna. But just as he had done after the death of the former cathedral organist at Linz, Bruckner hesitated, procrastinated and despite the insistence of Herbeck, who came to see him at Linz, would not make up his mind.

Mention has already been made of another friend of Bruckner's in Vienna, of Rudolf Weinwurm (1855–1911). Originally he had been studying jurisprudence and had founded in 1855 a choral society of the Faculty of Law. Three years later this society was extended to members of other faculties and became known as the *Academic Choral Society of the University of Vienna*. Since 1862, Weinwurm was officially appointed as choral instructor in the University and responsible for choral music during ceremonial festivities. It seems he was Bruckner's closest friend at this time and always ready to search for congenial accommodation whenever Bruckner came to Vienna during the years of study with Sechter. Now Bruckner confided in him again. Of course, he appreciated the honour of becoming Sechter's successor; he was worried by the question of money. On May 27th 1868 he wrote to Weinwurm:

> I could become Sechter's successor in the Konservatorium with a yearly salary of 600 florins. Nine lessons per week: six lessons in counterpoint, three lessons in the organ school. He

> [i.e. Herbeck] told me that everything would be put down in writing and then I could make my decision. Although I should never be given the formal appointment as organist of the Imperial Chapel with a salary, which is very sad, still the offer is a great honour. What do you think? Write to me soon! In Linz I have no right for a pension either; except in case of extreme need, by applying to His Majesty. Please be kind and give me your competent advice! Advise me, noble friend; most of my acquaintances think I should go, even Alois. The Liedertafel [i.e. Bruckner's choir] and some of the clergy are against it. But you know the conditions and you will advise me well. Please write to me soon. It is unbearably hot here! How are you in Vienna? Could I live on 600 florins if need be? . . .[1]

Seeing Bruckner's fears and hesitations, Herbeck advised him against a hasty decision, insisting that materially the honourable post in Vienna would be inferior to his more humble one in Linz. He also insisted on pointing out to Bruckner that he could not relieve him of the burden of making the decision, 'I can take no responsibility, nor can I give any guarantee either moral or material'. To Bruckner nothing worse could happen than to be faced with a dilemma in which his own initiative, and not the advice of his friends, had to decide the issue. Already in November 1867 Bruckner had applied for a post as tutor in musical composition in the University of Vienna and his application had been turned down. Now, under the spell of Herbeck's cautious letters, he found himself plunged into despair. In a letter to him he even talked of 'leaving the world'. But Herbeck, who had in the meantime secured an arrangement whereby Bruckner's salary was to be increased by 200 florins, answered with the following forceful words:

> . . . You have no one to fear but yourself, particularly if you start writing hysterical letters to anyone else like the one I received from you today. Far from 'leaving the world' then, 'go into the world'! Have none of these fears and hesitations unworthy of a man and an artist like you; you have no cause for them. . . .[2]

There was a final crisis in June. Bruckner had again voiced fears and was in despair when he realized that one of his letters

[1] *Gesammelte Briefe*, p. 95. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 307.

had given the impression that he had turned down the proposition.

> . . . It makes me desperately unhappy. I crawl around, I can neither eat nor sleep. . . . Why did I give in to these fears? Think of the honour of the position! How should I ever have such a chance again? I am lost. Everything depresses me. . . . My stupidity is to blame and therefore I have to suffer—to suffer bitterly. How can it have happened? I only wanted to improve the conditions but I would have accepted in any case; and I would have been certain of 600 florins and many additional lessons. . . .[1]

During the same unhappy period, he wrote yet another letter, to Hans von Bülow, who, at that time, was busy with the first performances of the *Mastersingers* in Munich; he was also approaching the crisis of his marriage with Cosima and, with it, the necessity of a radical re-orientation of his relations towards his wife's future husband, Richard Wagner. Apparently, he never replied to Bruckner's letter in which the composer wrote of a sudden new idea, to obtain

> . . . an audience with the King [i.e. Ludwig II of Bavaria] and to play the organ to His Majesty and so, perhaps, gain the post as Court Organist or Second Court Conductor either in church or in the theatre for a secure and better salary. Is that possible? Or altogether impossible just now? . . . I pray you most humbly and sincerely to regard this petition and enquiry as the deepest secret and particularly not to tell anyone from Vienna anything about it. . . . (6 June, 1868.)[2]

However, by the end of June, Bruckner had, at last, made up his mind and wrote happily to the director of the Vienna *Konservatorium*:

> The undersigned, who has already asked Herr Court Conductor Herbeck to act on his behalf, declares himself ready for anything and satisfied with everything. The undersigned will be grateful to accept the honourable position and only asks, as a binding agreement, to be appointed with security.[3]

This was on June 28th. On July 6th, Bruckner received the *decretum* which nominated him as lecturer for figured bass,

[1] *Gesammelte Briefe*, p. 96. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 97 f.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 98.

counterpoint and organ. The last safeguard which Bruckner still insisted on was to reserve his post in Linz until 1870.

How different are these timid hesitations to his ever-greater self-assurance in all that concerned his music. In March 1868, Bruckner had been invited to play the organ at a concert of the Academic Choral Society in Vienna. While corresponding about the proposition with Rudolf Weinwurm, Bruckner said his decision would depend on the quality of the organ and asked his friend to inspect the instrument. In addition, he stated:

> Further, it is no longer possible for me to perform other people's compositions. . . . I should have to restrict myself to my own fantasies, to improvised fugues. In any case, there are plenty of people in Vienna to play compositions of others. I believe that only my own manner can characterize me.[1]

Bruckner moved to Vienna in October 1868 and at first he was very happy. His favourite sister Anna [d. 1870] looked after his household, as she had done for a time in Linz. Financially, he was, after all, better off than in Linz, particularly after December when Herbeck secured for him a special stipend of 500 florins to further his plans for new symphonic compositions. Herbeck also secured for him nomination as expectant organist in the Imperial Chapel, but Bruckner had to wait until 1878 before he was elected to full membership with the corresponding salary.

The next year saw an unprecedented excitement in Bruckner's life. The Parisian firm of organ builders Merklin Schütze had won the Gold Medal at the International Exhibition for their new organ in the recently built church at St. Epvre at Nancy. Now they announced a public competition of famous organists to take place at Nancy. At first, the Austrians intended to nominate the Court Organist R. Bibl, but he declined. Bruckner then received the visit of Professor Gehring of the *Konservatorium* who asked him to accept the invitation. After characteristic hesitation, Bruckner accepted on the advice of Eduard Hanslick (at that time still his friend). And so, in April 1869 Bruckner travelled to France, there to distinguish himself as the best and most accomplished of the competitors. Apart from him, only R. de

[1] *Gesammelte Briefe*, p. 92.

Vilbac (organist at St. Eugène's, Paris) was mentioned as outstanding.

From Nancy, Bruckner reported to Herbeck:

> The concerts are over! It was very solemn. During my first days here and even during the first recital it seemed to me that a Parisian organist, Herr Vilbac, was very much preferred to us Germans. However, already in the first recital I had all the musical listeners on my side. In the second recital (yesterday, April 29th), my performance was most movingly acknowledged though I prefer not to write of it. High aristocracy, Parisians, Germans and Belgians outdid each other in congratulating me, much to my astonishment since Vilbac (who is a very charming and very fine French artist and a friend of Thomas) played very well-rehearsed French pieces. It is obvious that he is greatly in favour here, because he often comes to Nancy. What they will write in the paper I do not know—unfortunately I would not even understand it! I have but the immediate judgments of the experts—so favourable that modesty forbids me to describe them—as well as the reception and the applause from the public. Charming ladies of the highest birth even came up to the organ loft to congratulate me.
>
> I apologize for presuming to trouble you. The gentlemen who pay me have asked me to go to Paris and to play on a newly constructed organ there. I have told them repeatedly that my leave expires on Monday. But still on all sides they press me to go, urging me to beg your lordship that the esteemed Management of the Konservatorium may be so gracious as to extend my leave by three days....[1]

Needless to say, the extra leave was readily granted and Bruckner went from Nancy to Paris, there to play on the new organ in Notre-Dame before an audience of musicians including César Franck, Saint-Saëns, Auber and Gounod. Bruckner wrote from Paris to Pastor Schiedermayr at Linz:

> Never again will I experience such a triumph. The musical journals of Paris say that only through me did the great organ at Notre-Dame fulfil itself, that never before had anything so perfect been heard in Paris. Such success, a great surprise to me, has unfortunately affected my health, but I hope, please God, to be soon completely well again....[2]

[1] *Gesammelte Briefe*, pp. 102 f. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 104.

Bruckner's only other journey to foreign parts took place two years later. The Chambers of Commerce of many countries had been invited to send their nations' greatest organists to the International Exhibition of 1871 in London. In Vienna, three candidates played for a selection test and Bruckner was chosen. He arrived in London on July 29th and stayed at Seyd's Hotel, 39, Finsbury Square. He reported with excitement about the posters which advertised the recitals: 'Everywhere my name appears in letters bigger than myself!'

Alas, the papers gave voice to seething indignation, directed against the committee responsible for the arrangement of the recitals, protesting against the invitation of foreigners and the neglect of English organists. Persuaded that the recitals of alien organists were a national scandal, they could find no praise for the unwelcome guests. The *Musical Standard* of August 12th was the exception in at least bestowing some faint praise on Bruckner as the only foreigner worthy of mention. Bruckner, remembering the unstinting enthusiasm of the French press, was baffled and had to content himself with the exuberant applause of the audience. He, the collector of certificates and testimonials, would have been much happier with something on paper to take home with him. An official from the embassy told him that there were means of securing the services of a commissioned newspaper reporter. Bruckner was horrified and would not hear of so scandalous a proposal. All the same, the success of the recitals was exciting enough for him. On August 23rd, he wrote to his old friend Moritz von Mayfeld at Linz:

> Just finished. Gave ten recitals; six times in Alberthall [*sic*] four times in Crystal Palace. Enormous applause, always unending. Requests for encores. Particularly two improvisations I had to repeat often. In both places. Many compliments, congratulations, invitations. Kapellmeister Mann of the Crystal Palace told me that he was astonished and urged me to come back soon bringing my own compositions. . . . Soon I will return to Brussels, but I shan't play any more, am too tired and excited. Germany, Berlin I reserve for later, also Holland and Switzerland. I beg to be remembered to your lady wife. With respect,
>
> always in gratitude yours
> Anton Bruckner.

> P.S. Yesterday I played before 70,000 people, and had to give encores at the request of the committee, because I didn't want to despite the enormous applause. Monday I played equally successfully in the recitals, etc., etc.
>
> N.B. Unfortunately, the music critic of *The Times* is in Germany. It is therefore unlikely that something will be written about me *now*.
>
> Please say a word to the Linz newspaper, particularly to Dr. Dutscheck.[1]

It was only after his departure from London that Bruckner learned of a report in the *Morning Advertiser* of September 1st, which reported about his playing with unrestrained admiration and expressed a hope for his early return.

Bruckner never forgot his London success and in later years when longing and begging for performances and recognition of his symphonies in Vienna, he would often reproach himself: 'If only I had gone to England then!'

It was in London that Bruckner began (with the Finale) the composition of the Second Symphony. Two years earlier he had been at work on two symphonic attempts. A Symphony in D minor was actually 'finished' but Bruckner did not go further than revising its first draft. On coming upon the manuscript many years later, he called it his Symphony 'No. 0' and wrote on the score: 'This symphony is entirely invalid (only an attempt).' After Bruckner's death, the work was published as an *opus posthumus* both in an extensively touched-up version of Ferdinand Löwe's and, later, in its original text. This symphony shows an outstanding advance to Bruckner's later style; although the Mass in F minor is incomparably greater, the development of the composer is more easily traced in the Symphony 'No. 0', a purely orchestral and symphonic composition. The work has some superb music. The opening is, in a way, a sketch for the beginning of the Third Symphony (also in D minor). There is no doubt that this 'attempt', fragmentary as it is compared with the matured works, is more akin in style to the Third and later symphonies than to the Second which followed it. Any critical estimation has to take account of the fact that with Bruckner a finished first version is but an extensive sketch.

The composition of the Second Symphony was beset by a new

[1] *Gesammelte Briefe*, p. 114.

difficulty: Hellmesberger and Hanslick had criticized the complexities of the First Symphony and urged him to write more simply. In seeking to comply with their advice, Bruckner again lost his self-assurance. In the course of his career, such a situation was to occur time and time again. Earlier he had protected himself against this uncertainty as to the purpose of his life by collecting the many certificates which testified to the progress and success of his studies. Now he had found his true calling; and as a creative artist he could hardly continue, as was his wont, to depend on others' judgment rather than on his own. At this moment, when wishing to begin a new symphony, Bruckner's inspiration was hampered by the advice of the experts. It must be remembered that he was a man of nearly fifty, less careless of such advice than might have been a young man engaged on his second or third *opus*. Further he was weighed down by his deep-rooted and humble respect for 'authorities'; and everyone who had somehow or other achieved a respectable position was for him an authority. Years later, he was to write of this period: 'I had lost all the courage to write down a real theme.'

No doubt, it was the London success which had given him the courage to start the new work; but that was not sufficient to let him forget the advice to write with simplicity. After lengthy reflection, he seemed to have discovered a solution: would not the expanded sonata form (which apparently he never thought of abandoning) be made perfectly clear by the means of a sharp separation of the theme groups? It was a strange device and its effect was to make the pauses so blatant that a member of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra coined for the work the name 'Die Pausensymphony', a term which soon found its way into the vocabulary of Bruckner's adversaries, even when the work had been revised and most of the pauses had disappeared from the score. This didactic use of pauses led the composer to discover the potentialities of general rest bars which were soon to have their place in his monumental style as direct means of musical expression. Though he never again used them with such frequency as in the first versions of the Second and Third Symphonies, they appear in most of his later works.

Bruckner once explained the meaning of the pauses, as employed in the revised and later works, to Artur Nikisch: 'I must take breath when I am about to say something of importance.'

On another occasion, he was less grave on the subject and said naïvely: 'What's all the fuss about? Beethoven has a pause right at the beginning of his Fifth Symphony!' The effect of the pauses during performance depends necessarily on the conductor's understanding of their significance. Of course, the composer could have managed almost invariably to 'fill' the rest bars with some transitional notes or chords, had he not preferred silence. There is plenty of evidence throughout his scores that he had the technique of writing excellent transitions. To give only two examples: the transition linking the development section with the recapitulation in the first movement of the Fourth Symphony is quite marvellous; even more remarkable is the consecutive evolution from theme to theme in the first movement of the Fifth Symphony.[1] Still, there are those much-discussed pauses in his works and we can't have Bruckner without them. At least, it must be admitted that he succeeded in making a virtue of his 'defect' (if such indeed it is); certainly, he would not have been capable of a fluency like that of the first movement of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony (the old question: where does the second theme begin?) or that of Brahms's First Symphony, but Bruckner's pauses are never mere gaps.

There are not nearly as many pauses in Bruckner's symphonies as rumours and newspaper criticism might lead one to expect, although they are an integral aspect of his style just as are his beautiful themes. It is for the performers to make the pause eloquent and a responsive conductor can here attain to the sublime.

[1] See pages 163–164.

5

The Evolution of Bruckner's Style

THE composition of the First Symphony—the work that had established Bruckner's future as a symphonic composer—brought this middle-aged man to the end of his formative years. With the Third Symphony his greatness was manifest. If the First Symphony revealed to him his true medium, and the Third determined his style of writing, the Second Symphony (and also the attempt of the Symphony 'No. 0') showed him the way.

With the soaring theme of the 'celli underneath the sextuplet 'tremolo' of violins and violas, Bruckner for the first time wrote one of his impressive symphony openings. The Adagio is his first symphonic slow movement to have the characteristic intense tranquillity. The stormy Scherzo has a Trio of delicate charm and the Finale, again interrelated to the first movement as it had been in the first symphonic exercise during his lessons with Otto Kitzler, is of a complex structure, crowning the whole work. This summary description indicates to anyone who has heard a later Bruckner symphony that the composer had taken the decisive steps towards the attainment of his personal style. From the Second Symphony onwards, the fundamental construction of Bruckner's symphonies (with the exception of the Eighth) remains the same. It has been said that Bruckner's symphonies 'are not Beethovian, although in certain respects no other nineteenth-century symphonies are so much so. What they are is

Bruckner's own'.[1] Certainly, he is quite different from Beethoven in that he never attempted with each new symphony to create a new world. It was typical of his unromantic personality that he had but few aspirations, and in this, perhaps, he compares unfavourably with Beethoven. It was Beethoven who had set the precedent of giving entire individuality to each single symphony and no other composer has managed to live up to his great example, much as some have tried. Bruckner did not deliberately attempt to compete with Beethoven in this respect, as from the outset his compass was restricted. He did achieve contrasts in, say, his Fourth and Eighth Symphonies comparable with those between Beethoven's Fifth and Sixth Symphonies. But he would never have wished to write a symphony like Beethoven's Fourth or Eighth. Bruckner's symphonies are all different, and yet have a likeness of style as marked as the 'variety'. It is the comparison with the unique Beethoven which obscures the issue. The case of Bruckner might be compared to the works of either Mozart or Bach: for as in them the stylistic unity forbids such vivid contrasts as Beethoven was able to achieve. Further, we must not lose sight of the fact that all Bruckner's great works were written in the space of twenty years—a period which saw, apart from growth, no change in his personality. The five years from 1870 to 1875 alone yielded the first versions of no less than four symphonies, numbers 2 to 5. From 1876 the revision of this vast material began. It would therefore be quite futile to look for major stylistic changes in these four works. The progress from one to the next symphony is one of intensification. It is always the same man who speaks but he does not repeat himself; his vision deepened from work to work.

Bruckner finished the first version of the Second Symphony on September 11th 1872 and sent it immediately to the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. It was rehearsed under Otto Dessof, who called the work 'nonsense' (*Unsinn*). The members of the orchestra were divided in their opinions. After some discussion, Bruckner was asked at least to suggest some cuts; his sacrifice, however, of thirty or forty bars was considered quite inadequate. Finally, the orchestra returned the score to the composer with the verdict: unplayable (*unspielbar*). However, Bruckner did not

[1] R. Capell, *The Monthly Music Review* (1936), p. 156.

give in. With the help of a substantal subvention from Prince Johann Liechstenstein, he engaged the orchestra at his own expense. When beginning the first rehearsal, he made the announcement: 'Well, gentlemen, we can rehearse as long as we like. I have got someone to pay for it.' Most of the musicians were unco-operative, obstinate and sarcastic during the first rehearsals under Bruckner's direction, but among the friendly members of the orchestra was a young violinist whose immediate admiration for Bruckner was to be of decisive importance later —Artur Nikisch.

The performance took place on October 26th 1873. Apart from conducting the symphony, Bruckner played Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor and a free organ improvisation. It was a tremendous success in the concert hall and the symphony was reasonably well reviewed by the newspaper critics. The orchestra had warmed up to the difficult work and performed the 'unplayable' symphony with so much enthusiasm that the following day Bruckner wrote them an exuberant letter:

> Never in all my days can I put into words—still less repay—all that you did for me yesterday with such infinite kindness, and in all the vast range of your artistic accomplishment, in which (if it were possible) you excelled yourselves. But at least I can try to express my deep emotion and my unending gratitude towards you. I ask you then, gentlemen, to accept my profound and heartfelt thanks. And I beg, you will never deny me your inestimable favour in the days to come.
>
> I have still one great longing in my heart, to see the work fulfil its destiny. Since each father seeks the best possible position for his child, surely all will understand if I do likewise and ask you:
>
> May I dedicate the work to you?
>
> Since it could come nowhere into better hands than yours, your acceptance would give me great joy. (27 Oct., 1873.)[1]

Originally, Bruckner had wished to dedicate the work to Liszt, but the relation between the two composers never developed. Quite apart from the difference in their musical outlook, Liszt found Bruckner's personality positively annoying. On one occasion, he told a friend that nothing made him more irritable than to hear himself addressed as 'Your Grace, most reverend Herr

[1] *Gesammelte Briefe*, pp. 123 f.

Canonicus'. The Philharmonic Orchestra failed to reply to the offer of dedication and later, in 1884, Bruckner reverted to his original idea of inscribing the work to Liszt. The latter's reply was cool and formal:

> Many thanks for the friendly dedication of your Symphony in C minor. I wished I were still in charge of an orchestra as I used to be. I would then be able to have this sound work considered for performance. As things are, I must confine myself to reading in the interesting score.
>
> In the expectation of favourable results of your unyielding activities, I remain yours sincerely
>
> F. Liszt.
>
> 29 Oct., 84 Vienna.[1]

Soon afterwards, Liszt lost the score when leaving Vienna in haste. It found its way back to Bruckner, who was offended; Liszt, it seems, never noticed the loss.

Before the performance of the Second Symphony, Bruckner had yielded to pressure and agreed to extensive cuts. Among those who had advised him in that matter was Johann Herbeck, one of his truest friends. As we shall see later, Bruckner's consent set a fatal precedent. At that time it was considered the responsibility of the conductor to ensure that the audience should suffer no strain or shock; it was for him to guard against the dangers of all that deviated from convention. In this desire to please, the conductor could confine himself, on the whole, to excisions. In principle, anything was permissible to make the customers happy. Berlioz's *Autobiography* contains an amusing, angry chapter about the liberties taken by conductors. There is, for instance, the story of the extraordinary popularity of the second movement of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony in Paris which led the conductors to transplant it into performances of the Second Symphony. Herbeck, when conducting the first performance of Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony*, did not dare to end with the second movement and added, as Finale, a movement from an earlier Schubert symphony.

In Herbeck's biography, written by his son, mention is made of Bruckner's reluctance to agree to the suggestions made: 'It is incredible what energy and eloquence Herbeck had to devote

[1] *Gesammelte Briefe*, p. 329.

to the winning of Bruckner's consent to some judicious cuts and alterations.'

The changes had been extensive enough to affect the formal balance of the work. And so for the first time Eduard Hanslick's fairly favourable review contained the fatal censure: 'lack of form', a reproach which that particular performance certainly deserved. It may be that Hanslick—always *au courant*—had heard of the alleged 'inordinate length' of the symphony, of the need to shorten it. At this stage his personal relations with Bruckner were still friendly: there is no question of malice. It is possible, however, that the work was beyond his comprehension. For, whenever Hanslick failed to enjoy and to understand a work of music—and this happened not infrequently—he would put the blame on the composer. It is in this review that we find for the first time that note of condescension which in future he was always to adopt when writing of Bruckner: that with all his heart he approved of the applause bestowed upon such a modest, energetic composer. Here, the unnecessarily patronizing compliment concludes what is, on the whole, a favourable review; later, such personal reassurances were to have their place in Hanslick's most damning and offensive criticisms.

Hanslick was the first to accuse Bruckner of lack of form. The expanded sonata form could never be examined by his contemporaries because of the cuts to which the works were subjected. Hanslick's charge was given credence owing to the alterations made by the conductors and continued to carry weight because of the unfaithful presentation of the works in the earlier published versions. It is to be expected that the publication of the original versions has discredited this idea.

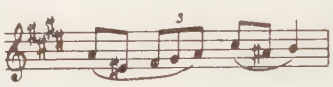
Already, before the first performance of the Second Symphony, Bruckner had composed all the Third with the exception of the last movement; the Finale was finished on the night of December 31st of the same year. The rejection of the Second Symphony, disheartening as it was, had not deterred him from starting on a new work.

While at work on the Third Symphony, Bruckner came to have full assurance in his own powers. The earlier admonitions of the critics forgotten, he no longer felt a need for restraint. It still remained for him, however, to beware of too strong an influence from Wagner. The first version of the Third Symphony

presented the problem in a truly excessive form: it contained a number of quotations from Wagner's scores, as a signal mark of Bruckner's homage to the great man to whom from the first he had intended to dedicate the work. When revising the symphony in 1876–1877 Bruckner eliminated these strange demonstrations of fealty, not because his admiration for the Master had waned but because he was at last able to obey his own critical sense and had begun to appreciate his own significance.

It was in the Third Symphony that Bruckner used for the first time thematically the duplet-triplet combination

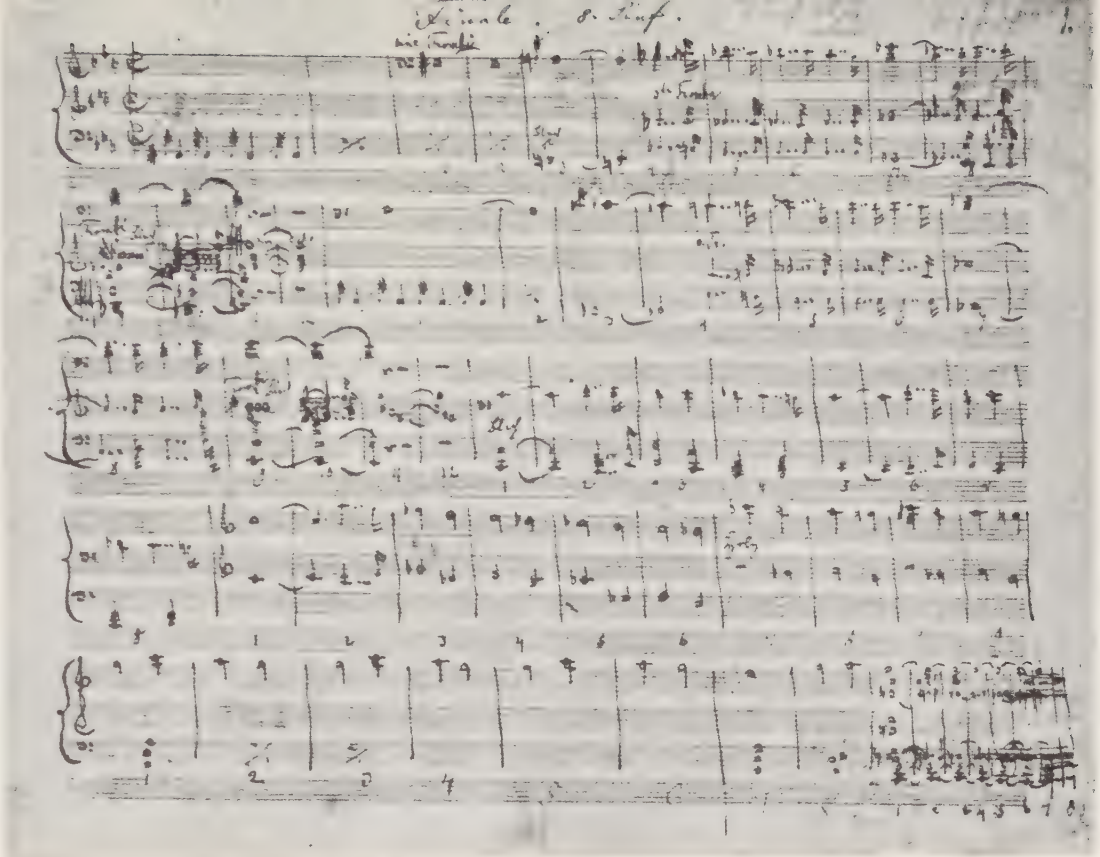
which thereafter became so frequent in his scores that it has been given the name 'the Bruckner rhythm'. In the earliest sketches, the rhythm appears noted as quintuplets. It is possible that Bruckner accepted the rhythm from Wagner, who employed it on occasions, as for instance in the *Mastersingers*



Although the combination exists in some lively country dances from Upper Austria which show a rapid succession of 2/4 and 3/4 rhythm—they were called *Zwiefache* ('doubles')—Bruckner's particular use of the rhythm reveals no affinity at all with these dances; in Bruckner, the rhythm is usually employed for fairly slow and highly expressive tunes.[1]

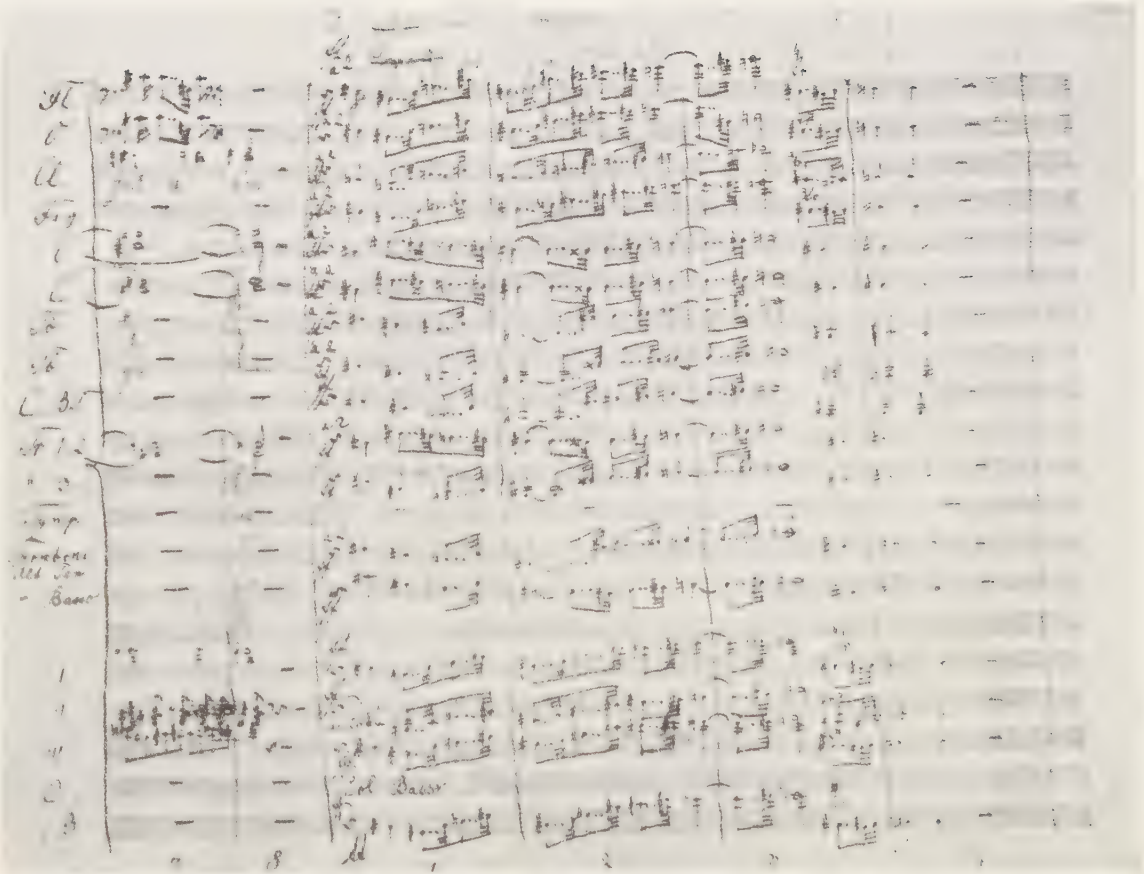
Apart from the 'Bruckner rhythm', his rhythmical idiosyncrasies are few. Except for occasional cross rhythms and sharp, accentuated double-dotted rhythms which can be found in almost all his scores, syncopations are fairly frequent and can at times be a severe test for conductors and executants, as for example the long unbroken passage in the *Incarnatus* of the F minor Mass or tricky episodes in the Adagio and Finale of

[1] The article on Bruckner in Grove's *Dictionary* (5th edition, 1954) refers to those country dances for the origin of rhythm; in his book (*Bruckner and Mahler*, p. 56) the same author thinks the rhythm derived 'evidently' from plainsong and from the late medieval polyphonists—an even less convincing theory.



Symphony No. 8, Finale. First sketch.

(By courtesy Stift Kremsmünster)



the Third Symphony. A typical Brucknerian *thematic* syncopation occurs as early as in the Symphony 'No. o' of 1869 in a theme which may well be considered a sketch for the viola passage in the slow movement of the Fourth Symphony.

In September 1873, nothing deterred by Wagner's failure to answer a letter he had written him on the subject, Bruckner went to Bayreuth to show Wagner his Second and Third Symphonies (the latter still unfinished). Once again this shy and diffident man showed an amazing stubbornness in pursuing a definite goal. When Bruckner presented himself suddenly, Wagner tried to shake him off, excusing himself on the plea of having no time.

Many years later, Bruckner reported to Hans von Wolzogen how the interview had continued:

> I replied: 'Master, I have no right to rob you of even five minutes, but I am convinced that the highly discerning eye [*der hohe Scharfblick*] of the Master would only have to glance at the themes and Master would know what to think of it all.' Then the Master said to me: 'Very well then, come along.' And he went with me into the drawing-room and looked at the Second Symphony. 'Very nice', he said, but, all the same, it did not seem bold enough for him (at that time the Viennese had made me very timid) and he took the Third (D minor) and with the words: 'Look! Look! I say! I say!' he went through the whole first part (mentioning the trumpet most particularly) and then he said: 'Leave this work here; after lunch (it was twelve o'clock) I will have another look at it.' Dare I ask him, I thought, before he says I may? Very shyly and with a pounding heart I then said to the Master: 'Master! there is something in my heart which I lack courage to say.' The Master said: 'Out with it! You know how I like you!' Then I presented my petition (i.e. the intention of dedicating the work to him), but only if the Master was more or less satisfied, since I did not wish to do sacrilege to his highly celebrated name. The Master said: 'This evening at five o'clock you are invited to Wahnfried; you will see me then; after I have had a good look at the D minor Symphony we can discuss the point.[1]

The outcome was that Wagner told him: 'Dear friend, your dedication is in order; your work gives me immense pleasure.'

[1] *Gesammelte Briefe*, p. 166.

The next day, alas, Bruckner was in fresh difficulties. He must have been overwhelmed by the interview with his adored Master; the latter had, moreover, persuaded his admirer to drink beer with him, and although this would have had no ill effect in normal times, Bruckner had just completed a cure, taking the waters at Marienbad. The result was that the next day Bruckner was no longer sure which of the two symphonies had been accepted by Wagner. He sent a note to Wagner:

> Symphony in D minor, where the trumpet begins the theme?
>
> Anton Bruckner

Wagner wrote underneath:

> Yes! Yes! Kindest regards!
>
> Richard Wagner

and returned the note to Bruckner.

The symphony is decisive in two ways: it is the first monumental symphony of Bruckner the master, and, at the same time, the one which by its dedication to Wagner labelled him, at least for the Viennese critics, a confessed Wagnerian. It laid the foundation of Bruckner's lasting fame, but it also made for the hostility of Eduard Hanslick and his entourage and for all the difficulties which Bruckner was to suffer for years to come. There was no hope for a performance of a 'Wagner Symphony' (as Bruckner proudly called the work). The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra rejected it twice, in 1874 and 1875. Bruckner revised the work in 1876–1877 and offered it again for performance in 1877, but in vain. When Bruckner had been disappointed even by Hans Richter who had raised his hopes after having examined the symphony, Johann Herbeck stepped in and declared himself willing to conduct the work. The performance was planned for December 3rd. Nothing came of it, because Herbeck died suddenly on October 29th. In him Bruckner had lost his most devoted friend of that period.

The symphony was unlikely now to remain on the programme for December 3rd. But after much agitation and with the help of August Göllerich (a member of parliament), a personal friend of the president of the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde*, Nikolaus Dumba, it was finally decided to include the symphony under Bruckner's own direction in a concert on December 16th.

The first performance of the Third Symphony was the worst

fiasco in Bruckner's life. The musicians were obstinate and ill-mannered at the rehearsals; at the concert, their playing was quite inadequate. The audience was divided in two factions, the hostile party being in the majority. Between the movements, hissing and clapping held the verdict precariously in the balance, but in the course of the Finale many people actually left the hall. When the symphony had come to an end, some twenty-five people were left in the audience, most of whom laughed at Bruckner, who soon found himself alone on the rostrum, the musicians having taken flight almost with the last note. It was not much of a comfort to Bruckner to listen to the compliments of a few devoted young friends (the seventeen years old Gustav Mahler among them), many of them his students. Yet it was in that hour of despair that Bruckner was asked to give his consent to the publication of the work which had just met with such downright rejection. The publisher was Th. Rättig. Rättig had attended some rehearsals and the failure of the concert had not influenced the independence of his judgment. Thus, the rejected symphony was printed by the publishing firm of Bösendorfer and Rättig in score and parts; in addition, an arrangement for piano duet was published in 1878, made by Gustav Mahler and Rudolf Krzyzanowsky and revised by Julius Epstein. But unfortunately the composer, shattered by the experience of the concert, had agreed to some vital omissions and therefore the symphony appeared in a state which provoked fresh comments on his disregard of form.

This is the only clear instance of Bruckner's acquiescence to the printing of a mutilated edition of his work. Later on, we shall discuss the 'original versions' which Bruckner carefully preserved for the future, resigned to the impossibility of his works being performed without destructive excisions. In composing, he never made the slightest concession to the taste of his time; but here he failed to insist that his work should remain unprinted rather than being presented to the world in the form of a torso.

6

Eduard Hanslick

'WHOM I wish to destroy shall be destroyed!' This is not an apocryphal saying of one of the major prophets but the pronouncement of Professor Dr. Eduard Hanslick, the leading music critic in Vienna in Bruckner's time. Neither was it a mere ejaculation but the device of a career devoted to fighting the 'Neo-German School', in which he saw, with some justification, an affront to the heritage of classical values in music. The head of the movement, Richard Wagner, had sufficient resources to deal with a critic who roused his anger; he was not only able to pay back in kind—his pen was no less biting than Hanslick's own—he even used Hanslick as a model for Beckmesser (who in the first version of the *Mastersingers* was called *Hans Lich*). Now, Bruckner had never written a music drama or a symphonic poem, but his constant boasting of Wagner's friendship sufficed to infuriate this brilliant, fashionable critic for whom he fell an easy victim. Bruckner humbled himself before the lesser man and each smooth article, perfectly phrased, in the *Neue freie Presse* made him utterly miserable.

Eduard Hanslick was born in Prague in 1825. His father was 'scriptor' in the Prague University, his mother the daughter of a Prague merchant; both of them had wide cultural interests. Eduard Hanslick showed leanings towards philosophy, aesthetics, music and the theatre. After early lessons with Tomascheck,

he studied philosophy, law and music. His studies were designed to lead to a legal career, but already as a student he turned to journalism; he was appointed music critic of the Prague paper *Ost und West* and, thanks to an enthusiastic review in this paper of Schumann's *Paradise and Peri*, he was invited by the composer to come and see him in Dresden. This journey chanced to coincide with the first performance of Wagner's *Tannhäuser*. Hanslick had already met Wagner in Marienbad in 1845 and Wagner had invited him to attend that first performance. He discussed Wagner with Schumann and went to see him. The composer was pleased with his report on the opera.

In 1846, Hanslick moved to Vienna. His interest in his legal activities began to wane and by 1855 he gave them up in order to devote his whole time to music. He wrote for the (old) *Presse* and, after the publication of his book *Vom musikalisch Schönen*, was appointed as lector for aesthetics and history of music in the Vienna University. In 1861 he became professor, in 1864 he left the *Presse* and became music critic of the *Neue freie Presse*.

The goodwill of his earlier relations with Wagner culminated in his praise for *Tannhäuser*. Three years after that performance in Dresden, Wagner was involved in the political upheavals of 1848 and consequently ceased to be *persona grata* in Vienna. The details of the affair have no place here; but there is no doubt that it was originally political considerations which influenced Hanslick's attitude towards Wagner. In 1856, Hanslick wrote a hostile article about Wagner following a performance of the *Faust Overture* and after that the animosity increased. For a brief spell relations were improved by a meeting between composer and critic in 1861, as a result of which Hanslick even recommended *Tristan and Isolde* for performance in Vienna. But in 1862, on Wagner's return to Vienna, Hanslick was invited to a party at which Wagner read the libretto of the *Mastersingers*. After becoming more and more restless, Hanslick left the company in a fury, mortally offended at recognizing in Sixtus Beckmesser his own caricature. He immediately prevented the *Tristan* performance. Though he always remained openly hostile to Wagner, he did occasionally make sincere attempts to be objective, particularly after 1880, as for instance in his report on *Parsifal*. When Wagner died, Hanslick's obituary notice of

February 20th 1883 ended: 'The death of so outstanding a personality will always be a great loss.'

Eduard Hanslick was a cultured man; his articles are lively and though they are of but small literary merit, they make good reading; he was the typical cultured and eloquent journalist fashionable in Europe towards the end of the last century. As a scholar of music, he had a competent knowledge of the classics. His well-known book *Vom musikalisch Schönen*, while revealing much of his aesthetic theories, does not help us to assess his significance as a critic of contemporary works, since it contains no reference to the latest developments of the time. Certainly, Hanslick was wrought by the press, not by his learning, and it is beyond dispute that the *Bismarck della critica musicale*, as Verdi called him, had his shortcomings. His writings show that the works of Beethoven's last period, piano sonatas and the late string quartets, were beyond his understanding; his deprecating remarks about those works are as obsolete nowadays as are his articles on Wagner and Bruckner. He professed admiration for Brahms. It was the admiration of a man incapable of understanding and enjoying Beethoven's most mature works. Even to him he offered critical advice on such works as the *Tragic Overture* or the String Quartet in C minor which he had failed to comprehend. Hanslick's benevolence was an asset to Brahms, who repaid his influential friend by dedicating to him a work—the Piano Waltzes op. 39. The choice cannot have been accidental. Even Bruckner (who disliked Brahms's music) grasped the situation: 'Hanslick', he said, 'does not really understand Brahms any better than he does me.'

Now Hanslick did not succeed in 'destroying' Wagner, nor was Brahms's success entirely due to Hanslick's benediction; and like them, Bruckner continued to compose regardless of the decisions of this music arbiter. Unlike Wagner, however, Bruckner suffered torments because of Hanslick's sarcastic hostility.

Hanslick was entitled to his opinions, nor was he alone among his contemporaries in failing to understand Bruckner's significance. But was he aware of the misery he caused Bruckner by his brilliant jibes and did it not rather inspire him to the formulation of the most satirical aphorisms which he ever achieved? It would certainly seem that this was the case, judging from the

false *bonhomie* which is always appended to his criticism of Bruckner's music: that patronizing tone with which he hypocritically expresses his personal sympathy with 'the talented and honourable man with whom I have been in friendship for over thirty years' (1890), with 'the sympathetic personality of the composer who is entitled to respect' (1881).

Hanslick was a constant terror to Bruckner, never absent from his mind even in moments of happiness. One day, in the autumn of 1877, Bruckner found his lecture theatre full to overflowing —the wish and dream of every professor. Bruckner's reaction was to implore the students: 'Please, gentlemen, permit me to tell you that Hanslick is also lecturing here. Please go to him as well, so that he does not think that I prevent you.' When, at last, Bruckner had experienced his first triumph as a composer in Germany and Holland, he begged the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra not to play his Seventh Symphony, since a performance in Vienna could only suffocate the success that was dawning for him outside Austria. What could be more pathetic than this old composer, after years spent in vain struggles to have his works performed, actually asking a leading orchestra to refrain from playing his symphony simply on account of a newspaper writer?[1]

It is perhaps regrettable that Hanslick did not follow up the constructive work of his book, that instead he concerned himself so much with criticism of contemporary music. In the company of Brahms, Wagner and Bruckner he seems unavoidably a mere mediocrity, however verbose. For Brahms, Hanslick was of some practical use; for Wagner he was an irritating nuisance. It was in connection with Bruckner that he gained in stature; here, he figures as the Adversary and doubtless enjoyed the distinction.

At the time of the first performance of the Third Symphony, it was not only the Wagner dedication which infuriated Hanslick, nor simply the failure of the press to understand Bruckner's music which further estranged the composer and the critic. Other things had happened in the meantime to make Bruckner thoroughly unpopular with the dictator of Viennese musical opinion. Since 1874, Bruckner had again been in financial

[1] A facsimile of Bruckner's sketch for the letter to the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra is shown in *Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, vol. II (1952), p. 371.

difficulties; in that year he had lost his position in the teachers' seminary of St. Anna, secured for him by Herbeck in 1870 as an additional source of income. In January 1875, he wrote to Moritz von Mayfeld:

> I have only the Konservatorium which is far too little to live on. In September, and several times since then, I have even had to borrow money to avoid starvation. . . . The students at the Konservatorium, and even the servants there, are appalled at the way I am treated. My life has lost all joy and cheerfulness—and all for nothing. How I would love to return to my old post. Had I only gone to England then!
>
> That's the way things are.[1]

Early in 1874, finding himself in this situation, Bruckner had thought of once again offering his services to the University as lecturer in musical theory. The dean of the Vienna music faculty was none other than Eduard Hanslick, who therefore had to report to the state authorities on Bruckner's application. Bruckner's letter of April 18th had been somewhat vague since it did not specify which branches of musical theory he proposed to teach. He had apparently drafted the application without anyone to help him. Naïvely he had made the mistake of writing honestly:

> The humbly undersigned is already fifty years old. Therefore, time for creative work is most precious to him. In order to reach the destiny which he has in view, to gain time and leisure for musical composition, and to be able to remain in the beloved fatherland, he permits himself to make the petition. . . .

Hanslick attacked the application at its weakest spot:

> . . . It is then obvious that Herr Bruckner is not himself clear as to what he wishes to teach, but only about the purpose for which the Ministry should create an academic chair for him, namely in order that Herr Bruckner may have undisturbed leisure for composition. . . .

He also mentioned that in his opinion Bruckner was lacking in qualification for an academic post:

> . . . in order to be spared the necessity of enlarging on this point, I permit myself the request that the honourable com-

[1] *Gesammelte Briefe*, pp. 127 f.

> mittee of professors should give attention to the remarkable style of Bruckner's application.[1]

He advocated refusal of Bruckner's application. There followed further petitions from Bruckner—once again in the stubborn pursuit of an aim. Among those who encouraged Bruckner to renew the attempts was the Minister of Education, Karl Edler von Stremayr, who had a high opinion of him. Bruckner therefore addressed his next application direct to the Ministry; but his letter had to go through the usual official channels and went to the Philosophical Faculty of the University, who, in turn, passed it on to the referee for music—to Professor Hanslick. Hanslick, equally determined not to give in, continued to report unfavourably on each new application. Bruckner encouraged all the time by Stremayr, looked around for help and appealed to August Göllerich, the M.P. for Upper Austria, and a few university professors. In December 1874, a newspaper gave publicity to the affair and by October 1875 it appeared that Bruckner had the support of the majority of the professors. Hanslick had to give way. Bruckner was elected to the University as, alas, an *unpaid* lector. For the present, he had only gained more work and fresh burdens, while his financial distress was in no way alleviated. Moreover, Hanslick's defeat in the lengthy contest was, naturally enough, unlikely to improve his disposition towards anything Bruckner might subsequently write.

Earlier in that year of 1877, after a performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony had been unexpectedly substituted for Gounod's *Requiem*, Hanslick had written an article which reveals his attitude to new works in general.

> What a piece of ill luck for us poor critics! We look forward to having an interesting curiosity under our pen and instead are presented with a classical masterpiece. Alas, we do not accuse ourselves of such perversity simply in jest. All specialization must narrow one's outlook. Just as a doctor takes more interest in an 'interesting' case than in a healthy man, however honoured a figure the latter might be, so too the critic looks for the novelty in the programme rather than for classicism. . . . With one side of our being, that human side which is pure, unspoilt musically, we rejoice if there is an opportunity to hear

[1] Quoted from R. Lach, *Die Bruckner Akten des Wiener Universitätsarchius* (1926).

> the *Magic Flute* or the 'Pastoral Symphony'; with the other, critical side we go for Liszt and Wagner. The critic becomes jealous in the interest of his readers, seeking first in a programme, not his own enjoyment, but a subject for his pen. . . .

The relevance here of this quotation lies less in the general argument (which is clear and obvious) than in the sign of the clinical metaphor and of the choice of names (in conjunction with Wagner and Liszt one misses Brahms, a contemporary composer whom Hanslick professed to admire).

On this December 16th 1877, therefore, Bruckner's Third Symphony was at the mercy of Hanslick at his most hostile. Not only was the animosity of the critic towards the composer aggravated by recent events, but the work in question was a 'novelty' and, furthermore, was known as 'The Wagner Symphony'. The review was just as damning as could be expected:

> We have no wish to hurt this composer, for whom we entertain a genuine respect both as man and as artist and whose musical aims are sincere albeit their treatment is strange. Rather than criticize, therefore, we would own in all humility that we have failed to understand his gigantic symphony. The poetic meaning was never revealed to us—perhaps it was a vision of how Beethoven's Ninth befriends Wagner's *Walküre* and finds itself in the end under her hooves—nor did we succeed in grasping the continuity of the music. The composer conducted in person and was greeted with applause; afterwards, that fraction of the public which had remained to the end consoled him for the flight of the rest.

Bruckner was so discouraged that for some time he stopped composing. However, during those four years which had passed between the composition and the performance of the Third Symphony, Bruckner had already written his Fourth and Fifth Symphonies in their first versions. We have therefore to go back to 1874 to take up the chronology of events.

7

Struggle for Recognition

BRUCKNER had finished the first version of the Third Symphony on December 31st 1873. Two days later he started on a new work, the 'Romantic Symphony (No. 4) in E flat major'. He finished it 'on November 22nd 1874 in Vienna, at 8.30 in the evening'. (All his manuscripts, even sketches, are meticulously dated and he often looked at his watch when writing the final note.) In February of the following year, he began the Fifth Symphony in B flat major. The contrast between the two works is considerable; the Fourth is marked by its abundance of melodic invention whilst the Fifth stands out as a vast edifice, its Finale a *tour de force* of contrapuntal construction. Later in the composer's life, the Fourth Symphony became one of the most popular works, almost as much as the Seventh and the *Te Deum*. Despite its melodic richness, it is in fact no 'easier' than any other Bruckner symphony; the Finale is actually one of his most complex constructions. Bruckner dedicated this work to Karl von Stremayr, the Minister of Education who had given him so much assistance during the struggle for the University appointment.

The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra played the Fourth Symphony in a test rehearsal of new works in 1875 and the verdict was that only the first movement was fit for performance. 'The rest,' it was decided, 'is idiotic.' The 'cellist E. Popper tried

to advocate a more thorough trial of the difficult work, but one favourable voice in favour of Bruckner carried no weight. The symphony was rejected.

Bruckner revised the work thoroughly in 1878. He simplified the instrumentation and replaced the Scherzo and the Finale by entirely new compositions. The work was not performed until 1881, by which time Bruckner was composing the Finale of the Sixth Symphony. Hans Richter conducted, and it was after one of the rehearsals that the well-known incident occurred when Bruckner pressed a tip into the hand of the conductor. Richter was supposed to spend the money on a glass of beer, but he preferred to wear the coin attached to his watch-chain as a keep-sake. The performance was loudly acclaimed by the public. On February 27th Hanslick wrote a sour comment on the magnificent work:

> This paper has already reported on the extraordinary success of a new symphony by A. Bruckner. We can only add today that, on account of the respectable and sympathetic personality of the composer, we are very happy at the success of a work which we fail to understand.

Once again, several years had elapsed between the composition of a first version and the first performance of the revised work. Before we broke the chronological order to follow the fate of two symphonies, we saw Bruckner in financial distress. There was no improvement in this respect until February 1878, when Bruckner succeeded to ordinary membership of the Imperial Chapel, with which he had been associated as a prospective member for some years. This meant 600 florins annually to him with prospects of an increase of income in the future. It was also helpful that he could enjoy a pleasant and large enough flat in the Hessgasse, near the Schottenring, which cost him next to nothing owing to the generosity of the musical Herr von Otzelt, the owner of the house.

In April 1876, he delivered his inaugural lecture in the University. These new duties as lecturer, unpaid as they were, added still further to a time-table crowded with teaching commitments. A leaf from his calendar—some time in 1877—shows the composer, whose one desire was to gain time for writing, had to give thirty hours lessons per week:

Monday 5–7 University.
Tuesday 9–2 and 5–7 Konservatorium
Wednesday 11–1; 5–7; 7.30–9.30 private pupils
Thursday 9–2 and 5–7 Konservatorium
Friday 10–1 private pupils
Saturday 9–12 private pupils; 5–7 Konservatorium.

The memoirs of some of Bruckner's pupils give an idea of the daily life. Friedrich Klose, a private pupil from 1886 to 1889, tells of how rigidly Bruckner confined these enforced duties within the time prescribed.

> Late-comers were told off. It even happened that Bruckner, watch in hand, would wait for the late-comer on the landing, receiving him with the words: 'You are late today; it's already five past one!', or 'Your watch must be slow!' Such a remark was then usually followed by the regretful announcement that the lost time would not be made up by an extension of the lesson.

Friedrich Eckstein has described the room in which the lessons took place:

> In the middle was the small, rectangular table, painted with green oil paint, on which Bruckner had written most of his symphonies, the Quintet, the *Te Deum* and many another work. It stood between the long Bösendorfer Grand Piano, aged and much used, and an organ-harmonium which was never played. For many years I sat at this small, ink-stained table, three times a week, working under Bruckner's supervision. Between us there was the snuff box, the ink bottle and a wooden bowl with blue sand.

Bruckner's teaching was methodical and clear. Like Sechter, he insisted on hard work and on slow, systematic progress; he hated impatience on the part of the students, many of whom found the tempo unbearably slow, and rebuked them for any attempt at 'nervous questioning' (*nervöse Fragerei*). His approach was modelled on Sechter's system, but he did not use a textbook. In class, the clarity of his presentation and his way of confiding in the students combined to make his lectures attractive. It is likely that some students attended simply for the pleasure derived from this gentle, quaint man. Bruckner considered these duties a burden, and yet it was in the lecture hall that he found

happiness in the company of people who were truly devoted to him. The 'academic quarter of an hour' preceding the lectures was always a time to talk of the fate of this or that symphony or to enjoy his reminiscences. Occasionally, he would address his class as 'my children' and then hasten to correct himself, reverting to the conventional address 'gentlemen'. His students were to him 'my Gaudeamusers'.

The private lessons were very demanding and stern indeed. It is again Friedrich Klose who gives us some definite information. A typical lesson would begin with a careful examination of the student's homework. Mistakes were not corrected by Bruckner; he only gave the student a hint and then left him to find the right solution to the problem. Whilst the student brooded over his task, Bruckner attended to his own affairs, in the course of which he would even go to the piano to test something, without any consideration for the student.

The aim of Bruckner's tuition was exclusively the achievement of technical perfection in harmony and counterpoint. He did not concern himself at all with melodic or rhythmical application of the examples and it would therefore be quite wrong to regard his courses as lessons in composition.

In recent years, a verbatim text of the most elementary of Bruckner's lectures on harmony has been published, prepared by E. Schwanzara, who attended that particular course no less than three times in order to make sure beyond the smallest doubt that his stenographic notes were impeccably correct. His preface [1] contains a good deal of valuable information and a book of this kind might have become a source of further knowledge of the greatest interest, had the accomplished stenographer attended a slightly more advanced course and had he combined his remarkable pedantic qualities with the ability to recapture an atmosphere. However, the obvious pedantry would at least seem to guarantee that every letter of the stenographic transcription is assuredly *verbum ipsissimum*.

[1] Schwanzara's marvellous, dogged patience is not only testified to by the tedious investigations about the appointment of Bruckner to the University. Years of persistent research have resulted in his achievement of tracking Bruckner's ancestry on the male side down to about 1400 A.D.; here, the purpose was to demonstrate with crashing finality that, from the grandfather backward, the ancestors were not *Upper*-Austrians but *Nether*-Austrians.

Financially disappointed by his University post, Bruckner tried in January 1877 to become musical director of the church *Am Hof*, but in May he received a negative answer to his application.

In the same year he made his only revision of the Fifth Symphony which he had finished in the first version in May 1876. This is the only Bruckner symphony to have a slow introduction to the first movement. This consists of a strange series of sharply contrasting themes or motifs, each group standing by itself, separated by pauses. It is an astounding rhapsodical introduction in which suspense alternates with solemnity; it epitomizes several main themes of the symphony. Various interpretations have been given, quite a few of them equally convincing, as to the precise connection of each theme in the work with the common *'Ur-motif'*, namely the descending and ascending pizzicato bass which opens the work. Even if one does not care to follow the more thorough of the commentators through all their revelations, it is advisable for the intelligent understanding of the symphony to have a close look at the details of the thematic material contained in those fragments. Bruckner, who rarely talked about his musical secrets, never uttered a word of explanation. Occasionally, he called the Fifth Symphony his 'Fantastic Symphony'.

Unique, too, is the Finale of this work. It is a synthesis of sonata organization and a fugue with three themes, the third of which is the main theme of the first movement. The Finale gives this symphony a more tense contrapuntal character than any other. The only composition of which it may remind us is the Finale of Brahms's E minor Symphony which combines elements of sonata form with a strict passacaglia.

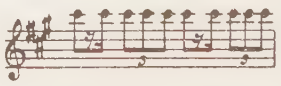
This work is the supreme union of Bruckner's power as a symphonist with his strength as a master of counterpoint. And once again it is puzzling to know how this man of apparently restricted personality could write music of such magnitude.

It was not until 1879 that Bruckner overcame the paralysing effect of the fiasco of the Third Symphony and began a series of new compositions with his only chamber music work, the lovely String Quintet in F major and the initial work on the Sixth Symphony. The successful performance of the Fourth Symphony in 1881 also helped to wipe out the shameful experience of 1877.

But it was as though he was not meant to be happy in his life. In 1880, after spending the summer vacation at St. Florian, he went to Oberammergau to see the Passion Plays. During the performance he was once again captivated by the charm of a young girl; she played in the group of the Daughters of Jerusalem. After the play, he waited for her, introduced himself and spent the whole evening with her in the house of her aunt. Soon he proposed to the girl, but in vain: Bruckner was fifty-six years old and Marie Bartl only seventeen. It was the old story all over again: 'You are too old, Herr Bruckner.'

Still at this time Bruckner was easily enraptured by fresh and unsophisticated young girls, often almost children. And here, as in everything else, his spontaneous and naïve vitality was in contradiction to an instinctive need for decorum. He would fall in love like an adolescent and with complete disregard of reality proceed to propose like a widowed grandfather. To be stirred and inflamed today only meant to feel deeply wounded very soon afterwards, and though all these episodes brought him unhappiness he continued to his last years to propose and be rejected by the parents of the incongruously young girls of his choice.

Bruckner had begun the Sixth Symphony on September 24th 1879. It was completed on September 3rd 1881. The more modest dimensions of this work are like those of the Fourth Symphony rather than of its immediate predecessor, the colossal Fifth. The Sixth Symphony is the only work which Bruckner never revised. Here again, as in the Fourth, is an abundance of fine tunes; the resulting impression is not, however, one of unproblematic happiness: the character of the first movement, for instance, is determined as much by the rhythm



as by its warm themes; the Scherzo dispenses with the element of speed without, for that matter, dispensing with that of tenseness. The Sixth is the least spectacular of the great Bruckner symphonies and, at the same time, the one which least represents Bruckner as the master of thematic connections. It has a grandeur all its own and belongs to those works which haunt one's

Anton Bruckner, *c.* 1882

(By courtesy Stift St. Florian)

The schoolhouse in Ansfelden, Bruckner's birthplace.

Belvedere, Vienna, Bruckner's last residence.

(*Photo: E. Doernberg*)

memory for weeks after a performance. It is most regrettable that the only recording at present available presents the noble work in a most unsatisfactory performance.

The year ended with the first performance of the String Quintet in the *Wagner Verein* of Vienna after a previous, semi-private performance in Cologne.

The main events of 1882 were a performance of the Mass in E minor in Vienna and Bruckner's journey to Bayreuth for the first performance of *Parsifal*. The Mass was performed in the Imperial Chapel and one of the newspapers reported that a group of declared adversaries 'left the church after the *Gloria* with the ostentation of parliamentary dissidents'. At Bayreuth, Bruckner was received several times in Villa Wahnfried. On this occasion, too, Wagner again made his customary promise, 'Holding me by his hand: "Rely on it, I myself will perform the Symphony and all your works" ', as Bruckner told Hans von Wolzogen after many years. Wagner apparently uttered this assurance almost as a matter of course whenever the two composers met. In May 1875, Wagner greeted Bruckner in Vienna with the exclamation: 'Bruckner is here! The Symphony must be performed!' In 1876, he spotted Bruckner in the Festival Theatre at Bayreuth during a rehearsal and ran to him with almost precisely the same words. Bruckner's 'dog-like devotion' to Wagner, as Ernest Newman aptly described it, remained unaffected by the fact that Wagner never lifted a finger to help him. As things were, an occasional kind word from the adored Master seemed to him the height of earthly joy. Bruckner's reports to Hans von Wolzogen about his meetings with Wagner end with the words: 'Herr Baron, please take great care of all this! My most cherished testament!!!—Until yonder, above!!!' Bruckner's punctuation is always a reliable indication of the emotion excited in him by a particular subject. It is notable, however, that even on the subject of Wagner he had his moments of realism. On *one* occasion he wrote: 'One must never ask anything from Wagner lest one lose his favour.' (13 Feb., 1875.)

What was Bruckner's reaction to *Parsifal*? One could imagine that here he would have shown a keener interest in the drama, or at least in its operatic associations with Catholic liturgical ceremony. Surely, a practising Catholic like Bruckner could not remain indifferent here, would either be attracted by this

association or violently repulsed by it? It seems that the strange Wagnerian 'communion service' in the temple of the Holy Grail did not interest Bruckner any more than anything else that had ever happened on the Bayreuth stage. During a *Parsifal* rehearsal he showed his enthusiasm for the music by applauding noisily and Wagner had to admonish him to keep quiet. Bruckner had failed to regard the *Sacred Festival Play* as sacrosanct. As usual, he listened with rapture to the music and ignored everything else.

An episode in Friedrich Eckstein's memoirs underlines this indifference to the drama which for the real Wagnerians had become a substitute for religion. Once, a little before Easter, Eckstein began to talk to Bruckner about the *Good Friday Music*. Completely ignoring *Parsifal*, Bruckner reacted unexpectedly by telling Eckstein that nothing could move him more deeply than the setting of a verse from the prophet Isaiah by Jacobus Gallus which is sung during the night from Maundy Thursday to Good Friday: *Ecce, quomodo moritur iustus et nemo percipit corde.*

That same year of the Bayreuth journey, Bruckner wrote the work which was soon to bring recognition to this ageing composer: the Seventh Symphony. For the time being, however, nothing had changed and Bruckner counted himself happy when Wilhelm Jahn offered in 1883 to perform the Adagio and the Scherzo of the Sixth Symphony in a Philharmonic concert. This was the first time that a work of Bruckner's—to be correct, half a work—had its place in a programme of the official concerts of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. Hanslick and Brahms were in the auditorium. Whilst Brahms participated in the acclamations, it was observed that Hanslick remained seated, 'calm and motionless, cold as a Sphynx'.

8

Bruckner and Brahms

Brahms respected Bruckner though he did not understand or even like his music. There is a notable difference between the restraint of his attitude and the behaviour of those who were pleased to call themselves 'Brahmans'.

Soon after Nikisch's performance of the Seventh Symphony, Elizabeth von Herzogenberg wrote to Brahms for advice as to what to think (or, perhaps, what to say) of Bruckner:

> Our friend Hildebrand will have delivered our messages and told you of the Bruckner excitement here, and how we rebelled against having him thrust upon us—like compulsory vaccination. We had to endure much stinging criticism, insinuations as to our inability to detect power under an imperfect exterior, or admit a talent which, though not perhaps fully developed, still exists, and has a claim to interest and recognition. . . . We wished we had you to back us up, and could hear your sound views, which are based on such vast experience and are therefore worth more than all the theories of the wise, all the mere instincts of the simple. And who knows? You may agree with us, the simple; and that is precisely what I want to know. It would be such a help. . . .

Brahms did not at first reply at all and had to be reminded:

> . . . When you write, breathe one word about Bruckner. You need not fear our leading you on, and then proclaiming:

> Brahms says we are right! We will keep silence over anything you say, but a word we do crave for our own peace of mind.

Now Brahms answered (12 Jan., 1885):

> Dear lady, I understand! You have sat through the roaring of a Bruckner symphony once, and now, when people talk about it, you are afraid to trust the recollection of your own impression. Well—you may safely do so. Your delightful letter expresses most lucidly all that can be said—all that one has said oneself or would like to have said so nicely. You will not mind if I tell you that Hanslick shares your opinion and read your letter with pious joy. Now, one symphony and one quintet of Bruckner's have been printed. I advise you to acquire them, to look at them with a view to steeling your mind and judgment. You will not want me![1]

Having thus ascertained Brahms's dislike for Bruckner's music, Frau von Herzogenberg felt confident that she could safely talk of Bruckner as of an 'inflated windbag' and of 'one or two not quite impossible motifs, like grease spots swimming on top of a weak soup, and there we have "Meister" Bruckner's whole stock-in-trade. . . .' Brahms, however, had relapsed into silence and did not answer.

In private conversations, Brahms did not mince words when giving his views on Bruckner's music. He regarded 'these symphonic boa-constrictors' as 'a swindle which will soon be forgotten'; 'everything is effect with him, affectation, nothing natural. His piety is his private affair and I am not concerned with it.' On the other hand, Weingartner tells in his memoirs that, when he talked to him about Bruckner, 'Brahms listened quite calmly and spoke of Bruckner with respect, but without warmth'.[2] It is to be regretted that we are kept in ignorance about the trend of the conversation.

Bruckner, for his part, had a poor opinion of Brahms as a composer. It is not unusual that a great composer should be so absorbed in his own work as to be incapable of appreciating those among his contemporaries who follow different ways. One is well advised not to judge Wagner and Verdi, Brahms and

[1] *Johannes Brahms, the Herzogenberg Correspondence,* edited by Max Kalbeck, translated by Hanah Bryant (1909), with minor corrections of the translation.

[2] *Buffets and Rewards,* transl. M. Wolff (1937), p. 222.

Bruckner, Hindemith and Schönberg by what they say of each other.

It is strange that Brahms—who was known for his rudeness—should always have been irreproachably polite to Bruckner. On the occasion of the performance of Bruckner's F minor Mass in November 1893, Brahms applauded with such ostentation—he was seated, as usual, in the Director's box—that Bruckner was moved and went to thank him for the noble gesture.

In 1895 Richard von Perger became the conductor of the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde* and paid his formal visit to Brahms. Brahms took the opportunity to say to him: 'I believe that it would be your duty to perform one of Bruckner's choral works right away in your first year.' Perger complied with Brahms's request and performed Bruckner's *Te Deum* on January 12th 1896. This was the last time that Bruckner heard one of his own works performed; desperately ill and emaciated, he was carried into the concert hall.

The relation between the two composers was perfectly described by Bruckner himself. In conversation he once said: 'He is Brahms—my profound respect. But I am Bruckner and I prefer my own stuff.'

9

Dawning Recognition

Two days after the concert in which Wilhelm Jahn conducted two movements from Bruckner's Sixth Symphony, the composer received the news of Wagner's death. It is hard to grasp how much this meant to Bruckner. By its austerity, his short note of condolence to Cosima Wagner reveals how deeply he was affected. Gone is the diffusion with which he customarily wrote of Wagner; now he was capable only of conventional phrases of sympathy:

> Most deeply moved, I beg to be permitted to express my deepest condolence to your ladyship and to the whole highly honoured family on the occasion of the unspeakable loss of the phenomenal artist, etc., etc. May he rest in peace![1]

Does that strangely repeated *et cetera* indicate a vain search for words?

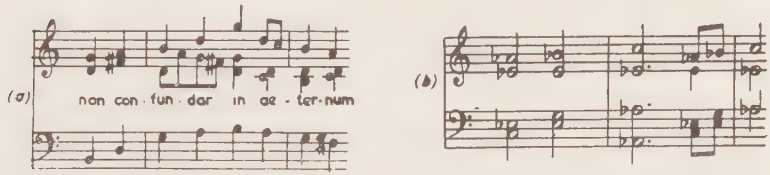
Bruckner had begun the Adagio of the Seventh Symphony in anticipation of Wagner's death; after the event, he celebrated the Master's memory in the coda of the movement. And here he was able to give voice to his sense of loss.

On September 5th, Bruckner completed the Seventh Symphony in St. Florian and soon afterwards, on September 28th, he wrote the second and definite version of the *Te Deum* which

[1] *Gesammelte Briefe*, p. 153.

occupied him until March 1884. This concise work is most eloquent both of the power of Bruckner's musical genius and of his faith. It is joyous, virile in its praise of God. Its avowal of trust is ecstatic. Indeed, its elemental power was mistaken by the weaker souls among Bruckner's friends as mere primitiveness, and they dubbed the work *Das Bauern Te Deum* ('The Peasant's Te Deum'). The misnomer should be dismissed from one's mind before a performance, though the writers of programme notes rarely refrain from mentioning it.

In the Second Symphony, Bruckner had quoted two episodes from the F minor Mass. Of the *Te Deum*, two themes recur in the Adagio of the Seventh Symphony:



The *Te Deum* might have been performed almost immediately after its completion; but, for once, Bruckner categorically refused to concede the excisions suggested by Hellmesberger. It seems incredible that even the *Te Deum* was considered to be too long to be played in its entirety; the performance of the complete work takes no longer than thirty-five minutes. Indeed, it is hard to see what excisions could be made. As a result of Bruckner's firm attitude, the work had to wait five years for performance.

Apart from the fragmentary performance of the Sixth Symphony, the only Bruckner concert of the year 1883 was an evening in the *Wagner Verein* when the String Quintet was performed, followed by the Third Symphony—in an arrangement for piano duet, played by Josef Schalk and Ferdinand Löwe.

At last, in 1884, the unforgivable neglect which Bruckner still endured was brought suddenly to an end. Josef Schalk had shown the Seventh Symphony to Artur Nikisch and reported to his brother Franz:

> . . . We had hardly finished the first movement of the Seventh when Nikisch, usually so sedate and calm a person, was all fire and flame. . . . 'Since Beethoven there has been nothing

> that could even approach it!' 'What is Schumann in comparison?' and so forth—that's how he talked all the time. You can imagine how I looked forward to the effect the second movement was to make on him. We had only just finished (we were playing in Nikisch's flat quite alone and undisturbed) when Nikisch said: '. . . From this moment I regard it as my duty to work for Bruckner's recognition.'

Nikisch had promised to perform the symphony at Leipzig in the *Gewandhaus*. Twice the concert (planned for June 27th) had to be postponed. However, Nikisch made good use of the intervening time and played the work on the piano to influential music critics in order to familiarize them with the music. On October 15th, he wrote to Bruckner:

> Today I played the E major Symphony to Herr Oscar Schwalm, the music critic of the most influential Leipzig paper, the *Leipziger Tageblatt*. He was beside himself with delight and asked me to tell you that he is full of enthusiasm for your masterpiece and that he considers it his duty to use all his influence in the press on your behalf, in order that you may be acclaimed as you deserve. . . .[1]

Despite his excitement, Bruckner's long experience made him accept even Nikisch's assurances with certain gloomy reservations. At one point he even suggested playing the Fourth Symphony which he considered an easier work. In the end, however, he agreed to the great risk notwithstanding the fact that later Nikisch had to break the news to him that no tubas were available at Leipzig.

Whilst this correspondence with Nikisch was in progress, Bruckner had been discovered by another great conductor—Hermann Levi of Munich. But his recognition was hardly begun; he was still ignored by the great world when he celebrated his sixtieth birthday on September 4th 1884. He went to his relations at Vöcklabruck and was given a serenade by the local choral society and the band of the civil guard. Among those who came to congratulate him was a simple woman; she had been a schoolgirl at Windhaag in the time when Bruckner was assistant schoolmaster there.

In Austria the outlook had not changed at all. When Anton Vergeiner of Freistadt informed Bruckner of his intention to

[1] *Gesammelte Briefe*, p. 336.

write an article about him in a paper, Bruckner carefully briefed him:

> Please do not write anything against Hanslick on my account. His wrath is dreadful. He is in a position to annihilate other people. With him one cannot fight. Only with petitions can one approach him, but even that is not of any use to me, because to me he is never at home.[1]

In another letter of this time, Bruckner wrote: 'Here in Vienna nothing has been performed apart from the String Quintet in the *Akademische Gesangverein*. Hans Richter does nothing at all. He blows Hanslick's trumpet.'

It was elsewhere that his hopes were raised. On December 8th, he wrote to Frau Pfeiffenberger, the daughter of a schoolmaster from St. Florian: 'I have received letters from Leipzig and Munich which made me weep. They honour me, they say, as a successor of Beethoven.'[2]

On December 30th, the first performance of the Seventh Symphony took place. The applause lasted fifteen minutes, the press was excellent and Bruckner was presented with two laurel wreaths.

[1] *Gesammelte Briefe*, p. 162. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 171.

10

Rising Fame and Declining Health

On March 10th 1885, the Seventh Symphony was performed in Munich under Hermann Levi and the work was dedicated to the King of Bavaria. Levi had several times called on the King's secretary to prepare the way and then advised Bruckner to make full use of bombastic court phraseology in his letters to Ludwig II, 'because he is very fond of such formalities'. Bruckner contrived a style which a Byzantine Emperor might have deemed over-polite; the words *allergnädigst, alleruntertänigst, allerhöchst* are showered over the pages which as a result are untranslatable. Fortunately, the efforts were not wasted: Bruckner was indeed 'struck by the rays of Royal Favour'—Ludwig II *allergnädigst* accepted the dedication.

With the notable exception of Vienna, this symphony brought Bruckner success and admiration from all sides. And soon, also, the Third Symphony was performed in Dresden, Frankfurt, The Hague and New York.

Bruckner followed all these events in bewildered excitement whilst he worked on the composition of the Eighth Symphony, which he had begun at Vöcklabruck at the time of his sixtieth birthday. But no longer could he write the first version of a symphony at one stroke. The early signs of public recognition coincided with the first indications of his declining health. The new symphony was not finished until August 1887.

In Vienna, nothing had changed at this moment when Bruckner's symphonies had begun to make his name known throughout the world; all that could be achieved here was an emergency performance of the *Te Deum* in the *Wagner Verein* with two pianos in place of the orchestra. Towards the end of 1885, Bruckner heard that the Philharmonic Orchestra were thinking of performing the Seventh Symphony. As we have already mentioned in another context, this time it was the composer who refused. In a well-formulated letter he thanked the committee for the honour done by their proposing a performance, but he requested them to refrain from playing the symphony 'on account of the influential critics who would only be likely to obstruct the course of my dawning success in Germany'. The accuracy of his judgment became clear in 1886 when the experiment was made and Hans Richter conducted the Seventh Symphony on March 21st.

Hanslick wrote:

> Bruckner is the newest deity of the Wagnerians. It is hardly true to say that he has become a fashion because nowhere does the public want to follow that fashion; but Bruckner has become a regimental order, and the 'second Beethoven' an article of faith for the Richard Wagner congregation. I do not hesitate to declare that I am hardly able to judge Bruckner's symphony entirely with objectivity; the music is antipathetic to me and appears to me seeming unnaturally exaggerated, sick and perverted. Like everyone of Bruckner's works, the E major Symphony contains ingenious inspirations, interesting and even pleasant details—here six, there eight bars —but in between the lightnings there are interminable stretches of darkness, leaden boredom and feverish over-excitement.

He admitted that the public gave the composer a quite extraordinary reception: '... most certainly, it has never happened before that a composer was called out four or five times after *each* movement.' However, he ended his criticism with two unfriendly quotations from Hamburg and Cologne newspapers as illustration of his contention that there were no grounds for the rumour of a 'triumph' in Germany.

Kalbeck and Dömpke, the two Viennese critics whom Bruckner used to call 'Hanslick's adjutants', wrote with less restraint. Kalbeck prefaced his article on the symphony with a

longish series of verses in which each line consisted of a quotation from some well-known poem; the purpose of the elaboration was to demonstrate Bruckner's lack of originality. Dömpke informed his readers of the shivers that had gone down his spine when 'the odour of the decomposing counterpoint' had entered his nostrils; the Scherzo he described as an 'excessively ugly mixture of coarseness and over-finesse' and of the Finale he wrote: 'the brilliance lies in the instrumentation but even that begins to pall soon enough if nothing is being instrumentated but sheer nonsense.' He summed up his impressions: 'Bruckner composes like a drunkard.'

A year earlier, such a press would have spelled disaster for Bruckner's reputation, but his music was now performed throughout the world and it was no longer the privilege of the Viennese press alone to report on Bruckner. In 1886, the Seventh Symphony was played in Cologne, Graz, Hamburg, Chicago, New York and Amsterdam.

During the eighties we find Bruckner on numerous occasions in the Benedictine monastery of Kremsmünster. These were not his first visits to the religious house which had strong links with St. Florian, but Bruckner's connection was renewed through Rafael Loidol, one of his truly talented pupils during 1879-1880. Loidol was admitted to the Benedictine order in 1880 when he was given the name Oddo, and the devotion of this former pupil continued to his untimely death in January 1893. Frater Oddo received his theological training in St. Florian. It was in 1883 that he was permitted by the prior to invite Bruckner to visit him at Kremsmünster. The prior's carriage was sent to the railway station and the composer was received as a respected guest. During this visit, as on all future occasions, he gave a public organ recital. On August 2nd 1885 Oddo Loidol was ordained priest and Bruckner came to play the organ during his first Mass. As a present to his former pupil he gave the Gradual *Christus factus est*. The friendship between Bruckner and P. Oddo strengthened the link between the composer and Kremsmünster, and the archives of the monastery possess a fine collection of sketches presented by the composer in 1892. The present writer has been privileged to reproduce two facsimilies from this gift of Bruckner to Kremsmünster.

On January 10th 1886 the *Te Deum* was performed for the

first time and met with even Hanslick's approval, although he could not refrain from some bitter remark about the 'never-ending noise of the applause'. In April, Bruckner travelled to Munich to be present at a great performance of the *Te Deum* under Hermann Levi and once again he was received with storms of applause. The only mishap which disturbed the composer on this occasion was the loss of a woollen cap between Vienna and Munich. On his return, he wrote to the management of the German railways:

> During a journey from Vienna to Munich—departure from Vienna on April 5th at 9.30 p.m.; arrival in Wels after 2 o'clock—I lost on April 6th at approximately 2.30 in the carriage No. ?, 2nd class, compartment No. ?, the following article (detailed description): a winter travel cap of black wool. A young lieutenant—aristocratic, I believe—who often travels to Vienna with that train, might, in the hurry (shaken from his sleep) have taken the cap unknowingly with his own luggage. I request the favour that you might search for it and return it to
>
> Anton Bruckner, Professor,
> Wien I, Hessegasse 7 [1]

In 1886, a new and still greater honour was bestowed on Bruckner. Through the recommendation of the Princess Amalia of Bavaria, to whom Levi had introduced Bruckner during a rehearsal in Munich, he received from the Emperor the Knight Cross of the Order of Francis Joseph. The decoration was delivered to him by Prince Hohenlohe and Bruckner was informed that the Emperor had granted him the supplementary payment of 300 florins. The Princess also asked Levi to inform Bruckner that the Emperor had offered some assistance, from time to time, with publication costs. In the following year, the *Maatschapij tot Bevorderung der Tonkonst* of Amsterdam nominated Bruckner as an honorary member. However, in Vienna Bruckner's position remained unchanged despite the successful performances of the previous years and the Imperial distinction. Apparently, the musicians of that town could not afford to risk Hanslick's displeasure. During the three seasons of 1888–1890 not one of Bruckner's works appeared in the programmes of the

[1] *Gesammelte Briefe*, p. 210.

official concerts. His friends managed to organize a special concert in which Richter conducted the Fourth Symphony and the *Te Deum*. The concert was ignored by the press.

Bruckner reported to Hermann Levi:

> In Vienna it is the old story all over again. I almost prefer them not to perform anything. Old friends have become hostile again, etc. In a word: the same old atmosphere and treatment. Without Hanslick's approval nothing is possible in Vienna.[1]

And, at the end of a letter to Nikisch: 'Hanslick!!! Bülow!!! Joachim!!! For God's sake! I work as much as is possible.' (23 Nov., 1888.)

More and more frequently, Bruckner fell ill. In 1890 he was forced to ask for a year's leave from the *Konservatorium* after which he had definitely to retire from these duties. Fortunately the circle of his young friends had grown considerably and they made it their business to see that Bruckner should be able to supplement his inadequate pension of 400 florins. Their activities were seconded by Bruckner's own determination to make money with his Eighth Symphony. On April 23rd he wrote to Hermann Levi, asking him to find a publisher:

> Vienna is out of the question, because three symphonies and the Quintet have already been simply given away. For the *Te Deum* I have received 50 florins. . . .
>
> Whoever makes the best offer shall have it. If no offer comes, it can go abroad to whoever makes the cheapest estimate for printing costs. Perhaps the dedication to the Emperor will be of some help.

Levi tried his best to help, but had in the end to report to Bruckner that all his endeavours had been in vain. He mentioned also that Princess Amalia had been active again on his behalf, but without avail. 'I am unable to find out what precisely is going on in Vienna.' The publication of the Eighth Symphony had to wait until 1892, when the costs were, indeed, borne by the Emperor.

Max von Oberleithner tells in his memoirs of the activities of Bruckner's friends to ensure a subsidy which would allow him to resign from the *Konservatorium*:

> Bruckner sighed, convinced that no such Maecenas as had come to Beethoven would bring a subsidy to him. I was struck

[1] *Gesammelte Briefe*, p. 222.

by this and wrote to my father, describing Bruckner's circumstances and insisting that here was an opportunity of doing something particularly worth while. My father answered at once with a promise of 500 florins. With this good example I went to Josef Schalk, who wrote to Almeroth, a personal friend of Bruckner's in Steyr, and also of the heirs of the manufacturers Werndl in Steyr, and these weathly people offered a yearly contribution of 580 florins. . . . But Bruckner insisted that everything should be confirmed legally by formal contracts and this nearly spoiled the arrangements with my father on account of the forbiddingly high legal fees for donations. However, my father's lawyer found a way out. . . .

On October 31st 1890 the *Landtag* of Upper Austria decreed unanimously that Bruckner should receive for life an annual gift of 400 florins and four years later he received the freedom of the city of Linz.

We have often mentioned the devotion of Bruckner's young friends to their revered teacher. This loyalty was shown above all in their untiring efforts to make his music known. The most active among them formed a kind of life-guard around the composer: Josef Schalk, his brother Franz Schalk, Ferdinand Löwe and Friedrich Eckstein. However, almost everyone among Bruckner's students, and other young musicians, fell at one time or another under the spell of this strange personality who combined patriarchial dignity with fiery enthusiasm, so competent in all that concerned his music and yet so incapable in his dealings with the world. They would make propaganda for his works, negotiate with publishers, copy music and do all that the moment demanded. It has already been told that it was Josef Schalk who had taken the Seventh Symphony to Nikisch. The correspondence between the brothers Schalk is a testimony to their continuous zeal in the task of winning recognition for Bruckner.

The *Wagner Verein* was very well attended and contributed decisively to the success. Without any modesty I regard that as my doing, because I present those fellows with a portion of Bruckner each and every Thursday. (Josef to Franz Schalk, 10 Jan., 1885.)

Bruckner entrusted the *Te Deum* to young Friedrich Eckstein with this note: 'Herewith I authorize my dear friend Director Friedrich Eckstein to see to the publication of my *Te*

Deum and to undertake any steps he deems appropriate.' Indeed, without this declaration, the work would probably not have been published at the time. Eckstein had been in negotiation with Theodor Rättig, the same publisher who had volunteered to take on the Third Symphony after its disastrous first performance. Rättig insisted on a guarantee that Eckstein would subsidize the publication and the latter bore, indeed, the larger part of the cost.

At one time, the young friends also tried whether Schalk's piano version of the Fourth Symphony could not be published by the means of a duplicating method. They engaged a skilled copyist to prepare calligraphic stencils, but the copies looked so poor that the project had to be abandoned.

In 1887, Josef Schalk was appointed director of the *Wagner Verein* in Vienna; he continued systematically to make propaganda for Bruckner and also for Hugo Wolf, sometimes combining their names, as, for instance, in the concert of June 15th when Bruckner's Fourth Symphony and Wolf's music to Ibsen's *The Feast of Solhaug* were performed.

August Göllerich the Younger, son of the member of parliament who had been of assistance to Bruckner in earlier years, began to collect material for his biography. At first, Bruckner was reluctant to answer the questions of the unrelenting examiner. Asked about some minor incident, he would shake his head and say: 'That wouldn't interest a cat!', and on being asked what had happened in this or that year, the usual reply was: 'Nothing happened!' (*'Is eh nix g'schegn.'*)

Only gradually did Bruckner come to accept the idea and even to be proud of it, referring to Göllerich as 'my biographer'.[1]

[1] Göllerich's biography never got very far. To judge from the four chapters which were eventually published, the writer became overwhelmed by his ever-increasing collection of material and was unable to discard what was clearly irrelevant or, at least, unimportant. Max Auer ultimately added to the collection of Göllerich's papers and had the entire miscellany published. The result is a biography of nine rambling volumes with next to no organization or order of any kind. The work retains some value as a unique, uncritical collection of 'Bruckneriana', most of which would not otherwise have survived. Truly valuable are the extensive quotations of Bruckner's very early works.

The large work testifies to the devoted intentions of compiler and editor, but the hero of this biography is Bruckner as seen through the eyes of the contemporary young Wagnerians: the Bruckner of the anecdotes, a friendly, embarrassing, half-witted simpleton.

Quite an obscure pamphlet, published in 1895 in Linz, demonstrates

The organ of St. Florian.

View of Linz, showing the old cathedral. *(Photo: E. Doernberg)*

Bruckner's sarcophagus in the crypt of St. Florian.

(By courtesy Alkor-Edition Kassel G.m.b.H.)

Hugo Wolf, who was for a short while the music critic of the *Wiener Salonblatt*, first met Bruckner on Corpus Christi Day 1884 in Klosterneuburg. On December 28th of the same year he published an article in the *Salonblatt*. With the animated irony with which he used to castigate most compositions of Brahms, he attacked the Viennese for their attitude to Bruckner:

> Bruckner? Bruckner? Who is he? Where does he live? What does he do? Such are the questions one can hear in Vienna among people who go regularly not only to the Philharmonic concerts but also to those of the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde*. If one really meets someone to whom the name is not entirely unknown, he may indeed recall that Bruckner is a professor of musical theory. 'And an organ virtuoso', someone else might add. . . . A third person may believe, a fourth really know it, a fifth will even protest and a sixth declare under oath that Bruckner is also a composer, although, to be sure, not a very special, not a classical composer. . . .

And so one could go on for a long time to enumerate instances of active devotion to Bruckner's cause and to his personal well-being on the part of the young men around him.

Unfortunately, some of Bruckner's closest friends considered it incumbent upon them to supplement their help to him in his life by extending their charity upon his works. For them Bruckner was a Wagnerian composer and with an astonishing lack of understanding they presumed that the difference between Bruckner's and Wagner's manner of writing was due to Bruckner's lack of ability to reach what they considered to be his aim. They therefore set to work 'improving' Bruckner's scores, either

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that it was by no means impossible for the contemporaries of the still-living composer to write a good biographical sketch. The booklet was issued in the aftermath of Bruckner's seventieth birthday and the unveiling of a plaque at the birth-house in Ansfelden. The author, F. Brunner, had often seen Bruckner, but had never had the courage to talk to him. His biography is concise but includes all essential points with the right kind of emphasis and the composer appears as a person of true dignity. Comparison between Brunner's booklet and the literature of the 'apostles' strengthens one's conviction that the devotion of his familiar friends was altogether a mixed blessing for Bruckner.

Brunner's surely very rare biography came to the British Museum with the Hirsch Library and forms a most valuable corrective to the reports of the ominous 'friends'.

by subtle alterations or drastic change. The resulting versions contain some pages which make it impossible to recognize Bruckner at all. Nor did they omit to rectify the composer's 'inordinate lengths'—simply by cutting out everything that struck them as superfluous. In consequence, Bruckner—whose reputation had already suffered from shortened performances—became known as a strange Wagnerian composer who wrote symphonic movements in the sonata form in which anything can happen: the coda might follow directly after the development; a recapitulation may leave out the main theme, and so forth. A more detailed account of these edited versions will be given in the first chapter of Part III. They are mentioned here simply as illustration of the somewhat ill-judged activities of Bruckner's devotees; though in justice it must be said that his friends' disfiguring of his works was dictated by the same devotion with which they looked after the man himself.

To return to Bruckner. In 1891, he enjoyed the triumph of a glorious performance of the *Te Deum* in Berlin under Siegfried Ochs with the Philharmonic Choir. Bruckner had recovered sufficiently from recent attacks of illness to be able to travel; he was present during the concert on May 31st. Already at the end of the rehearsals, his presence was celebrated by the choir and the orchestra. After the concert, Bruckner reported: 'The jubilations defy description. Most of the personalities came to me to offer congratulations and I had to remain on the rostrum a long, long while.' The press was excellent and Hans von Bülow—hitherto totally disinterested in Bruckner—spontaneously recommended a repeat performance.

It was in Berlin that Bruckner came nearer than ever before to the fulfilment of one of his lifelong wishes—to find a wife. On this occasion, the story varies from the usual pattern. It was not Bruckner who proposed and Ida Buhz was older than seventeen. She was a chambermaid in the Hotel Kaiserhof and surprised Bruckner by handing him a letter in which she suggested marriage. Whatever may have preceded the proposal is unknown. Bruckner's first response was to demand an immediate introduction to her parents and to assure himself of their permission for further correspondence. The subsequent letters show that Fräulein Buhz had a genuine affection for the old composer and wished to look after him.

> I should like to ask you not to judge me wrongly and to think that I am out to make a good match. If something were to come of it, I would not marry the professor, doctor and so forth, but only my dear, good Herr Bruckner whose good and noble character shines in each letter, in every line.

Disregarding the advice of his alarmed friends, Bruckner was firmly resolved to marry her. When he returned to Berlin in 1894, Ida Buhz was invited by him to the concerts and he visited her parents. But alas, there was a stumbling-block: the Lutheran girl could not think of becoming a Catholic and that was for Bruckner an insurmountable obstacle. The whole affair came to an end. Bruckner had only two more years to live and Fräulein Buhz became a deaconess after his death.

Meanwhile the Eighth Symphony had been finished and the Ninth was under way. It has been mentioned that Bruckner had begun the Eighth at the time of his sixtieth birthday, in 1884. On the last page of the finished score we find, as always in Bruckner's manuscripts, precise dates: 'First movement finally revised from November 1889 to January 1890. Last note written on January 29th.' The note goes on: 'Vienna, February 10th, 1890, entirely finished.' 'March 10th, entirely finished.' The phrase 'entirely finished' (*'ganz fertig'*) always had a relative force with Bruckner.

Mere words can convey nothing of the glories of this symphony; but some idea of the impression it made can be gained from the letters of Hugo Wolf to his friend Kaufmann: 'Should you not yet possess this work, do not fail to obtain it. . . . This symphony has been created by a giant and surpasses all other symphonies of the master in spiritual depth, in fertility and greatness.' After a few days, having heard that his friend knew the symphony already, Wolf wrote again:

> I am overjoyed by your raptures over Bruckner's Eighth Symphony. I quite agree with what you say about the powerfully moving Adagio. Indeed it is hard to think of anything else of the same class; certainly there is nothing to compare with the content, whilst in form it is not wholly convincing because of its immeasurable breadth and length; in this respect he falls short of the level of Beethoven. But the first movement, strong and succinct, is altogether unique and perhaps the

perfect example of what we possess of its genre. An orchestral performance of this movement is overwhelming, defying all criticism.

Bruckner had sent the first version of the Eighth Symphony to Hermann Levi in 1887, hoping for an early performance in Munich. But Levi failed to understand the work. He was anxious not to make the old composer too unhappy with a rejection and asked Joseph Schalk to undertake the ungrateful task of passing the information to him. The effect on Bruckner was, it is no exaggeration to say, disastrous. The first result was that he became unable to continue the Ninth Symphony which he had just begun; almost three years were to go by before he felt able to make a new start. The three years only yielded revisions of earlier works, some of them quite unnecessary. The dreadful disappointment also led to a renewed manifestation of the nervous affliction; one of its symptoms, the irresistible counting mania, even affected the revisions to some extent. The exaggerated search for consecutive octaves, mentioned in the first part of this book, belongs most certainly to this context.

The revisions made during these harassed years included, apart from the Eighth Symphony, the Third and the Fourth. The ever well-meaning young friends accepted Bruckner's state of mind as a new opportunity to make him susceptible to their advice. Löwe or Franz Schalk had prepared a version of the Fourth Symphony for a performance under Richter (Vienna, January 22nd 1888) and made Bruckner agree with it. Nor did they hesitate to use the resulting torso as copy for the printed edition!

The revision of the Third Symphony was undertaken by Bruckner in a most unhappy state of mind. It seems that he began this work under the influence of his friends' irresistible advice. It led eventually to the printed edition of 1890 which most certainly includes alterations made by one or more of the pupils. Needless to say, the result is a tremendous textual confusion and the third version of this symphony still awaits publication of a cleansed text.

Bruckner's own revision of the Eighth Symphony only began seriously in March 1889 and occupied him for a whole year. By the time it was accomplished, Levi no longer conducted the

concerts at Munich and asked Felix Weingartner of Mannheim to perform it. Weingartner began the rehearsals in March 1891. It was in the course of his correspondence with this conductor that Bruckner wrote that important letter which will be quoted below on page 118, explaining that excisions were necessary for the time being, but that the full length of the symphony would find appreciation in 'later times'.

Weingartner would have done his best for the symphony, although in later years he made no secret of the fact that he never loved Bruckner's music. Bruckner was grateful to Weingartner, although he would certainly have preferred to see the work in the care of one of his favourite conductors. About that time, Hugo Wolf wrote to Oscar Grohe: '. . . some time back I had the greatest trouble in persuading Bruckner of Weingartner's integrity and of his serious concern with his symphonies.' But Wolf too sometimes had doubts about Weingartner: 'What am I to think of Weingartner's damned indifference? That attitude which he is so fond of showing? . . . Is he for me or against me? Is he making fun of me? Am I, by any chance, his court jester? Why does he write to Bruckner, why not to me?'

In the end, nothing came of the project of having the Eighth Symphony performed at Mannheim. On April 19th, Weingartner had to inform Bruckner that he had suddenly been called away to Berlin and that in the rush he had been unable to conduct as many rehearsals as the work demanded: 'Be assured that I am a sincere admirer of your genius and that I shall perform a work of yours as soon as possible in Berlin.'

Thus it happened that Vienna came to the honour of the first performance. Hans Richter conducted the work on December 18th in a Philharmonic concert. Once again, Bruckner experienced a great triumph and received laurel wreaths. Even the critic Max Kalbeck, who had gone to such lengths in his strained merriment over the Seventh Symphony, praised the work for its 'clear disposition, good organization, well-coined expression, fine details and the logic of the whole'.

Hanslick, however, did not desert his post and wrote something of the work's 'dream-disturbed cats'-misery-style, unrelieved gloom' and so forth. Again his report includes mention of the tremendous applause: 'Tumultuous acclamations, waving handkerchiefs, innumerous calls, laurel wreaths and so forth. No

doubt whatever, for Bruckner the concert was a triumph.' On New Year's Eve he bewildered Bruckner by presenting him with his photographic portrait inscribed 'To my sincere friend'. And only a few days earlier, the Philharmonic Orchestra had performed the Third Symphony—the 'Wagner Symphony'! Yet two weeks later, Hanslick wrote another dreadful article on Bruckner; this time the composer's comment was: 'It made me quite ill.'

During 1891, an honour came Bruckner's way which he had coveted for a very long time. For years he had been possessed of the desire to obtain a doctor's degree. In 1882 he had his expectations raised by a mysterious 'Englishman' who appeared frequently in Bruckner's favourite restaurant and who told him that something could be arranged in Cambridge. Friedrich Klose's memoirs do not make it really clear whether this individual played a hoax on Bruckner for the fun of it or for material gain (he did extract some money from Bruckner); neither were Bruckner's friends able to find out whether the man was really English—they had a strong suspicion that he came from Berlin. In any case, it is fairly clear that Bruckner's application never reached Cambridge. Three years later, in 1885, Bruckner applied to the Universities of Philadelphia and Cincinnati. He had to search the wide world because the Austrian universities did not bestow the title of a doctor of music.

Now, in July 1891, the University of Vienna granted him the degree of a *doctor honoris causae*. Professor Dr. Stefan had asked Hermann Levi, who had once again been instrumental, to give his views on the question and the conductor had replied from Bayreuth on June 23rd:

> In answer to your enquiry I beg to say that I consider the proposed distinction to be fully merited by Professor Bruckner. In my opinion Bruckner is by far the greatest composer of symphonies since Beethoven. The fact that he has not yet been generally acclaimed as such is perhaps due to the contemporary taste which has moved away from the great tradition of our classics. The so-called 'romantic' trend, introduced by Mendelssohn and Schumann, dominates the concert programmes, banishing inclination for a monumental style. Also, Bruckner's personality, his somewhat stern nature may estrange and even repel people—particularly in cases when his works are known only superficially. But his time will assuredly come. . . .

> Yet, Bruckner is significant not only as a composer but as musical scholar and master of counterpoint; as a teacher, too, his outstanding work has won the praise of his students. Therefore I believe that the first university of Austria would perform an act of justice by honouring Bruckner in preference to all other artists and by bestowing on him the dignity of an Honorary Doctorate.

Professor Stefan then submitted the proposal to the University and it was accepted unanimously on July 4th. On October 2nd the Ministry of Education informed the Rector of the University that the Emperor had given his consent. On November 7th, a celebration took place in Bruckner's honour and the Rector of the University, Professor Adolf Exner, ended his oration with the words :

> Beyond the final barriers which mark the limits of science, there lies the realm of art, the fufilment of the things to which science cannot attain. I—the *Rector Magnificus* of the University—bow before the former assistant school teacher of Windhaag.

Bruckner threw away all his visiting cards which he had ordered only a few years earlier when he had become a Knight of the Order of Francis Joseph. New ones had to be printed to show that now he was also a Doctor of Philosophy. He also promised the University the dedication of a symphony.

Hitherto we have mentioned, as the rare highlights in the life of a neglected composer, nearly every single instance of a performance of one of Bruckner's larger works. Now, performances became too frequent to mention them all. The pity of it was that for Bruckner the change had come so late. Frequent illness often made him unable to travel to concerts of his own works. Swellings of his feet and vein trouble made him more and more inactive and he had to give up organ playing. Liver and stomach complaints necessitated a diet which he, who had always enjoyed a good meal, detested. '*Post molestam senectutem*', he quoted in several letters early in 1892. He suffered from the enforced inactivity and seclusion as much as from the complaints themselves and once again the familiar note of depression makes itself heard :

> I feel totally deserted. Nobody comes to me, or at least only extremely rarely. The *Wagner Verein* is everything for them.

> Even Oberleithner only goes *there*. . . . Several months back, I heard through acquaintances that Schalk intends to perform my third Mass. To *me* he only mentioned it a few days ago. (To Göllerich, 10 March, 1893).[1]

To Otto Kitzler, his former tutor, he wrote a report about his health and added :

> Now you see how it all is. I am not allowed to play the organ and I can't even make any plans to hear music. It is all as God wills. Anyway, do not rely on me at all. Perhaps I may get permission to come; but probably it would mean over-excitement. They did not even want me to hear the Eighth. . . . It may be better to have a summer without music. (14 March, 1893.)[2]

One week he felt a little better, the next he felt a little worse. Towards the end of the year he was informed that Siegfried Ochs and Karl Muck planned some performances of his works in Berlin. Once again the question tormented him : would he be able to be present? On November 8th, he wrote to Ochs :

> Again I have been laid up. Thank God, I am now able to be up again. I cannot tell you how I suffer from being unable to make any of my own plans. Professor Schrötter is very strict.
>
> Apart from the *Te Deum*, performed by you with my favourite chorus (Greetings! Kisses!), I would love to hear my Seventh Symphony once again. Since the time of the dreadful article in the *Neue freie Presse*! ! I have not heard it, I believe. If I am at all able to travel, I shall certainly come.[3]

Despite the faint note of hope expressed in this letter, Bruckner knew that he would not recover. On November 10th 1893 he made his will. First, he decreed that his body should be taken to St. Florian and be laid to rest in the crypt of the church underneath the great organ, in a sarcophagus 'standing free, without being interred'. Next, he made provisions for money in order to have the sarcophagus maintained and for Masses to be said on his birthday, his name-day and the anniversaries of his death and also for one annual Mass for his parents, brothers and sisters. In the third paragraph, he nominated his brother Ignaz and his sister Rosalie Huber of Vöcklabruck as heirs, making

[1] *Gesammelte Briefe*, p. 269 [2] *Ibid.*, p. 269.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 275.

special mention of royalties 'which, I hope, will come forth more frequently in the future; during my life I had hardly any benefit from my works'. Fourthly, he made those provisions for the preservation of his works in their original versions which became decisive to posterity: the manuscripts should be deposited in the *Hofbibliothek* and should at any time be made available to the publishers Josef Eberle & Co. Finally came a gift to his faithful housekeeper Katharina Kachelmaier, or—as Bruckner called her on less solemn occasions—'*the Kathi*'. The will was witnessed by Ferdinand Löwe, Cyrill Hynais and the solicitor Dr. Theodor Reich.

In December 1893, Bruckner felt so much better that his doctor, Professor Schrötter, permitted him to travel to Berlin. On December 28th he heard his F minor Mass in Vienna and on January 5th he arrived in Berlin. Hugo Wolf travelled at the same time, since the concert of January 8th included his two choral works *Der Feuerreiter* and *Das Elfenlied*. On January 6th, Bruckner had his wish fulfilled: he heard the Seventh Symphony and on January 8th and 11th the *Te Deum* was performed.

In the summer of 1894, he went for the last time to Upper Austria and played the organ in St. Florian. In October he made an attempt to continue his lectures in the University, but already after one week's trial that, too, came to an end. By the last day of November he had written all that it was given him to complete of the Ninth Symphony.

This symphony is a work which stands on the threshold of the twentieth-century, in certain details going far beyond the most daring harmonic devices of Wagner. Until the coda of the Adagio, the work is the expression of a deeply disturbed spirit; here and there, however, are profound contrasts, notably that of the wonderful second theme of the first movement, or in those few bars of the Scherzo when ghostly visions are suddenly broken by the simplicity of an oboe tune. Only at the end of the third movement, which terminates the work, does a sublime serenity overcome all that went before, and with two delicately transfigured greetings from the Eighth and Seventh Symphonies Bruckner gives his valediction to music and to life. In his last two years, he never had strength for more than scant sketches of a Finale and of a transition from the Adagio to the *Te Deum*

which, he sometimes thought, might be played after the symphony, should he not be spared to complete the Finale.

The last years of his life saw him ever more burdened with age, decline and ill health. On July 4th 1895 he moved from the town to the palace *Belvedere* where apartments (on the ground floor) in the custodian's house had been granted him by the Emperor through the kind intervention of the Archduchess Marie Valerie, and sometimes he could still take pleasure in the fine park.

On October 11th 1896 after a morning spent at a little work on the sketches for the Finale of the Ninth Symphony, Bruckner died at three o'clock in the afternoon.

There was a stately funeral service in the *Karlskirche*, solemn celebrations and orations. Bruckner, who had entered Vienna as a poor music teacher, left the capital like a prince and went home, to his beloved St. Florian.

PART III

NOTES TO THE SYMPHONIES

With an Essay on the Original Versions

The Original Versions of Bruckner's Works

In the course of the biography, occasional mention has been made of the fact that Bruckner's friends acted as editors of some of his works and that the editions printed by their initiative and under their supervision differed from the manuscripts in various ways. The discrepancies in the scores of three symphonies are so extensive that these were in actual fact nothing less than free arrangements.

Before discussing the activity of these editors, we must remember that Bruckner himself never ceased revising his works. He wrote a new version of the Third Symphony as late as 1889, two years after the initial work with the Ninth Symphony. The Second Symphony, originally written in 1870–1872, was again on his desk in 1879, and for a third time in 1891.

The reasons for some of these frequent revisions of finished works are explained in the biography. Usually years would go by without a performance, the scores lying unused in a drawer. Bruckner never heard his Fifth Symphony at all and of the Sixth, only two movements; it was not until the Fifth was written that the Third Symphony had its first, unhappy performance. This alone made it impossible for Bruckner to detach himself from finished works.

Furthermore, originally some revision on the part of the composer was really necessary. He composed during the years 1870–

1875 no less than four symphonies in one continuous flow of inspiration. Obviously, his self-criticism developed as he grew in stature as a composer from the Second to the Fifth Symphony. The work of revision began immediately after the stupendous achievement of those five years, in 1876.

Next we have to consider that Bruckner was never able to accept criticism stoically. Not that anyone's complaint could ever stop him composing (with the notable exception of the experience of 1887); normally he would begin a new work within days or weeks after the completion of a major composition. A rejection of his work, however, never failed to shake his confidence. As late as 1887 he was 'despairing of himself' and 'no longer able to believe in himself', as Joseph Schalk reported to Hermann Levi, when the latter had been unable to understand the Eighth Symphony which Bruckner had submitted to him—'may it find grace!'—for performance. For over two years he was unable to continue the composition of the Ninth Symphony and the two profoundly unhappy years produced, among other revisions, a quite unnecessary new version of the Third.

There are four symphonies which were never revised extensively by the composer: the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh and Ninth Symphonies. The composer's own versions of the others are many and varied: two versions of No. 1, three of No. 2, four of No. 3, one definite revision of No. 4, two versions of No. 8. Sometimes revisions were considerable, on other occasions they concerned detail only. There followed innumerable examinations of the score and corrections of detail whenever a performance was imminent.

Whilst all this complicates the textual problem *historically*, the practical solution was basically obvious and simple: the discovery that some of the composer's works were known only in garbled versions made it advisable to revert to Bruckner's own text. The term commonly used to denote authenticity—'original version'—defines, therefore, the composer's own text without alien editorial interference. The term does not point to the first version but to a text which can be regarded as Bruckner's definitive score. As a rule, this would be the composer's last revised text. However, of the First Symphony we have *two* original versions, since Bruckner was unable to decide between them. For different reasons, we have also two original versions

of the Third Symphony: the second version appears superior to the revision undertaken in a period of severe stress; moreover, the printed score of the third version, though basically showing Bruckner's own text, has most probably been tampered with.

What, now, are the garbled versions? Bruckner's pupils saw the composer's constant concern with finished works and they apparently concluded that he never reached a stage in composing indicating definite finality. Quite possibly, they imagined that Bruckner's finished works needed further revision. If this notion was perhaps understandable, one can hardly follow them when they considered that therefore they were not only entitled, but even qualified, to continue where the composer had left off. Still more astonishing is the fact that they saw this as not merely a question of isolated changes: their presumption led them to make totally new versions of the composer's own works. Nor can their action be explained and forgiven as simply the action of youthful enthusiasm; for, even at a maturer age, Bruckner's former pupils were quite unwilling to attribute this activity to the ill-judgment of youth. What they maintained is untenable: that their versions of the Symphonies No. 5 and 9 represented Bruckner's last intentions and had his approval. They may have been sincere when they claimed the right to alter one single note in Bruckner's scores; certainly they exceeded all editorial licence nor did they give any indication of the liberties they had taken.

Already August Göllerich, Bruckner's first biographer, had written a remark to the effect that the printed versions of Bruckner's works do not agree with the composer's manuscripts. In 1919, an essay by Georg Göhler in an important German musical journal stressed the need for a thorough investigation.[1] His suspicion had been roused by the printed edition of the Sixth Symphony. Alfred Orel assured Göhler by letter that it was widely known in Viennese musical circles that the differences between the printed scores and the originals were considerable. Since the two chief editors of the printed versions, Franz Schalk and Ferdinand Löwe, were still alive, the next step was clearly to consult them. To the astonishment of Göhler and Orel, Bruckner's two former friends protested that an examination of Bruckner's manuscripts was quite irrelevant and that the question of an edition of

[1] Georg Göhler, *Wichtige Aufgaben der Musikwissenschaft gegenüber Anton Bruckner* (Zeitschr. f. Musikwissenschaft, 1, 5.).

Bruckner's works on the basis of the manuscripts did not arise. The resistance of Franz Schalk, as director of the Vienna State Opera, made it for some time impossible to pursue the matter. However, some private examinations of the manuscripts revealed the extent of the discrepancies and eventually Schalk was more or less forced into submitting himself to a discussion. A conference was arranged to take place in his office in the State Opera building. Ferdinand Löwe made a final demonstration of his opposition; he declined to be present during the discussion. Since he was the editor of the Ninth Symphony (one of the works particularly suspect), his deliberate absence appeared particularly significant. The outcome was Schalk's repeated assurance that the composer's manuscripts were hardly relevant; further, that the printed versions had been prepared under the composer's own supervision, that Bruckner had seen and corrected the copy given to the printers. He put an end to the argument by asserting that he had first-hand knowledge of Bruckner's intentions.

Schalk's reaction—not to mention Löwe's—was somewhat too personal and agitated to be convincing. Some years passed during which strenuous efforts were made to trace the manuscripts of the Fifth and Ninth Symphonies which had been given to the publishers as the printers' copy. It is, after all, the usual procedure that a publisher either returns such 'copy' or else preserves it in his archives. Since Schalk and Löwe asserted that Bruckner had entered corrections by his own hand in the suspect printers' copy, it seemed that nothing short of an examination of those manuscripts could give conclusive satisfaction. However, these manuscripts were missing, but not, however, that of the Seventh Symphony which is untypical in so far as the printed edition of *this* work hardly differs from the original. Where are those manuscripts? Are they still extant? Have they been destroyed, and, if so, by whom and why? One of them may have been lost accidentally, but the disappearance of both of them is inexplicable, unless one agrees with Max Auer that there was 'system' in the disappearance of the copy manuscripts.[1]

At the time of the preliminary investigations, the director of the National Library in Vienna also became convinced that an edition of the original versions ought to be made possible. A mighty storm broke lose in 1932 and again in 1936 with the first

[1] *Zeitschrift für Musik*, vol. 103, p. 538.

performances of the Ninth and the Fifth Symphonies in Bruckner's original versions.

The effect of the test performances had been conclusive. By that time, both Schalk and Löwe had died. Yet their protest against the resurrection of Bruckner's own scores was kept alive by others and personal issues seemed to involve everyone in a mesh of offence, libel and slander. Robert Haas, the chief editor of the original versions, had rashly spoken of intimidation of Bruckner by his friends ('*Sanktionen*') and was obliged to make solemn declarations that nobody entertained the slightest doubts about the honourable intentions of Bruckner's apostles. The host of objectors was joined by several well-known conductors who had been familiar with the works in the garbled versions and found it difficult to adjust themselves. The ensuing disputes were conducted in an atmosphere of extraordinary personal heat and malice. Few besides Max Auer and Alfred Orel managed to explain things calmly and objectively. Some of the personal animosities seem even now beyond repair, but in the meantime the true versions of Bruckner's works have been accepted by the world. The garbled versions have swiftly become a curiosity of purely historical interest and there is not a single conductor with a reputation to lose who could possibly perform Bruckner with the older editions.

However, even though the problem of the arrangements by Schalk and Löwe is no longer acute, the old scores still turn up in second-hand music shops and are liable to mislead the unwarned; these scores must be the cause of much astonishment if the unlucky purchaser takes them along to a concert in which the original version of the same work is performed. It is still interesting to examine the tendencies underlying those arrangements. Although it is inadmissible that Bruckner should have given his consent to versions not only differing from his own compositions in countless details but which altered his style fundamentally, the fact remains that Schalk and Löwe were intimate and devoted friends of the composer and active apostles. What can have led them to believe that his works needed their revision? We have dismissed their assurance that Bruckner had authorized their work.

No doubt, such an idea may have sprung in the first place from the fact that the composer discussed his works with them,

despite their youth. By listening to their criticism he gave them a false idea of its value; sometimes he even acted on their advice. The absurd result was apparently that these young men imagined themselves more capable of writing a Bruckner symphony than Bruckner himself. Bruckner could hardly have foreseen what his disciples would eventually do to his Fifth and Ninth Symphonies (to mention the worst examples), but gradually he began to see danger. As we saw in the biography, Bruckner's own concession to contemporary conditions was to agree to certain excisions in performance. Everybody in his circle knew that he made these concessions only under severe pressure, grudgingly, until finally driven to suggest them himself. However, these concessions were allowed only for performances, *never* for the printed editions. Surely, not one of his friends could have been ignorant of the composer's express intentions. In the case of the Fourth Symphony, for instance, he demanded that the direction *must* be printed: 'The great cut [i.e. in the Andante] shall only be made if it is absolutely necessary because it does much harm to the work.' He gave his consent to an excision suggested for the Finale *under the condition* that not only the orchestral score and parts but also the piano arrangement should give the full text and that the excision may be marked with the symbol 'VI–DE'. The students to whom he entrusted the supervision of the publication ignored all this! We do not know how Bruckner reacted when faced with the mutilated printed version. Those who might have told the tale were, naturally, least inclined to do so. All we know is that Bruckner became increasingly suspicious.

During the preparation of a performance of the Eighth Symphony under Felix Weingartner, Bruckner wrote a number of letters which clearly show his wishes and his nervousness:

> How fares the Eighth? Have there been any rehearsals yet? How does it sound? I do recommend to you to shorten the Finale severely as is indicated. It would be much too long and is valid only for later times and for a circle of friends and connoisseurs. . . .

And again:

> Please submit to the wishes of the orchestra. But I do implore you not to alter the score and it is one of my most burning wishes to have the orchestral parts printed without alterations.

When the symphony was eventually published, Bruckner was far too ill to take any part in the preparations and the friends re-wrote the score to their hearts' content!

The two letters to Weingartner are by no means the only indication of the composer's anxiety. Having sensed the danger, he quietly made his provisions. In 1892–1893 he had all his manuscripts bound and packed them in a sealed parcel. In his will he decreed that these 'original manuscripts', as he called them, should be deposited in the Court Library in Vienna and that the directors of the library should see to their preservation and make them available to a certain publishing firm if requested so to do. He confirmed his will in 1894.

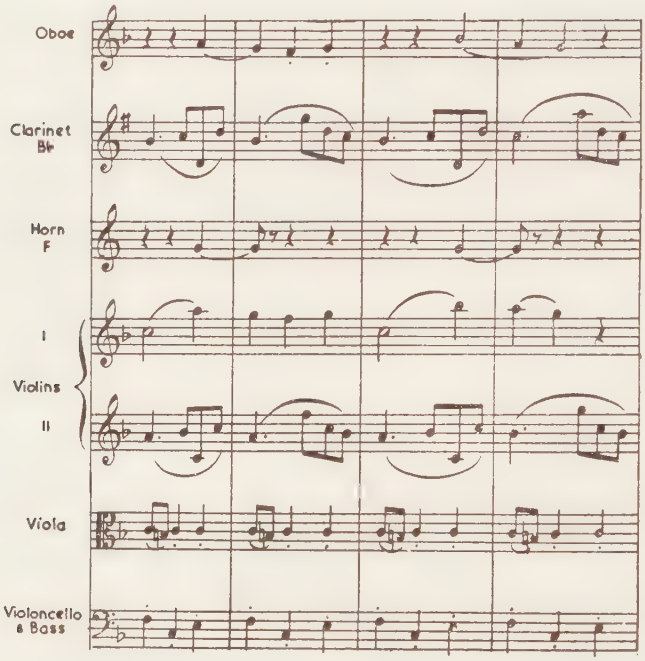
All this leaves us in no doubt as to Bruckner's views on the question. One more episode may be relevant. When Karl Muck visited Bruckner, the old composer gave him a manuscript copy of the Ninth Symphony to take away with him, away from Vienna, '*so that nothing may happen to it*' ('*dass nix g'schiacht dran*'). Was Bruckner anxious to protect the score from theft or fire, or from his disciples? If his words were remembered correctly by Karl Muck, the latter must have been the case. For other calamities he would have expressed himself differently.

It now remains to look at the general trend of the alterations. The editors of the edition of the original versions (Robert Haas and Alfred Orel) have appended to their scores an exhaustive list of the discrepancies between manuscripts and printed versions. The lists are far too long for quotation here. In the case of the Fifth and Ninth Symphonies, there is hardly a bar which has not been disastrously 'improved,' quite apart from some free additions.

The aim of the editors was clearly to obliterate as far as possible Bruckner's individuality, particularly where his manner of writing differed from that of Wagner. Easy was the task to remedy the length of the works: they simply left out huge portions, despite Bruckner's insistence that the whole text must be printed. From the Fifth Symphony, no less than 222 bars were omitted from the Finale alone (bars 13–14, 325–353, 374–459, 624–627 of the original version).

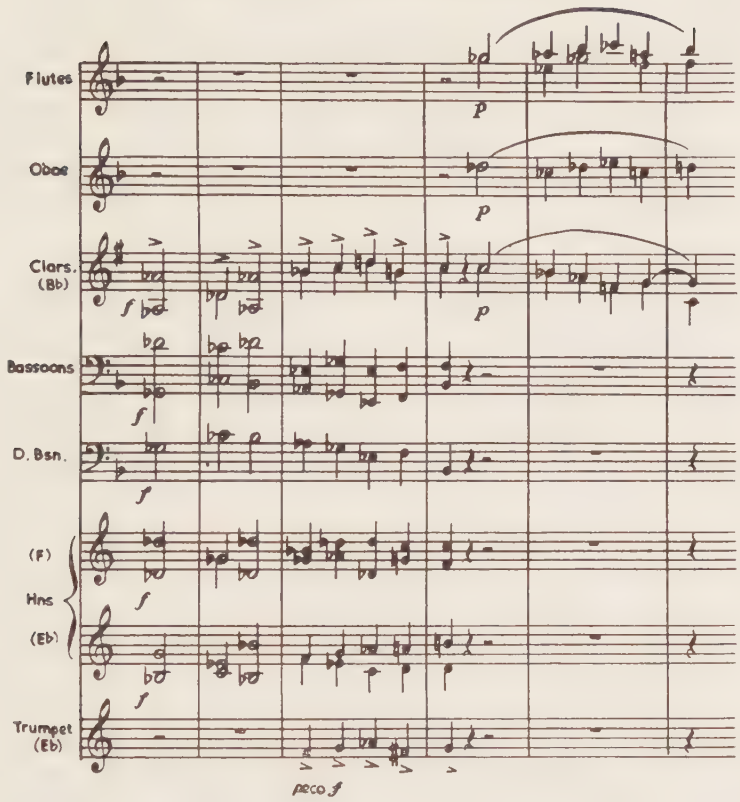
Next came Bruckner's instrumentation. The principal method of the friends' revision was to substitute mixed instrumentation for Bruckner's frequent writing in instrumental groups. Some-

times, they would fill up the score as for instance in bars 23–26 of the Scherzo of the Fifth Symphony (which Bruckner had set for strings only):



Or Bruckner's wood-wind writing was made significantly to conform with Wagner's technique of setting oboes lower and clarinets higher. Further, piccolo and muted horns were introduced.

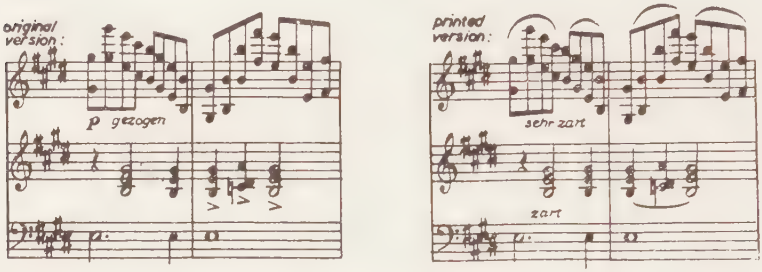
On occasions, the correction of Bruckner's writing for contrasting instrumental groups can be quite astounding. The third fugal theme in the Finale of the Fifth Symphony is introduced by Bruckner as a powerful chorale, in the original version magnificently set for brass (Example No. 92 in the notes to the symphony). In the original version, the brass chorale is followed by a wonderful transition of soft string playing and here the editors added wood-wind. The result of their labours is the obliteration of the contrast. And Bruckner, F. Schalk declared to Göhler and Orel, had given his approval to the following instrumentation!



Still other kinds of changes were made, by Ferdinand Löwe, in the Ninth Symphony. In Bruckner's composition, the eerie wood-wind chord opening the Scherzo is long sustained. Löwe crossed it out: the correct upbeat is followed by a staccato crotchet and thereafter the wood-wind is silent! To enable the orchestra to play the Scherzo prestissimo, the pizzicato quavers following the manageable crotchets were transferred from violins and 'cellos to flute and bassoon respectively. Needless to say, the Scherzo is not meant to be played prestissimo.

Sometimes only Bruckner's direction of phrasing had to be changed in order to take the marrow from the music. To give an example, here are bars 231–232 from the Adagio of the Ninth Symphony. Bruckner's direction '*gezogen*' asks for a long-drawn bow for each single note of the violins; Löwe replaced this by a

common *legato*. Thus nothing is left of the expressive *tenuto* effect of each note and the passage loses its luminous intensity and clarity. The same principle was applied to the tubas: Bruckner's directions make for transparency, Ferdinand Löwe's *legato* produces an effect of cloudiness and weight. Even the arranger's direction '*dolce*' and '*dolcissimo*' could never have been written by Bruckner.



Occasionally one comes across an essay written, some years ago, in defence of the garbled versions. Geoffrey Sharp spoke of the newly published original versions as of a 'political gambit' to be taken with caution. Egon Wellesz wrote very sceptically about them, implying more or less clearly that there is not really much to choose between them. However, the internal evidence of the scores shows beyond any doubt that there never was any need for Bruckner's friends to re-write his music. Their tale of the composer's approval is not plausible. A preference for their versions does not make good sense. Their versions have little to recommend them and are already gathering well-deserved dust in archives.

Unfortunately, a new wave of obscurity threatens the achievement of Robert Haas and his fellow workers. In consequence of the political events of the last twenty-five years, Haas was dismissed in 1945 from his post as Keeper of the Music Department of the Austrian National Library and his successor became at the same time director of the International Bruckner Society of Vienna. The Third Symphony in the second original version came out in Germany and in Vienna a new edition of a number of miniature scores have been published. The original 'collected edition', as envisaged by Robert Haas, has not been completed.

It has been considered advisable in Vienna to discredit the work of Robert Haas, whose single-minded devotion to the

restoration of the true Bruckner texts is testified, one would have thought, by the scores and by his most scrupulous editorial reports. Now the name of his successor appears in splendid solitude on the title page. Whereas the prefaces of Haas, even to the small scores, were strictly to the point, the prefaces of Leopold Nowak make very different reading. They make either no mention at all of Robert Haas's editorial work (Symphony No. 6), or in other cases so brief and casual a mention that it in no way reveals the extent of his work (Symphony No. 4) and, lastly, there is even occasionally a remark of a disparaging nature (Symphonies No. 7 and 8). The preface to the Ninth Symphony only just mentions the name of Alfred Orel, the true restorer of the original text, although it is admitted that nothing but 'a few printing errors' had to be corrected. The same applies to Robert Haas's edition of the Fifth Symphony of which it is said that 'various errors have been rectified'. In neither case has the new editor given a list of errors in the editions which served him as copies for his reprints.

The most curious feature of some of these prefaces is the frequent warm, almost gushing, references to the editors of the old, garbled versions, despite the fact that Nowak appears to dismiss their versions no less definitely than anybody else. Praise, then, for the garblers and contemptuous treatment of Robert Haas! The only preface in which Haas is mentioned with the generosity due to the man who has really done the work is that to the First Symphony. The exception was made possible, I presume, by the fact that in this one instance the integrity of the ominous 'friends' was not involved.

Nor is it, alas, a matter of mere title pages and prefaces. Whilst Haas had, of course, based his editions almost throughout on the last and definite manuscript from Bruckner's own hand, he had occasionally included excisions from an earlier original version. These were clearly indicated and could be left out by any conductor who had doubts about the wisdom of the decision. In the event, these short passages fit in most convincingly and their omission would be felt as a loss. This concerns chiefly the Eighth Symphony. By the time he edited the original version, Haas had developed so sure an instinct, was so steeped in Bruckner's world, that the result leaves us in no doubt of Bruckner's wholehearted approval.

There is one symphony, the Fourth, in which Leopold Nowak has consulted a source which had escaped the attention of Haas, for his text incorporates some variants from a manuscript in Columbia University, New York. Here again, the preface might have provided an indication as to what these variants are, considering that space was devoted to a far less relevant assessment of the virtues of Ferdinand Löwe. However, editorial reports, presumably such as those issued by Robert Haas with the large scores, are promised for the future.

As we have mentioned, all this concerns only the small study scores. The orchestral libraries possess as performance material the conductors' scores and the parts of the Haas editions and these are therefore the editions that are heard in the concert hall. Because of the excisions the result in the Eighth Symphony —those brief inclusions, so happily and carefully introduced by Haas from the first version—is that the miniature score differs from the work as it is performed and its possessor will find himself bewildered from time to time. To a lesser extent this is also the case with the Seventh Symphony where, however, the discrepancies concern only minor details in instrumentation.

One cannot help wishing that Professor Nowak's energy had been devoted merely to the completion of Haas's edition of Bruckner's works. To judge by the progress made in the past, there cannot be any doubt that the latter would have finished the task by now. Instead we have this unnecessary new series of confusions, and, once again, a future generation will have to sift the evidence. There will, of course, be no doubt that it was Robert Haas who rescued the heritage.

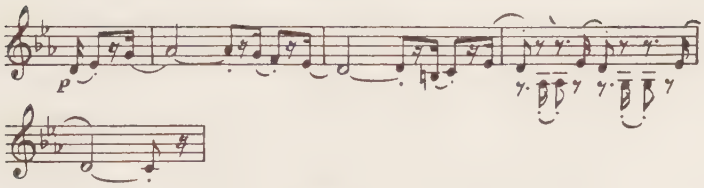
★

SYMPHONY NO. 1 in C minor

I. Allegro
II. Adagio
III. Scherzo in G moll, Schnell QUICK
IV. Finale, Bewegt, feurig FIERY

First Movement

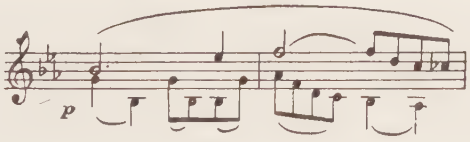
THE symphony opens with the C minor theme:



EX. 1

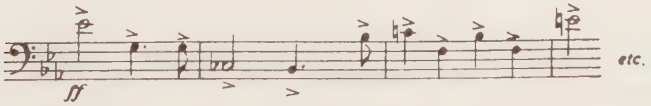
Its rhythm dominates the entire first group. This has a brief climax at bar 18 with a significant new motif in the bass. The music subsides, a transition leading to the second theme, which appears in E flat.

This, even in so early a work, is a perfect example of a Brucknerian *Gesangsperiode* (as he invariably called the second groups in his first movements). Typically, it is a singing tune wreathed in significant counterpoints. These are either, as in the present case, so expressive as to make a thematic contribution to the main tune, or they may even equal it in importance.



EX. 2

When this theme is played for the second time (bar 58), it is by violoncelli and, for the first four bars, a solo horn. It leads to a powerful extension with a new theme (bar 67). The rhythm of the first notes provides an organic preparation for the trenchant third theme:



EX. 3

A calm epilogue of six bars (bars 101 f.) ends the exposition in E flat major.

The first stages of the development are pervaded by the

agitated violin figure from the third theme; then, at bar 144, the rhythm of the first theme takes over, passing through some dramatic incidents before the music settles on the home dominant in preparation for the restatement, which starts at bar 200.

The recapitulation is greatly altered; the second group follows a new course and the third (having spread itself so widely over the development) is omitted to leave room for the coda and its final climax.

Second Movement

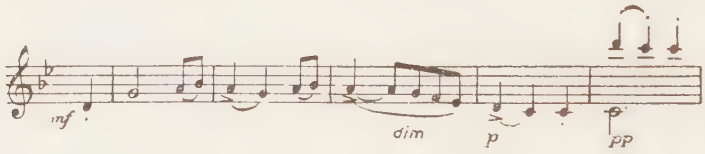
Unlike the slow movements in all other symphonies of Bruckner, the Adagio of the first opens not with an expressive and easily memorized theme, but with brooding, chromatic densities that create a tension relieved only in bar 20. Then the music falls into a profound calm, from which there emerges a violin theme of great beauty (bar 30).

There is a middle section (andante, 3/4) with a new wave of flowing, tuneful music that is so glorious as to anticipate the famous F sharp major passage in the Adagio of the Seventh Symphony.

The recapitulation, beginning at bar 112, is entirely re-scored, with expressive new violin passages, and reaches a noble climax at bar 151. A short and calm coda ends the movement in A flat major.

Third Movement

The character of the G minor Scherzo is determined by the main theme:



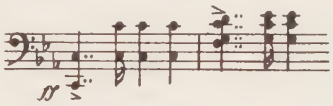
EX. 4

This is already a typical Bruckner scherzo and, although it is not the deepest part of the symphony, it is the earliest example of a

'type' of Bruckner movement. The Adagio, of course, is profound, but it is different in some fundamental ways from the later slow movements.

The Finale

Without any preliminaries, the whole orchestra announces *fortissimo* the first theme. In the later years of serene maturity, Bruckner considered such an opening of a Finale amusing and he compared it with the effect of someone bursting unannounced through the door: 'Here I am!' (*'Da bin i!'*). When revising the symphony in 1890, he attempted to lessen the effect of so un-Brucknerian an opening by leaving out the trumpets. Only the loudest version, however, seems to do justice to the theme.



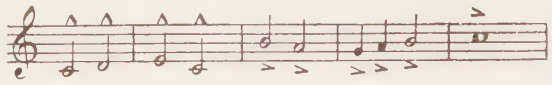
EX. 5

The second theme (bar 39 f.) maintains the vitality of the music, although it mollifies the ferocious wildness of the first group. Soon, however, a third theme (bar 58) reverts to former energy. Just before the end of the exposition, there is a dramatic pause, followed by a calm epilogue of eight bars derived from the preceding violin figures by the means of double-augmentation (bar 79). The very last bar of the exposition (bar 87) has a rhythm identical with that of the second bar of Ex. 5; thus the developmental treatment of the main theme is smoothly linked with the end of the exposition.

Later on, the second theme undergoes development (bar 152 f.) and in this particular section we see yet further anticipations of Bruckner's later characteristics, such as free inversion (bar 163). The viola's part in the original setting of this second theme (see bar 39 f.) accounts for the next phase (bar 187) and the shakes in violins derive from the second bar of the second theme. Finally, the material of the third theme is called in (bar 208 f.).

The recapitulation sets in at bar 273 in C major, but soon reverts to minor. Only after the much-abbreviated second theme does the signature change definitely to C major. With unceasing

energy the movement drives towards a brilliant coda and the work ends with the trumpet theme:



EX. 6

★

SYMPHONY NO. 2 in C minor

I. Ziemlich schnell
II. Feierlich, etwas bewegt
III. Scherzo, Schnell
IV. Finale. Mehr schnell

IN the biography we saw how difficult it was for Bruckner to comply with the wishes of those friends and critics who had advised him to write his second symphony in a more simple manner than the first. This was, as we have seen, a severe test, less for Bruckner's ability as a composer than for his hardly won and as yet still insecure assurance. For all this we refer to pages 61–62 but here we will repeat: Bruckner's personal style of composing had rapidly developed after the composition of the First Symphony and the nervous breakdown which followed. His increasing depth and ease of invention is not only testified by the Mass in F minor but also by the discarded Symphony 'No. 0' in D minor.

'At that time, I hardly had enough courage left to write down a proper theme.' 'The Viennese had made me quite timid at that time'—sentences of this kind occur whenever Bruckner spoke about the composition of the Second Symphony. The work itself hardly gives the listener the impression that its composer lacked the courage to write down 'proper themes'. Bruckner's sense of uncertainty only compelled him to revise the work much more frequently than any other composition.

The score presented by Robert Haas in the edition (1938) of the International Bruckner Society shows chiefly the third ver-

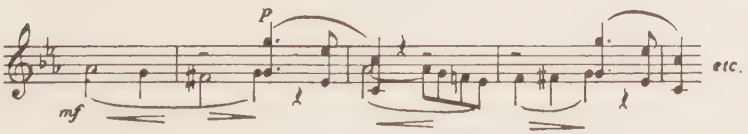
sion of 1877. But important details derive from the first version, particularly the endings of the first two movements. The score also restores regrettable excisions (First movement: bars 488–519; second movement: bars 48–69; Finale: bars 540–562 and 590–651). No conductor with a true feeling for Bruckner would ever leave these bars unplayed.

Leaving aside comparison with the Symphonies 4 to 9, and ignoring what we know from the biography, the work reveals no trace of inadequacy at all. Robert Haas's editorial restoration is a fine achievement that has revealed a masterpiece with few uncertainties of any kind.

The First Movement

The work begins immediately with the expressive opening phrases of the first theme and at once we become aware of that chief characteristic mentioned earlier, of that intensity which fills Bruckner's writing. It is also the first of those allegros which open as if they could possibly be slow movements. The conductor must find the subtle mean between too slow a tempo which will drag and any degree of haste which will take away the intensity of the shorter notes. Even if the direction is allegro, or its German equivalent, precipitancy is hardly ever called for.

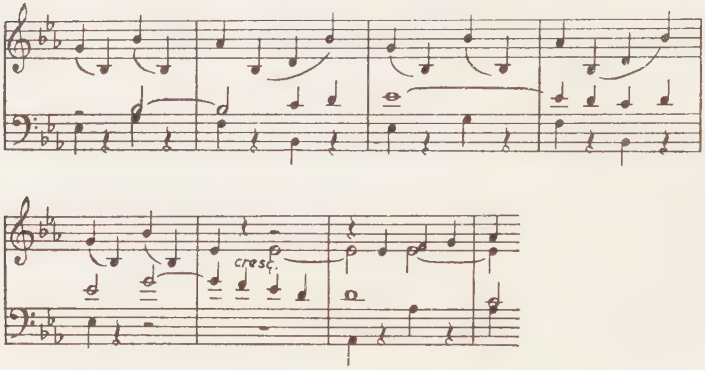
This is the beginning of the main theme:



EX. 7

In the twelfth bar, the pace is stressed by a dotted rhythm and we obtain the character of a moderately fast allegro. If the tempo is right from the start, the music itself will produce the right effect.

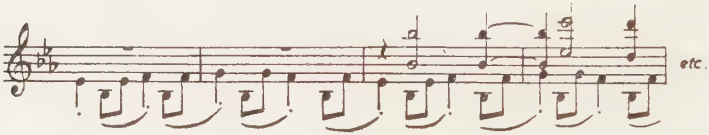
The second group is truly a Brucknerian *Gesangsperiode*. Comparison with the corresponding section in the first movement of the First Symphony will show how Bruckner had meanwhile developed his peculiarly entrancing manner of writing a second theme.



EX. 8

This quotation gives only an indication of the extensive theme and it is advisable to look up the score for its context.

The third theme follows immediately:

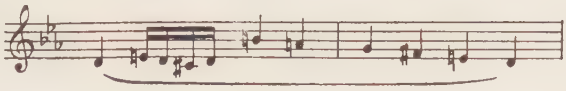


EX. 9

In the First Symphony, the third group opened in unison. Here, for the first time, it is brought in softly in the form of two combined unisons, a very typical Brucknerian feature. Similar instances occur in the later symphonies, and a comparison with, for instance, Examples 142 and 153 of the last two symphonies is interesting. It is astonishing what variety of invention and effect Bruckner was able to produce with this method.

The ostinato rhythm of the third theme dominates for over fifty bars and various new motifs are added to it. After bar 122, at a climax, it is interesting to note that trumpets (later on with horns and trombones) introduce the so-called 'Bruckner Rhythm' which plays so prominent a part in the Third, Fourth and Eighth Symphonies. Whilst in later instances the rhythm is employed for themes, here it remains in the background.

Just before the end of the exposition, there is a short codetta in which the figure:

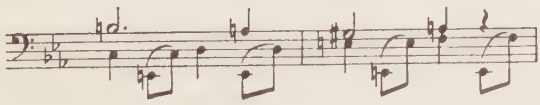


EX. 10

is played by various wood-wind instruments.

The development uses most of the themes of the exposition and contains many fine instances of new content given to previously heard material. This is not done by complex variation work but by augmentations, inversions, combinations and so forth. Bars 185–231 are concerned with the two first bars of the first theme. The approach to the climax (bar 221) is a very gradual scale progression, remaining in or around F minor (with a bright vista of A flat at bar 203) until the climax, whence the music sweeps to the remote region of G flat (bar 231). A quick hush, the sound echoing away into the new tonal direction, gives an irresistible impression of vast Alpine spaces. This is one of the most striking episodes in the development; it uses the ostinato rhythm of the third theme which, by means of augmentation, is turned into a section of most lovable pastoral music, beginning with bar 233. This comes first in the oboes, repeated by the horns and extended by the violins with the addition of a pleasant contribution of the bassoons.

Throughout this most enjoyable section, the basses play an ostinato derived from their scale passages during the preceding section. This is taken over by the violins at bar 254 for a transition towards bar 259 where the rhythm of the third theme is combined with the first four bars of the first theme.

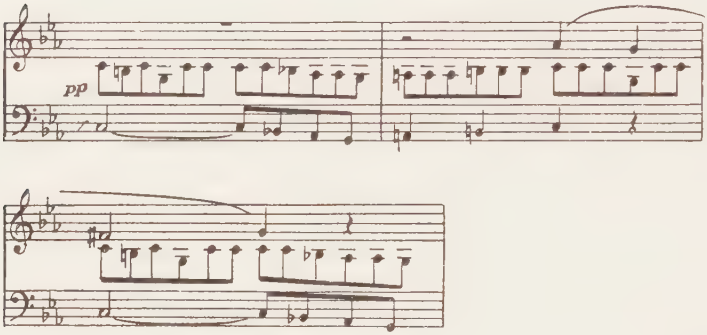


EX. 11

At bar 275 the violin part of the second theme and a variation of the 'cello tune come into prominence, but remnants of the

rhythm of the third theme are retained. There follows (bar 318) a full recapitulation.

The coda of the movement begins with an ostinato in the strings (bar 488) which consists of the third and fourth bar of the first theme (Ex. 7) while the oboe plays the first and second bars of the same theme:



EX. 12

The way in which it is organically derived from what went before, however, does not hide the fact that the ostinato closely resembles the one which concludes the first movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Bruckner was long haunted by this Beethoven coda. In the Symphony 'No. 0' he adopted it literally (and here it did not link up with his own themes), and in the Third Symphony, which is again in the same key as Beethoven's Ninth, Bruckner restricted himself to using Beethoven's descending notes. Here, in the Second Symphony, the similarity is veiled to a considerable extent by the difference of key and the speedier tempo, though it was certainly not Bruckner's intention to conceal it. The discovery of the 'quotation' of the Beethoven ostinato in no less than three Bruckner symphonies has been the subject of a learned, musicological investigation. One is tempted to quote Brahms's repartee to the clever contemporary who had divined a 'similarity' between the main theme of the Finale of his First Symphony with Beethoven's *Ode to Joy*.

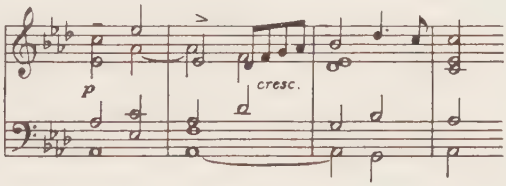
The ostinato leads to a mighty crescendo, followed by a tremendous pause. The silence is broken by a hesitant statement

of the first bars of the main theme. Again a pause. Then the movement ends, after four crescendo bars, in unrestrained fortissimo.

The Second Movement

The form of this movement is simple: an alteration of two themes with increasing solemnity in each of the three appearances of the main theme.

The noble first theme extends over fifteen bars and we can here only quote its beginning:



EX. 13

The second theme is divided between the strings and a solo horn. The strings play (pizzicato) a chorale-like theme in simple homophony, to which the horn adds an expressive cantilena. Similar settings are to be found in the Fourth and Fifth Symphonies (Ex. 46). A richer version follows (bar 48), scored with additional wind parts, and this repetition is preceded and followed by a short expressive sequence on the first phrase of the pizzicato theme of bar 34.

At bar 70, the first repetition of the first theme occurs. Almost immediately expanded, broadened and developed bar 107 reintroduces the second theme without major changes.

A short transition (bars 135–148) leads to the final recapitulation of the first theme. The recapitulation of the first theme (bar 149) introduces an increased note of festive solemnity and allows the first phrase to lead gradually to an imposing climax. At bar 164 there is a sudden hush and a passage that anticipates amazingly the Adagio of Bruckner's Ninth Symphony.

A calm coda concludes the movement with serene, mysterious horn calls.

The Third Movement

The Scherzo opens wildly with its main motif:

EX. 14

which determines the character of almost the entire movement but for some more friendly passages in the second part.

As in the First Symphony, the Trio is again *Laendler* music, charming and idyllic. Happy music-making of this kind does not call for analytical comment, although it would be quite wrong to presume that the mere repetition of so lovely a theme were sufficient for the happy result. A careful look at the score reveals a variety of keys and it is most certainly the imaginative breadth of Bruckner's tonal mastery that enables the theme to yield so much sheer music.

The Fourth Movement

Here we have the first Bruckner Finale whose form is difficult to describe; basically it is a mixture of rondo and sonata form. Comprehension of the formal complexities will not be difficult, however, if the listener is familiar with the themes of the Finale itself and with the first theme of the first movement.

The movement begins pianissimo, with a thematically important play on a fragment of the descending scale. Underneath, the second violins are engaged with a flowing passage of consecutive quavers. This passage incorporates, from time to time, the notes of the beginning of the main theme of the first movement (second half of bars 1, 4, 6). These notes recur at bar 20 in the first violins, in the course of a long crescendo which leads to the main theme of the movement:

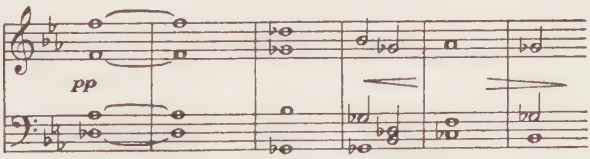
EX. 15

Rising tension leads to a sudden halt at bar 51 and the opening of the movement is repeated. Its flowing phrases lead to a chord

which we would tend to interpret as the dominant seventh of D flat. The second group, however, begins without turning a hair in A major. Bruckner, in halting on the threshold of D flat, realizes that he has come too far south; to counteract this, he goes to the other extreme, and in flying to A major finds himself too far north. Gradually, however, the music drifts round to E flat, which is the 'relative major' and orthodox. The effect of all this manœuvring is beautiful.

The second group begins (bar 76) with a fine *Gesangsperioden* paragraph. The first violins definitely lead the music, but all other contributions from the orchestra help to create the glorious sound of the passage; this includes even the basses, which simply play plain rising and falling fourths, fifths and octaves, pizzicato.

The epilogue to the second group of themes is followed at bar 148 by a sudden appearance of the opening bars of Ex. 15 with dramatic extensions which break off after bar 178. A crescendo follows (we recognize elements of the beginning of the Finale in its passages) which leads to a resounding passage on a chord of C major, without, however, giving the listener any feeling of finality when this suddenly stops at bar 197. A pause of three bars precedes the calm quotation (in G flat) from the Mass in F minor:



EX. 16

We may be permitted to interpret this quotation as the composer's thanksgiving for his release from his severe nervous breakdown. The strains of this slow theme turn quietly back to E flat, in which key the exposition ends. The development very soon introduces (bar 280) the first theme of the first movement.

Beginning with bar 308, the second violins' part of the second theme predominates in the developmental treatment. At bar 340 this is combined with the opening of the main theme of the first movement. A few bars later (bar 348) a pedal on G begins to take command and the fragment from the second theme gives way

gradually to a scale progression. The steady crescendo leads to the recapitulation which sets in at bar 388 with the main theme of the Finale (Ex. 15) in C minor.

The recapitulation is regular, though not, strictly speaking, a repetition. Particularly noteworthy is the quite different tension which finds relief in the quotation from the F minor Mass (bars 549–562).

The two great waves of which the coda consists are separated and interrupted by plaintive references to the main theme of the first movement and the second subject of the Finale. Finally, when a defiant C minor ending seems inevitable, there is a striking change to the major and the symphony ends with positive confidence.

★

SYMPHONY NO. 3 in D minor

Second version of 1878 with additional notes on the third version of 1888–1889

I. Gemässigt, mehr bewegt, Misterioso
II. Adagio, Bewegt, quasi Andante
III. Scherzo. Ziemlich schnell
IV. Finale. Allegro

THE Third Symphony is the last one to reflect the direct influences of events in the composer's life. The biographical context of the work has been discussed elsewhere in this book.

Bruckner unreservedly called it 'The Wagner Symphony' despite the fact that during the first revision he freed himself and the score from all preoccupation with Wagner's music by eliminating the quotations from the 'Master' which he had included, as an act of homage, in the first version. The title 'Wagner Symphony' should not deceive anyone. The work always recalled to Bruckner the tremendous satisfaction he had felt when Wagner gave it his approval and accepted the dedication. Wagner, too, saw this work as his link with Bruckner and any chance mention of Bruckner's name would cause him to exclaim: 'Bruckner! the

trumpet!', an allusion to the first appearance of the symphony's main theme which had particularly impressed him. And this is all that can be said to justify the retention of the name 'Wagner Symphony'. The music will not remind any listener of Wagner. What is traceable as direct influence from Wagner fades into insignificance under the strength of Bruckner's individuality, now fully unfolded. Nobody but Bruckner could have written the work.

The first version of 1872–1874 contained the Wagner quotations, later discarded. The revision of 1878 also eliminated unnecessary lengths and the pauses which had the function of separating the vast sections of the larger movements.

The second version was published in 1950 by Fritz Oeser and will probably be accepted generally as the definitive version of the symphony. The following analytical notes will chiefly consider this version.

The third version was made after the rejection of the Eighth Symphony by Hermann Levi. It seems likely that Bruckner's pupils took advantage of the composer's dejection and influenced him. There cannot be any doubt that Bruckner undertook the task with little fervour. The alterations made were of two main kinds. Whereas the first revision had strengthened the form by rigorous pruning, the new version provided for vast excisions which have the very opposite result. New settings of many episodes were introduced with distinct characteristics of the last three symphonies, often very beautiful, but disturbing the stylistic unity of the earlier work. The printed score (1890) of this third version shows, moreover, that once again the composer's text had been tampered with in all kinds of detail. Even the vast cuts in the Finale may have been the work of some editor. An original version of the third revision has not been published.

The following notes include references to the third version in its present printed form for two reasons: firstly, although the second version will, no doubt, become generally accepted, performances of the familiar third version will continue; and secondly, despite the obvious intrusion of editorship, the version is, in a general sense, Bruckner's own.

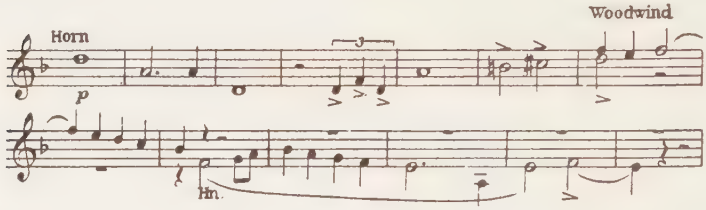
Bar numbers are indicated by Roman figures as referring to the third version. Special remarks regarding the third version are in square brackets.

The First Movement

The symphony opens with an exquisitely written play of strings over the common chord of D minor, with the ninth added.

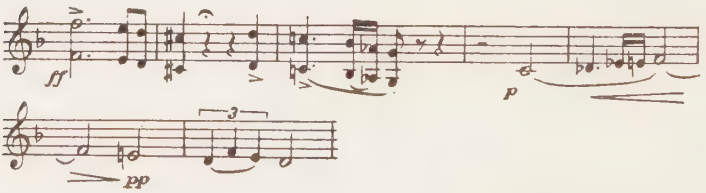
> [The staccato direction in the printed score of III is almost definitely not Bruckner's own.]

In the fourth bar, the trumpet announces the main theme of the symphony:



EX. 17

A crescendo leads to the second motif of the first group of themes and throughout, basses hold a pedal point on D. The second motif (bar 31) is first stated as a tutti unison and then repeated with electrifying harmony:



EX. 18

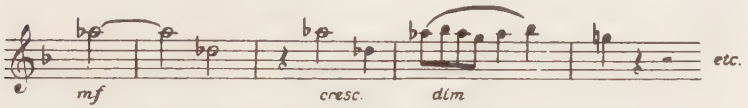
The last bar of Ex. 18 becomes the motif for a transition towards a concise recapitulation of the whole group, shifted to the dominant key of A major—the process of Beethoven's opening of the Ninth Symphony reversed. Thereafter a short transition leads to the second group (bar 101).

This begins with a motif on the second violins, employing the Brucknerian duplet-triplet combination (here used for the first time in a theme):

EX. 19

The basses have a pedal on F and the violas add (third and fourth bars) a pleasing counterpoint.

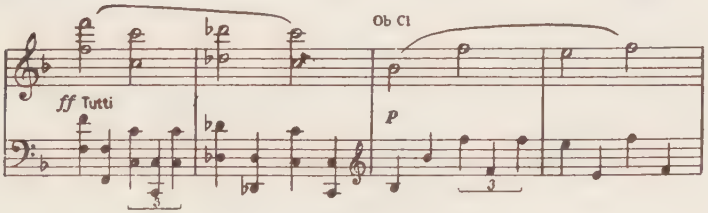
Later, at bar 127, a new motif is added:



EX. 20

The mixed rhythm is maintained throughout. At the climax (bar 153) Ex. 19 is split. During the fortissimo, only its first bar appears and the following pianissimo uses the second bar.

The uninterrupted rhythm continues even after the appearance of the powerful third theme of the movement (bar 171).



EX. 21

This very strong third group is crowned (bar 201; III, 198) by a magnificent chorale. The basses continue playing a modified version of the second bar of Ex. 19 and the violin part resembles that of the opening of the movement. The third theme, incidentally, is not the kind of 'double-unison' we had in the Second Symphony (or the parallels in the last three symphonies). Here we have what is practically a real unison. The rhythm of the strings, however, is sufficiently contrasted to the even notes of the brass and wood-wind to create the effect of a Brucknerian 'double-unison'.

The chorale leads to a powerful quotation of the main theme

(Ex. 17) in canon at bar 211 (III, 209) and a quiet, very beautiful codetta (bars 220–256; III, 216–254) terminates the exposition. Towards its end (bar 242; III, 240) a flute plays a drooping reminiscence of part of the main theme (inverted).

The calm of the codetta is maintained in the first section of the development. Here (bars 268–297; III, 266–295) we first encounter the main theme in solemn inversion (basses and, in canonic imitation, horn and wood-wind). The two stanzas of this setting are followed by hesitant quotations of the second phrase of Ex. 18.

The next section, beginning with bar 298 (III, 296) is dominated by the first phrase of Ex. 18. At bar 323 (III, 321) the character of the music changes suddenly. The former rhythm of the violins gives way to broader sounds and gradually the motif from Ex. 18 is accelerated by three stages.

> [Here the third version differs very much from the second and introduces a depth of feeling which, it has been pointed out very rightly, belongs to the atmosphere of the Eighth Symphony. The magnificent sound is so memorable that, no doubt, one may well miss the familiar intensity when first hearing the second version.]

As soon as the process of acceleration begins (bars 331–332) trumpets and horns add the beginning of the main theme.

> [In the third version this is delayed and occurs only at bar 335.]

The gradual chromatic progression of the bass, with the increasing activity of the leading motif, brings us by bar 341 (both versions) to the first great climax of the symphony; the entire orchestra joins in a monumental unison statement of the main theme. The effect is so colossal as to seem like the beginning of the recapitulation. This is not so. Only after a further episode, based on the second theme of the movement (bar 403 f.; III, 405) does the development section end, strangely enough with a quotation from the opening of the Second Symphony. This occurs first in the woodwind (bars 413–414; III, 415–416) and afterwards in the bass.

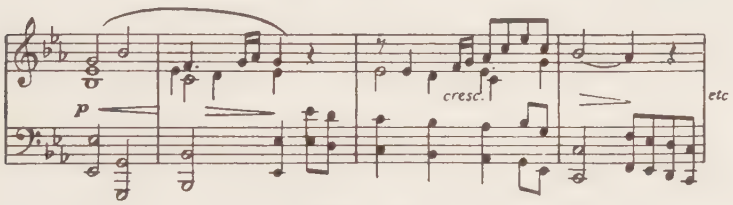
The recapitulation sets in at bar 429 (III, 431). It follows the exposition systematically, but with considerable shortening, and

the chorale of the third group of themes is omitted. The onset of the coda is prepared by an organic return to D minor and its beginning (bar 590 f.; III, 591) is marked by a chromatic ostinato in the bass which reminds one, as we have already discussed on page 132, of the coda of the first movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

The Second Movement

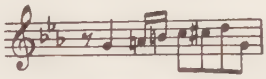
The Adagio has two groups of themes, with an important new theme in the middle of the second group. The form of the movement is unusual, but not difficult to follow.

A noble, solemn theme of four bars' length opens the movement in a manner that suggests regularity of metre:



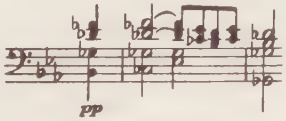
EX. 22

Regularity, however, is abolished by the continuation in one-bar phases that build up a climax with the aid of a fresh idea:



EX. 23

It is first played very quietly and gradually gains strength. Twice the fortissimo is answered by a motif of which Bruckner was very fond:

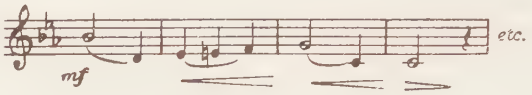


EX. 24

This occurs in an *Ave Maria* of 1856 and in the piano piece *Erinnerung* of 1868; the motif is, of course, not unknown in

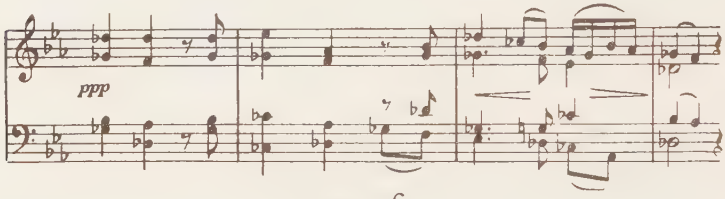
Haydn and Mozart. The first group eventually ends with a quiet epilogue; above a pedal point on E flat the strings, in polyphony, produce harmonies very distinctly Mozartian in character.

The second group of themes (bar 41) is marked 'Andante quasi allegretto' (3/4). Violas introduce the main theme:



EX. 25

The section begins in B flat major but the tune begins to modulate after the fourth bar. These modulations (really inflexions) return, however, to B flat by bar 57, where the basses warmly repeat the whole theme. Next comes the second group's central section, slower, but retaining the 3/4 rhythm. In pianissimo ('misterioso') the strings play in G flat major:



EX. 26

A wood-wind sequence (bar 83), derived from the third bar of the last example, reverts to the Mozartian sounds of the previous, similar passage; the bass hold fast to a pedal on F. Ex. 26 is repeated (bar 98) in G major and extended by a strong, polyphonic treatment of the falling fifth in the second bar. This leads organically to a recapitulation of the first theme of the second group (Ex. 25). To be precise, it is not a real recapitulation. For a while, only the first four bars are used and the entire theme reappears only when E flat major is established (bar 136).

> [The third version makes a cut at this point and goes straight to bar 144 of the second version (in an altogether different setting). Hitherto, the third version has differed considerably in detail, without, however, deserting the original sequence of events.]

At bar 152 (III, 142) a powerful sequence on a theme derived from the inverted first notes of Ex. 25 brings about a climax of tense character, but the second group is, after a sudden release from this tenseness, allowed to close with a short reminiscence of Ex. 26.

> [This, too, is omitted in the third version. Here, the sequence is scored more lightly, without trumpets. Basically the text is the same for seven bars. Thereafter, four bars suffice to end the group as against seventeen bars in the second version.]

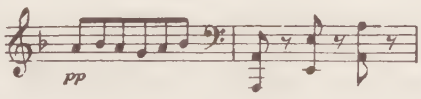
The recapitulation of the first theme begins, in the original key of E flat major, at bar 182 (III, 154). This time the first four bars are not followed by a sequence on the last two notes. Instead, the music expands broadly towards a great climax. By bar 193 (III, 165) Ex. 23 is brought in; throughout this section, 12/8 rhythm of the strings becomes increasingly powerful. The final, towering climax occurs in G flat major at bar 216 (III, 187).

> [Here, the third version introduces a new theme, played by trumpets. The second version has nothing of the kind and the effect is far stronger without the trumpet flourish which, one may agree with the editor of the second version, is not among Bruckner's noblest ideas.]

The tutti is twice interrupted by impressive silences, broken by the still, small voice of Ex. 24, and a coda follows, gradually leading the tonality back to E flat major. At bar 240 (III, 212) the opening theme is heard softly in the subdominant (woodwind) and the response of the horns graciously returns the phrase to the tonic. The movement ends in perfect tranquillity.

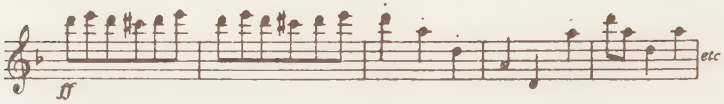
The Third Movement

The Scherzo (D minor) begins with a fragmentary motif on second violins, followed by the indication of the dominant of D minor in the basses:



EX. 27

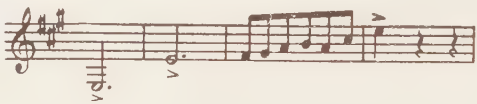
These motifs create a crescendo and, impelled by a marked wood-wind rhythm, grow into the main theme, breaking out, tutti:



EX. 28

The demonic character of this theme dominates most of the movement. There is, in the second part, an idyllic episode in B flat major, the first violins singing a tune of Schubertian beauty (bar 61). Beneath its charm, however, the second violins and the basses persist significantly with their pervasive motifs. Soon—the idyll is but brief—the music reverts to wildness in the recapitulation.

The trio is evolved from the short theme:



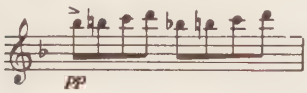
EX. 29

This is probably the most obviously rural Austrian *Laendler* music ever introduced in a symphony. The music is still far more lovely than the Trios in the two preceding symphonies. As in the second symphony, the theme is also given to the basses, an episode of most musical effect if only the conductor will implore the bass players to give a warm vibrato on the first two and last notes of the theme. (Such subtle points distinguish a good from a perfunctory performance of Bruckner's music.)

The Finale

The last movement of this symphony is the first of the really complex Bruckner finales and its formal construction may not be easy to follow at first hearing.

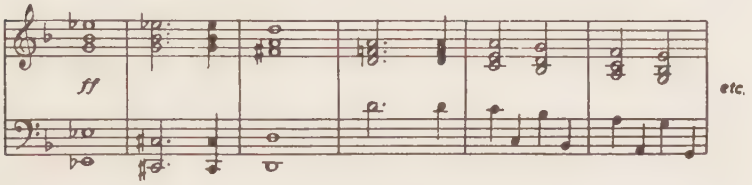
The first eight bars build a crescendo with a continuous figure in the violins:



EX. 30

above which wood-wind sound a bare fifth.

Every second bar more instruments join, and the ninth bar crowns the crescendo with the first theme:

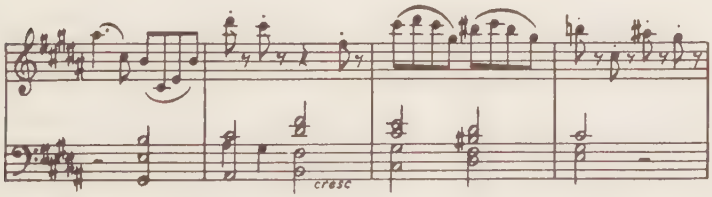


EX. 31

The first bars of this theme are obviously related, by identity of rhythm, to the main theme of the first movement (Ex. 17).

This rugged music is at once counterstated with different harmonic inflexions, and a sudden diminuendo prepares the way for the second group.

We have already repeatedly remarked that Bruckner's second themes have, almost invariably, highly important and expressive accompanying parts. Here we have a perfect combination of two simultaneous themes. While the violins play a merry dance tune, horns, trumpets and trombones intone a solemn chorale.



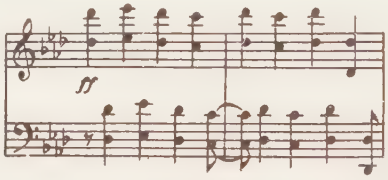
EX. 32

August Göllerich tells in his Bruckner biography how he was once walking home with the composer late in the evening, when, passing the Schottenring, they heard the music of a festive ball from one of the stately mansions. Not far away, in the Sühnhaus,

the body of the cathedral architect Schmidt lay in state. Göllerich relates how Bruckner remarked to him: 'Listen! Here in this house a grand ball and yonder in the Sühnhaus the master in his coffin! That is life and that is what I wanted to show in the last movement of my Third Symphony: the polka means the fun and joy of the world and the chorale the sadness and pain of life.' As always with stories of this kind, it may or may not be one of those 'Bruckner anecdotes'. It does, however, ring true, and it certainly fits the effect of the music, with its two superimposed moods.

Extensions of the theme begin with bar 81. The strings remain occupied for a very long time with passages derived from the third bar of the last example while wood-wind and horns—later with trumpets—continue the measured chorale.

At bar 125 the combination of both themes is heard again, in F major. From bar 139 the music begins to move towards the third group, which begins thus (bar 155):

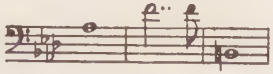


EX. 33

[The setting of this theme differs significantly in the two versions. The second version contrasts the heavy syncopations with a firm counter-unison in the brass, deriving from the transition (bars 141–142, 145–146). The third version has, strictly speaking, only the syncopated unison. The rhythm of the counterstatement of the second version is in evidence only during the diminuendo, but it can hardly be considered as having thematic significance.]

The power gives way to mystery, with lyrical responses from horns and wood-wind, violas still maintaining the former syncopation on a pedal-point C. At bar 185, Ex. 33 bursts out again and the counterstatement of the brass (in the second version only) now becomes prominent.

Dramatic extensions after bar 197 involve further figures in the rhythm of the first theme of the first movement, such as



EX. 34

At the height of its development, this wild section breaks off abruptly (bar 217; III, 213) and a calm epilogue (horns, later wood-wind) brings the exposition to its end.

Almost imperceptibly this merges into developmental treatment. At bar 247 (III, 243) the violas take up the violin figure from the beginning of the movement (Ex. 30). It gains momentum and gradually, crescendo, a lively ostinato movement gathers way. At bar 259 (III, 255), the brass adds the first three bars of the main theme (Ex. 31) which, it will be remembered, have the rhythm of the main theme of the first movement. The rhythm of Ex. 30 is constantly in evidence and an important part is played by bars 5 and 6 of Ex. 31 (in both the upper staves and the bass). In the second version, the obvious approach to a great climax is most effectively interrupted by a diminuendo after bar 288; the music ceases. A quick crescendo, on the same lines as before, leads to an even more formidable display of strength.

> [The third version is considerably different after bar 260 and both versions meet again at bar 291 (III, 309).]

The expected climax occurs at bar 341 (III, 323) and it is, indeed, so far the most powerful in the symphony: the first bars of the main theme of the first movement are triumphantly blazoned forth on the dominant of C. There is a quick hush, a silence, and then a new treatment of the second theme, on violoncelli with pizzicato accompaniment beginning in C minor (bar 351; III, 333). The 'Polka' is absent. The music comes to rest on the dominant of F; then another powerful tutti breaks out, proved by subsequent events to mark a recapitulatory process (bar 379) and corresponding to the first full tutti of the movement. This leads, exactly as before, to the second theme, which now enters in A flat major.

[The omission of the restatement of the first theme in the third version affects the formal balance of the Finale so seriously that one can hardly believe it authentic. It is the kind of excision which is typical of the garbled printed versions of the Fourth and Fifth Symphonies. Quite likely, future research may show that here, too, one of the helpful pupils has destroyed the formal equilibrium. The third version, as we know it, begins the recapitulation section with the second theme (bar 361, corresponding with bar 433 of the second version).

The third version also omits the recapitulation statement of the third theme (bar 479 f. in the second version).

Both excisions not only destroy Bruckner's symmetry, but also fail to provide the obviously needed preparation for the final climax of the coda. In the printed edition of the third version, this climax comes far too soon, is not generated, and therefore misfires.]

The beginning of the coda is less obvious in this movement than usual is with a Bruckner finale. At bar 515 (III, 393), the violins derive their part from the third theme (Ex. 33) and the brass introduces the main theme (Ex. 31). The tonality is yet far from settled and the modulations come to rest on a long pedal point on G.

[This does not apply to the third version which, after bar 393, differs considerably throughout.]

Once again, the approach to a climax is interrupted by a sudden silence. A hesitant quotation from the second theme of the first movement (bar 555 f.) merely delays a new outbreak of strength based on material derived from bar 301, etc., towards the end of the exposition. This leads to the true climax of the symphony at bar 597 (III, 451). In majestic augmentation, the main theme of the first movement closes the work in D major.

★

SYMPHONY No. 4 in E flat major, 'The Romantic'

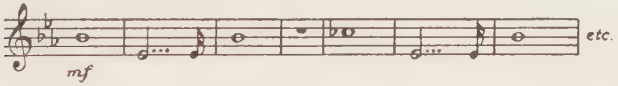
NOT TOO QUICK

I. Bewegt, nicht zu schnell
II. Andante quasi allegretto
III. Scherzo. Bewegt
IV. Finale. Bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell

YET NOT TOO QUICK

The First Movement

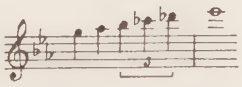
'*ppp sempre* (without crescendo)' the strings play tremolo the warm, full chord of E flat major in a low position. Above it, a solo horn enters in the third bar with the first part of the main theme. Solemn harmonic departures from the common chord lead away from E flat major and return to it by the time the horn ends its fourth intonation.



EX. 35

The dark, warm sound changes to sudden brightness when the deep notes of the bass leave off. The wood-wind instruments take over the main theme from the horn, but the latter joins in with ecstatic imitations.

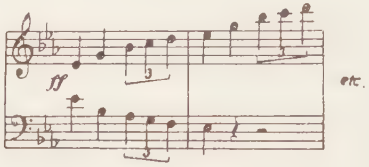
The continuation of the theme introduces the 'Bruckner rhythm', previously mentioned in the first movement of the Third Symphony.



EX. 36

The opening of the movement does not determine whether the movement is fast or slow. The character of the Allegro

becomes established no sooner than bar 51, when the second part of the theme (Ex. 36) occurs in its definite form:

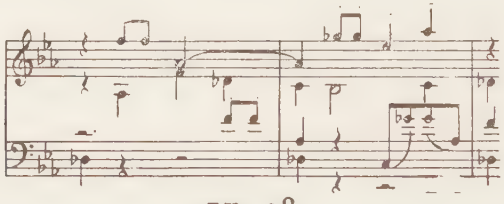


EX. 37

The heroic character of the music is sustained, and a chromatic progression of the bass leads to a spectacular assertion of the dominant of B flat. This F, however, is interpreted as the third of D flat major; a simple pizzicato note in the basses suffices to accomplish the shift into the new tonality, and the modulation has a surprisingly beautiful effect.

Whilst the bass holds on to the new tonic in a pedal point, the other strings combine to play the *Gesangsperiode*. The contributions of the first violins and the violas are of equal importance; the violoncelli play a somewhat less important part, but later in the movement it will be used for a most lovely episode (Ex. 42).

This is the second theme:



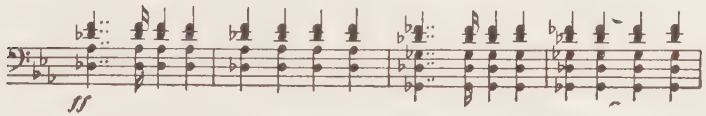
EX. 38

It has a companion in:

EX. 39

The music ranges freely through various tonal inflexions, until at length it reaches a big tutti (bar 119) in B flat, the dominant

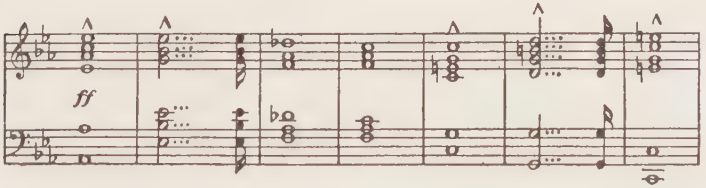
key that was expected at bar 75. This tutti does not state any new themes (it is not a 'third theme', unless one counts the rather striking new idea in the brass as such), but it serves the same function as do Bruckner's normal third-theme groups. It culminates in the following dramatic brass chords:



EX. 40

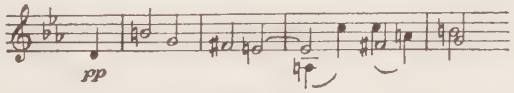
which, cut off suddenly, makes way for a reminiscence of the second theme, adorned by a simple new descending counterpoint. This gives rise to a short codetta in the nature of a 'dying fall'. It ends the exposition.

Almost imperceptibly the development sets in: the strings are still occupied with the chromatic codetta motif when an oboe and a clarinet recall the beginning of the first theme. Very soon, the second part of the theme joins in (Ex. 36) and becomes prominent for a time until the horn theme predominates again, its rhythm now used for a noble chorale:



EX. 41

This dies away into vast distances with trumpet calls based on the main theme, and the development ends with an episode which sounds like an entirely new tune:



EX. 42

But it is not new; it comes from Ex. 38. The sublime music achieved by this augmentation of the second theme is one of the most masterly transitions ever written, linking the end of the development with the onset of the recapitulation. The transition towards E flat major, starting from G major, begins with Bruckner's characteristic shift by half a tone upwards (bar 341); thereafter the music moves nobly and organically towards its home key.

The mirage of beautiful sound does not vanish at the entry of the main theme. The opening of this symphony was outstandingly beautiful; but the composer is able to raise it to a still higher level.

From bar 365 to 377 a solo flute plays a new contribution extremely simple yet enhancing the warmth in an individual way. When the wood-wind join the horns (bar 381), the 'celli add a glowing comment at the caesuras of the theme.

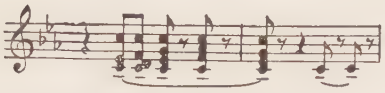
From the tutti onwards (bar 413), the recapitulation takes its normal course, but is by no means strict in detail. The 'third theme' is now made far shorter in order to prevent a sense of towering climax, and the extensive play with chromatic scales towards the end of the exposition is now condensed to one single chromatic decline (bars 495–501).

Here the broad coda begins in C minor and the rhythm set by the lower strings will continue right to the end of the movement. After twelve bars the tonality moves to D flat. Again, four bars later, a chromatic progression begins on the dominant of B flat minor, eventually reaching the key of E major at bar 533. In bar 541, however, an enharmonic reading of G sharp as A flat procures one of those marvellous Brucknerian shifts into the mediant tonality. Again the music seems to settle happily on A flat until after a few bars the common chord is gradually extended. Step by step we approach a moment when the insistent A flat pedal point is felt as the subdominant of E flat. At bar 557 the music comes home to E flat major, freed from all alien influences with the horns repeating the first phrase of the main theme over and over again.

The Second Movement

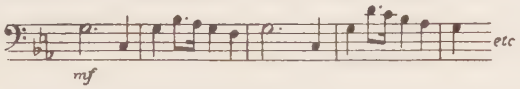
The character of this Andante quasi allegretto has much in it of the funeral march, at least in large and important sections.

The upper strings open the movement with the Schubertian motif:



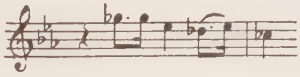
EX. 43

which forms the accompaniment to the theme:



EX. 44

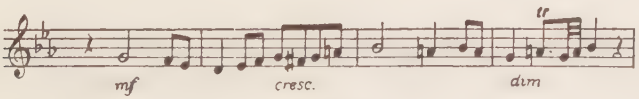
The dotted rhythm in the second bar of Ex. 44, so important a part of the tune's character, becomes also the nucleus of a brief comment added by the violins in the clear key of C flat major, contrasting brightly with the dark C minor theme:



EX. 45

The whole section is then repeated with fuller instrumentation. The basses emphasize the march character with their heavy alternation of tonic and dominant; this, for all its simplicity, is an important link with later episodes in this movement and the Finale.

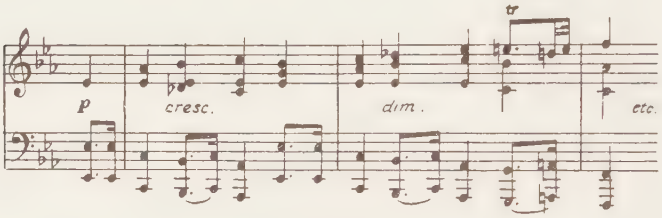
The counterstatement of the main theme is followed by a richly modulating, profoundly solemn chorale, punctuated by the characteristic dotted figure. The essence of all this is its completely *static* quality, a fact which is confirmed by the eventual entry of the true second group in the tonic, C minor, at bar 51; this, astonishingly, consists of a long, slow chant on violas, accompanied by simple pizzicati:



EX. 46

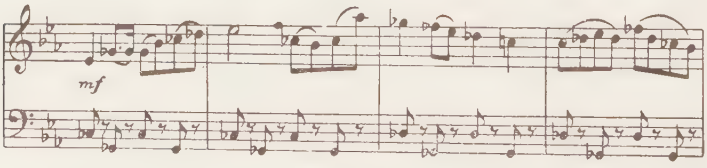
The pace never varies throughout this section, nor does the texture, and its static character, the total absence of contrast, may strike some hearers as a test of patience. Once its true nature and function are understood, however, it becomes one of the most moving passages of the work.

The 'development' of the movement begins with a high solo flute recalling (bar 83) Ex. 45 which is repeated, a semitone higher, by a solo horn. This change of tonality and instrumentation reaches the ear as a strange and wonderful echo effect. The soft signal is connected with the extensive improvisations that follow by a repetition of the organlike sequence which preceded the second theme (bar 87). Then the march rhythm is resumed and Ex. 45 is made to serve as bass to a vigorous tune on the violins:



EX. 47

It is the same tune which modulates (bars 99 and 100) to the next episode, in which the horns play the first theme of the movement to the accompaniment of the familiar heavy tonic-dominant bass, while the violins introduce a new idea:

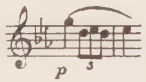


EX. 48

The bright key of C flat major seems to intensify inexplicably the sadness of the music; an occasional departure from broad legato to sharpest staccato in the violins appears to introduce

a strain of joyfulness. Perhaps the phrase 'a smile through tears' comes nearest to describing the strangely mixed mood of this music. Despite the tunefulness of the violins, the heavy bass sees to it that the atmosphere of a funeral march is retained, and a considerable climax is attained.

The first theme appears three times during the movement. Its first recapitulation is practically a repetition but for a significant new motif added by the oboe (bar 129). This is nothing more than a short motif of lament, but it immeasurably heightens the expressive quality of the music:



EX. 49

In its final return, the theme (beginning with bar 193), is played by the wood-wind, the strings adding a new, flowing accompaniment. This time an immense climax is created.

The movement ends with soft beats of the drums (bar 237)—the bass from Ex. 48—in C major. Despite numerous incidental apparent modulations, the final impression is that the key of C has never been disturbed.

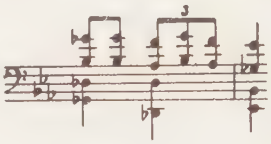
The Third Movement

The Scherzo reminds us with its very first notes of the name which Bruckner gave to the work: the 'Romantic Symphony'. The first section is made up, with interesting elaborations, of horn calls:

EX. 50

With the entry of other instruments, the ninth is added to the common chord of E flat major and through further piling up of thirds, the harmony becomes more and more tense until the

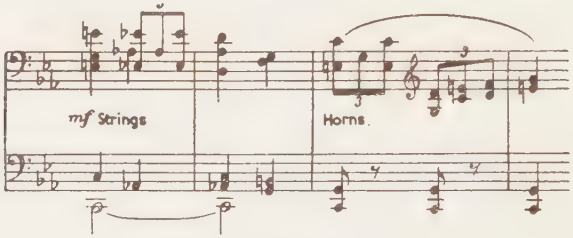
horns and trombones rapidly dissolve the accumulated dissonance with the motif:



EX. 51

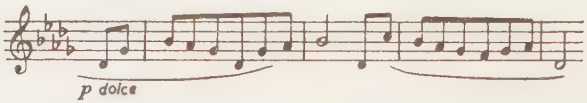
answered by a shining, diatonic trumpet call.

The second theme consists of an expressive modulating motif in the strings. This again is answered by a signal-like horn call:



EX. 52

The Trio is short, its atmosphere that of the beautiful tune:



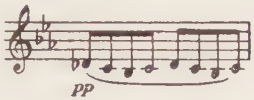
EX. 53

played by flute and clarinet, followed by a melodious flowing string passage. It is a particularly arresting moment when the G flat major of the Trio is replaced, without any bridge, by the key of the Scherzo, B flat.

The Finale

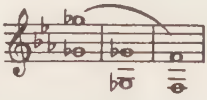
After the delightful Scherzo, the Finale brings back the monumental proportions of Bruckner's larger movements. It will perhaps be simplest to explain the architecture of this Finale in terms of sonata form organization, with which it has at least affinities, however loose.

The movement opens with a pedal point on B flat, lasting forty-three bars. Above the unceasing pulsation of the bass, the second violins begin an ostinato:



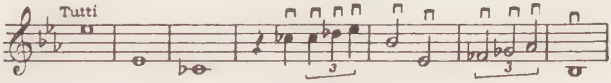
EX. 54

and two clarinets and one horn announce the motif:



EX. 55

which gradually increases its speed: first minims, then crotchets; from bar 28 it carries across the bar lines and assumes for a time an apparent rhythm of 3/4. To this double rhythm the horns add, again in a rhythm of their own, a reminiscence from the opening of the Scherzo (bar 28). Together with this mixture of rhythms goes a mighty crescendo, culminating in the outburst of the mighty main theme:



EX. 56

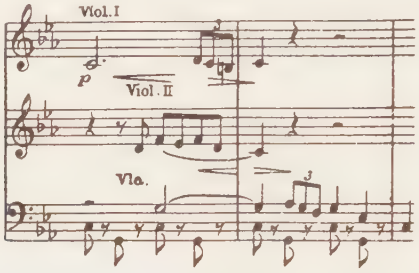
In the stormy music that follows, the thundering basses dominate the sound (bar 51) while the figure of the violins:

EX. 57

(related to the Scherzo theme, Ex. 50) is vital to the continuity of the movement. The tenseness of this section reaches its culmination in bar 79; the horns, augmented by the trombones, play

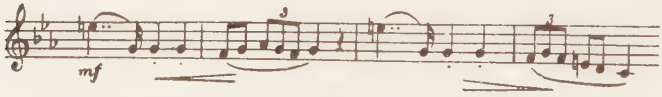
the beginning of the main theme of the first movement. Immediately afterwards, a rapid diminuendo leads to the second group of themes.

The main theme of this group is a combination of three motifs above the tonic-dominant bass from the march of the second movement (Ex. 48). As so often in Bruckner's second themes, each part has thematic significance:



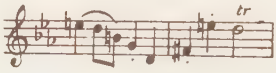
EX. 58

After twelve bars in this mood, the wood-wind surprise us with:



EX. 59

The violins respond immediately to the change of mood:

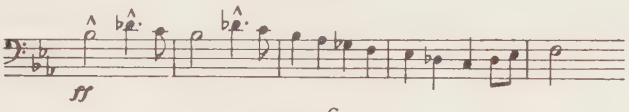


EX. 60

Into the carefree music of these themes comes (bar 130) a real 'quotation' from Schubert, a greeting from the String Quartet in A minor op. 29 which Bruckner may or may not have known.

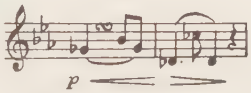
But then comes an ominous moment; the interval of the sixth, so cheerful at the beginning of Ex. 59, is repeated (bar 151) several times by the wood-wind and joined by a chromatic figure somewhat reminiscent of Ex. 54. Only four bars, and the

idyll is over. Into the thundering sextuplets taken from the stormy scene that followed the first theme, the trombones thrust the idea that starts the third group:



EX. 61

The dramatic violin figure of Ex. 57 is present throughout this tense section; suddenly (bar 183), the first clarinet plays it with great warmth, giving it a totally new meaning, and the violins respond rapturously:



EX. 62

Thus the exposition ends on a peaceful note.

The development opens with the beginning of the movement, inverted, and various ideas are then combined and juxtaposed. Bars 203–228 combine the violin ostinato (Ex. 54) with the inversion of the wood-wind motif (Ex. 59); from bar 229 on, the music goes new ways, eight bars of transition to one of the most impressive moments of the Finale. At bar 237, the friendly tune of Ex. 59 reappears in broad and solemn F sharp major, transformed into a Brucknerian brass chorale immediately continued by the full strings.

However, this sudden turn to broad solemnity is immediately dispelled. The flute plays reminiscences of the theme in its original rhythm. While it plays the first bar, the strings add the second bar in counterpoint. This episode closes with an improvisation on a rather free inversion of Ex. 60 (bar 257). The next bar (bar 269) begins with an almost definite statement of the second theme (Ex. 58), extended by a long improvisation inspired by the triplet, gradually falling into a hushed pianissimo, suddenly interrupted by an outbreak of the first theme (Ex. 56) in the full brass (combined with its own inversion), accompanied by the sextuplet figure of Ex. 57 in fortissimo unison strings.

There follows, from bars 339–382 a long link with the recapitulation (all these terms, we stress again, being used with the caution that we have here only an extremely loose application of sonata form). In the bars following bar 343 we recognize the first notes of the Scherzo. Bars 351–357 derive from Ex. 55 and bars 358–382 are entirely concerned with thematic fragments from the Scherzo, a pedal point on B flat (drums) ensuring the gradual return to E flat major.

The recapitulatory section omits the long introduction with which the movement began, opening at once with the tutti theme, Ex. 56. After the restatement of the second group of themes, the cheerful second section is not now, as it was originally, followed by a threatening episode. The sextuplet motif (Ex. 57) from the omitted theme group makes its appearance, nevertheless (bar 457), as a counterpoint to one of the other melodies.

At the very end of the recapitulation, during the transition to the coda (bar 465), there is another reminiscence of the Scherzo. The coda begins in mysterious twilight between E flat major and C flat major in which the wood-wind play the motif from the Introduction to the Finale (Ex. 55) in its real and inverted forms. With a steady crescendo quite different from that in the coda of the first movement and yet somehow cousin to it, the symphony draws to its close in serene and majestic solemnity.

★

SYMPHONY NO. 5 in B flat major

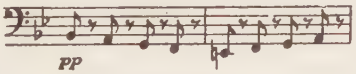
I. Introduction (Adagio)—Allegro
II. Sehr langsam VERY SLOW
III. Scherzo Molto vivace (Schnell)
IV. Adagio—Allegro moderato

The First Movement

THIS is Bruckner's only symphony which opens with a slow introduction. In the course of this preliminary Adagio, a number of themes are presented in a brief, aphoristic sequence. Most of them, if not all, are *Urmotifs* of themes which afterwards dom-

inate the work. It has been suggested by various commentators that the descending and ascending fragments of the scale with which the basses begin the work are the nucleus of every theme in the symphony. After a careful examination of a variety of such analytical findings, I hesitate to subscribe to any of them. The one obvious, undeniable example is the main theme of the Trio to the Scherzo (Ex. 83). This business of analytical search can so easily be overdone! Fragments of the scale are too frequent in melodies to be necessarily of significance. The second theme of the first movement of Beethoven's Violin Concerto, it seems to me, contains more of Bruckner's *Urmotif* than any theme in the symphony.

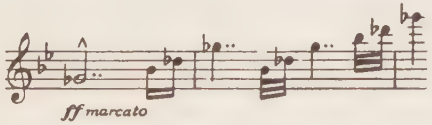
The work begins with the pizzicato notes of the basses descending and ascending slowly:



EX. 63

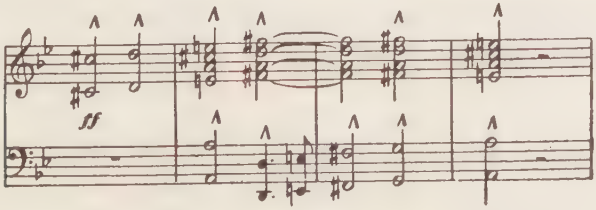
above which the other strings play in solemn polyphony.

This section occupies fourteen bars and ends with a half-close. There follows a general pause of half a bar. Its silence is pierced by a powerful triad in G flat major in vehement rhythms:



EX. 64

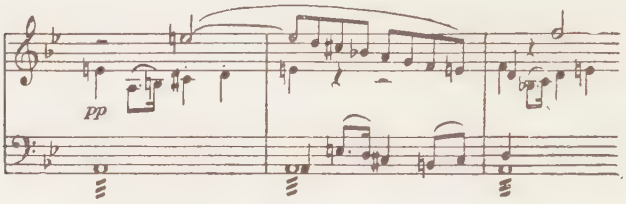
and immediately afterwards a change to A major with a chorale in the brass:



EX. 65

After a pause, the triad of Ex. 64 is repeated in B flat major, the drums now adding to its dramatic effect. The brass chorale again follows, as before.

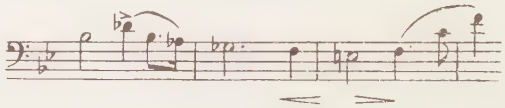
The third section of the introduction (beginning with bar 31) is more continuous and anticipates the allegro not only by its increased speed but also thematically. The leading theme derives from the part of the trombones in the chorale (Ex. 65). From the beginning, its inversion appears alongside its natural form :



EX. 66

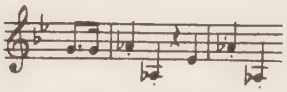
The crescendo of this section leads to a spectacular restatement of the chorale on the dominant of D. When it ends, the violins continue a tremolo on a high A and, imperceptibly, the tempo changes to allegro. The A of the violins leaps down a fifth, to D. This D, instead of behaving like a tonic, is read as the major third of B flat major. Major becomes minor with the entry of the main theme which shows itself to be tonally very restless. The introduction of two new ideas brings about a formidable crescendo (Ex. 68 and 69), culminating in a powerful counterstatement by the full orchestra. The opening of this allegro is remarkably beautiful and impressive, and the beauty of Bruckner's modulation from the dominant of D to B flat minor is only enhanced by the listener's knowledge of how it is effected.

The theme itself is derived from the trombones' part of Ex. 65 through its intermediate stage, Ex. 66.

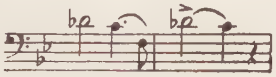


EX. 67

The two above-mentioned new ideas, which initiate the crescendo towards the big counterstatement of the main theme, are as follows:

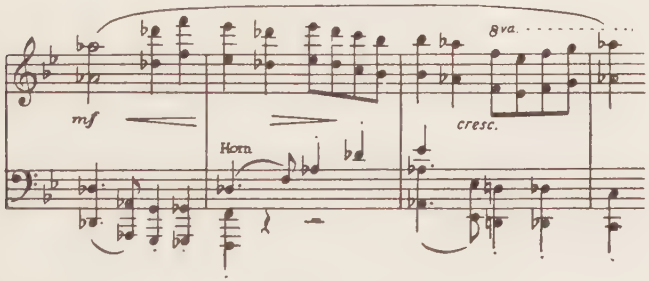


EX. 68



EX. 69

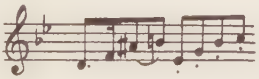
The excitement decreases and we descend to the second group, which, after the majesty of the preceding music, is a stark contrast. To the accompaniment of a pizzicato theme of the other strings, the first violins play expressive melodic improvisations. This section is lengthy and is followed by the second part of the second group, which, although there is no change of tempo, is far more active (bar 161):



EX. 70

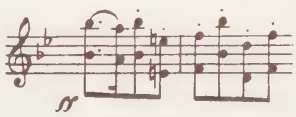
Note that the interesting bass not only provides a valuable contribution to the tune; it has thematic importance, and is answered by its free inversion in the third horn (this is significant and should be remembered).

In the transition which follows this theme, the driving force is derived from the bass in the last example; it assumes gradually this form (bar 189 f.):



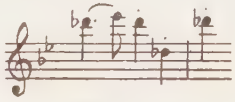
EX. 71

After a crescendo, it changes again and becomes the third theme of the movement, played by the whole orchestra in unison (bar 199 f.):



EX. 72

There is even one further change: the motif of the codetta derives from the same source. Once again slightly altered, this becomes (bar 210) the motif which leads into the beginning of the development section (bars 221 and 225). A wonderful example of the art of thematic transformation, arising from true and natural symphonic growth!



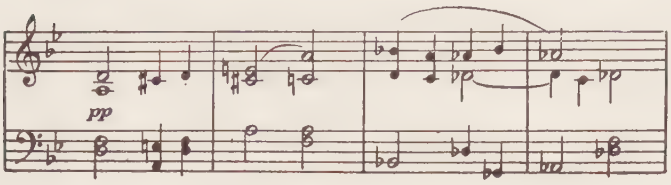
EX. 73

The development begins with an abbreviated version of the slow introduction, interspersed with fragments of the main theme. Eventually, a great variety of imitative contrapuntal devices are procured from the opening of the theme (for instance, bars 243–246, 247, 261 f., 267 f., 275, and so forth).

To such developments of the main themes, the triad motif of the introduction (Ex. 64) is added as a counterpoint (bar 283 and onwards), both in the strings and in the wood-wind. It becomes more and more important until (bar 319) it is the leading motif in a series of downward-thrusting diminished sevenths which drive the music to a climax. There its rhythm produces this new motif which is played by the strings in unison with great power (bar 319).

EX. 74

When suddenly the ferocious fortissimo ends, it gives way to the soft chanting of the horns playing the second theme (see bar 101, originally heard as short pizzicato notes):



EX. 75

The recapitulation is introduced by a similar preparation to that which preceded the first allegro, comparable with the section represented here by Ex. 66. It follows the pattern of the entire exposition.

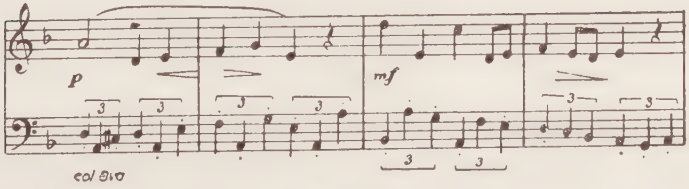
The recapitulation of the first group is much abbreviated, in anticipation of the important coda. A transition of four bars now suffices to lead to the second group of themes.

The coda, beginning with bar 453, is entirely occupied with the main theme. The characteristic ostinato movement of the strings can most certainly be considered to recall the first two bars of the symphony.

As the crescendo develops, contrapuntal imitations recur which remind us of previous instances, and after bar 477 also the powerful triad of Ex. 64 is brought in. Throughout the coda, the key of B flat major is in definite command, but for a few modulations which serve to emphasize the magnificent final B flat major from bar 493 to the end. Triumphant repetitions of the first bar of the theme close the movement.

The Second Movement (D minor)

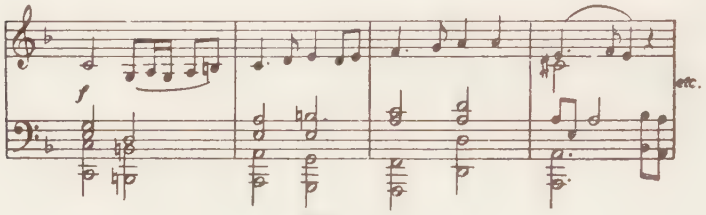
The basses open the movement with four pizzicato bars in slow triplets. As these are repeated, the oboe plays the first theme in even rhythm:



EX. 76

The cross rhythm greatly enhances the intensity of the tune. This is repeated with a bassoon added to the oboe and an epilogue of four bars follows (bar 19) in which the mixture of rhythms becomes very complex indeed. A pedal point on F links this section throughout with the second theme.

The second theme (bar 31), in C major, is first played with noble solemnity by the full strings:



EX. 77

The first two bars of this theme inspire the strings to wide, melodic extensions in which eventually the horns (bar 55 f.) and the trumpets (bar 63 f.) join. Later on in the movement, these extensions will reach much further developments. In this present section, we move with wonderful effect through a variety of keys, and at bar 67 the return to D minor is suddenly prepared by an arresting shift to A major, its dominant.

At bar 71 the main theme is repeated (full wood-wind unison) and immediately receives expansive treatment. The interval of the seventh in the third bar of the theme is especially singled out, first in its natural position and later on (particularly after bar 95) in its inversion. The ever-increasing agitation of this section is abruptly cut off at bar 100 and an uneasy sequence on a diminished chord from bar 13 introduces a period of uncertain suspense.

A firm statement of the second theme in D major brings relief. Here again, melodic extensions follow, vaster in their dimensions than before. After bar 130 the bass takes the lead with a particularly impressive extension:

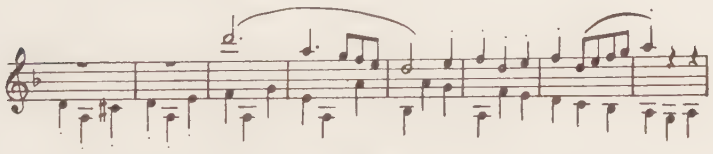
EX. 78

The third bar of this quotation becomes, indeed, for a time a motif of independent significance. It is with this motif that the section enters its epilogue (bars 141–162) and we arrive at the third statement of the first theme.

Against the flowing accompaniment of the strings (with a particularly fine, new motif in the bass) the theme is first given in its original text but goes new ways from bar 169 onwards. Eventually it is again the interval of the seventh which gains prominence. After bar 180, and even more powerful at bar 196 f., the sevenths appear as a sequence of juxtaposed dissonant chords. When in bar 203 the drum introduces the return to D, the sevenths are still played in soft pizzicato notes until a horn quotes the beginning of the first theme (bar 205). It is answered by an imitating lament of the oboe, but it is for the flute to end the movement with an unexpected solace in D major.

The Third Movement (D minor)

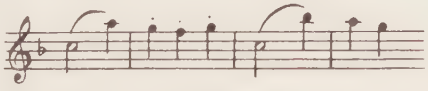
The strings begin the Scherzo by playing in rapid staccato the first eight bars of the Adagio. To this accompaniment the main theme enters in the third bar:



EX. 79

A most effective pause follows when the theme suddenly breaks off at bar 21.

The second theme, to be played 'considerably more slowly', is of the *Laendler* type:

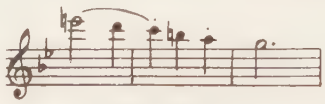


EX. 80

a beautiful melody to which the second violins add a tuneful counterpart whilst the violas play a comfortable ostinato and the basses retain the rhythm of their former tense theme.

Although the second theme is idyllic, there is something uneasy in the abrupt end of the melody, emphasized by the crescendo of its last bar. Otherwise, however, there is nothing to mar the lyricism which becomes jubilant when the violins contribute yet another *Laendler* motif (bar 39).

When the strings begin, accelerando, to resume the original speed, the wood-wind enter with a new motif



EX. 81

which now replaces the theme of example 79.

At the end of the exposition, a short coda is provided by a sequence of sevenths (bars 97 and onwards) which most certainly recall those sevenths which had played so important a part in the Adagio.

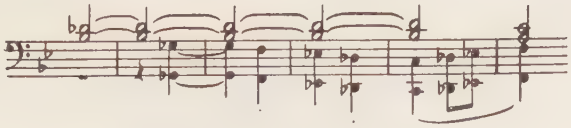
EX. 82

In the development section, various fragments of previously heard themes meet in ingenious combinations. A careful perusal of the score shows a great number of them. Thus, for instance, the jumping sevenths (Ex. 82) are used as a counterpoint to the last four bars of the main theme. Or there is a fleeting moment when these four last bars of the main theme are presented in a complex double imitation (bars 170–175).

The Scherzo ends in D major and the Trio opens with one of Bruckner's marvellous changes of tonality. The horn plays a sustained note—G flat—which we still hear as F sharp. Thus, without any bridge towards the new tonality, flute and oboe begin in G flat major.

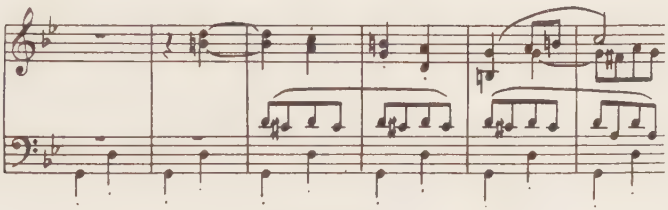
EX. 83

This theme (which *definitely* derives from the first two bars of the symphony) is also played in its inversion:



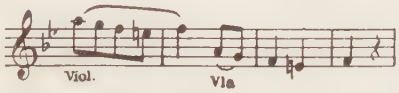
EX. 84

There is a third variation which, once again, introduces its own new atmosphere:



EX. 85

The main sections of the Trio end with a gallantry quite Mozartian in its elegance!



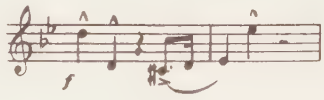
EX. 86

The Finale

This finale is chiefly a colossal fugue with three themes, one of which links it with the first movement, whilst the movement has an additional theme, characteristic of Bruckner's second groups.

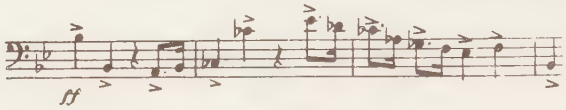
The movement begins with the opening episode of the symphony (Ex. 63) in a slightly abbreviated version. At the moment when the violas begin the polyphony of the upper strings, a clarinet calls out a descending octave, to be repeated, two bars later, a third higher.

When the pizzicato comes to a halt, the clarinet—after a general pause—enlarges on its octave call and plays, like a suggestion, the motif :



EX. 87

After a short pause, the strings begin playing the main theme of the first movement (Ex. 66), and now a trumpet adds the interjection of the octave. The clarinets repeat their new motif (Ex. 87). There is again a short pause after which the beginning of the second movement is recalled, with the octave call coming from the flute. Now, all this happened clearly in accordance with the precedent of the introduction to the Finale of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, and one might, therefore, expect next a quotation from the Scherzo before the Finale finds its own theme.[1] However, when the clarinets repeat their motif (Ex. 87) after the theme of the second movement, the basses take it up suddenly —with a characteristic shift of tonality—and it becomes the theme of an energetic fugue, the first theme of the Finale :

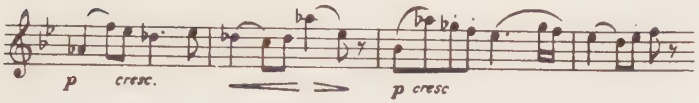


EX. 88

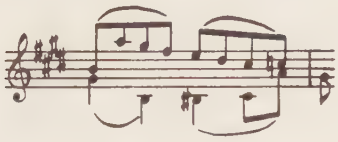
The fugue is played by the strings, with the rest of the orchestra heavily stressing the octaves in the theme. The fugue does not go beyond its exposition and then the music calms down over a pedal point on F.

Immediately after follows the paragraph which is not used for the fugal parts of the Finale and which forms an extensive second group. It consists of three themes, the second and third of which appear simultaneously :

[1] The Scherzo is omitted here clearly because its material is so closely related to that of the Adagio.



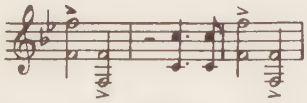
EX. 89



EX. 90

The statement of these themes is followed by a transition in which practically every detail of the passages used for the accompaniment of these themes assumes for longer or shorter periods thematic importance.

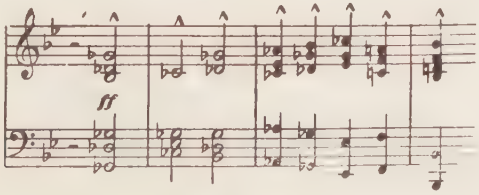
The second group of themes ends with a chromatic scale (bar 133) which derives from the part of the second violins in the first bar of the last example (bar 83). After a moment of silence, the strings resume the chromatic scale in a wild fortissimo and the orchestra adds with tremendous strength the octaves of the fugue theme:



EX. 91

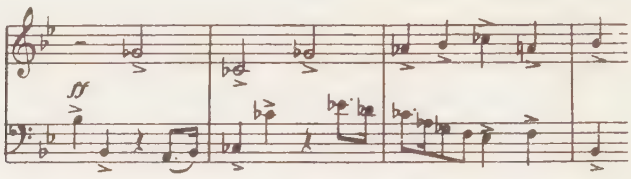
This section has the characteristic sound of a third theme in a typical large Bruckner movement. Afterwards (bar 167), flute and oboe play the chromatic scale, inverted, in crotchets and the basses answer with a still slower ascending chromatic scale.

The third section of the Finale opens with the noble brass chorale:



EX. 92

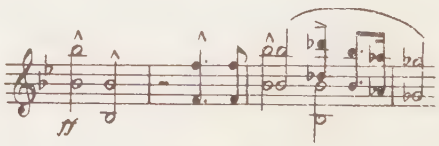
With radiant serenity, the strings repeat the second phrase pianissimo. The chorale is repeated by the brass and the response of the strings is now extended into an improvisation of rapt joy. This forms a prelude to the second fugue of the movement, the theme of which is the chorale (Ex. 92). In the course of this fully developed fugue, the inversion of the theme ends with an octave and this becomes a link with the first fugal theme (bars 261–264). Gradually this link is emphasized, till at last the themes unite:



EX. 93

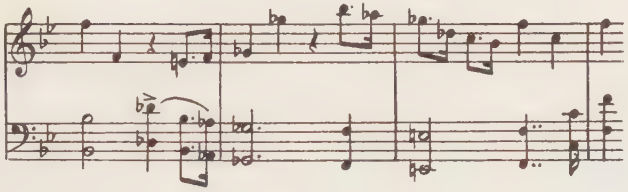
From then onwards, the immense double fugue broadly leads to the splendid climax in which the brass plays the theme of the chorale (Ex. 92) and the rest of the orchestra the first theme, both sections of the orchestra in unison (bar 374). After this, as so often in Bruckner's compositions, the great climax is followed by a swift diminuendo.

The fourth section of the Finale recapitulates the non-fugal group of themes (Ex. 89 and 90). The ending of the group (with the chromatic scales) is differently formulated, yet as before the scales lead to a reappearance of the octaves of the main theme (bars 450 and onwards). All this imparts a necessary sense of symmetry to the design as a whole. Three bars after their entry, the first theme of the first movement is joined to these octaves of the Finale's main theme:



EX. 94

The new combination is developed extensively in fugal style. Now, as we have seen, the combination contains the main theme of the first movement, the emphatic octaves from the main theme of the Finale and the chromatic scales derived from the Finale's second group of themes. The climax of these fugal developments is reached when the entire main themes of the first movement and the Finale are played against each other.



EX. 95

From here onwards, the new double fugue becomes more and more triumphant till further enhancement seems hardly possible. But the true climax comes only at the supremely festive moment when trumpets and trombones enter with the chorale (Ex. 92), the third theme of the Finale, whilst the rest of the orchestra brings the magnificent fugue to a close. Bruckner's sense of movement is so superb that the final entry of the chorale does not, as with inferior composers, rob the music of its great pace; it strides over the action like a giant.[1]

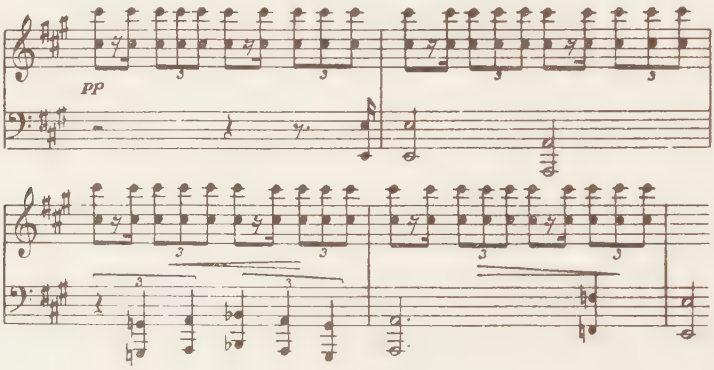
[1] In Eugen Jochum's recording, he pompously reduces the power of this passage to the level of clumsy ineptitude by suddenly halving the tempo. Instead of achieving the sense of immensity he aimed at, he merely exhausts, abruptly, all the steam from the music by destroying the tremendous momentum Bruckner has so mightily generated.

★

SYMPHONY NO. 6 in A major

I. Majestoso
II. Adagio. Sehr feierlich
III. Scherzo. Nicht schnell
Trio. Langsam
IV. Bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell

BENEATH the sharply accentuated pianissimo rhythm of the violins, the basses play calmly the main theme, which fully warrants the designation 'majestoso' :



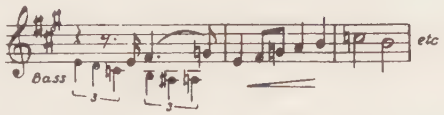
EX. 96

A solo horn links its first phrases with imitations of the third and fourth bars. The third phrase (bar 15) adopts something of the dotted rhythm of the persisting, characteristic ostinato of the violins, thereby introducing the pace of a moderate allegro. The rhythm becomes even more striking when, at bar 19, the final phrase of the first theme enters.

Suddenly, at bar 25, the entire theme is being repeated fortissimo. The glittering rhythm of the violins is taken over by the lower strings, assisted by the drums, and the upper instruments play the noble theme. The character of the music changes to festive solemnity.

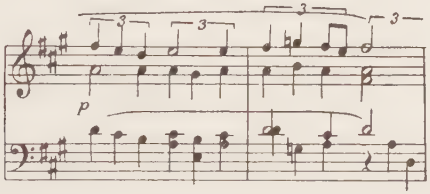
A new tonal direction begins with the second phrase. At bar 43 a sudden return to pianissimo allows the first theme to end with the original sound of the characteristic rhythm.

The second group of themes is far more complex throughout. The first theme is a strong violin tune, which occurs in a setting of a new striking mixed rhythm :



EX. 97

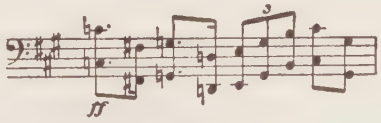
It continues, after four bars, with an expressive, lyrical phrase. There is a good deal of modulation throughout the second group, but the main theme invariably returns to the key of E, at first minor then (bar 81) major. The second theme of the second group comes in at bar 69, a short and beautiful motif of two bars.



EX. 98

We hear it first, led by an oboe, in D major, to be immediately repeated in fuller scoring, in F major. This leads to an extremely richly laid out version of Ex. 97 in E major, approached through what is now its subdominant, A major (the original tonic).

The sevenths from Ex. 97 (bass, bars 3 and 4) are important for a sequence which links the second with the third theme group. Throughout this sequence a pedal point on B prepares for the entry of the third theme in an admixture of E major and C major. This begins as quoted below in C, but soon swings in the direction of E :

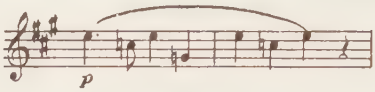


EX. 99

Yet, a second phrase of the theme (bars 111–112) introduces once again the mixture of both keys—as before, with an emphatic accent on E major:

EX. 100

A short epilogue leads to the beautiful codetta motif:



EX. 101

For the first two bars we have pure C major but the following six bars lead to the end of the exposition in the orthodox dominant.

The development is shorter and far less complex than usual in Bruckner's first movements and becomes marvellously eloquent when the violins play, from bar 159, in long periods, the inversion of the main theme. It is probably the absence of the accentuated rhythm of the opening which allows the theme to speak in an entirely new way. The serenity becomes disturbed at bar 183 when the second phrase of the first theme introduces its more animated rhythm. After a few bars, an accelerando over a pedal on B flat introduces a note of agitation, emphasized by the absence of the crescendo one would normally associate with this kind of transition.

Suddenly the pedal point on B flat explains itself: at bar 195 the main theme bursts out in E flat major, strengthened by inverted imitations (horns). The greatest impact of power is, however, conveyed by the simultaneous, sudden reappearance of the characteristic rhythm of the theme.

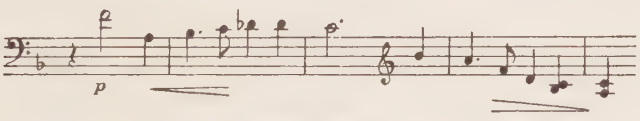
The listener may consider this section as a veritable climax. However, it only prepares for the true climax which occurs at bar 209 when the music swings round with great majesty from E flat (the remotest possible region from the home key) to the tonic, A major. This magnificent beginning of the recapitulation is indeed a climax. It is one of those masterly transitions which,

the critics keep telling us, Bruckner had never learned to write.

The recapitulation is a complete restatement of the three groups of themes but for the codetta motif (Ex. 101), which does not recur. Instead, we enter, at bar 309, an extensive coda (one of Bruckner's very greatest passages) in which the opening phrase of the first theme is used throughout. For four bars we are in A major, but thereafter awesome modulations create a world of ever more solemn intensity. At the height of a crescendo, the opening rhythm joins in (bar 345), but the modulations continue. A sudden pianissimo at bar 349 makes its peculiar contribution to the general atmosphere of festive expectation, and four bars later a new outbreak of fortissimo on the subdominant prepares the listener for the finality of the entry of A major at bar 361. A triumphant statement of the first phrase of the theme, now reduced to pure tonality, closes the movement by completing a giant plagal cadence.

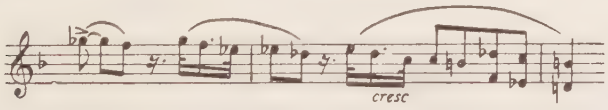
The Second Movement (F major)

The Adagio opens with a theme in the strings:



EX. 102

to which an oboe is joined in the fifth bar: while the strings repeat the first two bars, the oboe adds a pathetic lament:



EX. 103

and brings about a broad, elegiac crescendo that falls away into a dark transitional passage, modulating to E major, in which key the second theme follows at bar 25.

This is a *Gesangsperiode* of remarkable polyphony. Although the violoncelli have the leading part, the other instruments—

particularly the first violins—play hardly less important contributions:

EX. 104

In its last phrase, the theme reaches a climax in C major (which key it retains), its hold through a soft sequential passage containing diminutions of the first phrase of Ex. 104.

Towards the end (bar 49), an augmentation of the demi-semiquaver motif accompanies a significant phrase of clarinet and bassoon, while the C major darkens into minor.

The third theme (bar 53) has the character of a funeral march in which C minor is blended with A flat. The dotted rhythm in its first bar is perhaps an augmentation of the second oboe phrase of bars 5 and 6. The theme with its infinitely sad turn to A flat major after the fourth bar is the kind of music which Mahler wished and attempted to achieve with his typical conscious exertion from time to time which, therefore, has led some critics to the profound observation that occasionally Bruckner anticipates Mahler.

At bar 69, some developmental treatment of the first theme begins. The former bass scales are given to the wood-wind and a solo horn plays the opening phrase of Ex. 102. At bar 77, the basses invert this phrase and the last eight bars of the section bring in the lament of the oboe from the beginning of Ex. 103.

The recapitulation of all three themes begins with a return to F minor at bar 93. The former violin theme is given to the horns and then the wood-wind; the expression is raised to a higher degree of intensity, particularly by the violins, whose sextuplet accompaniment becomes increasingly agitated as the music approaches a vastly bigger climax than before.

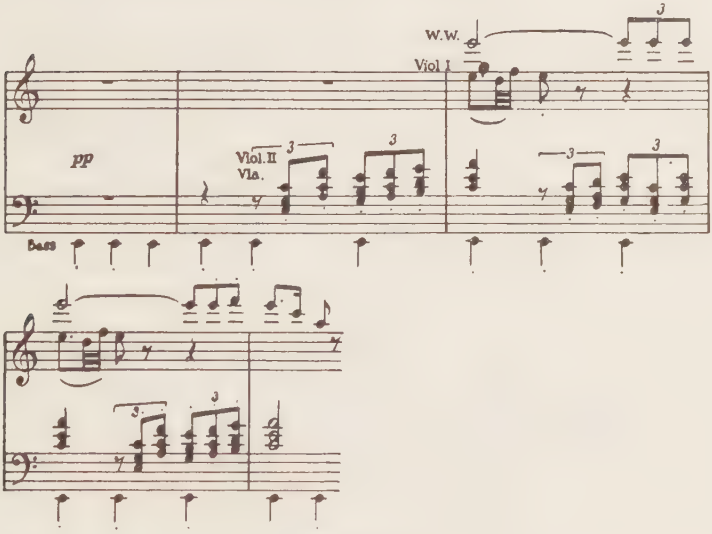
The second theme is recapitulated in its entirety in the tonic but four bars now suffice to introduce a very brief reminiscence of the third theme.

A transition over a dominant pedal once again makes use of the opening phrase of Ex. 104 (inverted) and leads to the beautiful coda. At bar 157 we hear for the last time the beginning of the main theme, and thereafter final improvisations on its former bass scales terminate the movement in F major, in a mood of

perfect serenity. This is the only one of Bruckner's Adagios in true sonata form and it is a monument to his mastery of this form on a vast scale.

The Third Movement

The A minor Scherzo of the Sixth Symphony is quite unlike all its predecessors. The tense character which is usually associated with Bruckner's Scherzi is here not absent, but very much subdued. The tempo is not fast and in place of a characteristic, striking Scherzo theme, we have here a combination of motifs, wood-wind having the main theme proper.



EX. 105

The first theme in its entirety ends with the four fortissimo bars after bar 11 where the important motif of the second violins is given to the basses.[1]

[1] H. F. Redlich's remarks on this movement (*Bruckner and Mahler*, p. 95) are quite absurd. Instead of quoting the memorable contribution of the second violins and violas to the theme in its definite form, he chooses bars 28 and 29 as his thematic illustration. The choice is odd, but it enables him to discover the Rhinemaidens from *Götterdämmerung* in Bruckner's Sixth Symphony!

The central development generates a particularly lovable new motif:

EX. 106

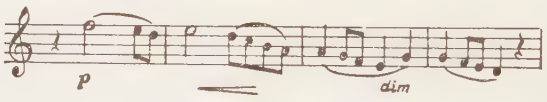
The Trio in C major is slow. Its rhythmical opening theme (pizzicato strings) enters, with an unforgettable, beautiful effect, in what sounds like the first inversion of the dominant seventh chord of D flat. In the third bar, an emphatic entry of the horns answers this decisively in C major, but the entry of the wood-wind, another two bars later, tries to assert A flat major (with what suggests an unexpected echo from the first movement of the Fifth Symphony). A final phrase of the strings leads back to a half-close in C major (bar 11), the whole group is repeated and brought to its conclusion in the tonic.

The middle section matches the opening phrases in beauty and marvellous tonal surprises, but the greatest miracle of all is the fact that the key of C is, at the end, so secure as to suggest that there have been no modulations at all.

The Scherzo returns complete.

The Finale

The first theme opens the movement in a Phrygian A minor:



EX. 107

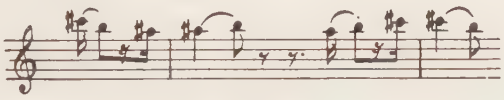
In bar 22, the horns and trumpets interrupt the rather sinister flow of the music with an A major ejaculation, but the theme continues in its former mood. Four bars later, the horns and trumpets interrupt again, this time with insistence. At once, A major is established (bar 29):

EX. 108

The new lively mood reaches dramatic emphasis and the first group of themes remains powerful to its end (bar 63) on the dominant of A.

The second theme enters, with one of Bruckner's favourite mediant modulations, in C major. Again it is a *Gesangsthema* full of rotating counterpoints in which the two most significant parts are in the first and second violins. The direction *hervortretend* (in relievo) in the second violins is not to be interpreted as a real subjugation of the first violins.

The third theme (bar 125) is divided between a powerful tutti on the dominant of E and a dotted wood-wind motif which is possibly derived from the oboe theme (Ex. 103) of the second movement.



EX. 109

It is this motif which is used for an extensive final section of the exposition which ends at bar 175, with E major established.

Immediately afterwards, the violoncelli play the first theme (Ex. 107) in its original Phrygian setting. Oboe and clarinet reply with the beginning of Ex. 109, which very soon afterwards again takes the lead in a short section of lively rhythm. At bar 197 F major is established, the violoncelli playing the inversion of the first theme (Ex. 107). The music continues to move through various major keys, now interrupted from time to time by the brass with powerful signals from Ex. 108, first on E flat (bar 215) and then on E (natural) and F (see bar 225). This inevitably creates a gradual rise in tension until at length a great tutti breaks out at bar 245, in the tonic key, A major. This may be regarded as the start of the recapitulation. A mighty paragraph for the full orchestra strides with colossal and deliberate breadth over some forty bars, expanding the material of Ex. 108 until it subsides in preparation for the restatement of the second group, which now begins in the tonic at bar 299.

Ex. 109 follows (bar 332), this time growing into a weighty tutti during which the opening rhythm of the first movement makes itself felt (see bar 349). There is considerable doubt about

the tonal direction of the music, and questions pervade the air (bar 356). Another crescendo is dramatically interrupted by a pianissimo on the dominant of B flat minor (bar 371), when suddenly the tonic, even more dramatically, reasserts itself (bar 385) in full power. At bar 397 there is a quick hush, as if the music does not quite believe itself so very near home, but the end is close in sight, and the final blaze of A major finds the trombones giving out a grand diatonic version of the main theme of the first movement.

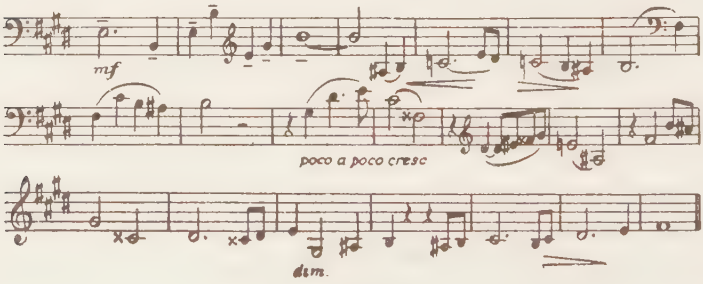
★

SYMPHONY NO. 7 in E major

I. Allegro moderato
II. Adagio. Sehr feierlich und sehr langsam
III. Scherzo. Sehr schnell
IV. Finale. Bewegt, doch nicht schnell

First Movement

THE violins open the symphony, playing tremolo the third of the chord of E major, and in the third bar the first horn and the 'celli begin to play the long first theme:



EX. 110

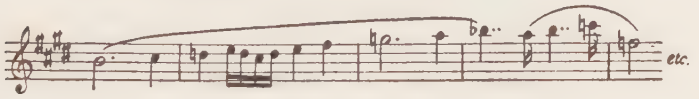
As a tune of twenty-one bars' length it is the longest of all Bruckner themes, a tune of perfect flow and inner unity, travelling far from the firm E major tonality of its opening and returning to the home key organically. It will be readily seen that in

the great arc of this theme a number of distinct motifs can be discerned: the great elevation of the broken E major chord (bars 1–3 of the theme); the next following phrase; again, bars 10 and 11. In the course of the examination of the movement, we shall often refer to these sections of the main theme and we shall even single out less obvious parts, such as bar 5 together with its upbeat and the ending of the phrase by the first two notes of bar 6.

The theme is played twice in succession. Its first statement ends without the final E and thus leads over to the entry of violins and wood-wind. These repeat the theme to the accompaniment of a gradually assembling tutti. In the fourteenth bar of the repetition, the theme reaches its climax with a new extension. After four bars fortissimo, a soft epilogue ends the first section of the movement. The epilogue, however, is still a continuation of the tune itself, based as it is on the motif of the climax (bars 38–39). We recognize its inversion in bars 41–42, and the two first notes of bar 39 inverted in bars 43, 44 and 45.

Whereas we often have to speak of 'groups of themes' in the formal elements of Bruckner movements, we have here, in the Seventh Symphony, one majestic tune which supplies in its vast structure a wealth of material for individual treatment.

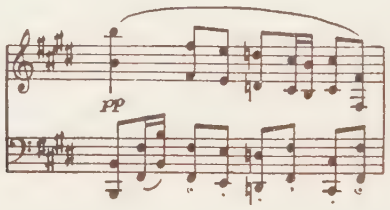
The epilogue to the tune, bars 42–50, serves as a perfect transition to the second section of the movement:



EX. 111

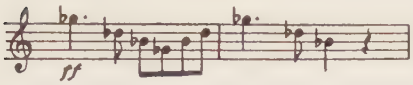
With the entry of the new theme, the background (hitherto one of tremolos and long sustained chords) assumes a definite rhythm. The section extends from bar 51 to bar 122 and is almost exclusively composed with the thematic content of the first four bars. In effortless singing, the music moves through a wealth of modulations. Contrapuntal play from subsidiary instruments is added to its flow, sometimes enriching the theme, at other times almost assuming leadership, and forming its own interlude: an episode of a polyphonic sequence (bar 81 f.) in three parts which, although strongly reminiscent of Johann Sebastian Bach, fits perfectly into the context.

Within this second section of the movement, its theme experiences a full development of its entire structure. Already after bar 59, when the double basses take the lead, the dotted motif of the theme's last bar gives opportunity for fine improvisation. Once the violins take over again (bar 69), it is the melodic turn which inspires further exaltation. After the polyphonic interlude, the horns intone the original tune with a new air of solemn calm (bar 89). With the inversion of the theme (bar 103) we arrive imperceptibly at the transition to the third section of the movement. The dotted motif which closes the second theme now becomes quite prominent and builds up a crescendo during which a piling up of thirds creates an increasingly tense dissonance, whilst a firm pedal point on F sharp assures of the approaching solution in B. The growth of sound and of dissonant tension seems to prepare for a thundering climax. However, when the moment comes for the dissolving of the dissonance, the third theme enters pianissimo, in sudden calm:



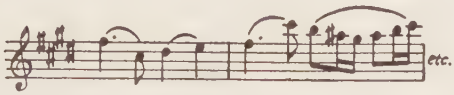
EX. 112

The impression of 'calm' is actually an illusion inasmuch as this theme introduces a lively rhythm, so far the first sharp rhythm in the movement. This rhythm of the strings is retained throughout the rest of the exposition and traces of it are carried into the first twenty bars of the development section. Despite the unceasing continuity of so distinct a rhythm over forty-odd bars, the music is by no means static. With bar 131, the bass repeats the string portion of the theme and the violins add a beautiful melodic motif, Schubertian in its major-minor setting, bar 135 (forte) introduces a descending scale motif in the woodwind which, after an extension of two bars, leads to a climax at bar 141 with yet a further new motif.



EX. 113

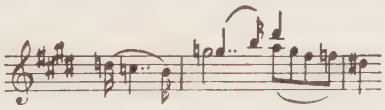
Lastly, we are given a most beautiful violin tune:



EX. 114

and the section ends with two successive augmentations of its continuous rhythm, sung by the horns (bars 163–164).

Talking in terms of sonata form, bar 164 ends the exposition and we enter the vast development section. This opens with a dialogue between the inversion of bars 1–7 of the first theme (Ex. 110) and a derivation of the rhythm of the third theme played by a solo flute. In bar 185 the violoncelli introduce in broad, singing notes the inversion of the second theme (Ex. 111). When they intone it for the second time, the inverted theme is extended to a long cantilena which is eventually (bar 210) softly interrupted by the first violins playing a motif deriving from the fourth and fifth bar of the second theme (Ex. 111):



EX. 115

Thus once again this dotted motif serves as a transition, entirely different in character now. Here, it leads to the third theme.

The quotation of the third theme in E minor is a most wonderful-sounding episode. The theme itself is played by a high flute whilst the basses play simultaneously its inversion in a low position. In the exposition, this theme yielded contrapuntal combinations with quite a number of tuneful counterparts. Here, after two bars, the violins enter with yet a further new idea. Theme and counterpart together bring the first section of the development to a close.

A short pause precedes a violent change of atmosphere. So

far, the development has been reflective and calm. Now, suddenly, the first three bars of the first theme (inverted) are dramatically introduced in C minor. In bar 249, the beginning of the main theme approaches its original form, yet still in C minor, but even a second intonation (bar 261) in D minor fails to quote the theme beyond its first two phrases. A further shift of tonality leads up a semi-tone, to E flat major, and this, by enharmonic reading, introduces in bar 281 the original key of E major. Thus, the entire episode from bar 234 to 280 prepares with admirable economy the return to E major, whilst at the same time the music gradually relaxes from its original C minor tension.

According to the sonata form scheme, bar 281 opens the recapitulation. The first theme is again played in its entirety by the violoncelli. Already in the preceding quotations of the theme's opening, ecstatic counterpoints of the first violins brought on an ever-growing intensity. The entry of the violoncelli is the climax of this play between theme and counterpoints, as now the violins no longer play freely inverted fragments but a mirror reflection of the 'cello tune. At the end of the theme the idea of 'recapitulation' is dispelled. Where the violins took over the theme in the exposition, we now get a new improvisation (bars 303–318) on the first three bars of the theme—a transition, full of mystery, which again employs a scale progression and which leads to the 'recapitulation' of the second theme (bar 319). This is given entirely new content. Already in its beginning, when the theme appears in its original form, a completely new setting produces a different atmosphere, but soon the music goes its new ways and approaches a broad climax of the kind which one would not normally expect in a second theme group.

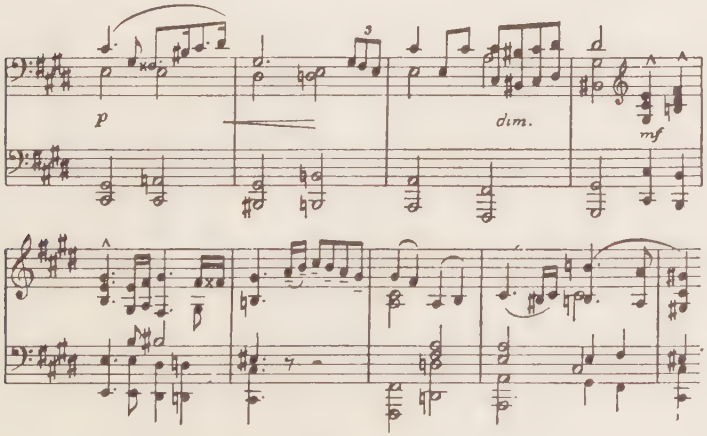
In bar 363, the third theme is 'recapitulated' in a similar way: unmistakably we have the original text of its first occurrence, but again the character is totally unlike the third theme of the exposition. It begins here in G major, modulates freely without, however, getting anywhere near the dominant of E major—until right at the end we notice that all its modulations are in fact a gradual, systematic approach to the main key—difficult perhaps to follow in the printed text but sublimely obvious to the ear.

There cannot be any doubt about tonalities when this section ends at bar 391. The basses play the sustained note of E and hold on to it for over fifty bars—right to the end of the move-

ment. Yet so far it is only a pedal point on E, and we are still far from E major. Bars 391–412 comprise a soaring improvisation on bars 10 and 11 of the main theme with a highly expressive contrapuntal motif which the attentive listener will already have heard in bars 291, 293 and 295, during the recapitulation of the first theme. A close examination of the violoncello part reveals derivation from other bars of the main theme towards the height of the crescendo. Slowly and solemnly this section grows in volume to recede again to pianissimo. And all the time the pedal point on E continues. At bar 413 E major sets in with glowing sound and the return to the original key of the music is celebrated in a final coda improvisation on the first two bars of the main theme.

The Second Movement

This truly *sehr feierliche* ('most solemn') Adagio opens with what is surely the most beautiful music ever written for the Wagner tubas. The mournful C sharp minor strains of the first three bars are continued by the strings with streams of melodic music. It is quite impossible to do justice to this music by describing how it leads from profound lament to serene consolation and then to a tense pathos. Since the entire section comprises, in a wider sense, the first theme, it is unfortunately not even possible to quote more than a fraction of the thirty-odd bars:



EX. 116

Four bars of brooding, dissonant chromatics lead to the totally different world of the second theme, set in 3/4 rhythm in the key of F sharp major.

EX. 117

It will be noticed that the first bar of this theme has a rhythmical affinity with the corresponding second theme in the Adagio of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and it seems unlikely that this should be mere coincidence. The conductor of the best-known recording, Eduard van Beinum, treats this second theme in the manner of a friendly, easy allegretto. There is no reason to suppose that this is the only possible interpretation. It seems much more likely that Bruckner here wanted precisely the speed and character of the corresponding Beethoven theme (which, too, speaks to greatest advantage in unhurried performance).

The theme is played twice (bar 37 f. and 53 f.) with a middle section (bars 45–53) and there follows a most beautiful epilogue during which the bass gradually progresses from F sharp to G sharp, the dominant of the original key of C sharp minor—once again one of those most beautiful and perfect transitions which, the critics are wont to say, Bruckner was incapable of writing.

At bar 77 rhythm and key revert to a repetition of the first theme which is now treated to extensive developments. The first bar of the theme is singled out for a crescendo transition (bar 75 f.) towards a preliminary climax at bar 101, when the first phrase of the theme is played in inversion. Bars 105–114 are entirely occupied with the first four notes of bar 5. Throughout the entire section so far, continuity is assured by the strings and more particularly by the important independence of the first violins and the bass. A short caesura in bar 114 precedes a first development of the whole phrase of bars 4–7 of the main theme. Later on in the movement the idea of this section (bars 114–132) will be taken up again for a still far more extensive treatment. At the present, the harmonic progression leads to a pedal point on G with the apparent intention of preparing for C minor.

However, at the crucial moment (bar 133) the second theme

returns and the bass of G leads, not to C minor, but to A flat major. The tune is assigned to the second violins and the violas whilst the first violins play an exquisite counterpoint. Also the continuation receives similar new treatment, but it is not now followed, as it was before, by a repetition of the main tune. Instead we have, from bars 149 to 156, an entirely new transition to the main C sharp minor theme (bar 157).

The restatement of the main theme introduces an ever-flowing accompaniment of passages in the first violins which is to continue right up to the coda of the movement. Of the theme itself, only the first seven bars are restated. Beginning with the upbeat to bar 161 we enter into a magnificent evolution of the fourth and fifth bars of the theme, the music ascending to ever loftier heights of modulations. Examination of this most inspired progression of harmony reveals that it is controlled by a chromatic scale (bar 160 E, bar 164 F, bar 166 F sharp, etc.) until we arrive at the great climax in C major (bar 177).

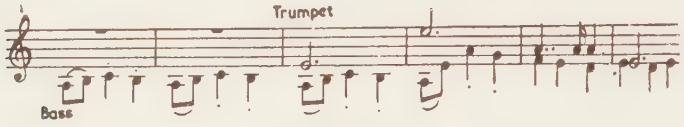
The crash on the cymbals and the contribution of the triangle at this grand moment was not originally Bruckner's own idea and for a long time he resisted the brothers Schalk who had first thought of it. However, after Nikisch had agreed that this could be the right moment for this kind of supreme emphasis, Franz Schalk could report triumphantly that at last Bruckner's resistance had been overcome. The part of these two instruments was entered in the score. Sometime later, however, it was crossed out and marked with the words 'cancelled' (*gilt nicht*). The passage is shown in facsimile in the preface to Professor Haas's edition of the work, with the opinion that the cancellation mark is written in the composer's own handwriting. Professor Nowak thinks that the handwriting is that of an unknown person. Perhaps it is debatable whether this part ought to be included in an 'original version' and conductors might regard it as '*ad lib.*' The purist will, no doubt, prefer to have it struck out.

A transition of three bars leads over to the significant coda, Bruckner's homage to the memory of Richard Wagner, the news of whose death had reached him during the composition of the movement. For the first time since the opening of the movement we hear some notes from the original extensions of the first theme. Bars 13 and 14 of the Adagio are singled out for playing the leading part in bars 193–206 of the coda, a section

leading to a final quotation of the C sharp minor tuba strains. The first phrase of the theme is quoted twice but the horns slightly change its melodic line and allow the movement to end in serene C sharp major.

The Third Movement

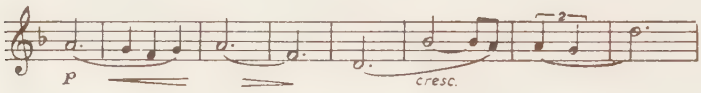
The Scherzo is set in A minor and its tense character is established right from the beginning, both by the restless movement of the strings and by the trumpet signal with the clarinet's rejoinder:



EX. 118

These three elements supply the thematic material for the entire movement. In the middle section inversions and contrapuntal treatment by imitation develop the themes: inversion of the trumpet theme in bar 109 f., of the clarinet's rejoinder in bar 125 f. (bass), of the string ostinato in bar 157 and so forth.

The trio is slower and a soaring theme provides a marked contrast to the swift Scherzo:



EX. 119

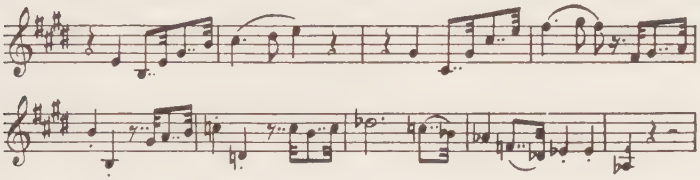
The contrast is emphasized by the remarkable change to F major.

The Finale

The last movement of this symphony has only vague affinities with sonata form; these are traceable in the contrast between the first and the second theme and in the transformation of the first into the appearance and function of a third theme.

The opening of the first theme establishes a distinct relationship with the main theme of the first movement: both begin

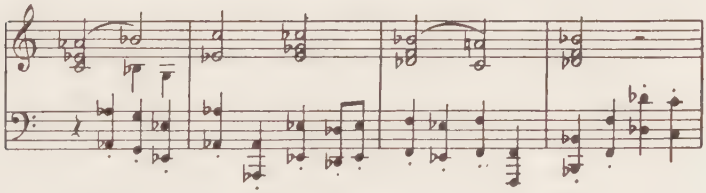
with the common chord of E major. Here, the second phrase appears to change over to C sharp minor, but this is immediately reversed. The surprise in modulation happens at the beginning of bar 7 where we find a rapid shift of tonality to A flat major:



EX. 120

Immediately the entire process is repeated in a free restatement with a 'landing point' in B flat major. There follows an Epilogue, entirely written with the first phrase of the theme, and the whole group reaches its end in bar 34, in C major.

Half a bar's total silence is broken by the soft strains of the second theme, a calm chorale, in a wonderful four-part setting. The second phrase shifts to B major, a fine instance of Bruckner's favourite modulation of transporting the tonality one tone higher:



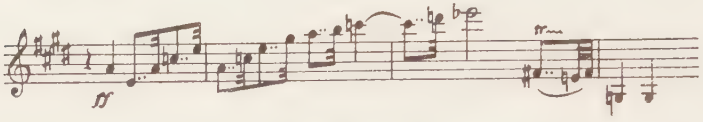
EX. 121

The first repeated phrase of this theme remains unchanged throughout the movement, only its extensions will vary at each of the three appearances. The changing vistas of the Finale are produced by thematic work with the first theme.

The second theme in its original statement ends at bar 50. It is followed by an expressive sequence over a pedal point on C, as before eventually introducing the chorale (in A flat major). Once again the extension of the chorale is followed by a

sequence. Towards its end a motif in the bass, repeated four times, will be recognized as a quotation of the second, third and fourth note of the chorale.

The silence after the diminuendo is broken by the violent outburst of the third theme—in the form of the often-mentioned 'double unison':



EX. 122

As far as one can here talk of sonata form this is indeed the third theme. However, its derivation from the first theme is so plainly obvious that it would be wrong to be dogmatic on nomenclature. When the fortissimo breaks off in bar 112, the music reverts very distinctly towards the original formulation of the first theme. Great prominence is given to a new setting of the short second motif of the first theme, now, however, ending with a sixth in place of the original octave. A pedal point on C from bar 129 to bar 145 controls the Epilogue to the 'exposition'—if once again we wish to apply a sonata form term. There certainly follows now a 'development section'.

Bars 145–162 are an improvisation on the second bar of the first theme, first inverted, afterwards in the original upward formulation. Bars 163–171 are very obviously simply the inversion of the entire first theme, complete with the surprising modulation at the end. The following four bars are less easy to trace back, but I feel sure that they derive from the inversion of the chorale theme.

With bar 175 we return to the first theme, which now undergoes a contrapuntal treatment. The steady crescendo of this section leads (bar 191) to a restatement of the tremendous 'third theme'. Its close affinity with the third theme is now even more obvious inasmuch as from bar 199 onwards the first two bars of the first theme are used in their original text. The immense tutti section reaches its climax when the chief phrase of the 'third theme' breaks off in a dissonance (bar 212).

After an anxious pause, the tension is relieved by a calm,

unchanged restatement of the soft chorale theme—unchanged in the strings, but given a slightly heightened note of calm by means of new by-play of clarinet and horn during the caesura.

The restatement of the second theme has a totally different epilogue which leads now (bar 247) to a further development of the first theme, with strongest emphasis on its concluding modulation.

Gradually it becomes evident that the music is moving towards its thematic and tonal goal. In bar 271 an augmentation of the first theme reminds us of its affinity with the first theme of the first movement, but this is only an anticipation. Three new starts are made (bars 275, 291, 299), yet all the time we feel—and an analysis of the tonal progressions would confirm our impression—that we are advancing towards E major.

At the crucial moment, the extreme fortissimo relapses into solemn pianissimo tremolo and the horns intone the first theme; it seems indeed as if the orchestra played the beginning of the first movement. Throughout the coda, the basses hold on to E and the symphony comes to a magnificent, glowing end.

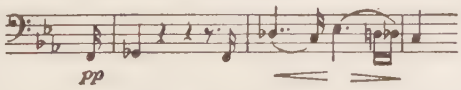
★

SYMPHONY NO. 8 in C minor

Original version edited by R. Haas, with references to the 'revised edition' prepared by L. Nowak, 1955

I. Allegro moderato
II. Scherzo. Allegro moderato
III. Adagio. Feierlich langsam; doch nicht schleppend
IV. Finale. Feierlich, nicht schnell

THE symphony opens with the main theme of the first group:



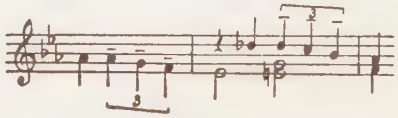
EX. 123

It will be noticed that this has precisely the rhythm of the first theme of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. It is impossible to know whether this is coincidence or deliberate design; despite the rhythmical identity, the character of the theme is, of course, entirely different.

The tonality is at first ambiguous, suggesting B flat minor during the initial two phrases and then seeming to approach the dominant of C minor. Throughout the first eighteen bars the violins play a scale (mostly chromatic) which allows a fleeting moment of C minor after bar 18. The next four bars appear to lead quite definitely to C minor, but at the crucial moment (bar 23) the tonality is forced, by a sudden fortissimo entry of the opening F, back to the dominant of B flat minor.

The theme itself, although so short, will give the composer great possibilities for developmental treatment and we shall constantly refer to Ex. 123 during the discussion of the movement.

The first theme is given an extension with the motif:

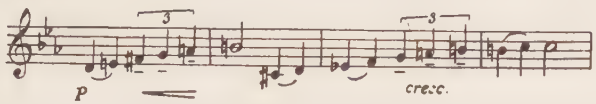


EX. 124

which is derived from the last notes of the previous example. It introduces once again the duplet-triplet combination which Bruckner had used extensively in the Third and Fourth Symphonies.

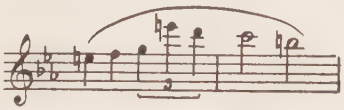
The first statement of the entire first group ends at bar 22. The first two phrases are then repeated, but from bar 31 a note of increased intensity is added. Again, at the reappearance of Ex. 124 we obtain a brief moment of C minor, but immediately afterwards the tremendous power gives way to a brooding repetition of the initial notes of Ex. 124. At last, an augmentation of these same notes (bars 49–50) allows the second theme to enter on the dominant of C minor, a key to which it will return at its close (bar 72).

The second theme retains the double rhythm of the last example.



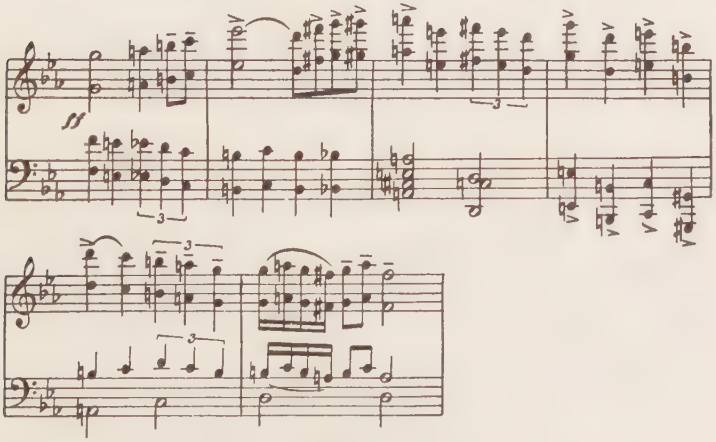
EX. 125

Already the second phrase begins to modulate and the upward trend reaches C minor in bar 58. This is changed to C major by the wood-wind who introduce a companion motif to the second theme:



EX. 126

The friendly sound of the two wood-wind phrases is dramatically changed in the strong reply of horns and strings (bar 63): the basses play the inversion of Ex. 125 and the upper instruments a motif clearly derived from the wood-wind theme of Ex. 126. After a repeat (one tone higher) of this two-bar combination of two themes, the violins expand this in a triumphant tune:

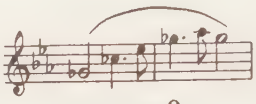


EX. 127

which is followed by a restatement of Ex. 125.

After bar 80, the point at which we might expect a restatement of the wood-wind motif (Ex. 126), the trombones take the lead with a variant of that motif, reminiscence of which also remains noticeable in the violins' expressive reaction (bar 85, etc.).

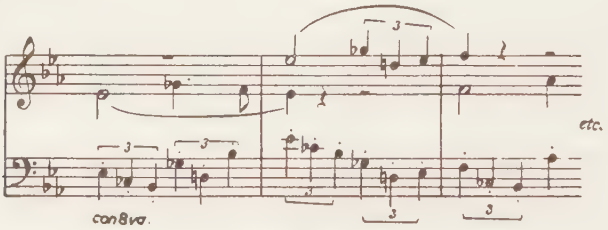
At bar 89 an oboe introduces a short transition with the motif:



EX. 128

which leads smoothly and organically to the third theme in E flat minor of the movement. The little by-play of the flute (bars 93–96) could easily remain unmentioned here. Only later on in the movement will our attention be drawn to what the flute is playing here, namely the first two notes of the main theme.

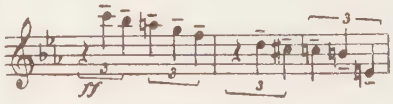
The transition episode from bar 89 does indeed introduce the third theme:



EX. 129

most wonderfully. The third theme, in E flat minor, is once again, as practically always with Bruckner, a combination of two unisons which in alternation go each their own way and merge.

The crescendo of the fifth and sixth bar (bars 101–102) leads to an outburst of dissonant fortissimo.



EX. 130

The violins play this fragment of a descending scale, actually the strict inversion of the opening of Ex. 125, a theme which gains a new meaning altogether at bar 109. Here an expressive crescendo begins which leads towards the termination of the exposition.

From bars 125 to 139 we have one of the longest and most breathless dominant suspensions in music, and it delays the final E flat close of the exposition in such a way as to give the listener (*a*) a sense of vastness commensurate with and even surpassing that of the opening of the symphony and (*b*) the feeling that from this still immensity the music *must* continue to expand with great slowness and breadth. Bruckner, as at every point in his greatest conception, is looking both backwards and forwards —except, of course, in his beginnings and endings!

From bar 129 the exposition is almost imperceptibly linked with the development section of the movement. Twice the basses make as if to play the first theme and the third attempt leads to a full statement of the entire first phrase. With a repeated playing of the last four notes (compare Ex. 123) the music attains almost complete silence.

Bars 140–164 emphasize the stillness with long double-augmentations of the first theme. The tubas join in and change in their second phrase (bar 156) major to minor—a most significant change indeed when tubas are doing it. At bar 161 the oboe reacts with great expression to the mournful strains.

During the crescendo, the bass adds the first two notes of the first theme in a way which could very easily, almost obviously turn to C minor. Yet, as the transition progresses, it settles on a firm pedal on F. The climax comes at bar 225 when the first theme is played in augmented power. We are back in the grim grip of B flat minor!

Bar 225 is the start of the recapitulation. The upper instruments are still holding on to the inversion of the first bar of the second theme. At bar 249 a sudden diminuendo reduces the tremendous mass of sound to a mysterious pianissimo. Even now a high flute continues the extension of the thematically isolated first bar of the second theme, in a variant derived from bars 227–230, (Ex. 131), and the bass plays the final phrase of the first theme (Ex. 123). At bar 255, two trumpets play on the note C the rhythm of the entire first theme, whilst flutes and

basses repeat their motifs over and over again, in a mood of utter exhaustion.

EX. 131

With the entry of the violins, new strength is given to that final phrase of the first theme and an upward progression, crescendo, leads to a new climax (bar 271 f.). Here the trumpets play again the bare rhythm of the first theme. The defiant power of this climax gives way, as before, quite suddenly (bar 278). Since bar 271 the motif of the strings (i.e. the last notes of the first theme) had changed slightly, and here, at bar 279, it is again a flute which continues after the collapse of a climax. At bar 283, an oboe plays the entire initial phrase of the first theme, answered by a free imitation of the clarinet. A trumpet introduces the third and fourth phrases of the theme (*vide* bars 11–17). In bar 298 the rhythm of the first phrase of the theme—which had been in evidence since bar 250—is suddenly released when the violins introduce Ex. 124. As in the exposition, this leads over to the second theme (bar 311).

Comparison with the exposition reveals that the recapitulation is considerably shorter. After the great violin tune of Ex. 127, ten bars suffice to reach the third theme and on this occasion it is not preceded by the former transitional episode.

The third section goes new ways from bar 361. A passage of the wood-wind, a powerful succession of steady minims, dominates a crescendo which leads to the greatest climax of the movement. At bar 369 the wood-wind minims are played with greatest power by unison strings, strengthened by trombones, two horns and bassoons. Trumpets and four horns play with overpowering insistence the bare rhythm of the first theme and continue even, when at bar 385, suddenly the entire orchestra stops (but for one further thundering entry of the drums).

This mighty onset of the coda is suddenly transformed to a mood of utter desolation.[1] Twice the first phrase of the first theme is played by the strings in sorrowful harmony. A clarinet adds

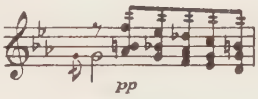
[1] In the first version, however, the mood of defiance persisted and the movement ended fortissimo.

imitating comments, but these soon come to an end and all that is left is a monotonous repetition of the last four notes of the first phrase of the theme, otherwise only the ever-decreasing remnants of the drum's beat on C. Bruckner sometimes spoke of this coda as of the *Totenuhr*, the clock in the room where a man lies dying: the life declines, but the clock goes on.

The Second Movement

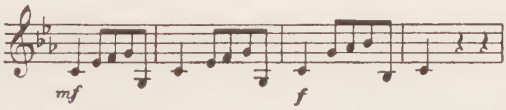
The entire Scherzo is built up from the thematic content of the first four bars.

Horns and violins begin:



EX. 132

and, in the third bar, violoncelli and violas play the theme:



EX. 133

All thematic events throughout the movement derive from these two examples. These occur almost exclusively in the development section. The exposition is most powerfully composed chiefly by the means of restatements of the theme in a variety of keys which are usually attained by chromatic approaches. The movement begins in C minor and the first chromatic scale progression begins with bar 7. At letter C (bar 25) a new chromatic movement begins, with the theme constantly in evidence. The climax is reached at bar 33 (A major) with a natural shift to E major four bars later. Again after four bars E flat major is established and remains for the rest of the exposition.

Thematic developmental work begins just before bar 65. In the drum-beats we recognize the first notes of the horn (Ex. 132) and the violin motif follows in its inversion. In bars 67–70 the wood-wind is engaged with a free improvisation on the 'cello

theme (Ex. 133) and its inversion (first clarinet). The constant modulations reach C minor at bar 95 where the inversion of Ex. 133 is played with a note of new tranquillity. The bassoon adds, in counterpoint, the theme in its original form. The transition to the recapitulation follows organically. At bar 115 the drums begin a pedal point on C, wood-wind instruments continue the play with the inversion of the 'cello theme and at bar 123 the horn begins to anticipate the recapitulation (bar 135). One feels tempted once again to request the critics to admit that 'the composer of pauses' could compose transitions quite nicely if he wanted to do so.

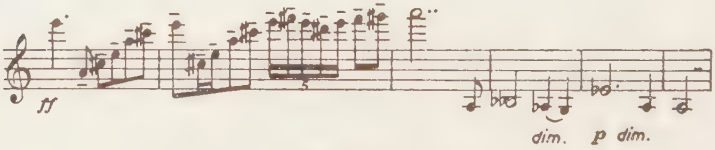
The trio (2/4) is slow and abounds in melodious invention to such an extent that an isolated quotation of the first phrase would hardly give an idea of the wonderful music. Moreover, this is the kind of music which makes analytical investigation quite unnecessary. An abundance of invention, excellent instrumentation and inspired changes of tonality combine to delight us without any effort on our part.

The Third Movement

To the soft syncopations of the warm chord of D flat major the violins begin the main theme of the Adagio:

EX. 134

which culminates in a climax on a chord of A major (first inversion). The lofty ascent of the melody towards this climax is followed by extraordinarily expressive bars on the violins' G string:

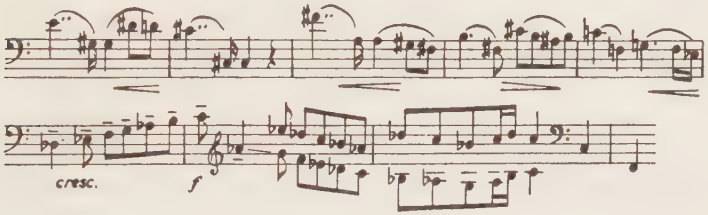


EX. 135

whence a further ascent leads to an ecstatic sequence of chords the modulations of which have some affinities with the character of old modes. From the beginning of the movement to the end of Ex. 135 (bar 20) the bass sustains a pedal point on D flat, changing to C sharp.

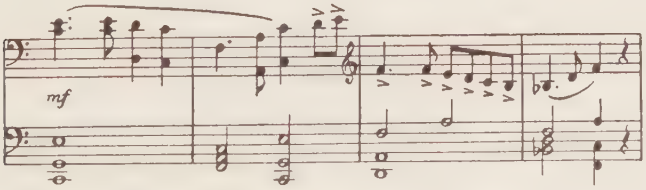
At bar 28 the first group of themes ends and there follows immediately a much-abbreviated repetition, with a new tonal direction.

The second group of themes begins with a fine violoncello tune at bar 47:



EX. 136

Between its statement and a repetition, the flute (continued by the clarinet) plays a descending scale—nothing but a link, yet even this simple scale will be used for significant development treatment eventually. The repetition of the theme is again followed by such a scale (bar 65, clarinet, B minor). It leads to the second theme of the second group, an eloquent 'chorale' played by the tubas:



EX. 137

to which the violoncelli respond with a final phrase of the group, assisted by important contributions by the first oboe and clarinet.

At bar 81 the time changes to 3/4 and a transition of fourteen

bars begins in which the opening sixth of Ex. 136 is of significance. This transition leads to an extended treatment of the first theme. Particular attention should be drawn to the fine passage at bar 109, where the first motif is played repeatedly by the bars whilst the second violins are engaged with the final bars of the first theme (see last two bars of Ex. 134); to this the first violins add a flowing melodic counterpart of great beauty. A climax is reached at bar 125 and here the last two bars of the theme are entirely in charge. The first bar of this thematic fragment is used for a sequence (bar 129) which leads to a recapitulation of the second theme (bar 141).

As always in Bruckner's music, recapitulation intensifies the thematic statement. Here we have, for instance, right at the beginning, at bar 141, a canon imitation played by a clarinet; the next phrase of the 'cello tune calls for a new contrapuntal by-play of a solo violin. Most striking, however, is the astonishingly expressive music made with the descending scales which here again link the phrases of the theme (bars 149–150 and 159–160).

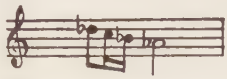
After the recapitulation of the tuba chorale (bar 161 f.) a new epilogue follows, again with the opening sixth of Ex. 141 very much in evidence. This epilogue leads to an extensive restatement of the first theme (bar 185 f.). The theme is now played by the second violins, the violas have a new flowing 12/8 motif as accompaniment and the first violins add most eloquent comments at each caesura of the theme. Gradually, a climax is approached.

Beginning with bar 209, the edition prepared by Robert Haas incorporates ten bars from Bruckner's first version. These ten bars interrupt, in Bruckner's typical fashion, the approach to a great climax with a new preparatory improvisation on the fifth and sixth bars of the main theme. The effect is entirely convincing and the omission of the ten bars in L. Nowak's reprint is to be deplored.

The climax occurs at bar 219 (N. 209) where the grand opening phrase of Ex. 135 is played by the trumpets and completed by violins and the entire wood-wind. At this point the recapitulation of formerly heard music is replaced by a flowing violin improvisation. The violas still play the 12/8 motif of bar 185 f., and in the violin tune we recognize (second half of bar

222, N. 212) the second half of bar 5 of Ex. 134 and the melodic turn from the second bar of Ex. 135. After four bars, a long chromatic progression begins with an extensive crescendo. The climax at bar 249 (N. 239) restates Ex. 135 in majestic augmentation.

Immediately afterwards, following a short pause, we enter the coda (bar 265, N. 255). The violins play a brief reminiscence of the second theme (Ex. 136), to which a solo clarinet adds a significant comment, ending with this phrase:

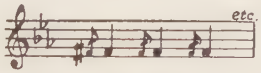


EX. 138

This derives from the first theme of the first movement, or, much rather, from those last four notes which, in monotonous repetition, ended the first movement in the mood of utter desolation. Now these four notes sound very different. At bar 269 (N. 259), the horns begin a wonderful final comment on the first theme, and those four notes, taken up and expanded by the violins, make a most satisfying contribution to the prevailing peacefulness of the music.

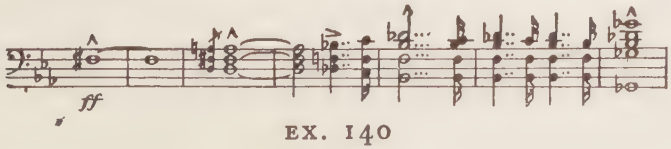
The Finale

The opening of the Finale is marked by the energy both of the accented repeated notes of the unison strings:



EX. 139

and of the definite rhythm of the first theme, played by horns and trombones:



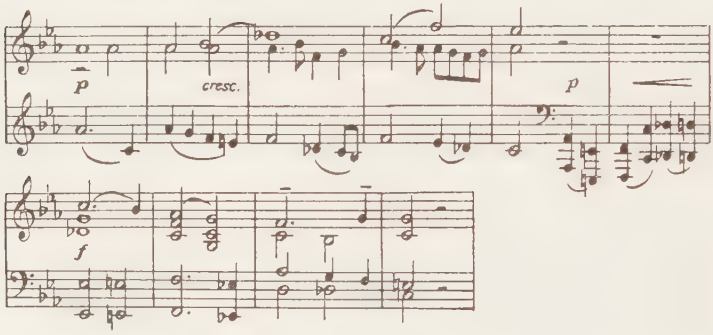
EX. 140

In anticipation of later developments, it is useful to realize that bars 5–7 of the theme have a rhythm very close to that of the main theme of the first movement.

A trumpet fanfare (bar 11) terminates the first phrase of the theme and everything is repeated. Only at bar 31 is C minor established and here the theme is continued by a second phrase. This is immediately used for a transitional epilogue.

Throughout the period of the first theme, the strings have continued playing the characteristic accented crotchets.

A pause separates the first from the second group. The second theme, directed to be played more slowly, consists of two stanzas which are linked by passages of the basses:

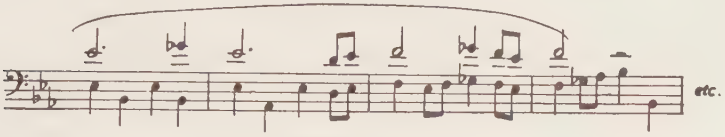


EX. 141

The free extensions of the theme may be called 'developmental'; we certainly recognize here and there a definite link with some detail of the polyphonic setting of the second theme. At bar 99, the tubas take up the descending scale motif of bar 85, etc., for a free 'variation'. At bar 111 the original tempo is resumed. The part of the 'celli is derived from the first two bars of Ex. 141 (bars 69–70); these two bars are repeated sequentially. At the end of the sequence, the violins play an extension of the double bass link of bar 83 f.

From letter H (bar 123) begins the Epilogue of the second group, during which gradually the dominant of E flat is approached. The bass introduces a new rhythm, a steady crotchet rhythm, which anticipates that of the third theme, an anticipation carried further at bar 131 when the drums actually play

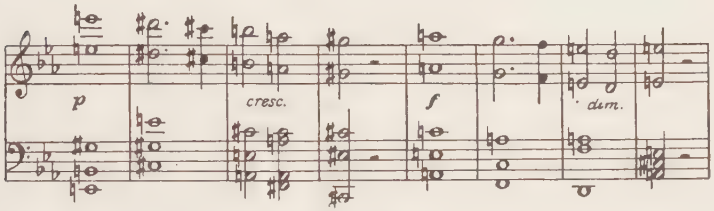
the tonic-dominant quavers with which the strings are to play in the third theme (bar 135) in E flat minor.



EX. 142

This third theme is, once again, a contrapuntal double unison of the kind which from time to time unites for a few notes of definite unison.

The pulsating rhythm of this theme comes to a sudden stop at bar 158 and a solemn, slow theme is played as an epilogue:



EX. 143

Immediately the oboe repeats the last four bars whilst pizzicato violins resume the rhythm of Ex. 142. A strong bass adds weight to a short melodic addition to the theme (bar 175 f.).

At bar 183 the rhythm of Ex. 142 is reintroduced with even greater emphasis than ever before and the brass adds, on one note, the rhythm of the main theme. To the unrelenting rhythm of the crochets, the brass enlarges on this reminiscence without, however recalling the real text of the first theme. The strings remain still engaged with the consecutive crochet rhythm during a transition (bar 231, N. 215) during which soft chords of the horns retain something of the short dotted rhythm of the previous music, but the formerly so energetic motifs now attain perfect tranquillity.

Preceding the horn passage after bar 231 (N. 215), the edition of Robert Haas includes a lovely, extended transition taken from the first version.

At bar 247 (N. 231), Ex. 143 is repeated with great emphasis (and a significant horn link between the two stanzas). Immediately afterwards (bar 260, N. 239), three flutes play softly the entire first phrase of the main theme (Ex. 140); the former trumpet flourish is now played softly by a solo clarinet in E flat major. Thereafter we hear four variations of the first four bars of Ex. 143. The fourth of these (bar 285, N. 265) will be recognized, as an inversion, in the bass. At this point, the violins begin a new melodic idea, its opening mood reflective but soon giving way to the rising tension in the bass. Calm is soon restored and from bar 305 (N. 285) onwards the rhythm of the third theme dominates again. In a climax after bar 321 (N. 301) the third theme is played in its original form by the wood-wind, whilst horns and trombones play simultaneously the second stanza of the first theme (bars 31–36). The development of this contrapuntal meeting of two themes continues to bar 365 (N. 345). Here developmental treatment continues. Bars 365–406 (N. 345–386) are concerned with the main theme (Ex. 140), omitting the first two bars. From bar 407 (N. 387) the entire theme is quoted and introduces further treatment of the 'development' kind. At bar 449 (N. 429) the opening rhythm (Ex. 139) is reintroduced and with bar 457 (N. 437) we reach, as it were, the true recapitulation of the entire first theme. Free extensions follow, quite different from the corresponding section after the opening of the movement, but these lead, by bar 567 (N. 547), to a recapitulation of the second theme. Again after a few bars of true recapitulation the music continues along new paths and the reintroduction of the third theme at bar 621 (N. 583) has its former rhythmical strength considerably reduced. The counter-unison of the wood-wind is absent and new syncopations give the passage a totally different sound.

There are considerable differences in the two editions throughout the pages between the recapitulations of the second and the third theme. Preceding letter Oo, Robert Haas incorporated, again with absolutely convincing result, fourteen bars from the first version. Also, the eight bars (Haas) preceding the recapitulation of the third theme are, beyond any doubt, superior in the first version to the six bars in the second version as printed in Nowak's score.

At bar 651 (N. 617) the preceding ascent of tonalities reaches

a point where a pedal on G sets in. Trombones and trumpets play the first theme of the first movement, but the rest of the orchestra continues in its organic, steady approach to the coda (bar 685, N. 647). Violins play a calm, ascending quaver motif and horns, drums and bass combine in a solemn statement of the opening of the first theme. In majestic calm the composition approaches its culmination. At bar 717 (N. 679), horns bring in the main theme of the Scherzo, ten bars later in canonic imitation, whilst the trumpets play an extended version of their spectacular flourish. Thus we arrive at the last two pages of the score where the first theme of all four movements in combination, reduced to terms of the C major common chord, bring the work to a magnificent end.

★

SYMPHONY NO. 9 in D minor

I. Feierlich, Misterioso
II. Scherzo. Bewegt, lebhaft.
Trio. Schnell
III. Adagio. Langsam, feierlich

BRUCKNER'S last symphony is unfinished inasmuch as it ends with the third movement, the Adagio. It is most fortunate indeed that the work was designed with the Scherzo as the second movement, as the symphony thus ends in sublime beauty, without any impression of fragmentary conclusion. The scant sketches for the planned Finale show some contrapuntal intentions but it is not possible to deduce what kind of ending the composer would have wished for the work. When he came to realize that the strength would probably not be given him to complete the symphony, he would occasionally recommend the *Te Deum* to be played after the third movement. He even worked for a while on a transition to the *Te Deum,* but it appears that the loss of tonal equilibrium disturbed him too deeply (the *Te Deum* stands in C major) for him to carry out the idea. Bruckner reverted to what was, naturally, the original plan: to compose a Finale. He used every moment of strength, but such moments were rare. The

manuscripts of the sketches show how his hand became weaker and weaker.

There can be no doubt that Bruckner considered the symphony unfinished. It was alien to his nature to end a symphony otherwise than with an assertion of virility and power. The Adagio ending is now familiar to us. Further, accustomed as we are to several symphonies with such endings, we are less disturbed by a quiet ending than Bruckner must have been: Tchaikovsky's 'Pathetique', Brahms's Third or Mahler's Ninth, for instance. Certainly, neither Bruckner nor Beethoven would ever have chosen to end a symphony in such a manner.

The sketches to the Finale are, as we have said, too slight to be of practical use and the idea of a transition to the *Te Deum* was given up by Bruckner as unsatisfactory. One may still consider the possibility of playing the symphony in the first part of a concert and to perform the *Te Deum* after the interval.

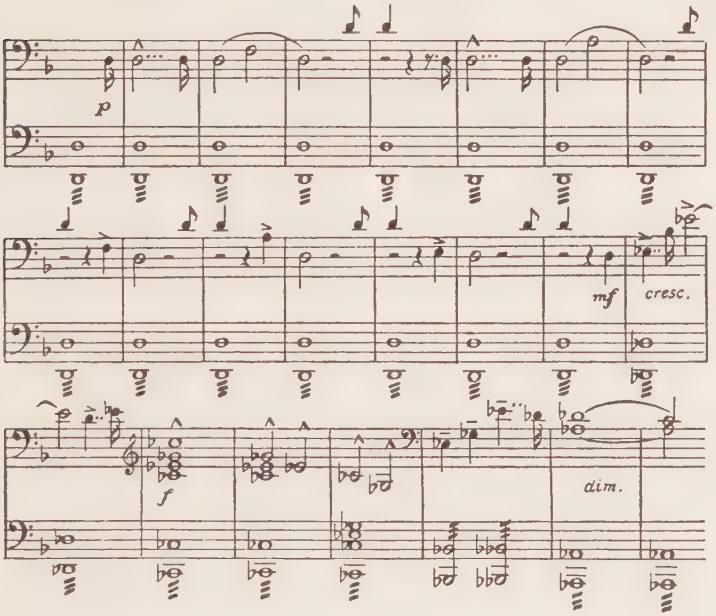
The First Movement

There can be no doubt that, although Bruckner's conception of a large symphonic first movement has its origin in sonata form, his actual procedures are such as to create, sometimes, a new type of organism. The sonata *symmetries* and thematic treatments are there indeed (which is why I have adhered to sonata terminology as a useful signpost to the main points of reference), but the nature of Bruckner's thought sometimes becomes basically alien to the dramatic-athletic character of true sonata style. Consequently critics have been apt to seize upon the external semblances and to miss the deeper processes.

Dr. Robert Simpson has described the first movement of the Ninth Symphony as consisting of three great sections—Statement, Expanded Counterstatement, and Coda; this gives a simple impression of the fundamentally static nature of Bruckner's marmoreal idea, and is verifiable by careful tonal analysis. Reference, however, to sonata terms can do no harm so long as the reader does not associate these terms with what he is used to in Beethoven and Brahms, and may even help him to remember the salient points in the manner of a mnemonic. Accordingly I have retained such terms.

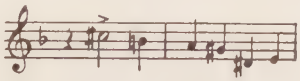
The first movement opens, pianissimo, with a unison tremolo on D, played by the strings, strengthened in the third bar by the

wood-wind. Beginning with the fourth bar, eight horns announce in awesome solemnity the first theme, which departs in its final phrase from D minor:



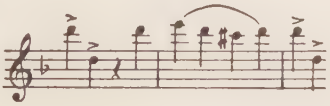
EX. 144

The firm assertion of the ending phrase does not herald a lasting air of solemnity. There follows a deeply disturbed epilogue with this motif of the violins:



EX. 145

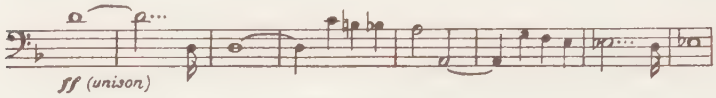
with an agitated reaction from the wood-wind:



EX. 146

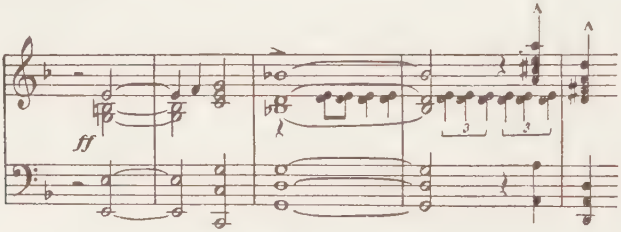
From time to time, at conspicuous moments, the ever-shifting 'modulations' lead to a brief return to D minor (bars 39 and 51).

Rising tension, both in harmony and dynamics, leads to the climax of the unison theme:



EX. 147

which once again asserts D minor. The unison theme is given a mighty addition which terminates everything so far heard with absolute finality:



EX. 148

This last example is not included in the restatement of the first group of themes at the beginning of the recapitulation, but becomes very important in the coda.

The tremendous finality of the cadence is followed by a chaotic episode in which a short motif is tossed about among the woodwind instruments, whilst the strings play agitated pizzicato scales.

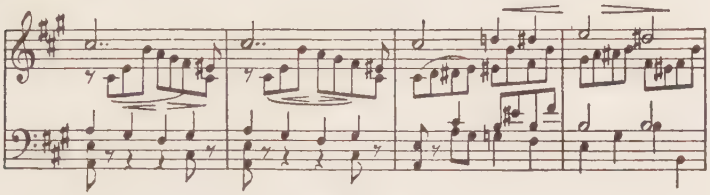
EX. 149

Yet the entire section remains dominated by a pedal point on D. What the listener tends to interpret as an epilogue to the fortissimo theme of Ex. 147–148 is in fact, formally speaking, the transition to the second theme.

At bar 97 the D of the long pedal point reveals itself as the

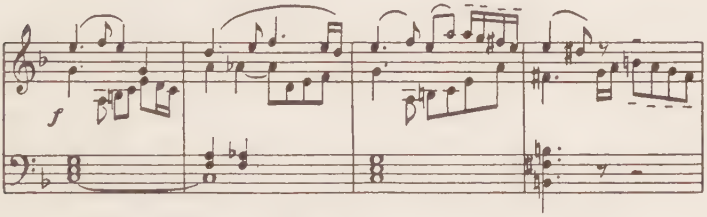
long-prepared subdominant of A major, the key which dominates the entire second section.

After the final bar 98 in which the drums and violas alone remain with the pedal point D, the strings sing the wonderful second theme:



EX. 150

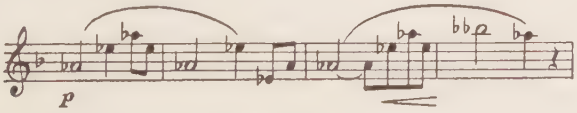
extended by melodic counterstatements of which the expressive:



EX. 151

is particularly memorable until the tuneful flow of music returns to the A major theme. As in the first group of themes, the tonality remains in control over the entire section notwithstanding the fact that we never remain in an obvious A major for longer than a few bars.

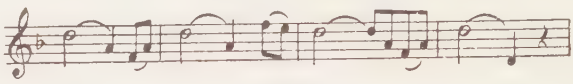
The entire section is filled with wave after wave of exaltation until the music moves into a mysterious echoing passage based on the following figure:



EX. 152

which settles darkly on a six-four chord of A, without the third

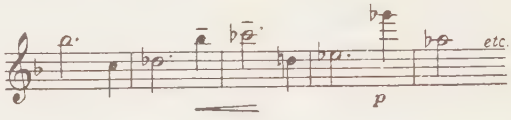
(bar 161). Then, anticipated by the last example, comes the third theme:



EX. 153

On paper it appears to be in D minor, but this is really the subdominant of A, and not a tonic in its own right, a fact finally confirmed by the restless tonality of this group and its eventual establishment of F major at bar 219.

The entire group (bars 167–227), with the impressive thematic extensions:



EX. 154

is characterized by a compelling inner unity. A double line at the end of bar 226 indicates the end of the entire first section of this movement and, if it is right to apply here sonata form terms, we now enter the development section.

The development treatment begins (bars 227–276) with the first theme of the movement (Ex. 144). The pedal point on F, which had begun at the end of the third theme group, at bar 219, carries over into the development, but consistent chromatic counterpoints prevent the music from settling in any clearly established key until, at bar 253, we attain A minor. Here, the wood-wind continues its developmental treatment of the first theme (Ex. 144) whilst the first violins play a figure which is clearly to be heard as a free inversion of the second violins' part of the second theme (Ex.150). Indeed, the undisturbed A minor sounds seem to introduce something of the second theme's peaceful note. However, the brief interjection of the horns at bars 255 and 259 reintroduce the short motif of Ex. 149 which attains a disturbing prominence after bar 261. The final phrase of Ex. 144 takes command and the disturbing vision of Ex. 149 vanishes as quickly as it had come up.

The next section, comprising bars 277–302, develops the companion of the third theme (Ex. 154) to a by-play of pizzicato strings which also derives from the second violins' accompaniment to the second theme.

A pause precedes a further section (bar 303). To the accompaniment of motifs somewhat reminiscent of the polyphony of the second theme (Ex. 150), the 'celli—and later other instruments—introduce Ex. 145 in broad, expressive play, giving it an entirely new meaning. Gradually, however, this motif regains its former agitated character. At bar 321 it is rejoined by the ominous octave motif of Ex. 146 and in a crescendo, far more tense and alarming than the corresponding bars in the exposition, we approach the extended quotation of the unison climax of Ex. 147 (bar 333). This begins in D minor, but phrase by phrase the tonality is shifted far afield.

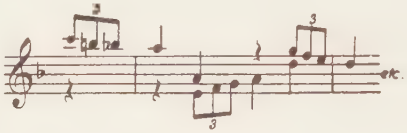
The octave of the unison theme (Ex. 147) remains the leading motif in a slower section, beginning with bar 355, whilst the strings play an improvisation beginning with a firm, rhythmical reminiscence of the beginning of the first theme (Ex. 144). At bar 366 the triplet from the unison theme (Ex. 147) joins in and instantaneously the music enters into a state of agitation, rising to visions of frightful terror.

After two bars of the drum's diminuendo (bars 398–399) it is the very same triplet from the unison theme which changes from terrified agitation to gentle comfort. Simultaneously a pedal point on A adds the note of reassured tonality and we approach the quotation of the second group of themes (Ex. 150) in D major. We are now clearly in the middle of a recapitulation that has been in progress for a long time.

Comparison of this recapitulation of the second group with its original appearance in the exposition reveals, apart from the different key, considerable alteration in the scoring of the background. The total impression made is, however, hardly changed at all. Significant changes occur only right at the end, at bar 450. The transition leading to the third theme is now entirely recomposed. The second tune of the group (Ex. 151) leads straight towards the end of the section, not as before, to a return of the main tune. By this means, the recapitulation of the section is considerably shortened.

Neither is the third theme now introduced by a preliminary

episode anticipating its tune. Careful comparison with the exposition once again shows differences in setting. Already the third bar goes new ways, but soon the theme reverts to its original text. The climax and everything that follows is entirely different, changes being obviously justified by the approach of the coda. The coda itself is preceded by a solemn sequence (bar 505 f.) which links the remote tonalities of the last section with D minor. Over a firm pedal on D (bar 519) the two violins engage the triplet from the unison theme (Ex. 147):

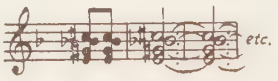


EX. 155

To this accompaniment, the clarinet plays a signal-like motif evolved from the end-phrase of the first theme (bar 19 f.). At bar 531, the solemn modulations from Ex. 148 join, first in majestic repose but soon yielding (bar 539) to the increased nervous tension of the pulsating strings. The solution of the resulting dissonance occurs in bars 499–501, the same tremendous cadence as before in bars 74–75, but augmented and now with truly irresistible strength. From bar 551, D minor remains firmly in command, emphasized by the superimposed diminished ninth, powerfully blazoned forth by the trumpets.

The Second Movement

An eerie dissonance, played by one oboe and three clarinets, indicates from the outset the character of this Scherzo.

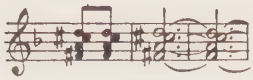


EX. 156

Violins and violoncelli play the notes of the chord, descending and ascending, in pizzicato:

EX. 157

At bar 13 (with upbeat), the dissonance shifts to a new position:

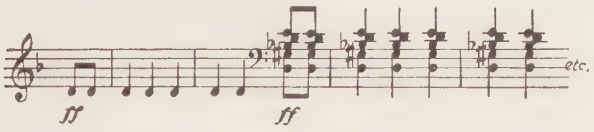


EX. 158

and the pizzicato playing is resumed as before.

From bar 23 the clarinets break the hitherto sustained chord into crochets. The thematic rendering of the dissonant chord by the pizzicato strings frees itself from the mere statement of the chord in broken notes. Simultaneously a crescendo sets in and the harmonic shifts occur more rapidly.

Hitherto the tonality of the music has remained quite undefined. A variety of analytical theories are available which pronounce on the nature of the opening chord, on its subsequent alterations and its root relation to D minor, all of them convincing and each different from the others. To the less initiated it is not until bar 42 that the tonality of the Scherzo becomes clear. Here, a powerful statement of the tonic forces the dissonance to remain in closer touch with D minor:



EX. 159

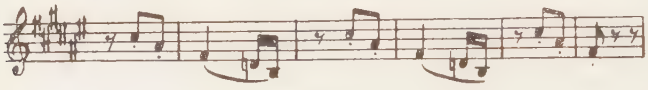
The dissonant chord remains, in one form or another, in evidence throughout the entire movement and the character of the music alternates between incorporeal ghostliness and defiant assertion. In the whole Scherzo there is only one brief period of relief when an oboe tries to lend the thematic rendering of the chord a friendly sound (bar 119 f.). After bar 135 the oboe even

tries with a new melodic idea, but these timid suggestions remain ineffectual. From bar 147 onwards nervous tension sets in again and by bar 160 the thundering unison D brings us back to the former visions of unrelieved terror.

The Trio (3/8) is extremely fast and an uncannily clear F sharp major replaces the tonal complexities of the Scherzo. The first violins play a rapidly ascending passage to which the flutes add this motif:

EX. 160

The deceptive ease of the harmony is slightly but significantly disturbed by a new motif which the violins add to their staccato ascent:



EX. 161

The fantastic swiftness of these apparitions have some external likeness to a Mendelssohnian Scherzo and have misled many a commentator into the use of such terms as 'elfin dance'. In fact, the Trio brings no relief at all from the evil eeriness of the Scherzo, which it only intensifies by different means. Robert Simpson's epithets 'icily compelling and repellent' seem the perfect description.

The trio has an important second theme:

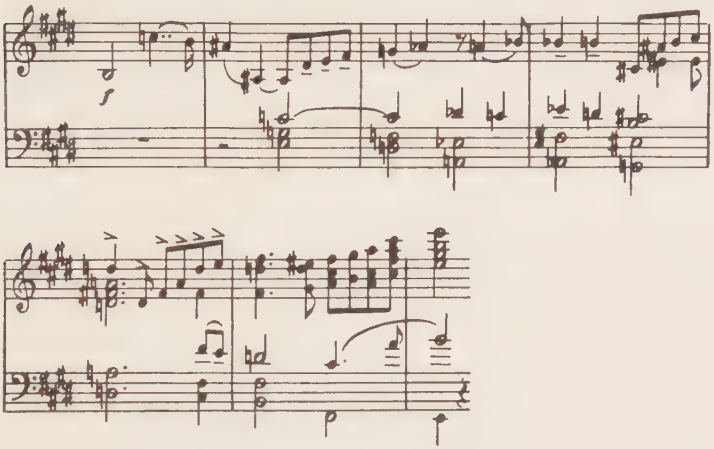
EX. 162

which seems to beg for relief from the ghostly visitations, but even here chromatic uneasiness allows no relaxation.

The Scherzo is repeated unchanged.

The Third Movement

The profoundly eloquent first theme with which unaccompanied violins open the movement (harmony is introduced at the end of the initial motif), moves in hardly definable chromatic tonalities until in the seventh bar it attains the key of E major:



EX. 163

As soon as this solution has been found after the chromatic search for tonal certainty, a chromatic scale in the tremolo violins dominates an uneasy epilogue in which the opening phrase of the theme (oboe and horn) together with the second bar of the theme (clarinet with violas) timidly play imitations. A rapid crescendo leads to a crisis in bar 17 in which two chords of the sevenths are piled one on top of the other. To the resulting dissonance the horns add with strength:

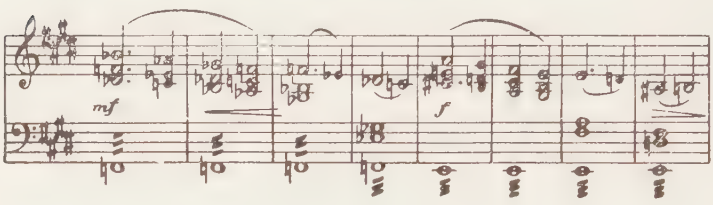
EX. 164

—a motif derived from the first bar of the main theme.

A momentary attempt (bars 19 and 20) to escape from these dissonances proves fruitless: there is a second outburst, soon to recede to a pianissimo which makes the painful dissonance even

more restless. Throughout the entire section, a jerky rhythm makes a further contribution to the general sound of despair.

At bar 29, the tubas add a sorrowful comment:



EX. 165

and the sound of the music loses much of its terror although the jerky rhythm refuses to be banished.

At bar 45 the key changes to A flat major and in broad strength the second theme sets in:

EX. 166

An important melodic extension is added at bar 57, beginning in the key of G flat major and followed, after bar 65, with two quotations of the former tune (Ex. 166). Bars 69–76 conclude the first section of the movement. At bar 77 we return to the signature of E major and the entire first theme is repeated, precisely in its original setting at the beginning of the movement.

Immediately afterwards a development treatment begins. At bar 85 the violins play the theme one note higher than formerly and during the first two bars a flute adds the inversion. The end of the theme, formerly so strong and assertive when arriving at its true tonality, introduces a diminuendo, thereby giving the theme a totally new character.

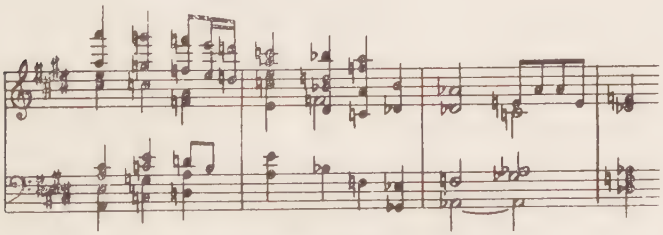
Bar 93 introduces B minor as a departure point. To the accompaniment of majestic scales in the bars, trumpets play four times the opening phrase of the first theme with a wood-wind imitation in the intervening bars, two further quotations of this phrase, pianissimo, by the oboes leads to an extension of the first

theme's development. From bar 105, the first two bars are quoted in their entirety by the bass with important counterstatements of both violins. A scale progression extending over a whole octave leads by bar 121 to a fresh outburst of the former crisis: the same dissonance, the same jerky rhythm and again Ex. 164 as the thematic link with the first theme.

This time the dissonant episode leads not to the main part of the second theme but to a free recapitulation of its melodic extension (bar 129—as formerly bar 57), a contrast totally different from the sad strains of the tuba theme in the earlier section. At bar 140, the expressive and melodious music comes suddenly to a halt.

There follows a further developmental section in which another fragment of the first theme is used: from the middle of its second bar to the phrase that carries over into the fourth bar. The first statement is serene and strong (bars 140–144), but then agitation sets in: for the next six bars the same fragment of the first theme ascends as a canon of the fifth, but serenity returns at bar 150 when the upbeat of the fragmentary motif inspires a new melodic thought for a sequence of four bars.

Suddenly the full string orchestra introduces a new theme of wonderful strength:



EX. 167

It most certainly derives from the tuba theme, Ex. 165, with whom it shares the melodic line of a descending scale in its initial phrase.

Immediately afterwards, however, the music reverts to further treatment of the first theme (bar 163 f.), the first phrase of which is used for an ascending sequence leading to a recapitulation of the second theme (Ex. 166) in augmentation. Here at

last the key of E is firmly established and is followed by a gradually ascending sequence of keys, reaching its summit at bar 181, when a free inversion of the first phrase appeases the mounting tension.

From bar 187, trombones and tubas begin a solemn crescendo with a steadily modulating motif derived from the opening phrase of the augmented second theme, strengthened by a powerful scale in sustained minims by the trumpets and, perhaps even more important, by a highly significant bass.

From bar 173, when the augmented second theme was introduced, an accompaniment of demi-semi-quavers was noticed, playing almost consistently with the interval of semitones. This figuration has constantly continued to make its significant contribution to the progress of the music.

At bar 199 the ever-increasing solemnity of the preceding passages reaches its climax, when trombones and basses play with the greatest power the opening phrase of the first theme. However, it is not the expected climax of solemn calm : the semitone figuration of the violins has reached its climax, too, and introduces a disturbing dissonance. More than the dissonance, it is the unceasing vibrating ostinato which, formerly assisting the sheer majesty of sound, now dominates the entire tutti with its nervous frenzy. No solution is offered to the paroxysm of dissonance and restlessness—a background to the power of the ever-repeated opening phrase of the first theme. A sustained pause of dangerous silence follows.

After this, very gradually and ever more perceptibly, the harmony gains ease and warmth. All the time we still hear the beginning of the first theme. The first violins play pianissimo an ascending chromatic scale. In bar 219, the violas join in with the semitone demi-semi-quavers (now altogether assisting the ever-increasing serenity) and the violin's octaves on E recall the 'jerky rhythm' which wrought such terror early in the movement. In bar 224 the first flute unites the end phrase of the first theme with this transfiguration of former terror. For a few bars, the sustained E gives way to a calm chromatic descent; however, already during its progress, at bar 227, the bass holds on to E as a pedal point until, at bar 231, E major is attained.

To a gentle play around the triad of E major in the strings, the

tubas bring greetings from the Adagio of the Eighth Symphony.[1] The flute plays once again (somewhat freely) the end phrase of the first theme and, lastly, the horns quote the elevated opening of the Seventh Symphony. Bruckner's last completed page ends in a valedictory transfiguration of his own music.

[1] See music example at page 122.

APPENDIX I

A Calendar of Composition and Revision (The Symphonies)

SYMPHONY NO. 1

FIRST ('LINZ') VERSION

14 May 1865. First Movement finished.
27 January to 14 April 1866. Composition of the Second Movement.
23 January 1865 (1.30 a.m.). Trio to Scherzo finished.
25 May 1865. Scherzo finished.
26 July 1866 Finale finished.

SECOND ('VIENNA') VERSION

27 October 1890 to 12 January 1891. First Movement (some further revisions in March and April, 1890).
18 August to 24 October 1890. Second Movement.
5 July to 17 August 1890. Third Movement.
12 March to 29 June 1890. Finale.
First performance: May 1868 in Linz under Bruckner.

SYMPHONY NO. 2

FIRST VERSION

11 October 1871 to 8 July 1872. First Movement.
19 to 25 July 1872. Second Movement finished.
16 to 18 July 1872. Third Movement finished.
28 July to 11 September 1872. Finale finished.
Revisions: 1873, 1875–1876 and 1877, 1878–1879, 1891.
First performance: 26 October 1873 in Vienna under Bruckner.

SYMPHONY NO. 3

FIRST VERSION

Autumn 1872. Beginning.
23 February 1873. Sketch of First Movement finished.
24 February 1873. Beginning of the Second Movement.
2 March 1873. Second Movement finished in sketch.
11 March 1873. Scherzo begun.
24 May 1873. Second Movement finished.
16 July 1873. First Movement finished.
1 August 1873. Finale begun.
31 August 1873. Finale finished in sketch.
31 December 1873. Finale finished.
1874. Some 'extensive improvements' (Bruckner).

SECOND VERSION

October 1876. Adagio revised.
27 January 1877. Revision of Finale finished.
28 April 1877. Second version finished.
1878. Further revision.

THIRD VERSION

1 August to 17 September 1888. Revision of Finale.
24 September to 17 November 1888. Revision of First Movement.
10 February to 4 March 1889. Revision of Third Movement.
17 February to 27 February 1889. Revision of Second Movement.
First performance: 16 December 1877 in Vienna under Bruckner.

SYMPHONY NO. 4

FIRST VERSION

2 January to 24 January 1874. First Movement in sketch.
21 March 1874. First Movement finished.
10 April to 7 July 1874. Second Movement.
13 June to 25 July 1874. Scherzo.
30 July to 12 August 1874. Finale in sketch.
22 November 1874. Symphony finished.

SECOND VERSION

18 January to 25 June 1878. Revision of First Movement.
26 June to 31 July 1878. Revision of Second Movement.
30 September 1878. Revision of Finale finished.
19 November 1879 to 5 June 1880. Further revisions of the Finale.
December 1878. New Scherzo.
Further revisions: 1880 (Finale), 1887, 1889.
First performance: 20 February 1881 in Vienna under Richter.

SYMPHONY NO. 5

14 February 1875. Beginning (with the Second Movement).
3 March 1875. Beginning of First Movement.
16 to 17 March 1875. Sketch for the Scherzo.
16 April 1875. Scherzo finished.
18 April to 22 June 1875. Trio.
23 June to 6 November 1875. Finale.
16 May 1876. Symphony 'finished'.
19 May to 5 August 1877. First Movement improved.
9 August 1877. First Movement 'entirely finished'.
11 August 1877. Some revision of the Second Movement finished.
4 January 1878. Second Movement definitely finished.
First performance: April 1894 in Graz under Schalk.

SYMPHONY NO. 6

24 September 1879 to 27 September 1880. First Movement in orchestral score.
22 November 1880. Second Movement finished.
17 December 1880 to 17 June 1881. Scherzo.
28 June to 3 September 1881. Finale.
First performance: February 1883 in Vienna under Jahn (Second and Third Movements only).

SYMPHONY NO. 7

23 September 1881. First beginning.
14 July 1882. Sketch to Scherzo finished.
12 August 1882. Scherzo finished in score.
16 October 1882. Another entry on the score to the Scherzo: 'finished'.
29 December 1882. First Movement finished.
22 January 1883. Sketch of Adagio finished.
21 April 1883. Adagio finished in score.
10 August 1883. Sketch of Finale finished.
5 September 1883. Symphony finished.
First performance: 30 December 1884 in Leipzig under Nikisch.

SYMPHONY NO. 8

FIRST VERSION

1st October 1884. Sketch of First Movement.
16 February 1885. Sketch of Adagio.

23 July 1885. Sketch of Scherzo.
25 August 1885. Sketch of original Trio.
9 July and 16 August 1885. Sketches of Finale.
7 February 1886. First Movement finished.
19 October 1886. Scherzo finished.
24 October 1886. A further entry 'finished' on Scherzo.
26 August 1886. Adagio finished.
4 September 1887. Symphony finished (Letter to H. Levi).

REVISED EDITION
4 March to 8 May 1889. Revision of Adagio.
31 July 1889. Finale finished.
25 September 1889. Scherzo finished.
29 January 1890. First Movement finished.
10 February 1890. 'Finished'.
28 February 1890. 'Entirely finished'.
10 March 1890. 'Entirely finished'.
First performance: 18 December 1892 in Vienna under Richter.

SYMPHONY NO. 9

21 September 1887. Beginning.
4 April 1889. Sketch of Scherzo.
April 1891. Beginning of First Movement in score.
14 October 1892. First Movement finished.
23 December 1893. Further entry 'finished'. (First Movement).
27 February 1893. Scherzo finished.
31 October 1894. Adagio finished.
30 November 1894. Revision of Adagio finished.
First performance: February 1903 in Vienna under Löwe.

APPENDIX II

The Works of Anton Bruckner

A. CHURCH MUSIC

1835 *Pange Lingua in C* for choir in four parts. (Revised 1891.)
1842 (*ca.*) *Mass in C* for contralto, choir, two horns and organ.
1843 (?) *Libera in F*, for choir and organ.
1843 *Tantum ergo in D* for choir.
1844 Choral *Mass in F minor.*
1845 (*ca.*) Two *Asperges me* for choir and organ.
1845 Five *Tantum ergo* for choir and organ.
1848 *Tantum ergo in A* for choir and organ.
Requiem in D minor for soli, choir and orchestra. (Finished 11 March 1849, revised in 1892.)
1850 (*ca.*) *114th Psalm* for choir in five parts and trombones.
Missa pro Quadragesima for choir and trombones. (Sketch only.)
Mass in E flat major. (Sketch only.)
1852 (*ca.*) *22nd Psalm* for choir and piano.
1853 *Magnificat* for soli, choir and orchestra.
1854 (*ca.*) *Tantum ergo in B flat* for choir, instruments and organ.
1854 *Libera in F minor* for choir in five parts, three trombones and organ.
Missa solemnis in B flat minor for soli, choir and orchestra.
1856 *Ave Maria in F* for soli, choir and organ.
1861 *Ave Maria* for choir in seven parts. (Composed as an addition to a Mass by Lotti.)

1863 *112th Psalm* for choir and organ.
1864 *Mass No. 1 in D minor.* (Composed between July and 29 September 1864; revised 1876.)
1866 *Mass No. 2 in E minor.* (Finished 25 November 1866; revised 1882.)
1867 *Mass No. 3 in F minor.* (Composed between 14 September 1867 and 9 September 1868; revised 1876, 1881, 1890.)
1868 *Inveni David* Offertorium for men's chorus and four trombones.
Pange lingua in the Phrygian mode for chorus.
Jam lucis for choir.
Asperges me for choir.
1869 *Locus iste,* Gradual for choir.
1878 *Tota pulchra in E flat* for baritone solo, choir and organ.
1879 *Os iusti* for choir in seven parts.
1881 *Te Deum.* (Composed from May 1881 to 7 March 1884; revised from 28 September 1883 to 2 May 1885.)
1882 *Ave Maria in F* for contralto solo and organ.
1884 *Christus factus est,* Gradual for choir in five parts.
Christus factus est for choir in six parts with strings or trombones.
1884 *Salvum face regem* for choir.
1885 *Ecce sacerdos* for choir in seven parts, three trombones and organ.
Virga Jesse floruit for choir.
1892 *Vexilla regis* for choir.
150th Psalm for soprano solo, choir and orchestra. (Finished 29 June 1892.)

B. OTHER VOCAL WORKS

1843 *Tafellied* for men's chorus.
1845 (*ca.*) *Herz Jesu Lied* and *O du liebes Jesukind.* (N.B.: A. Orel has raised doubts whether these are Bruckner's compositions.)
1845 *Vergissmeinnicht,* Cantata for four soli, choir in eight parts and piano. (Three versions.)
Das Lied vom deutschen Vaterland for male chorus.
1846 *Ständchen* for male chorus.
Festlied for male chorus.
1847 (*ca.*) *Dir, Herr, will ich mich ergeben* for chorus.
1847 *Der Lehrstand* for chorus.
1848 *In jener letzten der Nächte* for chorus.
Sternschnuppen for male chorus.

1851 *Frühlingslied* for voice and piano.
Two *Motti* for male chorus.
Das edle Herz for male chorus.
Entsagen, Cantata for soli, chorus and organ.
1852 Two *Totenlieder* for chorus.
Die Geburt for male chorus.
Auf Bruder, Cantata for soli, chorus and orchestra.
1854 *Vor Arneth's Grab* for male chorus and three trombones.
Lasst Jubelklänge laut erklingen for male chorus and wind instruments. (Three versions with textual alterations.)
1855 *Auf Bruder, auf, die Saiten zur Hand*, Cantata for soli, choir and orchestra.
St. Jakob spross aus edlem Stamm for soli, choir and piano.
Des Dankes Wort sei mir gegönnt for male chorus and soli.
1858 (*ca.*) *Amaranths' Waldeslieder* for soli and piano.
1861 *Am Grabe* for male chorus.
1862 *Du bist wie eine Blume* for solo quartet.
1862 (*ca.*) *Das edle Herz* for chorus.
1862 *Preiset den Herrn*, Cantata for soli, choir and wind orchestra.
1863 *Germanenzug* for male chorus and wind orchestra.
1864 *Um Mitternacht* for contralto solo, male chorus and piano.
Herbstlied for male chorus, two soprano soli and piano.
1866 *Der Abendhimmel* for male chorus.
O könnt ich dich beglücken for male chorus and soli.
Vaterländisches Weinlied for male chorus.
Vaterlandsliebe for male chorus and soli.
1868 *Motto* for male chorus.
1868 (*ca.*) *Im April* for solo and piano.
Mein Herz und deine Stimme for solo and piano.
Herbstkummer for solo and piano.
1870 *Mitternacht* for tenor solo, male chorus and piano.
1876 *Das hohe Lied* for soli and male chorus.
1877 *Trösterin Musik* for male chorus and organ.
Abendzauber for male chorus, yodel solo and horn quartet.
1878 *Zur Vermählungsfeier* for male chorus.
1882 *Sängerbund* for chorus.
1886 *Um Mitternacht* for tenor solo and chorus. (Second composition.)
1890 *Träumen und Wachen* for tenor solo and male chorus.
1892 *Das deutsche Lied* for male chorus and wind instruments.
1893 *Helgoland* for male chorus and orchestra.

C. INSTRUMENTAL WORKS

(For the Revisions of the Symphonies see Appendix I)

1862 Four orchestral pieces (Marches).
1862–1863 Symphony in F minor.
1863 Overture in G minor.
1865 Two military marches.
1865–1866 Symphony No. 1 in C minor.
1869 Symphony in D minor.
1871–1872 Symphony No. 2 in C minor.
1873 Symphony No. 3 in D minor.
1874 Symphony No. 4 in E flat major.
1875 Symphony No. 5 in B flat major.
1879 String Quintet.
1879–1881 Symphony No. 6 in A major.
1881–1883 Symphony No. 7 in E major.
1884–1886 Symphony No. 8 in C minor.
1891–1896 Symphony No. 9 in D minor. (The Third Movement completed in 1894.)

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