

its discomforts as "only growing pains," whatever that means. Reliable observers, such as Dr. Samuel McCoy, tell us that it is doubtful if 4 out of 50 children who suffer from heart disease receive proper care. But boards of education and health departments are now beginning to provide places for cardiac children in special classes. When properly supervised most of these cases recover.

To be effective, the attack on heart diseases must begin with the child. It is, in the last analysis, a community problem. Again quoting Dr. Emerson, there must be: 1, adequate facilities for diagnosis; 2, provision for the medical care and nursing of those unable to pay; 3, places in which

to care for convalescent and chronic cardiac cripples, and Summer camps for cardiac children; 4, vocational guidance for school children and wage earners with heart defects; and finally, 5, investigation of the causes and effects of heart disease. Another authority, Dr. William Robey, says that a program like this should not cost more than \$20 a patient a year—not so much when it is considered that in three years 4,500 patients with heart disease cost the city of New York more than a half a million dollars for hospital bed care, and about \$160,000 for convalescent home care. The 6,000 patients who came to the heart clinics cost only \$23,500, or one twenty-fifth of the hospital bill.

## Music

### STRAVINSKY AS A SYMPTOM

BY DANIEL GREGORY MASON

THE proverbial small boy's idea of "poetry" is a relentless recurrence of two-syllable groups, all exactly alike:

*The boy stood on the burning deck  
Whence all but he had fled.*

If the Juggernaut march of accents happens to bring a stress on an unimportant word like *on*, so much the worse for the sense. As he grows up, however, if his feeling for rhythm develops, he may come first to perceive, then to tolerate, finally to relish verses of less mechanical inflexibility, in which vital displacements of accent are effected by important words. He may come to savor such subtle groupings as these of Masfield:

*I must go down to the sea again, to the lonely  
sea and the sky,  
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her  
by;  
And the wheel's kick, and the wind's song and  
the white sail's shaking,  
And a grey mist on the sea's face, and a grey  
dawn breaking.*

Even the greatest poets and composers often go through essentially the same development. Wagner, as Mr. Ernest New-

man has pointed out, began with the small boy taste for sing-song, and many of his early tunes are as angular and monotonous as, for example, the march in "Tannhäuser." Only gradually did he feel his way to the beautiful elasticity of the Spring Song in "Die Walküre" and the Good Friday Spell in "Parsifal." It took Verdi the better part of a lifetime to pass from the crudity of "Trovatore" to the freedom of "Falstaff" and "Otello." What the psychologists call our spans of apperception differ not so greatly perhaps, in absolute measurement, between the rawest and the most cultivated mind; but the variation, however limited in quantity, is qualitatively immensely significant; it is what chiefly distinguishes the lover of Beethoven or Brahms from the child or the savage still in the tom-tom stage.

That the majority of what we are pleased to call our musical public are still in this childish or savage stage of taste is shown by the popularity of jazz. Jazz is the doggerel of music. It is the sing-song that the school-boy repeats mechanically before he becomes sensitive to refined cadence. It is not, accurately speaking, rhythm at all, but only metre, a monotonous repetition of short stereotyped figures. For precisely

this reason is it popular with listless, inattentive, easily distracted people, incapable of the effort required to grasp the more complex symmetries of real music. If I am so dull that I cannot recognize a rhythm unless it kicks me in the solar plexus at every other beat my favorite music will be jazz, just as my favorite poetry will be "The boy stood on the burning deck" or its equivalent. If I possess, moreover, the conceit of the dull, I can easily go on to rationalize my preference into a canon of universal excellence, and affirm, as so many are now affirming, that jazz is the only music for all true 100% Americans. And if I have also the hostility of the dull to all distinction, the desire to pull everything above me down to my own dead level of mediocrity that seems to be a part of our American gregariousness, I can complete my æsthetics by "jazzing up" whatever genuine music may happen to come in my way. With Mr. Paul Whiteman in his much discussed Jazz Concert last year in Carnegie Hall, I can render Chopin indistinguishable from Gershwin, I can reduce Beethoven to terms of Irving Berlin, and, like some perverse tonal Burbank, I can transform MacDowell's "Wild Rose" into a red cabbage.

Of course, the propagandists of jazz are always assuring us that there is in it a new rhythm, the famous rag-time snap or jerk. Our answer must be that this novelty, such as it is, is not rhythmical, is hardly even metrical, is in fact but superficial, as if our schoolboy should whistle or squeak before each word of his droning line. Fundamentally, jazz is an insufferably mechanical two-beat time, with a whack on the big drum for every down beat. To condemn a lover of music to sit through a concert like Mr. Whiteman's is to closet Shelley with the school-boy for a whole evening. So arid is the sameness that even a three-beat measure of common waltz time refreshes like a spring in a desert. There are people who seem to think there is something shocking about jazz. Ah, if there only were! It is its blank feature-

lessness, its unrelieved tepidity, that are so pitiless. Like all primitive forms of art it is so poverty-stricken in interest for the mind (whatever its luxury of appeal to the senses through mere mass of noise or through odd effects of muted trumpets, squeaking clarinets, or flatulent trombones), that it kills its victims by sheer boredom.

Now, if we were to take this formula of jazz—short rhythmic or metrical figures, formally inane but physically pungent, mechanically repeated—and put at its disposal all the resources of modern musical technic, particularly in the matter of complex harmony and tone-color, what should we get? We should get, I think, the so-called ultra-modernist composers, headed by Stravinsky. . . . The reason we do not usually recognize this curious æsthetic kinship, this atavism by which the traits of savage ancestors reappear in neurotic descendants, is that the modernist composers have drawn the red herring of harmony and tone-color across their trail. A page of Stravinsky is so much more sophisticated in technic than a page of Mr. Gershwin that we do not realize that æsthetically they are tweedledum and tweedledee. But harmony and tone-color are matters of superficiality, not of substance. Take a banal bit of melody, and reduplicate it at as many levels as you please, as in the favorite "parallel dominant ninth" chords of Debussy or the more ferocious dissonant combinations of Stravinsky, and though you lavish upon it all the exotic colors of your jazz band or Stravinskian orchestral palette, it can never become anything but the banal melody it was at first. Harmony and color are only costume; the persons of music are the rhythmized melodies; and dress them as you will they remain fatally themselves, like the tramp in the story who awoke in the king's palace.

Well, the Stravinskian melodies are just the jazz tunes over again, more strangely and handsomely dressed. They are the tramp in the king's crown and robes. No doubt the crown is dazzling bright, the

robes of iridescent silks and luxurious brocades: Stravinsky is a master of the orchestra. But he is no master of rhythm—rather the slave of metrical formulæ. Of the final dance in the “Sacre du Printemps” Mr. Cecil Gray remarks in his recent “Survey of Contemporary Music”:

The time-signature changes constantly from bar to bar, but the music itself does not. There is nothing there but the incessant reiteration of the same insignificant metrical phrase in slightly varying quantities. . . . Rhythm implies life, some kind of movement or progression at least, but this music . . . is like a top or gyroscope turning ceaselessly and ineffectually on itself, without moving an inch in any direction, until, in the last bars, it suddenly falls over on its side with a lurch, and stops dead.

It is this piecemeal, mechanical, inorganic structure that seems, despite other differences, to be characteristic of the whole contemporary movement of which Stravinsky is the outstanding figure, and even of the earlier impressionism from which it derives, partly by continuation and partly by reaction. Modern music avoids long living curves of rhythm, and becomes ever more choppy and more mechanical. In Casella and Malipiero, in Ornstein and Prokofieff, in the French Group of Six, even in Debussy and Ravel we note the same reliance on brief bits and snippets of tune, on stereotyped *clichés*, and on the *ostinato*, that degenerate modern grandchild of the savage tom-tom. It is a decrepit, senescent, decadent art that we see about us, slowly dying of hardening of the arteries.

To what extent is this second childhood of our music to be attributed to the influence of the general public? Does the public really like that sort of thing? And if it does, is there much chance of our ever getting anything better? A recent statistical investigation of the taste of a large section of that public in the sister art of poetry, undertaken by Professors Allan Abbott and M. R. Trabue,<sup>1</sup> certainly seems to show a

crudity of perception, a preference for obvious and rigid over subtle and vital rhythm, alarmingly widespread. Messrs. Abbott and Trabue reduced to jingle the Masfield stanza given above by replacing its elastic rhythms with mechanically regular anapests, thus:

I want to get down to the ocean again, to the  
wonderful sea and the sky,  
And all that I ask is a ship of my own and a compass  
to steer her by,  
And the pull of the wheel and the sound of the  
wind and the glistening rigging so free,  
And the grey of the dawn coming up o'er the bow,  
and a mist on the face of the sea.

Of thirty-five hundred students asked to choose between this sorry sing-song and the original, a majority in grades, high school, and college actually preferred the sing-song. It was only graduate students whose taste was mature and individual enough to pick out the more beautiful form. It seems that the perception of an elastic beauty requires a more sustained power of attention than most people have, and that they find the path of least resistance in “setting” their responses to short spans like unvarying anapests and letting them grind away automatically. “Disturbance of the rhythm,” write Messrs. Abbott and Trabue, “spoils poetry for most readers; and they count it disturbance to introduce inversion of accent, unexpected pauses, and other subtleties.”

Can we doubt that most listeners to music are in rhythmic feeling equally childish? As we look about a concert hall at the faces of the audience, so little concentrated, so easily distracted, so incapable apparently of sequacious thought or feeling, can we wonder at the popularity of the most banal and obvious sing-song in the “hits” of the day in musical comedy, rag-time, and jazz, at the eager response, on a somewhat higher plane, to primitives like Stravinsky and decadents like Debussy, at the long indifference to anything more subtle or powerful, making it take decades for Brahms to get the ear of the general public, if indeed he ever gets it? We have all read how Beethoven slowly and labori-

<sup>1</sup>“A Measure of Ability to Judge Poetry,” published by Teachers College, Columbia University. See also “Pegasus in the Paddock,” by Winthrop D. Lane, the *New Republic*, January 7, 1925.

ously created the lovely theme of the Andante of his Fifth Symphony from an unpromising germinal form found in his sketch-book, crude in balance as a street song. First it was this:



Finally it became this:



Was Beethoven's labor wasted? When we sit in Carnegie Hall waiting for the concert to begin we cannot help wondering whether most of the audience would not really rather hear the sketch than the perfect melody.

Perhaps they would, at any one concert. Yet one cannot help feeling that somehow the element of time must work for the

finer thing, that obviousness must grow stale in the long run, and quality tell. Condemn the dullest to read daily both versions of the Mascfield stanza, and one would say that at the end of a month either the spoiled version would have driven him mad or the contrast of the beauty of the original would have won him to sanity. Beethoven's Fifth Symphony would be unendurable by now if he had been satisfied with his sketch. One could make a very pretty fantastic theory that the higher and subtler qualities to be noted in any piece of art at any time are not the causes of its success in the immediate sense of being appreciated and acclaimed by this public now, but are only responsible, so far as the great public is concerned, for its survival over other things that have become too threadbare to be longer endured. We cannot stand Meyerbeer any longer, though his contemporaries preferred him to Wagner; nor Spohr, though he was ranked above Beethoven in their lifetimes; nor Mendelssohn, so much the popular hero when Schumann was still ignored. In the same way we may suspect that our descendants will find the monotony of Stravinsky's primitive rhythms intolerable. Indeed, some of his contemporaries are beginning to find them so already. Boredom, for the popular idol, is the beginning of the end. And so Stravinsky may turn out, after all, to have been the superman, not of music but only of jazz.

# THE SECOND WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE

BY HARRY ELMER BARNES

NEXT to the epoch of the Revolutionary War and its preliminaries, the period of our history from 1783 to 1812 has been the one most exploited by the patriotic type of historians, and the one most zealously guarded against any invasion of truth and candor by our hundred per cent custodians of text-books. The orthodox view of the period, in so far as its events relate to the Anglo-American problem, is substantially as follows:

As soon as it had partially recovered from the effect of the crushing military blow which it had received from American arms in the Revolution, the British government began a systematic campaign of insults and oppression, as if determined to drive the United States into another war, in the hope that it might be forced back into the British Empire. The treaty of 1783 was ruthlessly violated by Great Britain, and the diplomatic attempt of John Jay to remedy the unendurable situation only added new grievances and insults. American ships were subjected to search without provocation and in violation of every accepted dictate of international law. American subjects were pressed into unlawful and unwilling service in the British navy and were forced to fight against France, our former ally. As if not satisfied with these atrocities, Great Britain discovered an even more exasperating engine of oppression in the Orders in Council. By these she attempted to destroy the American merchant marine, which had grown to such proportions as to arouse the jealousy of British merchants. There being no disposition on the part of the English public or the British government to alter this onerous

and insulting system of extortion and exploitation, the United States was aroused to a man. By force of arms we compelled the relinquishment of the impositions in a "second war for independence," marked by a series of brilliant victories on land and sea. These victories again demonstrated the greater public virtue and military capacity of the Americans, and forever discouraged Great Britain from desiring another test of arms with the United States.

## II

One reason, perhaps, for all this misconception of the background of the War of 1812 lies in the fact that we tend to project back into the period from 1783 to 1812 the relative strength and position of the United States and Great Britain today. We forget that England looked upon the United States after 1783 with the same amused and semi-benevolent contempt with which, for example, the United States viewed Cuba and Porto Rico after 1898. We constituted a new, small and insignificant country that had still to make its way into international society. England, with her prestige and her hold upon Canada and the West Indies, was inclined to take our pretensions and interests about as seriously as the United States views the interests of Haiti and the nations of the Caribbean. Nor was she alone in this attitude. Our "friend," France, was equally arrogant and contemptuous of the United States. As Professor Channing points out, French officials in the United States were given an authority comparable to that of American consuls in China at the close of the Nineteenth Century.