ANTON BRUCKNER AND THE PROCESS OF MUSICAL CREATION

By EGON WELLESZ

THE SCIENCE of musical æsthetics has hitherto devoted but little attention to the question of the origin of the musical art-work. One could almost say that the concern of this science is always with the finished work—that the investigation of the mysterious process of the creation of that work is avoided. It is no wonder, then, that the understanding of a musical art-work is much more difficult to obtain than that of a work of literature. The definitive edition of a poet's work generally contains in the last volumes an assembly of the fragments, drafts, and sketches, relating to the various completed works. But in the editions of the complete works of the great composers it is only rarely that one finds such glimpses into the workshop of the musician.

And yet such additions to the collections of the finished works are altogether necessary to the understanding of the artist's personality. For this reason it is cause for congratulation that in the new edition of the Complete Works of Anton Bruckner [1] the sketches and drafts of the symphonies have been included in great number, so that one can follow the development of the various musical ideas and the growth of the musical architecture.

The symphonies of the Austrian composer are at the present time the center of unusual interest. Their previous publication in score had been divided among several firms.

On July 14, 1892, Bruckner—whose place as a composer was at that time still very much in dispute—signed a contract with the firm of Jos. Eberle & Co. of Vienna for his First, Second, Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, also—which does not concern us here—for the 150th Psalm and "Some Men's Choruses," as they were called in the contract. Inasmuch as Eberle & Co. was chiefly a music engraving firm and did not handle sales of publications, these works of Bruckner's were delivered to, and put on sale by, the firm of C. Haslinger in Vienna. (In this

[1] Anton Bruckner, *Sämtliche Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe im Auftrage der Generaldirektion der Nationalbibliothek und der Internationalen Bruckner-Gesellschaft*, edited by Robert Haas and Alfred Orel. Musikwissenschaftlicher Verlag der Internationalen Bruckner-Gesellschaft, Vienna.

connection the book on Bruckner by A. Orel is incorrect when it mentions the firm of Haslinger as Bruckner's publisher.) A few years later these works were transferred from Eberle & Co. to that firm's successors, Waldheim-Eberle, also of Vienna. From this firm, "Universal Edition" of Vienna took over the rights on June 21, 1910.

Bruckner's Third Symphony and the *Te Deum* were first brought out by the firm of Th. Rättig in Vienna. By agreement of July 13, 1901, "Universal Edition" acquired a joint sales right for these works—that is to say, they also could list them in their catalogue and sell them. When the Rättig Press was bought out by the firm of Schlesinger-Lienau of Berlin, "Universal Edition" still retained these sales rights, and then, in 1909, obtained from Schlesinger-Lienau—to be exact, from their Vienna branch, C. Haslinger—the entire rights for these works as well as for the Eighth Symphony, which had been published previously by Haslinger.

Bruckner's Fifth and Seventh Symphonies were published by the firm of A. Guttmann in Vienna. "Universal Edition" came eventually into possession of these works also, when they purchased the entire business of the Guttmann firm.

This concentration in 1909-10 of Bruckner's complete works in the hands of "Universal Edition" is connected directly with the circumstance of Emil Hertzka's [2] assuming the directorship of this company in 1908. Upon advice from Gustav Mahler, Hertzka set to work at once to obtain exclusive rights for all of Bruckner's compositions. From this time also dates the ever wider circulation of these works.

Between 1924 and 1927, all of these scores appeared in an edition revised by Joseph von Wöss, which had been made according to the parts and scores in the archives of the Wiener Konzertverein, which bear the indications for performance of Ferdinand Löwe.

In view of the way Bruckner's symphonies wandered from one publisher to another and this at a time when his importance to musical history had not yet been established, it will be understood—without imputing ulterior motives or, for that matter, intent of any kind to the editors—how the so-called "printers' copies" went astray. Before leaving this subject, I feel that I should express my thanks to the management of "Universal Edition" for having permitted me to examine the contracts dealing with Bruckner's Symphonies so that these complicated contractual relations could be clearly stated.

[2] The well-known promoter of modern music; died 1932.

In 1918, Georg Göhler, in the *Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft,* and again, in 1925, Alfred Orel, in his work on Bruckner, had urged the publication of a Complete Edition of the composer's works, to be based on scientific principles and to include critical notes—such an edition to be begun upon the expiration of the copyright thirty years after Bruckner's death, namely, in 1926. This wish has been fulfilled through the appearance of the Critical Edition during the past few years.

The first volume, containing the unfinished Ninth, caused great astonishment.[3] One knew, to be sure, that Ferdinand Löwe, Bruckner's pupil and friend, had, as performing conductor, arranged the work for practical purposes. But no one supposed that the alterations were so extensive as is shown by a comparison of the earlier known and frequently played score with the now available edition which follows the original manuscript. Still greater surprise followed, however, at the appearance of other symphonies, especially the Fifth and Seventh. Here again far-reaching differences were revealed between Bruckner's manuscripts, which served as the basis of the Critical Edition, and the formerly known scores. Yet, during Bruckner's lifetime, the symphonies, differing as they do from the manuscripts, were played as printed by "Universal Edition." How can we explain this? The critical notice of the editor leaves no doubt that every step has been taken to solve the riddle. The investigations aimed above all to find the proof-sheets. But these, from which we might have known whether Bruckner himself or his friends Josef and Franz Schalk or Ferdinand Löwe made the alterations, have remained undiscovered.[4]

It is not strange that this unusual case is claiming attention in musical circles, for it is even more interesting than that of Musorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov. The Bruckner performances according to the newly published scores have produced general and heated controversies. The origin of a dispute over the double question—are the recently published "original versions" to be considered the final expressions of the composer's will, and are the formerly accepted scores only adaptations?—will be scarcely comprehensible to a person who knows little of the man Bruckner. For the explanation can be made only from a knowledge

[3] Ninth Symphony in D minor (original version), edited and annotated by Alfred Orel.

[4] This is by no means surprising, since mere proofs are, after all, not likely to be treated with the same respect as an original manuscript. Moreover, the rights of publication in all the symphonies, and at the same time all the materials, were taken over from the original publisher by another firm. In fact, with the First, Second, Fifth, and Sixth Symphonies, the change took place twice.

of his peculiar nature, which, to a degree difficult to grasp in these times, preferred seclusion from the world. His was a nature which, in its true form and in its full greatness, revealed itself only in music. Bruckner is, in fact, one of the most puzzling figures in the history of music.

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This artist, born in 1824 in a little village in upper Austria, must have possessed enormous spiritual energy to make of himself what he finally became—one of the greatest masters of his time. His life and his unusually late maturity have been many times detailed, and the attempt has been made to explain also the discrepancy between the impression which the personality of the man made upon other people and the actual works of the musician. Nevertheless, the mystery remains, and it eludes every rational explanation.

One must realize what his background was. He was brought up in a little village, the son of a schoolteacher. At the age of eleven, he showed traces of a musical gift and was allowed to accompany the singing of the people in church. His father had him instructed in the elements of music. When the boy was thirteen, the father died. Bruckner became a choirboy at the monastery of St. Florian; his residence there became decisive for his future. For here, in a highly cultivated environment, he came to know the masterpieces of sacred music, the masses of the great composers of the Baroque, Rococo, and Classical epochs. Bruckner determined to be, like his father, a teacher. He prepared himself, with astounding diligence, for his calling; but, at the same time, he prepared himself to be an organist. As teacher he went to a little place that offered nothing stimulating. His salary was so small that he was obliged to play violin—on which, however, he was not highly skilled—at dances and weddings. Chance brought him again to St. Florian as instructor in the school of the monastery. He was now twenty-one years old, and resumed study to fit himself for teaching in the higher schools. In the year 1852, at the age of twenty-six, he reached his goal. Now he transferred his attention entirely to the study of the organ, and in 1854 passed an examination, achieving a good record. About this time he composed some church music which, however, showed as yet no personal characteristics. The cathedral organist at Linz having died, Bruckner succeeded him at his post and thereupon became first and foremost a musician.

Still Bruckner was not content with what he had attained. He

received from the Bishop of Linz permission to go to Vienna frequently, in order to study with the best teacher of musical theory there, Simon Sechter. His instruction lasted six years, until he had achieved such virtuosity in counterpoint and fugue that he astounded everyone at his final examination. Even then his career was not decided. Bruckner was now thirty-seven years old. At the crucial moment he met the Kapellmeister of the theater at Linz, Otto Kitzler, who acquainted him with the classical composers and Wagner. And again Bruckner began to study—this time composition itself and instrumentation. After two years his studies were concluded, and the last barrier that had obstructed the outpouring of his creative genius was surmounted. At the age of forty, Bruckner wrote his first masterpiece—the Mass in D minor. In this work he showed himself for the first time to be a composer in the true sense; and such he remained until October 11, 1896, when he died as he was working on the sketches of the last movement of the Ninth. For, in the consciousness of his gift for composition finally brought to fruition, Bruckner gave up his position as cathedral organist. It had become too confining for him, and he considered the possibility of going to Vienna. Recognizing fully how serious such a change would be, he wrote to his earlier protector, Herbeck, the director of the opera in Vienna: *In Ihre Hände lege ich mein Schicksal, und meine Zukunft. Bitte innigst, retten Sie mich, sonst bin ich verloren* ("In your hands I lay my fate and my future. I beg fervently that you save me; otherwise I am lost"). As a result, he received the place of Sechter, who had just died, at the Vienna Conservatory. His subsistence was thus assured; he could live for his art.

Let us consider this steady development: The nameless boy, favored by no external circumstances, sets himself a goal—he will be a teacher. He achieves it. Now he will be a music teacher besides. This also he achieves. Now he will be a teacher of higher forms; he succeeds. Then, organist; again he succeeds. Now he wills to be a composer; he feels in himself the strength to achieve the highest. He succeeds in remolding his life on a totally new basis; and in the sphere of art he mounts from work to work until in the Adagio of the Ninth Symphony he reaches classical greatness and perfection.

Can one, in the light of such a development, support the legend which says that Bruckner was like a child and accommodated himself to the will of every stranger? It seems not. Bruckner surely needed all his energy to make of himself what he finally became. But he had

consumed many years of his life in subordinate positions, and they left an external mark on him, so that he appeared more submissive than he really was. In addition he may have known that the appearance of shyness was a mask which protected him, which gave him—who was not a match for the witty conversation of Viennese artists—the chance to avoid discussions that meant nothing to him.

If one considers what Bruckner created between the fortieth and seventieth years of his life, if one grasps from the sketches with what difficulty he shaped his ideas to fit the intended form, then one will easily understand why, at the end of the day's work, he should have been happiest in the company of his friends or chatting with his pupils—preferably about his compositions. For around them clustered all his thoughts.

What was the actual nature of the creative process that produced them?

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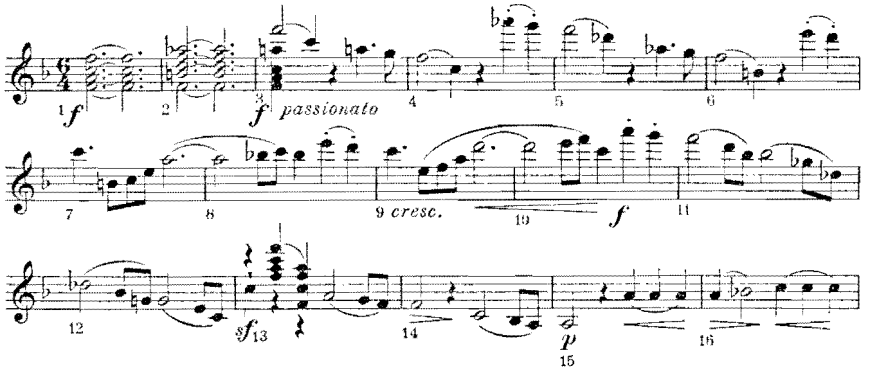
The music with which we are most familiar is the product of composers representing two types which, in their extreme forms, may be called opposite. There are composers who visualize the architecture, conceived in a moment of creative power, and who then become aware gradually of the component parts and turn their attention to details; and then there are composers who first of all conceive a theme, from which they proceed to a second theme, and who then exhaust all the possibilities which the development of the themes suggests. The latter type was the more frequent one in the second half of the 19th century, and to it Bruckner belonged. But his theme is no longer of the kind especially apt for spinning out, such as we encounter in Beethoven. The Bruckner theme has, rather, something of the finality and concentration of the Wagnerian *Leitmotiv,* and as a result the preparation and statement of a Bruckner theme may be followed abruptly by entirely new material; for the concentrated form of the thematic idea has allowed the composer to develop it no further. Such an attitude towards the symphonic material carries with it an entirely new conception of musical architecture.

Beethoven never in all his symphonies—not even in the Ninth—invested the theme beyond a certain point with independent individ-

uality. The romantic composer, with his predilection for the characteristic and for an excess of individuality, goes a step farther, Wagner finally employing in the opera the short *Motiv* which evokes in the hearer's mind the thing or idea with which it is linked.

Bruckner who as an organist was accustomed from his childhood to think musically in sharply defined contrasts, who possessed the melodic intensity of Schubert and who—as admirer of Wagner—even added to this intensity, could not, as Beethoven had done in the Fifth Symphony, erect a whole movement upon one single basic motive. He placed the contrasting groups side by side, and thus differed fundamentally from Brahms whose special art consisted in the undetectable transition from one theme to another. Although all this may be well known, it is necessary to mention it here in order to clarify the process of symphonic creation in Bruckner and to explain many of his encroachments upon the symphonic form, which would otherwise be incomprehensible. The contrast between Bruckner and Brahms in their relation to symphonic form may be illustrated by two examples which, in their thematic substance, are not radically different but which demonstrate the different manners of symphonic treatment used by the two composers. Let us compare the first theme of the Third Symphony of Brahms with the first principal theme of the Fourth Symphony of Bruckner. In the Brahms example, the main theme begins directly with the third introductory chord, a theme whose peculiar character lies in the first four measures, while the following measures are a working out of the original creative idea:

Ex. 1

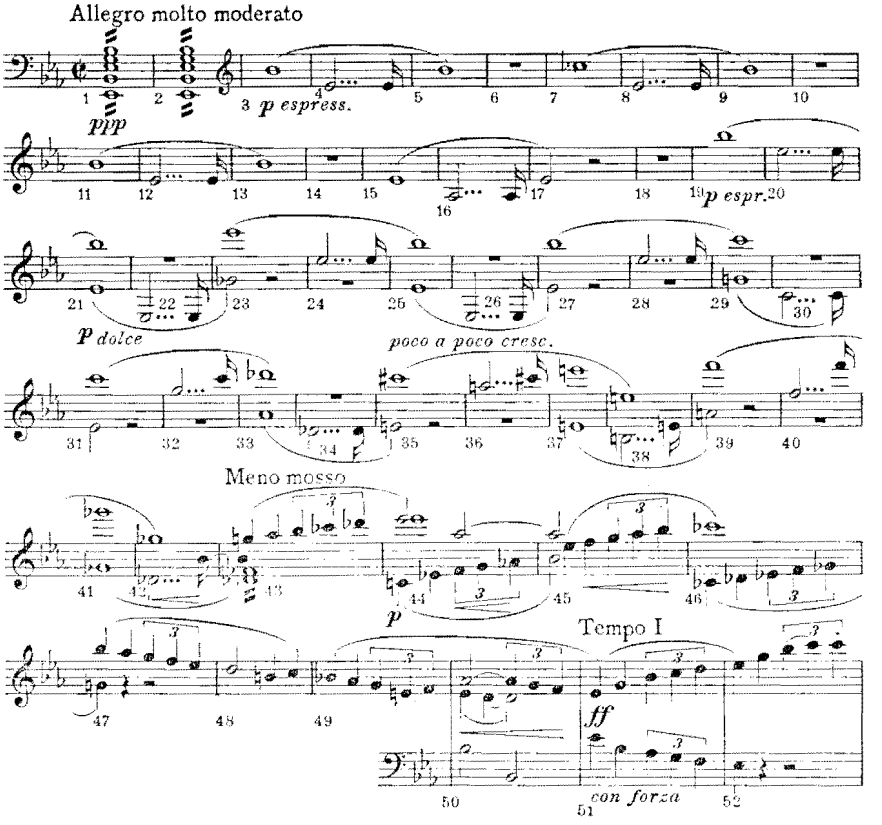


Measures 3-6 are constructed over the bass-motive—F, A-flat, f,—which has already been heard in the upper voice of the three introductory chords. The first idea (measures 3-4) receives a new impulse almost at once, both through the tendency towards the minor and through the two quarter-notes, a-flat″ and g″; besides the quarter-notes, eighth-notes are now introduced in measure 7. From measure 7 on, the bass presses ever upward, proceeding by step. The melody in measures 11 and 12 presents a variant of the first motive, and at the same time the beginning of the final cadence, which, however, is as yet so well concealed that a new thought can be joined on in measure 16 without its entrance being noticed.

Let us now compare with these opening measures of the Third Symphony of Brahms, the beginning of the Fourth, or "Romantic," Symphony of Bruckner. The similarity of the principal motive, which enters first in the bass in measure 51, to the opening measures of the Brahms theme cannot be overlooked. But how differently Bruckner proceeds! First of all he creates the mood in two measures in which all the strings sound the deep E-flat major chord. Then he assigns a simple motive, like a signal, to the horn. It is taken up again with a peculiar variation (measures 7-9). Through the introduction of the c-flat′, Bruckner wished to establish the subdominant in minor (the chord of A-flat, C-flat, E-flat). Here too, in the change from major to minor, appears a parallel to the Brahms; but how different, how much more discreetly and subtly is this problem solved by Bruckner. In measures 11-13 the motive returns in E-flat major, and yet again in measures 15-17, an octave lower, like an echo.

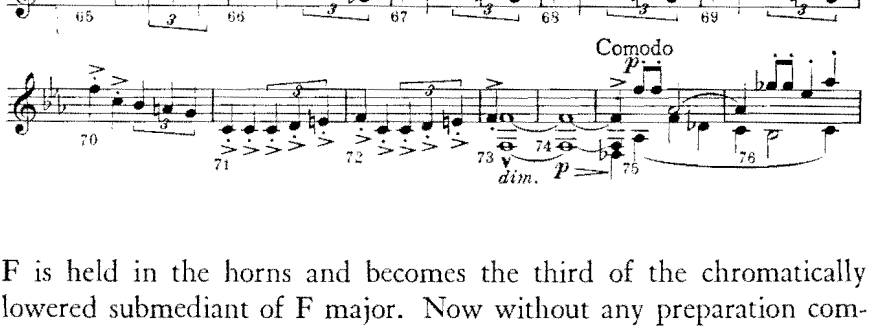
Now Bruckner begins to treat the motive, previously stated in the most simple manner, as call and answer between the woodwinds and horn, which overlap. It is worth noting that at the recapitulation of measures 3-13 (*i.e.*, the first idea) Bruckner does not again employ the c-flat′, but rather the leap of an octave e-flat‴, e-flat″ (already prepared in measure 21).

Ex. 2



Starting with measure 27, there begins a treatment of the motive, very characteristic of Bruckner. It ascends ever higher over c‴, d-flat‴ (c-sharp‴), e‴, f‴, g-flat‴. And now (measure 43) a variant of this passage is joined to a new motive: g″, a-flat″, b-flat″, c-flat‴, d-flat‴, which proceeds by imitation towards an E-flat major cadence; and now, at a point of high interest, appears for the first time the main motive in the bass (measure 51), which motive is carried by the full orchestra towards the key of A-flat minor (result of the c-flat′ in measure 7) and is brought to a cadence in the key of the raised submediant of A-flat minor—in F major (measures 68-73). This close is achieved with such intensity that there can be no doubt that an important part has been concluded.

Ex. 3

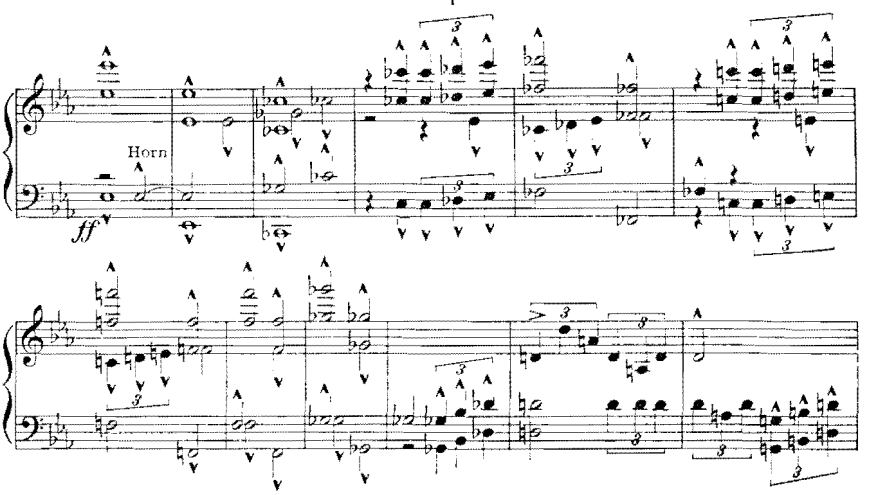


F is held in the horns and becomes the third of the chromatically lowered submediant of F major. Now without any preparation commences the second theme of the movement, in D-flat major (measures 75 ff.).

We may now realize that Bruckner's method consists in filling in, with motives and melodies, long-drawn-out columns of harmonies altered most frequently on the basis of the third-relationship. The character of these motives is such that, unlike those of the classical symphony, they leave no room for variation. Therefore, they are more frequently repeated. If Bruckner felt, however, that a theme returned too often, he occasionally took out a section of the development or the reprise in order to heighten the effect of the whole movement. This resulted in nothing more than a foreshortening of the harmonic perspective, since here there was not presented—as in a symphony of Beethoven—the development of an essential thematic idea, but the closer linking of short motives into a higher unity.

As pointed out by Dr. Haas, in his preface to the new edition of the Fourth Symphony, one may observe that in the first version, of the year 1874, the First Movement had 630 measures; in the second version, begun in 1878, only 573. The original Finale had 616 measures; the revised version of 1878 only 477. The newly composed Finale, which dates from between November 1879 and June 1880 and retains the most important thematic material, had 541 measures, as is apparent from the publication of the Complete Edition; the previously published Finale, however, had only 507 measures, as a result of a cut made after measure 382 of the version printed in the Complete Edition, which cut eliminated the return of the main theme *fortissimo* and the upward rise which followed it.

Ex. 4



If one views the omission of the return of the main theme from a purely formal standpoint, one may regard it as a serious violation of the symphonic scheme. But, considered in relation to the complete plan of the movement—that is, from the standpoint of a true architecture—, the omission of this passage is an improvement of the total effect. For, shortly before this passage, the main theme has been heard in full strength (measures 295-336). This fact caused Bruckner to find necessary a connecting *diminuendo* of 14 measures and a further extension of 31. Without the preparatory rise of 26 measures, this outbreak of the full orchestra extends over 88 measures up to the *diminuendo.* If at this place yet another outbreak of the full orchestra follows, then the return, which contains nothing really new, weakens the effect of what has been heard before. More than that, it weakens also the effect of the final *crescendo,* which is now beginning (measure 413 of the Complete Edition; measure 385 of the "Universal Edition").

Since Bruckner had often heard the work in the cut form, without remonstrance, we must conclude that he had himself realized that the deletion was necessary, or that he had been persuaded to accept it by his friends.

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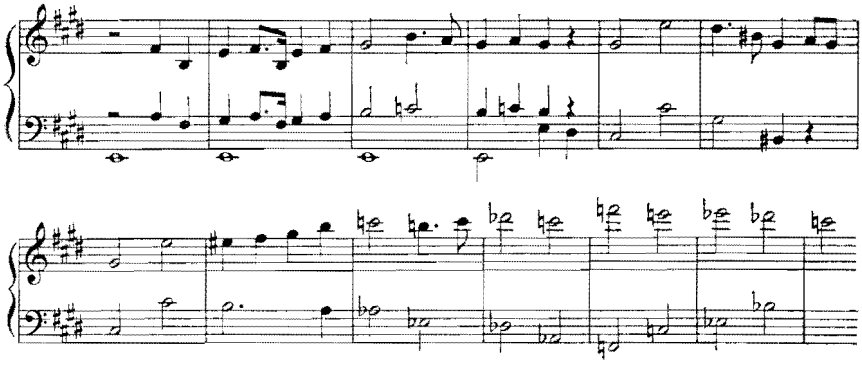
That Bruckner worked constantly on his symphonies and also listened willingly to the counsel of his friends, is immediately comprehensible if the development of his personality, as sketched above, is

borne in mind. One who had so much regard for knowledge and technical ability as Bruckner, one who had so recognized the worth of learning, would ever seek to improve his own work. Bruckner knew that fate had not endowed him with the gift of easy creation. He always had to struggle to realize his ideas, and the struggle continued even after a work was apparently finished.

We now, with Prof. Orel's publication of the sketches for the Ninth Symphony, possess one very illuminating illustration of the process of the development of a Bruckner theme—namely, that for the Adagio. I should like to present what has occurred to me in studying the sketches containing the drafts of it.

Bruckner was sixty-nine years old when he began the composition of this movement. He had shown his hand to be that of a master in the slow movements of the Seventh and Eighth Symphonies. No wonder that his musical fantasy bade him commence in the vein he had worked to such perfection in these compositions. Thus, the first sketch shows relationship to the first Adagio theme of the Seventh Symphony (measures 23-26) as well as to the second part of the first theme of the Eighth (measures 25-28).

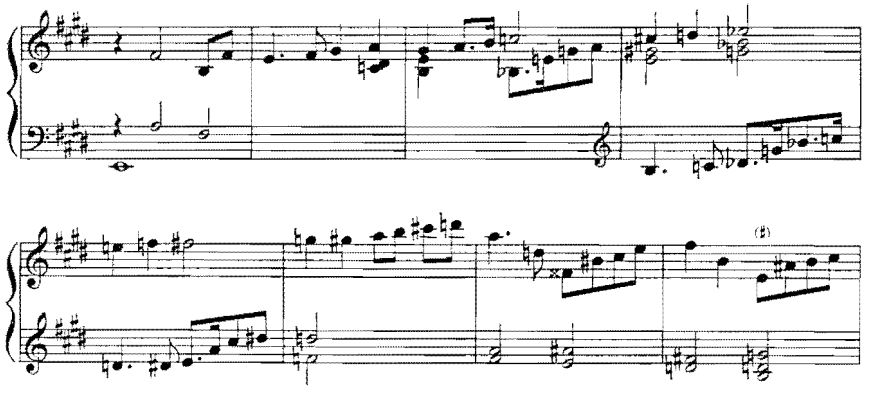
Ex. 5



The first four measures are as inspired as they are finished; but they do not have the quality of a theme that must serve for an entire symphonic movement. One could well employ this passage as a secondary or transitional theme; yet there can be no doubt that it was intended for the opening of the movement. The beginning of the second phrase (measures 5 and 6) presents a happy continuation; but then the interest wanes. For one thing, the exact repetition of measure 5 at measure 7 is unhappy; still more so is the eighth measure. Also,

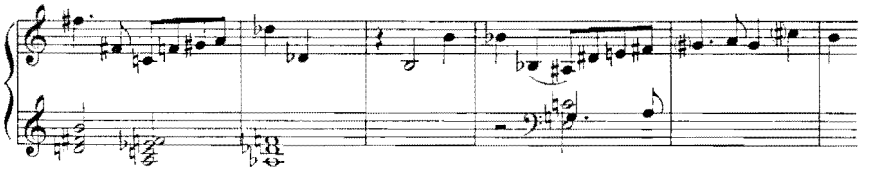
measures 9-12 have little thematic significance, though they were surely meant to be very sonorous, if one may judge from the parallel passage in the Eighth Symphony. One can well understand why Bruckner altered this idea and, even on the same sheet of paper, wrote the following variant:[5]

Ex. 6



In the first two measures one finds another reminiscence of the Eighth Symphony. In the third measure, however, appears an ascending motive, which eventually attains great importance and contains a vital germ-cell for the development now beginning. Out of the descending leap of a fifth in the seventh measure Bruckner now makes a descending octave-leap and employs in sequence the motive thus developed. If we skip over this passage, we find after it the downward octave-leap in syncopated rhythm:

Ex. 7



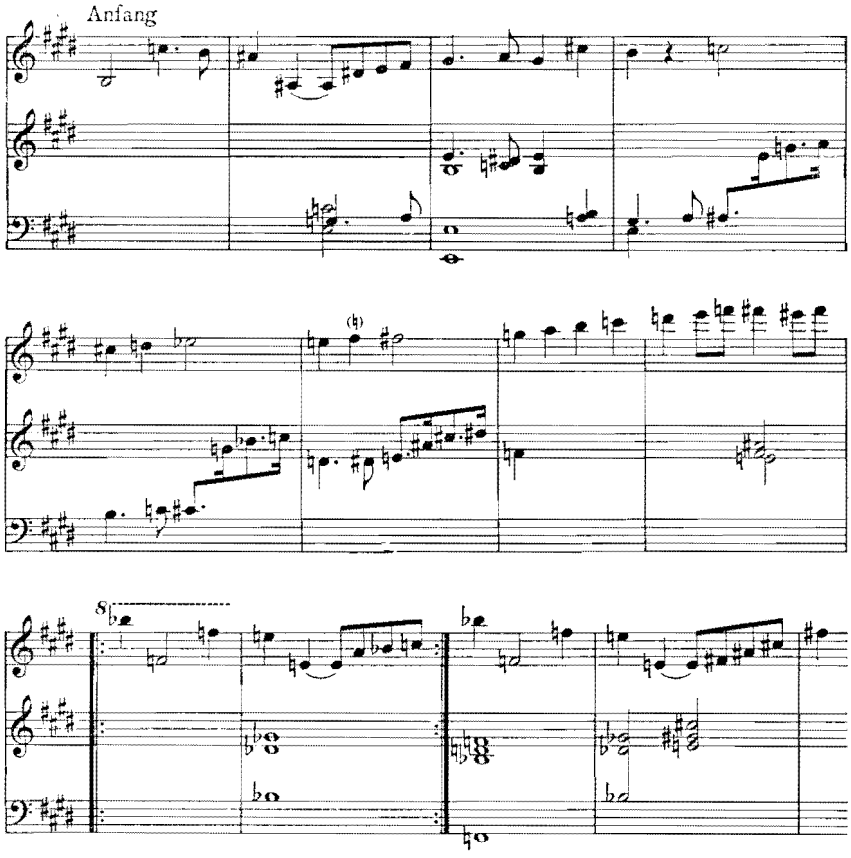
The third measure of the melody has decided importance in one sketch. The rhythm is again altered and the leap of an octave changed to that of a ninth (see Ex. 8 & 9), which is resolved on to the octave.

With this final change a secondary idea becomes one of primary importance. The first two measures are no longer retained, and

[5] Orel has commented splendidly upon the general nature of this idea.

Bruckner writes over the following sketch the word: *Anfang* ("beginning").

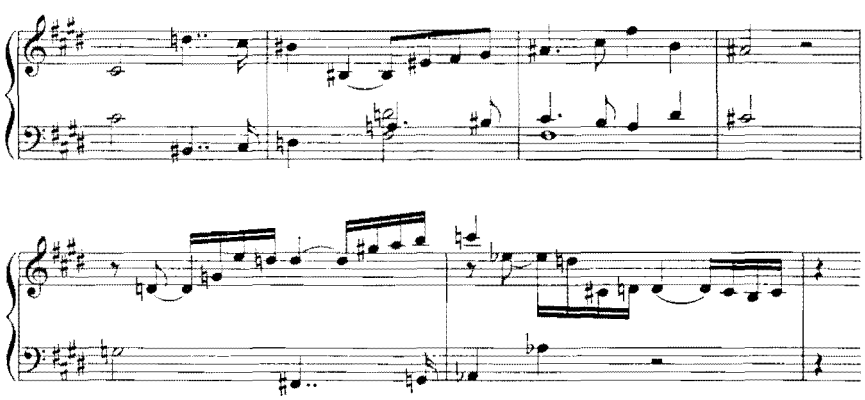
Ex. 8



What are now the first two measures have here assumed definite form, even though Bruckner tries alterations of the second measure in later sketches. The third measure is taken over from the previous sketch and contains the very expressive cadential turn. In the fourth measure begins the sequential ascent of the motive, which emerges from the lower range and above which the melody is carried ever higher, mostly by semitones. At the summit, instead of a B major deceptive cadence, which one might expect from a knowledge of Bruckner's other works, B-flat is reached.

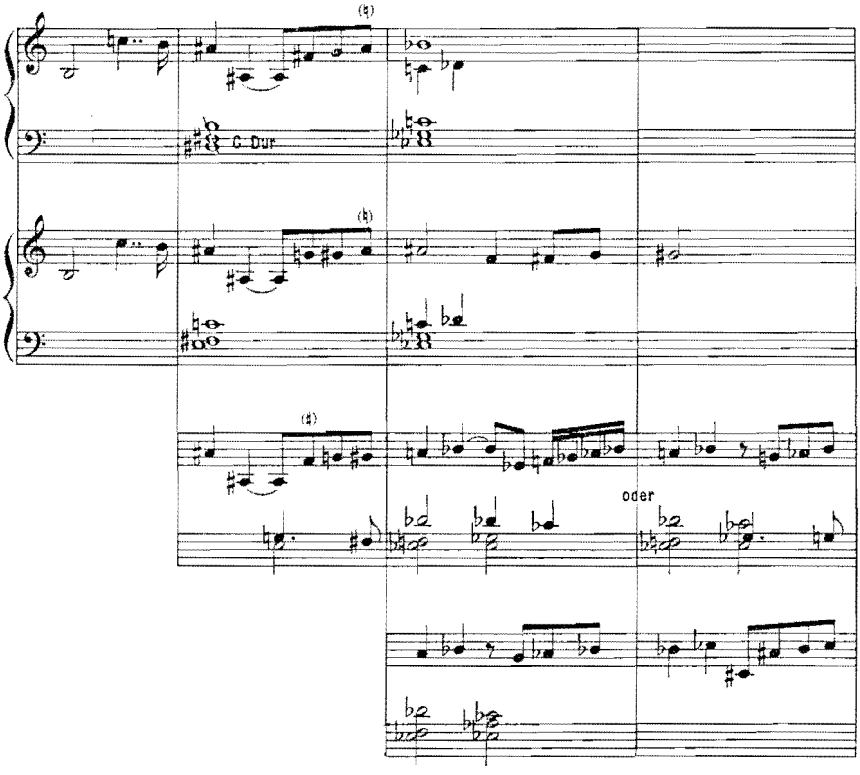
The following sketches show that Bruckner kept the scalewise ascent, even drawing out the upward movement, which seems now to tend towards E-flat major and reaches B major at the climax; but still the thematic idea loses itself in vague formlesness. The passage still has the nature of an organ-prelude built on a small idea. Bruckner himself seemed to feel this, and decided upon a radical alteration of the beginning. The theme now starts, after an introduction of four measures, at the same time as its inversion in the bass. The third measure is even more expressly constructed than before. After it, the first motive recurs inverted in the bass, which moves upward by step, while for the first time there enters in the upper voice an energetic passage in sixteenth-notes.

Ex. 9



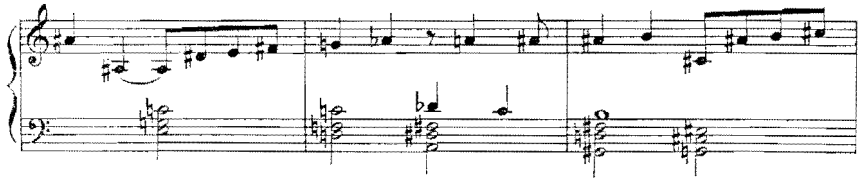
From now on the first motive with the leap of the ninth is clearly dominant in the sketches. The passages in sixteenth-notes are omitted from the first-theme section, and occur as a prominent motive in the second-theme section (measure 57) of the completed movement, at letter D. Henceforth the character of improvisation is removed from the first theme. Bruckner turns his attention to the presentation of the main idea. The sketches show how he struggled with every measure, with every note of every measure. It would exceed the scope of this study if I were to present and analyze all these sketches. One can find them in the appendix to the new edition of the Ninth Symphony, on pages 61 and 62. Here are shown only the most important stages in the growth of the idea.

Ex. 10



One may easily observe how the original intention of giving the germ-motive a scalewise treatment has been abandoned, and how, in its place, a chromatic, syncopated, upward-striving passage has been substituted. The new tendency is even more apparent in the following sketch, which precedes the final struggle with the form of the theme:

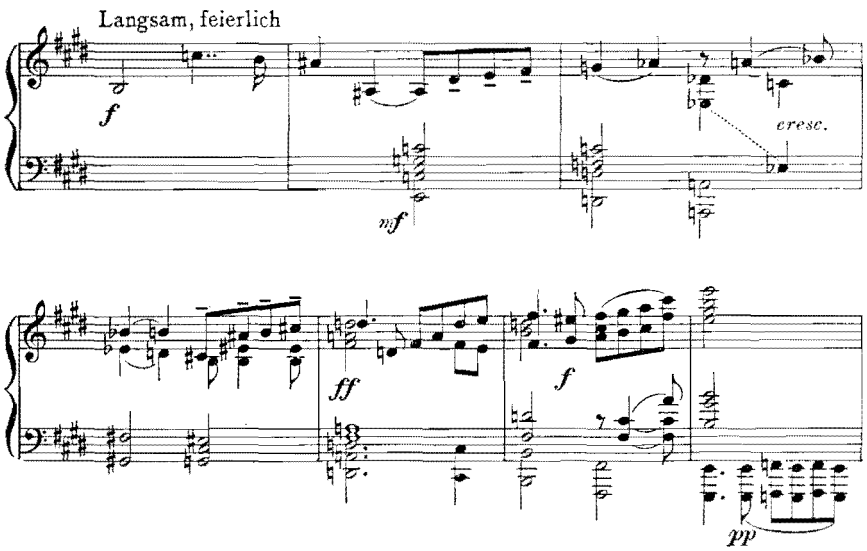
Ex. 11



Now Bruckner turns his attention to the second measure, the harmonic expression of which does not please him, and he writes nine variants of it. Finally he selects from all the attempts the one that is

strongest in expression and is at the same time best for symphonic treatment. It is not always the last version of a passage that he selects, and this second measure is a case in point. Indeed one gains from these sketches the impression that Bruckner would have preferred to present the theme in several variations. Actually the greater part of the sketches is transplanted into the symphonic work. If we consider the theme as it stands in the score,

Ex. 12



we are struck by the definite contrast in the treatment of the harmony in the first and second phrases. The first phrase is strongly chromatic, the second purely diatonic. The contrast is an example of the highest artistry—the theme already displays the opposition that dominates the entire movement.

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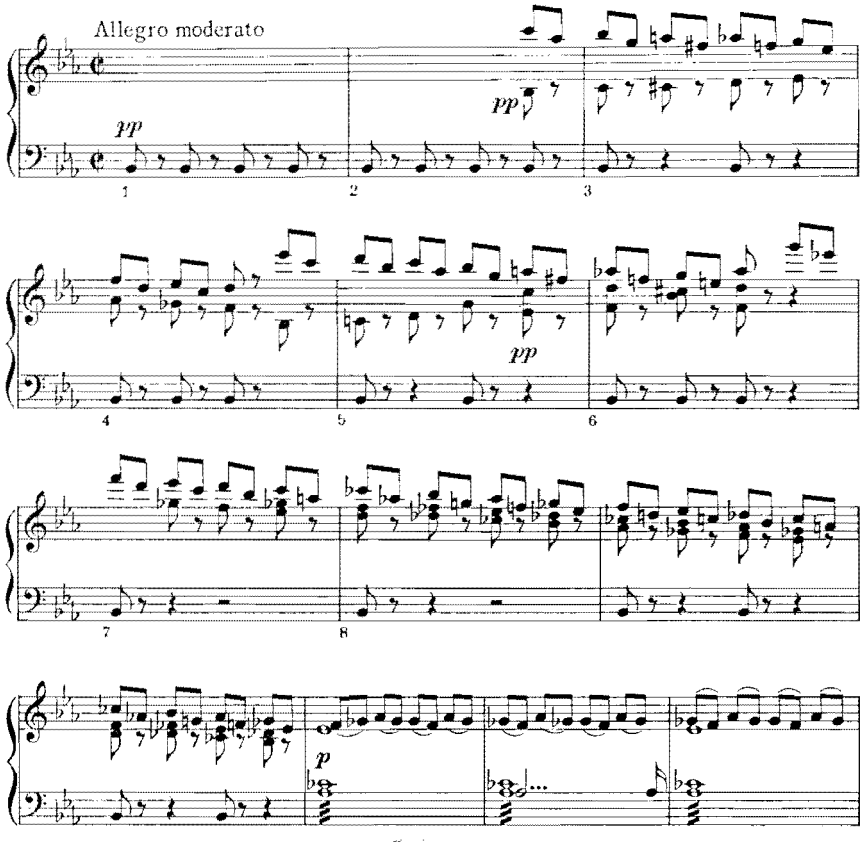
Just as we gain an insight into the development of a theme from the sketches of the Ninth Symphony, so we may study the architectural treatment of a whole movement from the publication of an earlier Finale to the Fourth.

The Finale of 1878 begins after two introductory measures with a passage, also of two measures, in the first violins, which outlines a descending scale in broken thirds. The pattern occurs three times in

all, the starting point rising from c‴ to e-flat‴ and then to g‴ (2 + 2 measures), the broken-third scale eventually plunging down four measures, ever *pianissimo,* and ending peacefully in a wave-like motion, while the horn-motive of the First Movement is heard below:

Ex. 13

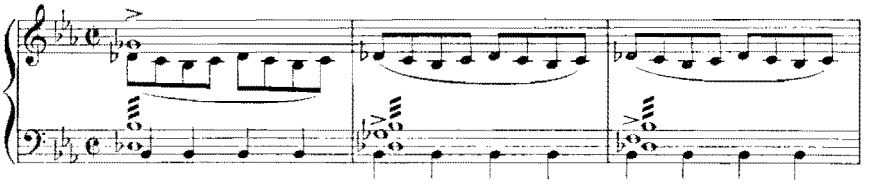


Subsequently there is developed a *crescendo* of 20 measures, in which the wave figure is employed and at the summit of which the main theme (already mentioned on p. 275) is given out by the full orchestra. After the statement of the theme the restless passage returns, as at the beginning of the movement.

In the modified version of the Finale (1879-80) Bruckner made a twofold alteration. He found the main theme too important to commence without preparation. The preparation, however, could not, with good effect, be organically connected with the passage in the violins.

On the other hand, the wave figure with its eighth-notes seemed just the thing for the background. The restless passage was therefore deleted, and a symmetrical wave figure substituted, more peaceful than the original; and with this figure were combined the first three notes of the main theme. Also, the movement in the bass was confined to equal, bowed quarter-notes, replacing the earlier rhythmically restless *pizzicati:*

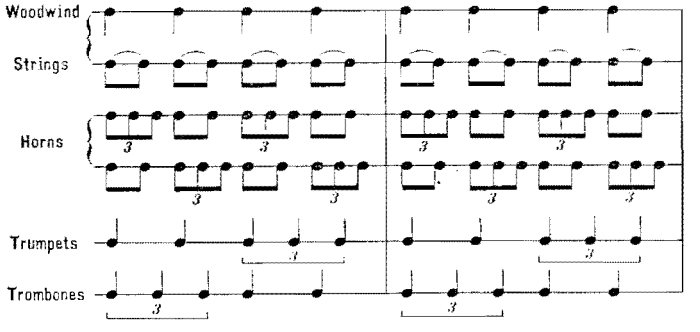
Ex. 14



The *crescendo* now embraced 42 measures, counting from the beginning of the movement. From the twenty-ninth measure on, in the place of the horn-call from the first movement was substituted the rhythm of the hunting theme of the Scherzo. In the following measures there was joined to the main theme a long continuing passage, in which a second climax, employing the horn-call of the first movement, was reached; then followed the same *diminuendo* that was used in the earlier finale.

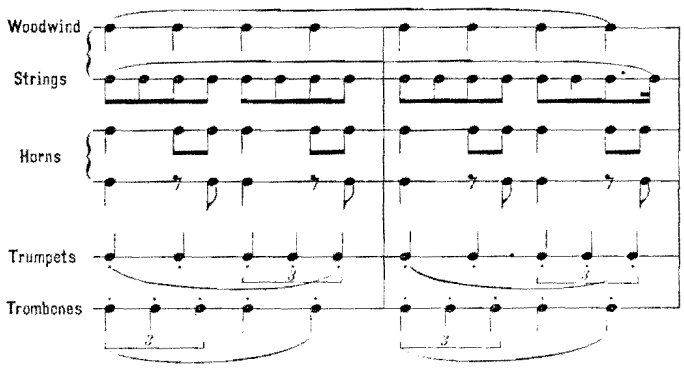
Between this Finale of the Complete Edition and that of the "Universal Edition" score there are far-reaching differences, not only in the instrumentation but also frequently in the rhythms of the wind instruments. The rhythmic aspect of the *crescendo* leading up to the main theme appears thus in the Complete Edition:

Ex. 15



while in the older printed score there is no such violent rhythmic intensification, but a more ponderous *crescendo:*

Ex. 16



This alteration seems to me to be entirely in the line of the creative process which leads from the Finale of 1878 to the Finale of 1879-80, and from the latter to the version contained in the printed score which previously was the source of our knowledge of the symphony. In the music represented by Ex. 15, unrest prevails, especially in the blaring horns; in the music represented by Ex. 16, the marked rhythms are constrained to an ever stronger display of power and at the same time to a *ritenuto* before the powerful entrance of the main theme.

If one approaches Bruckner from the point of view of musical architecture—which does not always necessarily coincide with the symphonic scheme—one will be able to observe, from an analysis of his works, that in every movement he reaches several climaxes, round which all the rest is grouped. Not from the manipulation of the theme are these summits achieved, as in the classical symphony, but the theme in its full power is revealed for the first time when these summits are reached, as the thought which is the goal of the development. The arrival at such a summit does not always follow a single upward surge, but more often comes after several shorter passages. When, therefore, it appeared that an intermediate climax weakened the effect of the main theme, it was very often decided to make an heroic cut. With such a cut the scheme of the symphonic form might well be damaged, but the total effect heightened. From the peculiarity, just described, in Bruckner's architecture, it is clear that passages could be deleted without the com-

poser's making intolerable concessions. If we—to employ a parallel easily comprehensible—may compare a classical symphony to a Greek temple, we may also compare the constructive plan of a Bruckner symphony to that of a Gothic cathedral. In the first pair juxtaposed one can think of no alteration that would not disturb the essential form. In the second, the form is composed of many single parts, and the total effect remains practically undisturbed even though little changes are made in the composition of the parts.

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The alterations in instrumentation should be considered in the same manner as those in form. If one compares the scores in the Complete Edition with those previously printed, one will see that the differences are very extensive, practically no page having remained unchanged. It seems to me, however, that the astonishment that has been expressed over the differences between manuscripts and printed scores is too great; for the sort of problem these discrepancies present is now for the first time being discussed in reference to an important symphonist. If one were to carry on similar investigations into the music of Brahms, one would experience great surprise there too. One might wish for the appearance of critical editions of other masters, similar to that of Bruckner, for this reason alone.

With Bruckner, the alterations in the scores are the sign of the composer's struggle to give reality to the sounds he heard in his mind. There can be no doubt that it is the manuscript that gives the purer and clearer external picture of the score, so far as voice leading is concerned. But it seems to me to be pertinent to the issue also that Bruckner was never satisfied with the instrumentation, just as he never was with the form, for the purity of the inner conception could find no realization in the outer realm of sound. Just as Bruckner suffered because he was obliged to write for the tempered scale while his inner ear always heard the pure scale,[6] so he heard in his mind a sound he was unable to translate by means of instruments with their imperfections. Doubt that it would be possible to realize the inner image is the psychological reason

[6] Friedrich Eckstein relates in his reminiscences of Bruckner (*Erinnerungen an Anton Bruckner*, Wiener Philharmonischer Verlag, 1923) that Bruckner perceived the fifth of the triad on the second degree as a "mathematical dissonance" and in strict writing always prepared it and when possible resolved it downwards by step.

why Bruckner continually added improvements to his instrumentation[7] and listened to the advice of his friends and pupils when, as practical executants, they recommended alterations.

One may suppose, therefore, that in some instances Bruckner went farther in the retouching of the instrumentation than was absolutely necessary and let himself be persuaded by friends to make alterations often dictated merely by the taste of the times, which liked fullness and tenderness and cared little for the abrupt contrasts of tone which Bruckner, as organist, favored.

Bruckner's desire always to learn more, coupled with his respect for technical knowledge, rendered him more willing than most composers would have been to follow advice to make changes. Even after having originally felt anger at Hermann Levi for refusing to play the Eighth Symphony at Munich, we see him, as is shown in a letter to this conductor, in the midst of alterations in the orchestration only a few days later. In the letter he dramatically confesses to have erred.[8] Orchestration was for him nothing more than a *means* by which to express in sound his inner vision. He, the inventor of lovely melodies and powerful themes, accorded it no more importance than to concede that it merited a certain amount of dexterity. In the major distribution of instrumental contrasts he was never mistaken. What he apportioned to the individual instruments as thematic material was always extremely effective. He erred only in overestimating the possible strength of a single wood-wind instrument, or in orchestrating too thickly a long

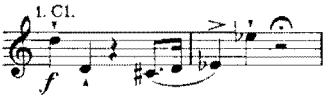
[7] I thank Friedrich Eckstein for the oral information that the proof-sheets of the string quintet, which are in his possession, show many corrections in Bruckner's hand, evidences that the last actual manuscript handed in by Bruckner before the printing did not mark the conclusion of his work on the composition.

[8] Immediately after the preparation of this article there appeared an extensive essay (in *Deutsche Musikkultur* I, No. 4) by Alfred Orel, entitled *Original und Bearbeitung bei Anton Bruckner*. Orel, who has no longer been named as co-editor on the title-page of the Complete Edition since the Fourth Symphony appeared in it, comes, as a result of his comprehensive knowledge of the subject, to conclusions similar to those advanced in the first sentence of the above paragraph. He regards as untenable the idea that Bruckner should have been under any sort of compulsion. He cites a letter of Bruckner's, dated October 20, 1887—that is, scarcely three weeks after Levi's letter of rejection of the Eighth Symphony—, in which Bruckner discloses that he is at work on a new version of the score and writes: *Es wird das Möglichste geschehen—nach bestem Wissen und Gewissen* ("The best that is possible shall be done—according to knowledge and conscience"). And on February 27, 1888, he writes to Levi: *Freilich habe ich Ursache mich zu schämen—wenigstens für dieses Mal—wegen der 8. Ich Esel! ! ! Jetzt sieht sie schon anders aus* ("Certainly I have much to be ashamed of—at least this time—because of the Eighth. An ass, I! ! ! It now has quite a different aspect"). This letter indicates that Bruckner must have been very happy with his new version, since he gives vent in such hearty manner to his humor.

fortissimo in the brass, or in keeping one section of the orchestra active for too long a stretch, or in using the oboe in too high a range, etc.—errors that could be corrected easily without disturbing what was essential.

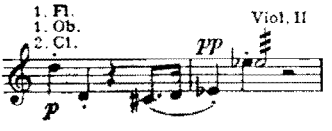
For example, the beginning of the Allegro Moderato in the Finale of the Fifth Symphony is scored in the original edition for one clarinet, *forte:*

Ex.17



In the revised score one flute, one oboe, and two clarinets are employed, *piano*. The sound of the original version is shrill and almost grotesque; that of the revised version is excellent.

Ex. 18



Besides making the substitution, Bruckner abandons the long pause, and the connection with the following theme is effected by means of a *tremolo* which, although almost imperceptible, nevertheless fills in the empty gap.

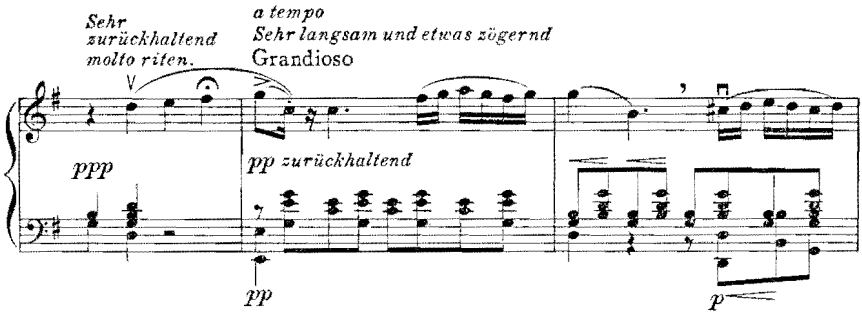
It would require too much space to mention all the changes in orchestration in detail. Whoever is interested in them can easily investigate them himself, now that both the versions published by the "Universal Edition" and those contained in the Complete Edition are available in miniature score. The alterations were made chiefly, as may readily be seen, (1) to lighten the masses of tone, (2) to strengthen the voices carrying the melody, (3) to support the strings by woodwind instruments, and (4) to soften the brass.

Connected with the retouching of the orchestration was an improvement in the directions for execution and the addition of many new ones. These alterations are easily explained. Bruckner did not have the same orchestral experience as did most of the prominent composers of his time. It was as an organist that he had his early experience—that is, in the rôle of an instrumentalist to whom great freedom

is traditionally granted in matters of tempo as well as in other details of performance. Thus it is quite understandable that in the first movement of the Fourth Symphony, for example, Bruckner originally gave only one tempo indication (see the Complete Edition): *Bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell* ("With movement, but not too fast"). But when his pupils played this symphony on the piano, four hands, he may have noticed that from measure 43 to measure 51 he felt the need for a slight *ritenuto* (*cf.* Ex. 2). At all events, one finds in the four-hand piano arrangement of F. Löwe and in the revised score the direction *Langsamer* at measure 43; at measure 51, *Tempo* I; at measure 75, *Etwas gemächlich* (*commodo*); at measure 87, *Etwas belebter* (*poco più vivo*); at measure 92, *Wieder beruhigend* (*calmando*); at measure 96, *poco rit.*, etc.

Attention is given to details similarly with respect to the indications of the general manner of performance. The symphonic style of the Austrian post-classical composers requires many more directions for performance than does the style of the contemporary German Romantic school. Anyone who had the opportunity, as I did, of being present at the rehearsals for the first performances of Gustav Mahler's symphonies knows how many dynamic alterations and how many additions to the directions for performance Mahler found necessary in order to insure that the orchestra would really play what he intended. One need only look at the close of the first movement of Mahler's Fourth Symphony, especially at page 45 of the miniature score in the very much revised edition, to find an illustration of the pains he took. This page contains not less than eight changes in tempo, some of which are indicated with several signs modifying and explaining each other, as for example, at the entrance of the main theme:

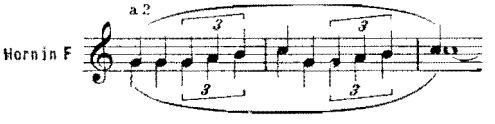
Ex. 19



A less experienced composer would surely have been satisfied with fewer instructions. But Mahler added these signs during the rehearsals of the Vienna Philharmonic—the very orchestra with which he worked daily through the years; and this is surely the best proof that every one of these indications was necessary.

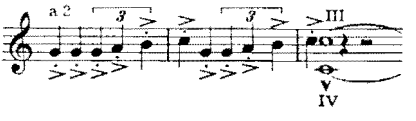
Let us return to Bruckner. If one compares the two editions of the Fourth Symphony, one notices how necessary was the revision of the score if the result Bruckner intended was to be obtained. If, for example, the close of the first theme-group were played in the horns as it stands in the manuscript:

Ex. 20



the passage would be ineffective. In the revised score it appears thus, as it was intended, and no one who has heard it can deny its effectivenss;

Ex. 21



The alterations in orchestration appear more striking on paper than they really are in performance. Today, when an enthusiastic part of the musical public is acquainted with the actual notes of the works, when another part at least associates the name of Bruckner with that of a great dead master, adherence to the harshness and roughness in the instrumentation of the original edition will seem interesting rather than annoying because an aura has been built up round the works. If today, at the close of the Fifth Symphony, the brass players perform the celebrated Choral while stationed in the orchestra itself, everyone nevertheless knows that this passage is the crowning section of the work. Yet it was the happy idea of Franz Schalk, who conducted the first performance of the composition at Graz, to have the Choral played by a brass orchestra placed above the hearers, achieving thereby an overpowering effect. This alteration, however, meant nothing more than that one last possibility already existing in the work had been splendidly

realized. And that Bruckner, as a letter shows, accepted it with enthusiasm, is proof that he recognized in this, as in many another alteration, a welcome articulation of an idea of his own creation that could never be fully presented.

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We shall confine ourselves to these brief remarks lest we wander from our main theme into a neighboring region which is indeed very interesting but which we shall not enter here, since orchestration and the arrangement of the score for practical use do not always pertain directly to the creative process. These subjects may be considered, for our purposes, only so far as we can trace in them the desire of the composer to give concrete expression to his ideas. The present article is designed only as a stimulus to increased interest in the process of creative formation, which can be studied with especial clearness in Bruckner's sketches.

It is greatly to the credit of the editors of the Complete Edition and of the Musikwissenschaftlicher Verlag that we can gain such a profound insight into the compositions of Bruckner through their publications, and, more than this, into his workshop—into the otherwise dark and mysterious process of the orgin of a musical art-work. For such glimpses into Bruckner's mental world give us more information about his personality than do biographical details, which so far as this musician is concerned, confuse rather than clarify the character sketch—this musician whose works now, forty years after his death, are beginning to find their place among the greatest masterpieces of the musical world.

(*Translated by Everett Helm*)