SIXTIETH SEASON, 1940–1941
CONCERT BULLETIN OF THE

Boston Symphony Orchestra

SERGE KOUSSEVITZKY, Conductor

Richard Burgin, Assistant Conductor

with historical and descriptive notes by

John N. Burk

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"THE SYMPHONY AT SIXTY"

"The Boston Symphony Orchestra begins this week its sixtieth consecutive season. As observance of this anniversary, it has issued a brochure elegantly printed and illustrated with pen drawings of its five most eminent conductors, from Henschel, its first, to Dr. Koussevitzky, its present; and a notable dynasty they make: Gericke, the polisher; Nikisch, the romantic poet; Muck, the classicist, and Koussevitzky, the explorer.

"Sixty years ago a resident orchestra of the first rank in America did not exist. The country had to be shown. It was. By 1900 we had six major symphony orchestras; in 1940 we have sixteen, and, in the second rank, two hundred and fifty lesser ones, four-fifths of which have been established since 1919, and one-half of which, slump or no slump, post date 1929. And after six decades of trail-blazing the Boston orchestra is still pre-eminent.

"It goes on blazing trails. 'Pops,' Esplanade concerts, Berkshire Symphonic Festival, and, in its sixtieth year, the new music school at Tanglewood—so soon as one path has been found, it starts another.

"The great creative epoch of music (from about 1720 to 1920), a period in which masterpieces came tumbling over one another from the brains of composers, was one in which musical form was being elaborated, but performances were often, if not generally, crude. That epoch has now been succeeded by one in which performance of the music is being elaborated. Bach never heard his B minor Mass. We can hear it annually—or daily by phonograph. Wagner never heard as good a performance of "Tristan" as those at the Metropolitan in New York. But in the art of composition, our epoch, with one or two exceptions, is a long way behind the two centuries from 1720 to 1920.

"Where we do excel is in performance. This art of interpretation in music is relatively new. It was, of course, always there, but in the background. Bach and Handel were virtuoso organists, but primarily they were composers.

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The change began among the concert pianists. A hundred years ago, Clara Schumann, then a young girl in braids and muslins, was a strict classicist. In Vienna she heard Liszt. He was a one-man revolution. Flashing eyes and floating hair, 19th-century romanticism had burst the dykes of the formal 18th century. Music had changed its dress from satin and ruffles to the flowing cape and Byronical collar open at the throat.

“At the turn of the present century something similar happened to orchestral conducting. Hitherto the conductor had been secondary to the orchestra; now he began to be an interpretive artist in his own right; like a fine instrumentalist, he not only played the music, he played on the music. Were we today to return to the flawless technical perfection of Gericke’s orchestra, or even to the austere classicism of Dr. Muck, it is a question whether, after having grown expectant of Dr. Koussevitzky’s performances that glow like October foliage, we would any longer be quite satisfied with the older style. For the art of conducting, too, has moved forward.

“This epoch of elaborate performance has its perils. Vast as the literature of music is, its masterworks are being subjected to an ordeal of repetition by concert, by radio, and by phonograph such as no other art except architecture, which we see and use daily, has ever been required to endure. How can its charm of novelty survive? Partly in the abiding unexpectedness which is an ingredient of all fine music, and partly in the art of interpretive conducting which recreates anew the music in each performance. Here, again, after sixty years of pioneering, the Boston Symphony Orchestra is still pioneer.”

(Boston Globe, Oct. 12, 1940)

RARE BEETHOVEN RELICS

In a case in the First Balcony Gallery are several items of Beethoven memorabilia, lent by Mr. Louis Krasner, which are of unusual interest because of their initial showing in Symphony Hall.

Of greatest importance is a page of music written Comme un souvenir à Sarah Burney Payne par Ludwig von Beethoven in 1825.

Mrs. Payne was the daughter of Charles Burney, the famous musical historian. She later presented the complimentary autograph to a London news-
paper editor and renowned amateur musician, Thomas M. Alsager. The letter accompanying her gift reads: "Not un-caring for the remembrance of Beethoven but desirous to consecrate and enshrine it in the most congenial spot in London (perhaps say the world), S. Payne claims for it a place in the music room of her most valued friend T. M. Alsager, February 2nd, 1845."

Thomas Massa Alsager (1779–1846) was for many years a proprietor of the Times of London, being especially interested in everything relating to music (as well as the collection of mercantile and foreign news). It was at his suggestion that the Times added to its staff a professionally trained musical critic, the first to be employed on any daily paper.

Alsager was an intimate friend of Lamb, Wordsworth, Leigh Hunt, Mendelssohn, Moscheles, and many other famous men. Intensely devoted to music, he gave to it all his leisure time; his accomplishments in this field were very great, for he could perform on all the instruments of the orchestra.

Private concerts given at his home were events in London musical life. The great Mass in D of Beethoven was given there for the first time in England (Dec. 24, 1832) under the direction of Moscheles. One object of the Queen Square Select Society, of which he was the most active member and under whose auspices these concerts were given, was to establish a taste for Beethoven's chamber music, by performing it in the best manner attainable. From this enterprise there resulted a series of chamber music concerts given publicly in 1845 and 1846, and called the Beethoven Quartet Society—the result of "the enthusiasm, knowledge and munificence of Alsager" (Grove). An announcement of this society is included in the present exhibit.

There is also a copy made by Moscheles for Robert Schumann of a sketch of Beethoven drawn from life by Hornemann.

In the same frame with the sketch are a flower picked on Beethoven's grave in 1852 by the English musician, George Doane, and a lock of Beethoven's hair, sent to Moscheles by Schindler in 1827. Moscheles has written an accompanying note stating: "L. v. Beethoven died on 26th March, 1827. A. Schindler wrote me on the 24th of March: 'This hair I have today cut from his [Beethoven's] head and I am sending this to you.'"

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Second Programme

FRIDAY AFTERNOON, October 18, at 2:30 o'clock

SATURDAY EVENING, October 19, at 8:15 o'clock

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GLUCK.......................... Overture to "Iphigenia in Aulis"

MOZART ..................... Symphony in E-flat major (Koechel No. 543)
   I. Adagio; Allegro
   II. Andante
   III. Menuetto; Trio
   IV. Finale; Allegro

INTERMISSION

SHOSTAKOVITCH ...................... Symphony No. 5, Op. 47
   I. Moderato
   II. Allegretto
   III. Largo
   IV. Allegro non troppo

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OVERTURE TO "IPHIGÉNIE EN AULIDE"

By Christoph Willibald Gluck

Born July 2, 1714, at Weidenwang; died November 25, 1787, at Vienna

Gluck composed this "tragédie opéra" in the year 1769. The libretto was furnished by the Bailli du Roullet, who based it upon the "Iphigénie" of Jean Racine. The first performance of "Iphigénie en Aulide" took place at the Opéra in Paris, April 19, 1774.

The Overture, with the ending by Richard Wagner, was last performed at the Friday and Saturday concerts of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, February 23, 1934. It was performed at Sanders Theatre, Cambridge, December 21, 1939.

When Charles Burney visited Vienna in the year 1769, he called upon the famous Gluck and was received in friendly fashion. "He was so good-humored," wrote Dr. Burney, "as to perform almost his whole opera 'Alceste,' many admirable things in a still later opera of his called 'Paride ed Elena,' and in a French opera, from Racine's 'Iphigénie,' which he had just composed. His last, though he had not as yet committed a note of it to paper, was so well digested in his head, and his retention is so wonderful, that he sang it nearly from the beginning to the end, with as much readiness as if he had a fair score before him."

* "The Present State of Music in Germany, the Netherlands, and United Provinces."

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When Dr. Burney wrote that his host had not "committed a note" of his new opera to paper, he was misinformed, or at least mistaken. Gluck had completed the score of his "Iphigénie en Aulide," as appears in a letter from du Roullet, the librettist, to Dauvergne a month earlier. Gluck was indeed planning industriously for a descent upon Paris. In Vienna his efforts had not brought him full artistic satisfaction. He looked with interest towards France, where opera, though stilted and formal, at least made much of its dramatic subject and did not lose itself in the meaningless vocal ornamentation of the current Italian style. Gluck accordingly cultivated the acquaintance of du Roullet, then attaché of the French Embassy at the Court of Vienna, with the result that du Roullet wrote for him a book on "Iphigénie," and when it was set to music called attention to the fact in a letter to Dauvergne, the Director of the Académie Royale de Musique in Paris. Gluck had already filled the ear of M. de Sevelinge, a receptive amateur, with his enthusiasm for the French style, and for Lully in particular, and M. de Sevelinge obediently carried messages of this hopeful enthusiasm back to Paris. Still another, and this time a winning card, was played by Gluck. He paid his respects to Marie Antoinette, and "Madame la Dauphine," who remembered him well as her music-master, at once threw her powerful influence in his favor.

There could have been but one outcome to this combination of inclination and strategy. As Alfred Einstein expresses it in his admirable biography of the composer: "Not only had Gluck become ripe for Paris, but Paris for Gluck." "Iphigénie" was ordered for production at the Opéra in Paris. Gluck supervised the production of the opera, not without difficulties through six months of rehearsals. The first performance came to pass on April 19, 1774, amid much excitement. Some were moved by Gluck's dramatic power, many were puzzled by his innovations. There was no doubt about the result and general verdict as Marie Antoinette, in her box, applauded with an emphasis as consequential as any royal decree. The Overture, although it led into the opening scene without interruption, was encored. At succeeding performances the opera took its place as a genuine success.

Since Gluck gave no end to his Overture (in itself a departure from tradition), endings have been supplied by others for concert usage. The one generally adopted is that of Richard Wagner made in 1854 for a performance in Zurich. Wagner at that time wrote a communication to the Neue Zeitschrift für Musik on the subject of this overture. He pointed out that the general custom of breaking into an allegro at the nineteenth bar where the strings have a striking passage
SOCIETY OF FRIENDS of the
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The fiscal year of the Boston Symphony Orchestra starts each year on September 1st in order that the accounts may conform to the seasonal activities of the Orchestra.

The year just closed has been remarkable for the outstanding performance of the Orchestra and for its great contribution to the musical thought and education of the country.

The Orchestra now enters its Sixtieth Season more widely respected than ever, and confident that those Friends whose financial support has made this possible will continue to back its efforts and share in its fame.

To those who have never enrolled in our Society let me point out that without the financial support of the Friends the Orchestra could not exist.

Contributions of any amount sent to the Boston Symphony Orchestra at the Treasurer's Office, 6 Beacon Street, Boston, constitute enrollment.

Among our members are those who enjoy the Orchestra; others who recognize the outstanding service it performs at the "Pops," the Esplanade, the Youth Concerts, or the Berkshire Music Center; and still others who value the prestige that it brings to our Community. All give according to their means and their interest.

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Chairman, Society of Friends of the Boston Symphony Orchestra
in unison was a blind following of the tradition of operatic overtures, and was a violation of Gluck's evident dramatic intentions. Wagner took the pains of examining the original French edition of the score, and found that there was no new tempo indication at this point, the only tempo given being that of the opening *andante*. Wagner demonstrates that the grave opening measures are a preparation for Agamemnon's touching appeal to Diana for the life of his daughter, which begins the opera. A glib and lively tempo in the Overture, according to Wagner, is a violation of this mood, and destroys the dignity and beauty of some fine passages. Instead of providing the Overture with a brilliant clap-trap ending, such as the one he specifically rejected and attributed (probably wrongly) to Mozart, Wagner closed the Overture with a reprise of the introductory measures varied slightly but treated respectfully and in good taste. The Overture thus ends *pianissimo* upon the theme of Agamemnon's apostrophe "*Diane, impitoyable!*"*

* When Wagner revived the opera at Dresden, he laid a refurbishing hand upon the entire score. It must be said that he took far more liberties than our more respectful epoch would allow. He cemented the arias and choruses with connecting passages of his own, justifying himself by using "Gluck's own themes." In the third act he introduced entirely new matter in the recitatives, brought in a new character, Artemis, and changed the ending. The revision was well received. "Our own judgment of today," says Alfred Einstein, "grown historically more sensitive, can no longer share this benevolence. What Wagner made of

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The connection between Gluck and Racine to be found in "Iphigenia in Aulis" is subtler and deeper than the letter of a text. Indeed, the libretto which Gluck set resembled Racine's drama only in that it kept the general scheme of dramatic unfolding and the happy denouement.* If Racine's text was not usable in that it did not fit the rather rigid requirements for arias, ensembles, division into acts, etc., of the opera form, Gluck no doubt felt this opera as coming indirectly from the pen of that illustrious poet of the Court of Louis XIV. Indeed, Racine was accepted as the very embodiment of the classical tradition. Stendahl wrote an essay of book length on "Racine et Shakespeare," depicting the two poets as representative of the

*Iphigenie" is no longer Gluck. He produced an overpainting which obscures the true colors and contours to the point of falsifying the original intention. The height of violation occurs probably at Iphigenia's resolve to die, where the music is not far from the most luxuriant 'Lohengrin' romanticism.*

* Euripides, in the ancient drama which was Racine's model, introduced Achilles as a mere pretext for the summoning of Iphigenia to Aulis. Racine depicted Achilles and Iphigenia as really in love, thus heightening the dramatic interest. Euripides had the Goddess Diana snatch Iphigenia from the altar of immolation, and transport her to Tauris. Racine ended his play with her final pardon by the gods at the critical moment, and her happy union at last with Achilles. Ernest Newman has turned ridicule upon this dénouement: "Nietzsche once asked scornfully how Parsifal came to be the father of Lohengrin. One might as well have asked Gluck how Iphigenia, the wife of Achilles, managed to get to Tauris as high priestess."

Gluck's later opera, "Iphigenie en Tauride," the text by Guillard, based on the tragedy of La Touche, was produced in Paris in 1779.

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[62]
classical and romantic in letters. Richard Wagner used the same analogy in his “Opera and Drama,” where he described the stage of his own time as the development of two tendencies: the “romance which found its greatest flowering in the plays of Shakespeare,” and its “diametrical opposite,” the “Tragédie” of Racine, where there is nothing more than “talk upon the scene, while the action is kept outside.” Gluck found a sort of emotional release for the French tragedy by carrying it into opera. “Opera was thus the premature bloom of an unripe fruit, grown from an unnatural, artificial soil.”* Unfortunately for Racine in these essays, their writers were too definitely upon the romantic side to give him a just accounting. They could not have been anything but impatient with his perfectly termed phrases, his rhymed couplets, his servility before king and period. French writers, before the romantic peak and after, have freely granted him his exalted position. Voltaire, placing him above Corneille, said: “He is complete in himself; there remains only to write below every page ‘beau, pathétique, harmonieux, sublime.’” Anatole France summed him up in this sentence: “Une intelligence fine des passions,

* Paul-Marie Masson, in a scholarly article on “Rameau and Wagner” in the Musical Quarterly, for October, 1939, points out that Rameau had already brought about many of the reforms attributed by Wagner to Gluck.

WELCOME THE WIND
—GAY, BRISK DAYS AHEAD—BRACING WEATHER, BURNISHED LEAVES, A TANG TO THE AIR, A CALENDAR FULL OF EVERYTHING THAT IS FUN TO DO—THIS IS AN AMERICAN AUTUMN, THE YEAR'S MOST BRILLIANT SEASON, CALLING FOR COLORFUL CLOTHES—AND WE HAVE THEM—
"Racine,' he wrote, 'knew the secret of external realization for his visions of beauty. As a poet he figures among the best of men, among those who charm human existence, lifting it to enchanted regions peopled with divine forms. The most beautiful images he has invoked will dwell for long to come in the hearts of men. We prefer to believe that they have not yet faded. We would say that they were immortal if the science of our century had not taught us that man makes nothing for eternity. We hold, perhaps, a quicker interest in the creations of the poet when, knowing that they are the finest in the world, we remember too that they are perishable.'

Jean Giraudoux, writing a brochure on Racine,* praises him as the flower of a civilization, rather than as an individual genius. This Frenchman exalts the civilization "which rears the man of letters in a stately tranquillity, raising him above histrionics and confession, and making him responsible for an ultimately perfect acoustic. The virtue of a successful civilization is such that in place of the restricted means by which, in unfinished epochs, writers acquire experience—misfortunes, the observation of men, crises cardiac or conjugal—is substituted in those happier periods a congenital knowledge of great

*Translated by Mansell Jones, Gordon Fraser, 1938.
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hearts and great moments. Racine is the finest illustration of this truth. . . .

“For Racine the birth of a tragedy is first a question of subject, then of composition, then of development. When the word ‘death’ comes under his pen, he does not think of his own death. No more than of his shadow when he writes the word ‘shadow,’ or of his mistress when he writes the word ‘mistress.’ He simply feels the ease with which his talent works, and the responsibility of seeing himself become the appointed purveyor to his country and his king. . . . He is the poet for whom one could have engraved the following epitaph: ‘Here lies he who never set himself the problem of God or of knowledge, he for whom problems of politics, rank and morality had no existence. Here lies Racine.’”

† No anecdote shows more clearly than the following the subjection of Racine, the man of individual thoughts and feelings, to Racine, the court poet. He was once moved to write a paper on the miserable condition of the people of France as the result of the expenses of war. Madame de Maintenon, interceder for him at Versailles, was reading this paper when Louis surprised her. He looked at the contents with displeasure, and inquired who had written it. When he was told, he said coldly: “Does he think he knows everything, and because he is a great poet, does he expect to be a minister of State as well?” Racine had to absent himself from the royal presence for a long time, and was restored to favor only after an abject apology and the earnest intervention of Madame de Maintenon.
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SYMPHONY IN E-FLAT MAJOR (K. 543)
By Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Born at Salzburg, January 27, 1756; died at Vienna, December 5, 1791

The symphony was composed in 1788.
The most recent performances at this series of concerts was on March 25, 1937.
The orchestration: one flute, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani and strings.

The careful catalogue which Mozart kept of his works shows, for the summer of 1788, an industrious crop of pot-boilers — arias, terzets, piano sonatas "for beginners," a march — various pieces written by order of a patron, or to favor some singer or player. Between these there are also listed:

June 26 — Symphony in E-flat major
July 25 — Symphony in G minor
August 10 — Symphony in C major

How clearly Mozart realized that within about six weeks he had three times touched the highest point of his instrumental writing, three times fixed within the formal symphonic periods the precious distillation of his inmost heart — this we cannot know, for he did not

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so much as mention them in any record that has come down to us. They were intended, ostensibly, for some concerts which never came to pass; but one likes to believe that the composer’s true intent was mingled with musical phantasy far past all thought of commissions or creditors. The greatest music must, by its nature, be oblivious of time and occasion, have its full spread of wing, and take its flight entirely by the personal prompting of its maker.

Mozart must have appeared to his acquaintances in the summer of 1788 a figure quite incongruous to any such sublimities—“a small, homely, nervous man,” writes Marcia Davenport with inescapable deduction, "worrying about his debts in a shabby, suburban garden.” And comparing this picture with his music—the very apex of his genius—the writer can well wonder at “the workings of the infinite.” Musical Vienna in 1788 (and long afterwards) was probably unconscious of incongruities. The three great symphonies (destined to be his last) were closed secrets to the public who beheld a famous but impecunious young man of thirty-two adding three more to the forty-odd symphonies he had been turning out with entire facility from the age of eight.

Some have conjectured that Mozart was spurred to this triumphant
assertion of his powers by the excitement attendant upon the production of “Don Giovanni” in Vienna in May, 1788, following its more highly successful production at Prague in the previous October. Others have found in the more clouded brightness of the G minor Symphony the despondency of a family man harassed by debts, pursued by his landlord. Mozart was indeed in bad financial straits that summer. Celebrated for his operas, much sought as a virtuoso, as an orchestral conductor, as a composer for every kind of occasion, yet for all these activities he was scantly rewarded, and the incoming florins were far from enough to keep him in a fine coat and proper coach for his evenings with the high-born, and still provide adequate lodgings for him and his ailing Constanze.

Unfortunately for the theory that Mozart wrote his G minor* Symphony when dominated by his financial distress, he finished his entirely gay E-flat symphony on the very eve of writing the second of his “begging” letters to Herr Michael Puchberg, friend, fellow Mason, amateur musician, and merchant. The first letter asked for the loan of 2,000 florins: “At all events, I beg you to lend me a couple of hundred gulden, because my landlord in the Landstrasse was so pressing

*Koechel lists only one other symphony by Mozart in a minor key—the early symphony in G minor, No. 183 (1773).
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that I was obliged to pay him on the spot (in order to avoid anything unpleasant) which caused me great embarrassment.” Puchberg sent the two hundred, and Mozart, answering on June 27, and asking for more money, is careful to impress his creditor with his industrious intentions: “I have worked more during the ten days I have lived here than in two months in my former apartment; and if dismal thoughts did not so often intrude (which I strive forcibly to dismiss), I should be very well off here, for I live agreeably, comfortably, and above all, cheaply.” Mozart was telling the strict truth about his ten busy days: listed under the date June 22 is a Terzet, and under June 26 a march, piano sonata, and adagio with fugue, for strings, together with a piece of more doubtful bread-winning powers (from which the “dismal thoughts” are quite absent) — the Symphony in E-flat.

Mozart had recently acquired his position as “Chamber Composer” to the Emperor Joseph II. But the post, which had been held by the Chevalier Gluck until his death the year before, was as unre- munerative as it was high-sounding. Mozart's emperor was glad to pare the salary of two thousand florins he had paid to Gluck to less than half — the equivalent of two hundred dollars — in Mozart’s case. He expected little in return — no exquisite symphonies or operas to set

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Austria afire—a fresh set of minuets, waltzes, or country dances for each imperial masked ball in the winter season was quite sufficient. Hence the oft-quoted line which Mozart is supposed to have sent back with one of the imperial receipts: “Too much for what I do—not enough for what I can do.”

Posterity can more easily agree with Otto Jahn’s characterization of the E-flat symphony as a “triumph of euphony—full of charm,” and the “Jupiter” as “striking in dignity and solemnity,” than his description of the G minor as “full of passion”—of “sorrow and complaining.” Early commentators seem to have found a far greater divergence of mood in the symphonies of Mozart than our present world. Nägeli soberly and earnestly reproached Mozart with an excess of “cantabilität.” “He cannot be termed a correct composer of instrumental music, for he mingled and confounded ‘cantabilität’ with a free instrumental play of ideas, and his very wealth of fancy and emotional gifts led to a sort of fermentation in the whole province of art, causing it rather to retrograde than to advance, and exercising a very powerful influence over it.”

Spokesmen of the later time when romance unabashed was the fashion extolled this very quality. E. T. A. Hoffmann called this sym-
phony the “swan song” of Mozart’s youth. “Love and melancholy breathe forth in purest spirit tones; we feel ourselves drawn with inexpressible longing towards the forms which beckon as the clouds to another sphere.” Wagner’s more factual imagination seems to acknowledge Mozart as a primary source of his own emotional art: “The longing sigh of the great human voice, drawn to him by the loving power of his genius, breathes from his instruments. He leads the irresistible stream of richest harmony into the heart of his melody, as though with anxious care he sought to give it, by way of compensation for its delivery by mere instruments, the depth of feeling and ardour which lies at the source of the human voice as the expression of the unfathomable depths of the heart.”

Wagner also discerned a “marked relationship” between this symphony and the Seventh of Beethoven. “In both,” he wrote, “the clear human consciousness of an existence meant for rejoicing is beautifully transfigured by the presage of a higher world beyond. The only distinction I would make is that in Mozart’s music the language of the
heart is shaped to graceful longing, whereas in Beethoven's conception this longing reaches out a bolder hand to seize the Infinite. In Mozart's symphony the fullness of feeling predominates, in Beethoven's the manly consciousness of strength."

Mozart uses no oboes in his E-flat symphony, only one flute, and clarinets, bassoons, horns, and trumpets in twos. Jahn finds the blending of clarinets with horns and bassoons productive of "a full, mellow tone" requisite for his special purpose, while "the addition of the flutes [flute] gives it clearness and light, and trumpets endow it with brilliancy and freshness." The delicate exploitation of the clarinets is in many parts evident, particularly in the trio of the minuet, where the first carries the melody and the second complements it with arpeggios in the deeper register.
Shostakovich composed his Fifth Symphony for performance in celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the Republic of Soviet Russia. The first of a series of performances was given at Leningrad, November 21, 1937. The first performance at Moscow was on the 29th of January following. The Symphony had its first American hearing at a broadcast concert of the National Broadcasting Company, in New York, April 9, 1938, Artur Rodzinski conducting. The Symphony was performed by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, January 20, 1939, Richard Burgin conducting.

The Symphony is scored for two flutes and piccolo, two oboes, clarinets in A, B-flat, and E-flat, two bassoons and contra-bassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones and tuba, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, triangle, tambourine, tam-tam, xylophone, bells, celesta, piano, two harps, and strings.

The Symphony is conceived, developed and scored for the most part with great simplicity. The themes are usually melodic and long-breathed in character. The manipulation of voices is plastic, but never elaborate. The composer tends to present his material in the pure medium of the string choirs, notably in the opening and slow movements, where wind color and sonority are gradually built up. The first movement and the last gain also in intensity as they unfold by a gradual increase of tempo throughout, effected by continual metronomic indications.

The first movement opens with an intervallic theme, stated anti-
phonally between the low and high strings. From it there grows a theme (violins) in extensive, songful periods. The development is in the nature of melodic exfoliation. The first theme returns in horns and trumpets, and subsides to the gentle voice of the violins, over a characteristic triple rhythmic figure. As the tempo quickens, the rhythms tighten and become more propulsive, while the melody, sounding from the brass choir, becomes exultant in animation. The recapitulation suddenly restores the initial slow tempo as the first theme is repeated by the orchestra in unison, *largamente*. The *fortissimo* strings and deep brass give way to a gentler reminiscent mood, as the wood-wind voices, here first fully exploited, bring the movement to a close.

The second movement is in the historical scherzo form with clear traces in the course of the music of the traditional repeats, trio section and *da capo*. The themes are in the triple time of the Austrian *Ländler*, from which, in the past, scherzos have sprung. The slow movement, like the first, is one of gradual melodic growth, from string beginnings. The theme, too, is reminiscent of the first theme in the opening movement. The individual voices of the wood wind enter, and the tension increases as the strings give a tremolo accompaniment, and sing once more, muted and in the high register. The finale, in rondo form, devolves upon a straightforward and buoyant march-like rhythm and a theme unmistakably Russian in suggestion. There is a constant increase in tempo to an inspiring and sonorous conclusion.

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Shostakovitch was nineteen years old when he wrote his first orchestral work, the Symphony Op. 10 which, played far and wide and established in the repertory of orchestras, has naturally drawn the interest and attention of the Western world to the composer.* Musicians have watched with hopeful curiosity the subsequent development of the young artist. His growth has been puzzling because it is quite without precedent. The environment of Shostakovitch, the only one he has known from childhood, has been a communal state which has made the works of its artists its direct concern. Shostakovitch has apparently taken it as quite a matter of course that his music must be integral with the thoughts and needs, the cultural ideology of Soviet Russia. His Second and Third Symphonies had explicit revolutionary programmes. But these symphonies did not repeat the success of the first. The element of the grotesque then took precedence in his works and despite the success of his opera ‘Lady Macbeth of Mzensk’ (1935), there came at length a rift between official sanction and individual inclination. The composer in his exuberance used satire which was purely musical in its impulse, and which instead of exposing bourgeois ideals, merely reflected them. His fantasy

* This symphony, first performed at Leningrad on May 12, 1926, was introduced in America by the Philadelphia Orchestra on November 2, 1928. The first performance in Boston was at a Boston Symphony concert, Richard Burgin conducting, November 8, 1935.

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became personal idiosyncrasy which neglected to fall in with class-conscious expectations. At the beginning of 1936, two articles appeared in the Pravda, chief organ of the Communist Party, condemning Shostakovitch (along with other composers) for his “formalistic ideas founded on bourgeois musical conceptions.” A new movement, taken up by the “Union of Soviet Composers,” and in official circles which were not musical, put Shostakovitch into general disfavor. His opera “Lady Macbeth of Mzensk” was found, even by those who had once praised it, to be “a concession to bourgeois taste,” and a pending new production was withdrawn, as was the new and lately mounted ballet “Limpid Stream.” This last rebuke was serious, for the composer had carefully built his ballet on the subject of a communal farm, only to be told by Pravda that he had depicted “merely painted peasants, the kind you see on the covers of candy boxes.” Shostakovitch, although he continued to hold his position as teacher at the Leningrad Conservatory,* faced, it would seem, definite extinction by the simple expedient of the withdrawal of his music from performance and circulation.

* For this and other information about Shostakovitch, we are indebted to the articles on this composer by Nicolas Slonimsky in the Bulletin of the American Russian Institute (January 15, 1938), and in the International Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians, edited by Oscar Thompson.
That the Leningrad Philharmonic accepted his new Fourth Symphony for performance in December, 1936, indicates that there was no positive official ban. But the composer withdrew the Symphony before it could come to performance, as if he were not satisfied that he had met the requirements of the new æsthetic alignment. He composed another, his Fifth, which was duly performed at Leningrad at the celebrations in the autumn of 1937. It was evident at once that he had toed the line. All seats for the first and for succeeding performances were taken far in advance. There were ovations and enthusiastic reviews at every hand. The chorus of written praise extended beyond the musical profession, and included the prominent literary figure Alexei Tolstoy, and Gromoff, the aviator and hero of the transpolar flight. The article by Andrew Budyakovsky in the Moscow Daily News is typical: “The composer while retaining the originality of his art in this new composition has to a great extent overcome the ostentatiousness, deliberate musical affectation and misuse of the grotesque which had left a pernicious print on many of his former compositions,” he wrote. “Shostakovich's 'Fifth Symphony' is a work of great depth, with emotional wealth and content, and is of great importance as a milestone in the composer's development.*

* It is interesting to note that on its performance in Paris in June, 1939, the Symphony was summarily dismissed by several critics.

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The critics of Shostakovitch were not very consistent. This one (and his fellows) congratulated the composer for having freed himself of "formalism" at the very moment when their supposedly chastised and penitent artist had settled into an abstract symphony, based squarely upon time-honored structural form and harmonic principles. Heeding admonitions, years before, that music should have an expressive connection with the life of the Russian people, he had written his Second ("October") Symphony with political implications, and his Third ("May Day") Symphony with an explicit programme and a verbal message. These works did not seem to call forth his best powers. Shostakovitch instinctively partook in the general return of composers to the abstract forms. That an inner, instinctive voice has at length conditioned the style of Shostakovitch, and, in turn, brought his critics into line, would seem a restoration of just values.

Whether the composer's move toward simplification in the Fifth
Symphony has been made by the prompting of his own instincts or by pressure of outward necessity remains the secret of Shostakovitch. Our Western experience offers us no criterion for a situation where a great nation, even in its non-musical circles, can be vitally interested as a single artist matures. We find it strange that many people in various walks of life will speak with a single voice for a new symphony or against a stage piece in their genuine search for an art for the many, acting without a basic motive (if so it be) of self-interest, personal malice, or narrow factionalism. To look at the other side of the picture and behold an important composer heeding, in all seriousness, this peculiar apparition of concerted advice, is at least as strange. "Capitalist" society has long been familiar with the spectacle of composers whose musical inclinations have been at odds with the desires of those who have held the purse strings, or with the listening public at large. Some have written inferior music for gain; some have imposed their will upon the world, arousing the clash of controversy; some have quietly persisted in going their own way, paying the penalty of temporary obscurity and neglect. Experience points that new and important music, having usually put forth unaccustomed and challenging ideas, has run into conflict with a general inertia of musical habit. It has prevailed through the dogged adherence of its maker to his own convictions, through his fine disregard of the debasements of
standardization. A society which rejects the tradition of an alien past, which, trying to build afresh, seeks a certain modernism, may present a somewhat different case. But when that society sets up new and arbitrary dogmas, there must be the need once more for a good infusion of healthy individual rebellion. Instead, there is the apparition of the composer who simply has no existence unless he conforms, and who looks upon nonconformity as in the order of things an artistic error on his part.

It will be interesting to review the career of Shostakovitch in the light of the statements he himself has made upon his aims and views.

"I was born in 1906 at Leningrad," he wrote for La Revue Musicale in December, 1936. "My musical leanings became manifest in 1915, and I began to study music at that time. In 1919 I entered the Conservatory at Leningrad, completing my course in 1925. I worked there under the direction of L. Nikolaiev (piano, and theory of composition), of Professor M. Sokolov (counterpoint and fugue), and of Professor M. Steinberg (harmony, fugue, orchestration, and practical composition). My studies at the Conservatory complete, I continued to attend the class in composition directed by Professor Steinberg. I began to compose at that time. My symphony, which has made the round of almost all of the world's orchestras, was the product of my culminating studies at the Conservatory.
"I was then absorbing with enthusiasm, and quite uncritically, all the knowledge and fine points [finesses] which were being taught me. But once my studies were finished, there came the necessity of assorting a large part of the musical baggage which I had acquired. I grasped that music is not merely a combination of sounds, arranged in a certain order, but an art capable of expressing by its own means the most diverse ideas or sentiments. This conviction I did not acquire without travail. Let it suffice that during the whole year of 1926, I did not write a single note, but from 1927 I have never stopped composing. During this period, I have written two operas: 'The Nose' (after Gogol), and 'Lady Macbeth of Mzensk' (after Lesskoff); three ballets, including the 'Golden Age,' and 'The Bolt'; three symphonies, including the 'Ode to October' and the 'Symphony of May 1st'; 24 preludes for piano; a concerto for piano and orchestra; music for films, etc.*

"In this interval of time, my technique has become more finished and secure. Working ceaselessly to master my art, I am endeavoring to create my own musical style, which I am seeking to make simple and expressive. I cannot think of my further progress apart from our socialist structure, and the end which I set to my work is to contribute at every point toward the growth of our remarkable country. There can be no greater joy for a composer than the inner assurance of having assisted by his works in the elevation of Soviet musical culture, of having been called upon to play a leading rôle in the recasting of human perception."

This avowal of faith was nothing new from Shostakovich, who had written in a communication to the New York Times (December 5, 1931): 'I am a Soviet composer, and I see our epoch as something heroic, spirited and joyous. . . . Music cannot help having a political basis—an idea that the bourgeois are slow to comprehend. There can be no music without ideology. The old composers, whether they knew it or not, were upholding a political theory. Most of them, of course, were bolstering the rule of the upper classes. "We as revolutionists have a different conception of music. Lenin himself said that 'music is a means of unifying broad masses of people.' Not a leader of masses, perhaps, but certainly an organizing force! For music has the power of stirring specific emotions in those who listen to it. Good music lifts and heartens, and lightens people for work and effort. It may be tragic, but it must be strong. It is no longer an end in itself, but a vital weapon in the struggle."

* The composer's "etc." includes a piano sonata, other piano pieces such as "Aphorisms," "Three Fantastic Dances," and two pieces for string octet (1927). More recently, there have been a string quartet (1938), and a suite for jazz orchestra, written for the new "State Jazz Orchestra," inaugurated November 28, 1938, in Moscow. The Sixth Symphony, announced as the "Lenin Symphony," with choral finale, appeared as a purely instrumental work with no more than the numerical title, and was performed in Moscow December 3, 1939. The Sovietskaya Musica announced last February that Shostakovich was at work upon his Seventh Symphony, and was preparing a new version of Moussorgsky's 'Boris Godunov.'
The composer's sketch of 1936 was apparently written just before the outbreak of open opposition through Russia to his music, and he must already have felt that the divergence between his musical tendencies and the immediate advantage of Soviet musical culture was being questioned. His Second and Third Symphonies, each with a bold and comprehensive programme designed as a mighty "organizing force," had somehow fallen short of their aim. The opera "The Nose" (1930), on Gogol's fantastic short story, had been strongly influenced by atonality and other Western experimentalism, and had been accordingly attacked by the R. A. P. M. ("Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians," since defunct) as a manifestation of "bourgeois decadence." This opera did not succeed, nor did the ballets "The Golden Age" (1930), and "The Bolt" (1931), which outwardly satirized the bourgeois West and capitalist tendencies in Russia respectively. Orchestral suites from these pieces survived the stage productions. The opera "Lady Macbeth of Mzensk" (1935), an earthy tale of adulterous passion and murder in provincial Russia, had an immediate success both in its own country and abroad.

The anonymous article which appeared in the Pravda on January 28, 1936, crystallized a case against Shostakovich. His music was declared "un-Soviet, unwholesome, cheap, excentric, tuneless, and leftist."
When his new ballet, "Limpid Stream," named after the title of a collective farm which was its scene, was produced in February, it was found inconsequential, stylized, artificial, quite failing to depict peasant life. The Pravda attack was considered to support a governmental tendency in favor of music closer to the thought and understanding of the masses. There may have been official significance in the fact that Stalin had shortly before singled out for special praise the young composer, Ivan Dzerzhinsky, and his opera "And Quiet Flows the Don."

The predicament of Shostakovich and the nature of the outcry against him may be better understood as described by Grigori Schneeerson (printed in Modern Music, March-April, 1938):

"A few years ago there appeared the now famous series of articles in the newspaper Pravda which were followed by the highly publicized discussion in the Composers' Union, condemning the formalistic tendencies as well as the vulgar realism of 'Lady Macbeth.' Both within and beyond the boundaries of Russia, admirers of that composer's remarkable gifts heard this censure as a thunderclap from a clear sky. Shostakovich, synonym of young Soviet musical creation, its most outstanding representative, with a world reputation to boot, was hurled from his pedestal!

"Not many at that time understood the meaning, the purpose of the Pravda criticism. With courageous directness the paper raised the problem of 'ultimate truth in art,' and, more specifically, of folk-consciousness in the composer, as against an indulgence in fruitless devices to enrapture the 'art-gourmands.' The articles were intended as a clarion call to artists to create as for a great epoch.

"In the Western world the object of the avant-garde is presumably the overthrow of old artistic foundations, the breaking out of 'new paths,' however meaningless, at any cost. For us in the Soviet, however, the avant-garde is held to express progressive ideas only when it talks to the people in a new, powerful, and intelligible language. The demands of the wide masses of people, their artistic tastes, grow from day to day. The 'advanced' composer is therefore one who plunges into the social currents swirling round him, and, with his creative work, serves the progress of humankind."

Last year Shostakovich composed his Sixth Symphony. Virtually nothing about the piece or its performance is known outside of Russia. Nicolas Slonimsky, who keeps in constant touch with musical events in Russia, has kindly contributed the following interesting account of the latest chapter in the efforts of an artist and his government to come to an understanding.

"Encouraged by the success of the Fifth Symphony, Shostakovich announced plans for a new symphony dedicated to the memory of Lenin. This was a difficult undertaking, in which the problem of ideological fidelity was all-important. Lenin was in no sense a music lover, and his musical predilections were indefinite. It was known only that Lenin was definitely opposed to what was loosely termed 'leftist
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art.' On the positive side, it was known that during the early days of the Revolution, he heard the pianist Dobrowen play Beethoven's 'Appassionata,' and liked it. The ideological influence of Beethoven has been strong in Soviet music at all times. Beethoven's earnestness of purpose, the epic dimensions of his music, his political independence, all these qualities were regarded as 'consonant' with Soviet philosophy. Shostakovitch's Fifth Symphony opens, significantly, with flashes of Beethovenian lightning. For his new symphony, Shostakovitch planned to take a leaf from Beethoven's Ninth, and use chorus and soloists. His 'Hymn of Joy' was to be a poem about Lenin by a Caucasian poet, which had an epical ring, and an imprint of authentic self-expression. But something must have gone seriously wrong, for when the Sixth Symphony was finally produced at the Moscow Festival, on December 3, 1939, it was sans chorus, sans Lenin, sans everything.

"Also, the universal approbation that greeted the Fifth Symphony was signally lacking at the performance of the Sixth. In the course of the Moscow Festival of November–December 1939, several major works were performed, among them three cantatas: Prokofieff's 'Alexander Nevsky,' arranged from his music to the film of the same name; Shaporin's 'On the Field of Kulikov,' and Koval's 'Emelian Pugatchov.' All these cantatas drew their inspiration from the incidents of the remote past of Russian history. Alexander Nevsky was the Russian leader who routed the Teutonic Knights at the bloody Ice Battle on the frozen Peipus Lake, on April 5, 1242. The film, with its emphasis on the ability of Russian armies to repel a Germanic invasion, was made before the conclusion of the German-Soviet pact of August 1939, but the production of the cantata on November 20, 1939, apparently was not considered as conflicting with the friendship clause of the pact. Shaporin's subject was the Russian victory over the Tartar chieftain Mamay in the year 1380. Koval selected the story of the rebel Emelian Pugatchov, executed by Catherine the Great on January 11, 1775. The cantatas of Prokofieff and Shaporin emphasized the national, and Koval's cantata, the historical and revolutionary elements. All three were extremely successful, and the press published long articles discussing their merits, while Shostakovitch's Symphony was barely reported at all. The technical analysis of the Symphony in the December 1939 issue of Sovietskaya Musica was definitely disparaging. The lesson was made fairly clear. What is needed in the year 1940 is the romanticization of Russia circa 1240, while Shostakovitch devotes his talents principally to satirizing Russia circa 1840. Will Shostakovitch be able to adapt his essentially satiric talent to the changed times? His entire future in Soviet Russia hinges on the answer."

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