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shelf. The first alternative shocks the musicians' sense of propriety—naturally. But the second would be a real disaster. A regrettable choice of evils; yet many signs point to the fact that it will soon have to be made. It is better to make it deliberately, to let those who really know suggest how it should be done, than to leave such things to the caprice of individual performers and conductors as is the case now.

Two concrete instances—extreme ones, it is true—will help to enforce this argument. We all know that Schubert's C major Symphony is a masterpiece, and that its appearance on a programme suffices to empty a concert hall. The 'Unfinished' is a sure draw. People often say 'But there are finer bits in the C major than anything here.' If anyone had the courage to reduce that Symphony to a size equal to that of the 'Unfinished,' it would become as familiar as its fellow. It would be known and loved by thousands who never hear it now.

Another instance is 'The Ring.' It is a thing in a class by itself, of course, but in a little conversation at which I was once present on the subject of cutting 'The Ring,' things were said that are of universal application. The late Dr. Richter was once inveighing against the wholly inartistic cuts that some conductors made, and a singer said the present want of system was distracting. He had sung the same part in three different theatres in a fortnight, and had had to study three different versions. A third person then suggested that a commission consisting of the Doctor himself, Levi, and Mottl—both of whom were then also alive—should publish an authorized abbreviated version for everyday use of all the Wagner music-dramas. He said it would be an artistic crime. It was pointed out that the absence of guidance from inspired quarters led to the perpetration of worse crimes. And so it is throughout the realm of music.

There is a cognate point on which another article might be written. It is tacitly assumed to be a sin to play one movement of a Symphony, or a Quartet, or a Suite. The result is that many beautiful movements are practically moribund, or certainly are not heard as often as they ought to be, because of the dead weight they have to carry with them. The most striking case is that of the early Symphonies of Beethoven. Each of them, the 1st, 2nd, and 4th, has one movement which hundreds would love to hear, but never do hear, only because the whole Symphonies would keep audiences away from a concert. So it is with the 'Pilgrims' March' from Mendelssohn's 'Italian' Symphony or the *Scherzo* of the 'Scotch' Symphony, and instances might easily be multiplied from Quartets, Trios, and Sonatas of all types. Here too is an opportunity of clearing our minds of cant.

Some very good people hold up their hands in horror when they hear the 'Dorabella' Variation of Elgar played by itself, but when asked why the procedure is dreadful, they really do not know, except that 'the movement is torn from the context.' But presumably the composer sanctions it, and he

knows best. Probably the composers of the past would be more broad-minded than the purists of to-day, and would have a clearer perception of the artistic necessities of the present.

THE HUMOUR OF STRAVINSKY.

BY LEIGH HENRY.

Among the vanguard of musical humorists stands Igor Stravinsky, in whose work music attains not only a new objective treatment based directly upon investigation of the aural nature of sound, but also an intrinsic expression of humour unknown to it before. The expressive capacities of sound which his empiric experiments have brought to light have given music a range of human mood-content hitherto unknown. In this content, humour, as in actual life, naturally occupies a prominent place, not only as a 'literary' motive, as has up to the present been the case, but also in the actual *aural* matter of the media in which it is expressed.

This intrinsically musical type of humour is naturally a comparatively late development in Stravinsky's music. Its potential presence is apparent, however, in his earliest work. There is latent whimsicality in the quality of the music he composed for the three Pushkin poems, entitled collectively 'Shepherdess and Faun.' This has a semi-literary quality, however, owing to the French classical sentiment of the words. Of a like suggestive type is the 'Fantastic Scherzo' for orchestra, as also are certain imitative effects in 'The Fire Bird.'

It is in the burlesque ballet-scenes of 'Petrouchka' that the objective development of Stravinsky's humour, both spiritually and musically, is first apparent. Here Stravinsky takes place with the world's greatest comedy-writers. 'Petrouchka' is informed throughout by psychological insight, by keen critical observation of human significances and relationships. Incorporate with this insight is an understanding compassion which, while never degenerating into sentimentality, yet places the work on that high level of comedy in which humour and tragedy are continually juxtaposed. One has but to recall the little passage, full of pained, bewildered, child-like questioning accompanying the unfortunate Petrouchka's examination of his grotesque, bruised body, to realise the element of human pity. Yet even here Stravinsky avoids all bathos. He is no sentimental romantic; the misery and childish perplexity of the wretched doll-clown are there; but so also are his clumsiness, ineffectuality, and stupidity:

Adagietto.

("Petrouchka," Tableau 2.)

Yet the humour is far from absolute farce. So far, indeed, that the next moment, when *Petrushka*, having vainly invoked the Charlatan, breaks out in fury and crashes his arms through his cell-wall, only to find a blank vista of stars, the comedy borders very close on tragic poetry. One can imagine what orgies of orchestral dynamics a German composer would have indulged in. This is what Stravinsky does—with a cornet:

The score, however, has no 'profound' pretensions. It teems with little tinkling melodies which, 'real' in the most descriptive sense, are full of a rollicking mockery, such as the two organ-grinders' phrases:

Throughout the whole of the fair-scenes, a perception of mass-psychology is the dominant feature. Here again the humorous sense gives the distinctive quality and accuracy. Moussorgsky, in 'Boris' and 'Khovantchina,' could never resist the temptation to idealise his crowds, and expend his sentiment on them. Stravinsky never loses sight of the crowd as a concrete, objective reality; he discerns its group-aspects and potentialities, but in so doing does not obscure his perception of its component whimsicalities, its collective incongruities. For him the type is never submerged in the sentimental ideal.

He is not cynical. Cynicism is usually disappointed idealism; Stravinsky's mind is of a pragmatic order. His irony has nothing acrid about it. Nor does he segregate himself in an aloof atmosphere of intellectual condescension.

Few passages have more personally-experienced exhilaration in them than that with which 'Petrushka' commences:

Nor is it easy to find anything more full of spontaneous merriment than this:

For Stravinsky's humour, like all great modern art, is true to human idiosyncrasies in its character-delineation, without ideal premise or modification. He is not a 'realist' in the current sense: his work is real in that it penetrates to, and expresses, the spiritual elements which give to actuality its significances. His dramatic work, as that of his countryman, Chekof, is a direct presentation of life as he apprehends it, without palliation, exaggeration, or modification; nor does he subvert it to intellectually-conceived purposes.

THE RACIAL FACTOR IN THE WORK OF STRAVINSKY.

In this sense, and in its ever-recurrent humour, the work of Stravinsky is the most representatively Russian music to date. For in no national literature, not even excepting France, has objective humour played so great a part as in that of Russia. And literature is the primary expression of a race.

The first Russian stage-work was a comedy, not an epic, or mystery, as is the case with other nations. This comedy was written by Gregory, pastor of the Sloboda in the 17th century.

The first Russian literary verse, written by Prince Kantemir (1708-44), was satirical, and commenced that distinctive type which has persevered, in varying forms in the fables of Krylof, the 'Contes' of Count Nulin, and even in writings by the classic Pushkin, to poetry such as that of Sologub to-day.

Russian prose, commencing with Gogol, derived from him that irony which, differing from preceding poetry, transferred humour from fables and fantasy to the ordinary incidents of everyday, and this has remained a persistent element of Russian prose, giving us one of the world's greatest satirists, Michael Saltykof-Shedrin (1826-89), and countless other

writers, such as Count Alexis Tolstoi (not to be confused with the more famous Leo Tolstoi), who wrote as 'Kuzma Prutkof.'

Russian humour has achieved its apex of irony, that of burlesque self-criticism, as witness the work of Saltykof referred to, where the whole social system is pilloried; or that of Loskof and Pisemsky, who extended their mockery even to the popular reformers; or Sologub, whose 'Little Demon' is satire directed against himself, or rather the elements of his subjective mentality.

That Stravinsky possesses an identical capacity for self-analysis is evinced in his 'Chant du Rossignol,' where he parodies themes taken from his own lyric-drama, 'Le Rossignol,' the somewhat sentimental Fisher's music being given to a cornet.

THE OBJECTIVE DEVELOPMENT OF STRAVINSKY'S HUMOUR.

I have referred to 'Petrushka' as the first manifestation of the objective musical development of Stravinsky's humour. Yet even here much of the comedy is not of an independently musical type. Nevertheless, signs of the composer's later development are to be seen. Apart from the burlesque section, there is something aurally mirth-provoking

in themes such as the ludicrously sentimental preamble with which the Charlatan introduces his show:

Ex. 6. (Flute.) *ad lib.* ("Petrushka," Tableau 1.)

'The Nightingale' is full of similar instances, though less obviously.

There are few conversant with music in which 'local-colour' is given weight, who will not feel the comedy of the 'Marche Chinoise,' or the artistic appositeness of the amusing scene at the close of the comedy, where the Emperor confronts the ostentatiously mourning courtiers:

Ex. 7. ('Le Rossignol,' Act 3.)
(Le rideau tombe lentement.)
L'EMPEREUR.
Bon - jour à tous.

On the other hand, they may not be disposed to recognise the satirical inferences against the intelligentsia in the music accompanying the effusions of the courtiers on hearing the frogs which they presume to be the famous bird favoured by the Emperor:

Ex. 8. COURTISANS. ('Le Rossignol,' Act 1.)
mf
C'est lui

The humorous aural quality of this is, however, obvious, and it is by the introduction of this latter quality into music that Stravinsky may claim to first rank among creative artists, apart from the

value of all his other innovations. In so doing he has rid music finally of the last shreds of subordination to literary purpose which dates from the inception of romanticism.

It is true that, in carrying his humour from burlesque to satire, Stravinsky has recently deliberately associated his music with a text, both actually and by tradition, permeated with literary satire. The work in question is the 'Renard; histoire burlesque en un acte,' for male voices and chamber-orchestra. The 'Roman du Renart,' from which this text derives, through centuries of similar work which includes the American 'Brer Fox' tales, is the earliest example of the practice of making bestial personages a vehicle for irony, as distinct from the materialistic fables of writers such as Æsop.

The setting by Stravinsky is no mere perfunctory appendix to the text. Both here and in the later vocal works ('Pribaoutki,' 'Berceuses du Chat,' and 'Histoire du Soldat') the music plays an

independent informative part, and is intrinsically humorous, apart from all ideas of the text. I cannot but feel something essentially comic in passages such as :

Ex. 9.

('Pribaoutki.'—No. 1. 'L'Oncle Armand.')

noie . . ton cha - grin de-dans. *Cadenza.*

The musical score is for a piece titled 'Pribaoutki' (No. 1, 'L'Oncle Armand.'). It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in 3/4 time and has a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The piano accompaniment is in 3/4 time and has a key signature of one flat. The vocal line includes the lyrics 'noie . . ton cha - grin de-dans.' followed by a 'Cadenza.' section. The piano accompaniment includes a 'Cadenza.' section.

There are many to whom this later humorous development of Stravinsky is something in the nature of musical degeneracy. These find humour derogatory to that art which has been enshrined on solemn heights by Beethoven—as in the tune of the Choral Symphony. But there are many who believe that this solemnity often cloaks a lack of real originality and vital impulse.

The form of the later works also, by its brevity and lack of worked-out dimensions, renders these trivial to those who judge value by quantity, not quality. Life, however, goes swiftly at present, and our moods and their expression follow its course. It would further be an absurdity for Stravinsky to incorporate his light wit in the voluminous body of conventional academic forms. The most refined type of literary humour is the epigram, the essence of which is brevity. To this

type of expression the later work of Stravinsky approximates.

Those who find his persistent humour lowering to the status of creative musical art cannot differentiate between 'musical comedy' and comedy in music. There is a great mass of purely humorous work, ludicrous in subject, which is yet among the world's greatest literary possessions. If we rule out humour and irony as the basis of certain types of creative art, then we must eliminate Rabelais, Cervantes, Swift, Samuel Butler, Lewis Carrol, Lear, Boccaccio, and much of Shakespeare, not to speak of thousands of lesser talents. But we are not likely to do this if sanity remains, for, in the world's present weariness of pathos and tragedy, we all have need of those things which contribute to life—'Laughter and rallying.'

'PARSIFAL': A NEW ENGLISH VERSION.

On November 17 'Parsifal' received its first performance in English, and on the same day the house of Novello issued a new English edition of the opera. Two of the first questions that arise concerning a publication of this kind have to do with the translation and adaptation of the libretto and with the pianoforte version of the score. Let us look at the new edition with these points in view. A few years ago very little importance was attached to the former need, if we may judge from the absurdities that seemed to be expected of a libretto translator. We are more exacting to-day, and any notable improvement there may be is due to our tardy realisation of the fact that such an adaptation demands much more than a mere knowledge of the two languages concerned. The adapter must have this to begin with, but he must be able to add some poetic feeling, musical knowledge (especially in regard to singing), and a good ear for rhythm and accent, both musical and literary. An adaptation must inevitably lose something of the original flavour, but, given one with these qualifications, the loss is more than made up by the convenience of having at hand an edition in the vernacular. In the Novello publication the English version has been made by Mr. Claude Aveling, whose abilities in regard to libretti, both original and adapted, are well-known. His work in this edition of 'Parsifal' will add to his reputation.

The pianoforte score contains some features calling for notice. In works of this kind, where the orchestration is of prime importance, something more than a mere pianoforte arrangement is required. An edition is doubly valuable to the student if indications of the orchestration are given. For example, a singer studying a rôle at the pianoforte

wants to know a good deal about the orchestral cues. Those of the audience who really go to listen need to be familiar not only with the musical matter, but with the manner of its presentment. For such as these, the Novello edition will be invaluable. The indications are so fully marked that the pianoforte version is an excellent substitute for the full score. If there be any other edition of the kind more fully marked, we have not yet seen it. We choose, almost at random, a few bars of a quotable kind :

Lento.
LANGSAM.
Cl.-B. Solo.

p Fag. II. III. *pp* Fag. I.

C.-Fag.

Cl.-I. Solo.

pp Fag. I. *pp* Fag. II. III.

Cl. B.

The musical score is for a piece titled 'Parsifal' (Lento, LANGSAM, Cl.-B. Solo.). It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in 3/4 time and has a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The piano accompaniment is in 3/4 time and has a key signature of one flat. The vocal line includes the lyrics 'noie . . ton cha - grin de-dans.' followed by a 'Cadenza.' section. The piano accompaniment includes a 'Cadenza.' section.

The advantages of this feature need no emphasising. From the player's point of view, the version is perhaps somewhat more difficult than the average of such