

a looser association, which has so far been mooted in Dutch circles, calls for complete autonomy for every dominion parliament, in the sense of abolition of all control or veto by the British Parliament, subject, in case of a deadlock, to appeal to an international court of arbitration. Under this scheme a purely formal membership in the British Empire, with allegiance to the king, would be retained. The plan clearly proposes a loose sort of federation, towards the establishment of which the recognition of the dominions as each a "small nation" in its own right, is sought as the first step.

It may be asked why the advocates of this scheme should be willing to submit to an international court, but not to, say, an imperial council on which representatives of South Africa would have equal seat and vote with the representatives of the other members of the Empire. It is possible only to hazard a guess at the answer. Some, no doubt, foresee that a closer union of the British dominions will but accelerate the disintegration and loss of Dutch ways and language, of Dutch cultural traditions. But the profoundest reason, not often openly confessed, lies probably in the fear of the Dutch that the pressure of public opinion in the Empire will force upon them a more liberal policy towards the negroes. The typical Dutchman, though not normally unkind in the treatment of natives, yet views them as nothing but "schepsels" (creatures), little better than animals, useful for their manual labor in field and mine, but not to be educated, not to be enfranchised, on no account to be admitted to an equality with the white man. Aristotle's famous phrase "slaves by nature" hits off his point of view. The traditional British policy, which prevailed before the days of the Union in the Cape Colony and which aims at educating the native for citizenship, and admitting him progressively to the exercise of political rights, fills the Boer with deep distrust and aversion. Just before the outbreak of the war an act was passed—ostensibly for the purpose of preparing for the segregation of the white and black races by preventing the further acquisition of land by either race—the effect of which was to turn the numerous native squatters on Boer farms at one stroke into serfs bound to the soil. Meanwhile, nothing has been done towards effecting segregation or delimiting adequate native territories, and a sense of injustice and suspicion has been created in the native mind throughout South Africa which only the war has prevented from attracting the attention it deserves. A small nation which is liable to exploit its autonomy in favor of racial dominion of white over black, needs watching lest its policy be sinister for the future of the white man in Africa. R. F. ALFRED HOERNLÉ.

Sibelius

OTHERS have brought the north into houses, and there transmuted it to music. And their art is dependent on the shelter, and, removed from it, dwindles. But Sibelius has written music innocent of roof and enclosure, music proper indeed to the vasty open, the Finnish heaven under which it grew. And could we but carry it out into the northern day, we should find it undiminished, vivid with all its life. For it is blood-brother to the wind and the silence, to the lowering cliffs and the spray, to the harsh crying of sea-birds and the breath of the fog, and, set amid them, would wax, and take new strength from the strengths its kin.

Air blows through the music of Sibelius, quickens even the slightest of his compositions. There are certain of his songs, certain of his orchestral sketches, that would be virtueless enough were it not for the windy freshness that pervades them. Out of all his works, even out of the most commonplace, there proceeds a far and resonant space. Songs like *To the Evening*, *Call*, *Autumn Sundown*, whatever their ultimate musical value, seem actually informed by the northern evening, seem to include within their very substance the watery tints of the sky, the naive fragrance of forests and meadows, the tintinnabulation drifting through the still air of sunset. It is as if Sibelius were so sensible to the quality of his native earth that he knows precisely in what black and massive chord of the piano, say, lies the silence of rocks and clouds, precisely what manner of resistance between chant and piano can make human song ring as in the open. But it is in his orchestral works, for he is determined an orchestral writer, that he has fixed it most successfully. There has been no composer, not Brahms in his German forest, nor Rameau amid the poplars of his silver France, not Borodin on his steppes, nor Moussorgsky in his snow-covered fields under threatening skies, whose music gives back the colors and forms and odors of his native land more persistently. The orchestral compositions of Sibelius seem to have passed over black torrents and desolate moorlands, through pallid sunlight and grim primeval forests, and become drenched with them. The instrumentation is all wet grays and blacks, relieved only by bits of brightness wan and elusive as the northern summer, frostily green as the polar lights. The works are full of the gnawing of bassoons and the bleakness of the English horn, full of shattering trombones and screaming violins, full of the sinister rolling of drums, the menacing reverberation of cymbals, the icy glittering of harps. The musical ideas of those of the compositions that are finely realized recall the ruggedness and hardness

and starkness of things that persist in the Finnish winter. The rhythms seem to approach the wild unnumbered rhythms of the forest and the wind and the flickering sunlight. Music has forever been a movement "up to nature," and Schoenberg's motto is but the precision of a motive that has governed all composers. But Sibelius has written music that seems to come as the very answer to the call, and to be the north indeed.

Such a discovery of nature was necessarily a part of his self-revelation. For Sibelius is essentially the Norseman. For all his personal accomplishment, his cultural position, he is still the Finnish peasant, preserving intact within himself the racial inheritance. Other musicians, having found life still a grim brief welter of bloody combats and the straining of high unyielding hearts and the falling of sure unalienable doom, have fancied themselves the successors of the Scalds, and dreamt themselves within the gray primeval north. But, in the presence of Sibelius, they seem only too evidently men of a gentler, later generation. Beside his, their music appears swathed in romantic glamour. For there are times when he comes into the concert-room like some man of a former age, like some spare knotted barbarian from the world of the sagas. There are times when he comes amongst us like one who might quite conceivably have been comrade to pelted warriors who fought with clubs and hammers, like one who might have beaten out a rude music by black-smoking hearth-sides quite as readily as made tone-poems for the modern concert-room. And his music, with its viking-blows and wild crying accents, its harsh and uncouth speech, sets us without circumstance in that sunken world, sets us in the very midst of the stark men and grave savage women for whom the sagas were made, so that we can see them in all their hurtling strength and rank barbarity, can well-nigh touch them with the fingers of our hands. And it is for the reason that Sibelius is so fundamentally a man as combat with the north has made him that vision of his native earth alone could bring him rich self-consciousness. For his individuality is but the shape of soul given his race by its century-long adjustment. It is the north that has given him his profound experience. Its rhythms have distinguished him. Its color, and the color of his spirit, are twin. And so he turns towards it as to a mirror. Like that of the hero of his tone-poem, his life is a long journey toward Finland. Contact with Finnish earth gives him back into his own hands. It is the north, the wind and the moorland and the sea, that gathers the fragments of his broken soul, and makes him whole again.

It was with the sanction of a people that Sibelius came to his task. For centuries before his birth

the race that bore him had lain prone upon its inclement coasts. But now a new vigor was germinating within it. Youth had overtaken it once more, and filled it with the desire of independence. Chained to the Russian Empire, it was reaching out towards all that could give it the strength to persist and endure, towards all that could give it knowledge of its proper soul. And so Sibelius, in the search for the expression of his own personality, so much at one with that of his fellows, was travelling in the common way. The word that he was seeking, the word that should bring fulfilment to his proper soul, was deeply needed by his fellows. Inarticulate thousands, unaware though they were of his existence, awaited his work, wanted the sustenance it could give. And, certainly, the sense of the needfulness of his work, the sense of the large value set upon his best and purest attainments by life itself, must have been with Sibelius always, must have supplied him with a powerful incentive and made enormously for his achievements. He must have felt all the surge of the race driving him. He must have had continually the marvellous stimulus of feeling about him, for all the night and the cold, the forms of comrades straining towards a single lofty goal, felt himself one of an army of marching men. This folk, far in its past, had imagined the figure of a hero-poet, Vainemunden, and placed in his hands an instrument "shaped out of very sorrow," and attributed magical power to his song. And Sibelius, bowed over his music-paper, must have felt the dream stir within him, must have felt incarnate within himself, however incompletely, that mysterious image, and so proceeded with his work everlastingly assured that all he actually accomplished woke from out of the heart of a people, and responded to its immemorial need.

Out of such an impulse his art has come. No doubt, some of it is not the response entirely worthy of so high a stimulus. Few modern composers of eminence are as singularly uneven as Sibelius. Moods like that which mothered the amiable elegance of the *Valse Triste* and that which produced the hard and naked essentiality of the *Fourth Symphony* are almost foreign to one another. The creative power itself is extraordinarily fitful in him. It is as if, for all his physical robustness, he has not quite the spiritual indefatigability of the major artist. He has not that inventive heat that permits the composer of indisputably the first rank to realize himself unflaggingly in all his independence and intensity. Too often Sibelius's own personality is cluttered and muffled by those of other men. No doubt, every creative artist passes through a period of submission to alien faiths. But in Sibelius, there

appear to exist two distinct personalities, the one strong and independent, the other timid and uninventive, who dominate him alternately. Even some of the music contemporaneous with the magnificent Fourth Symphony is curiously ineffectual and pointless. True, the color, the air and tone of the north are never entirely absent from his work. His songs invariably recapture, sometimes almost miraculously, the dark and mourning accents of the Scandinavian folksong. For all the modernity of medium they are simple and sober. Moreover, in those of his compositions that approach banality most closely, there is a certain saving hardness and virility and honesty. Unlike his neighbor, Grieg, he is never mincing and meretricious. We never find him languishing in a pretty boudoir. He is always out under the sky. It is only that he is not always free and resourceful and deeply self-critical. Even through the bold and rugged and splendid Violin Concerto there flit at moments the shadows of Beethoven and Wagner and Tchaikowsky. The first theme of the quartet *Voces Intimae* resembles not a little a certain theme in Boris. The close of *Nightride* and *Sunrise* is watered Brahms and watered Strauss. And there are phrases in his tone-poem that commence with all his proper rhythmic ardor and then suddenly degenerate. There are moments when his harmonic sense, generally keen and true, abandons him completely. And even works like the *Finlandia* and *Karelia* overtures, for all their generosity of intention, for all their suggestion of peasant voices lifted in song, disappoint because of the substitution of a popular lyricism, a certain easy sweetness, for the high poetry one might have expected.

And yet, one has but to turn to the symphonies of Sibelius to encounter music of another intensity, and gauge the richness of response that, at times, it is given him to make. It is as if the very dignity and grandeur of the medium itself sets him free. Just as the form of the concerto seems to have given his sense of the violin a play apparently denied it by the smaller mediums, so these larger orchestral forms seem to have liberated his imagination, his orchestral genius, and made him poet of his folk indeed. His personal quality, spread more thinly in his songs and tone-poems, is essentialized and developed in these other works. The symphonies themselves are in a sense the stages of the essentialization. In the first of them his language emerges, to a degree imparting its unmistakable coloration to a matter perhaps not entirely distinguished. There is a looseness and lushness, a romanticism and balladry, in the work, that is not quite characteristic. Still, the honesty, the grimness and savagery and lack of sensuality, are Sibelius's own. The adagio is steeped in his

proper pathos, the pathos of brief bland summers, of light that falls for a moment gentle and mellow, and then dies away. The crying finale is full of the tragedy of northern nature. And in the second symphony the independence is complete. The orchestra is handled individually, sparingly, and with perfect point. Often the instruments sound singly, or by twos and threes. What had been but half realized in the earlier work is distinct and important in this. It is as if Sibelius had come upon himself, and so been able to rid his work of all superfluity and indecision. And, curiously, through speaking his own language in all its homeliness and peasant flavor, he seems to have moved more closely to his land. The work, his "pastoral" symphony, for all its absolute and formal character, reflects a landscape. It is full of home sounds, of cattle and "saeters," of timbered houses and sparse nature. And through it there glances a pale evanescent sunlight, and through it there sounds the burden of a lowly tragedy.

But it is only with his Fourth Symphony, dubbed "futuristic" because of the unusual boldness and pithiness of its style, the absence of a general tonality, the independence of the orchestral voices, that Sibelius's gift attains absolute expression. There are certain works that are touchstones, and make apparent what is original and virtuous in all the rest of the labors of their creator, and give his personality a unique and irrefragible position. The Fourth Symphony of Sibelius is such a composition. It is a very synthesis of all his work, the reduction to its simplest and most positive terms of a thing that has been in him since first he began to write, and that received heretofore only fragmentary and indecisive expression. In its very form it is essence. The structure is all bone. The style is sharpened to a biting terseness. The coloring is the refinement of all his color; the rhythms have a freedom toward which Sibelius's rhythms have always aspired; the mournful melody of the adagio is well-nigh archetypical. All his life Sibelius had been searching for the tone of the music, desiring to speak with its authority, and concentrate the soul and tragedy of a people into a single and eternal moment. All his life he had been seeking the prophetic gestures of which this work is full. For the symphony is like a summary and a conclusion, it carries us into some high place before which the life of man is spread out and made apparent. The four movements are the four planes that solidify a single concept. The first sets us in a grim forest solitude, out in some great unlimited loneliness, beneath a sombre sky. There is movement, a climax, a single cry of passion and despair, and then, only the souging of wind through hoary branches. The scherzo is the flickering of mad

watery lights, a fantastic whipping dance, a sudden sinister conclusion. In the adagio, a bleak lament struggles upwards, seems to push through some vast inert mass, to pierce to a momentary height and largeness, and then sinks, broken. And through the finale, there quivers an illusory light. The movement is the march, the oncoming rush of vast formless hordes, the passage of unnamed millions that surge for an instant with their cries and banners, and vanish into nothingness. It is possible that Sibelius will create another work similarly naked and intense. More definitive it cannot be. For in this it was given him to make his monument and sign, to find the language of a people, and with the divine knowledge of the seer to cry to all the world "This is our life!"

PAUL ROSENFELD.

The Blue Pencil

IN a glass cage on the second floor sits the director of the organization, a man of forty with a nervous, handsome face above an overfed and lumbering body. He was born to be a pleasant fellow, but exigencies known to all men paid to drive have compelled in him a custom of snarling into the telephone and thundering at an intermittent succession of culprits in well ordered Anglo-Saxon, no words wasted. "If ever I run a newspaper," the head of the copy-desk murmurs wincing, "I'll fire every man who raises his voice above a conversational tone." But the assistant managing editor did not stamp and howl himself into authority. He is acute and politic, as you discover when first you hear him call up Henry N. De Smith to ask for a decision. Such action is very seldom necessary. The assistant managing editor knows the owner's prejudices and failings by long association. He is versed in a most essential knowledge of what may be printed in the paper, and what it would be dangerous for the public to know. Under his care comes the immense problem of general policy, the direction of opinion in the city in the paths most favorable to his master's fame and fortune. Nothing displeasing to friend or advertiser must by any chance appear. It means nothing to him that, given such conditions, advertising becomes a kind of legitimate blackmail, for his mind is not attuned to delicate moral vibrations. But if you are in doubt about anything take the question to him. He is a good executive. He will decide and outline a plan of action for you before you have fairly got the words out of your mouth. He exults in his combination of keen mind and heavy hand, and the impression he gives with his alert face and ponderous body may be likened to that which might be pro-

duced by an exceedingly sharp, heavy-handed spear.

The city editor is a nondescript ageing man who wields the blue pencil with astonishing rapidity and accuracy in a little glass den of his own. He is disillusioned about life and reporters and what is left of the king's English, but he has a very definite classification of illusions which must be maintained among the general public. Discontent must be discouraged, and exultant confidence flaunt in every line. Whatever the city may have planned is being done well and easily. Its crusades and benefit funds are scheduled beforehand to "go over the top with a rush." Accidents there are, to be sure, but one may always put the best face on them. "Steps are being taken to prevent the recurrence of the deplorable affair." Crime may exist, even for the public, but not often successful crime. "It is said that the thief got away with nothing of value except a silver teaspoon." "The girl fought off her assailant, and was able to give a very clear description of him to the police." "The suicide was undoubtedly due to an unbalanced mind following illness."

The city editor knows he can revamp a story in less time than it would take him to explain what was wrong with it. He can cut any paragraph or sentence in half without wasting an idea. Perhaps it is no longer a game to him; the harness easily assumed galls in time, and he may have paced too long the cloudy, monotonous parapets toward which he climbed eagerly in his youth. Bleak days of blue pencilling stretch on either hand; he can do it well; he can do nothing else. It is a closed life, useless to himself, dedicated in a meaningless fashion to the purposes of H. N. De Smith.

Under his mild direction the gentle-voiced reporters come and go in rubber-heeled shoes, hurried, business-like, youthful. Typewriters suddenly storm and cease under their hands. They sit at telephones receiving messages and bulletins, meticulous and merciless in matters of fact. The office may rapidly clear of them all, departed upon mysterious errands; as unexpectedly they may all drift in again to lounge suavely in corners. They are the trained blood-hounds of the unusual; grief and ruin are their prey. True, they do not all like the game. Left to their own devices they would not choose to interview children whose parents have been killed in accidents, to seek out the bodies of suicides sitting bolt upright in chairs or lying where they fell, to visit the morgue. What they do must be done to satisfy the demands of H. N. De Smith, whom the gods or fates or his fellow men have given power over many destinies.

The copy-desk is semi-circular. In the midst sits the dealer, a kindly, open-faced man of fifty, hand-