

door through which one must pass to discover the secrets of life and death. For Schloezer this is the very essence of Stravinsky's power. But for others it is precisely this which prevents him from drawing upon the treasure of true "melody." All true melody is, as the writer Henry de Montherlant once said in *Les Nouvelles Littéraires*, a canto jondo, in the sublime Spanish phrase: a *profound song*, probing the very depths of life.

Raymond Petit

BERG'S NEW WORK, DER WEIN

AFTER the volcanic dramatic effect of his opera *Wozzeck*, Alban Berg turned to more intimate types of music and produced his important chamber works, the *Concerto*, for piano, violin and thirteen wind instruments, and the *Lyric Suite* for string quartet. An element common to both is a latent "program" which, in the *Concerto*, celebrates the fiftieth birthday of Arnold Schönberg, while in the *Suite* it is recognizable as the lyric and dramatic presentation of his own personal character. Both works reveal a masterful treatment, contrapuntal in the *Concerto*, sonorous in the *Suite*. The *Concerto* may be described as a paean to the friendship of Schönberg, Anton von Webern and Berg, whose names are woven into an anagram that is set forth, after the manner of the old masters, in the work itself. But in the *Suite* it is the demonic heights and depths of life which here have found a new musical expression. The concluding work in this series of compositions, whose instinctive yet unerring goal has been the intimate revelation of a personality, was the cycle of *Seven Early Songs*. Composed in 1907, they were not orchestrated and published until 1928. They are obviously based upon the most profound love-experiences of the composer. Firmly adhering to tonality, they have an intense and deeply emotional melodic line, which makes them the finest example of vocal inspiration in contemporary music.

In *Der Wein*, a concert-aria for soprano and orchestra, completed last summer, Berg reveals the first indication of a new tendency, namely to check his advance, after these earlier works, in the expression of individual feeling, and to seek out again

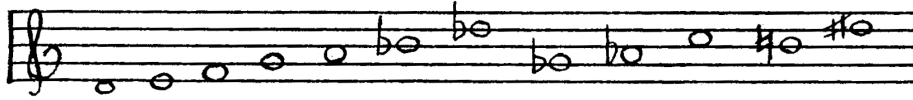
and interpret universal experiences. The text for the aria is based upon Stefan George's translation of three poems by Baudelaire: *The Soul of Wine*, *The Wine of Love*, and *The Wine of Loneliness*. In the opening verse, the voice of Wine reveals the joys and sorrows of mankind to the poet. The "Soul" of Wine here represents his own strength, by which he is bound to mankind. The power of Wine to free the individual, to enable him to develop and thus gain a certain identity with the love-life is the subject of the second section, which portrays a dual flight into eternity on the wings of Wine. Wine as a consolation for material and spiritual loneliness and as deliverance from the fear of divinity is the subject of the verses that close the series of poems, which then return to the introductory voice.

The aria is introduced by an orchestral prelude, in which the fermenting of wine in the cask is indicated by a bubbling figure in the bass set against muffled, extended chords in the wind instruments. A progression of fourths brings a gradual transition to the chief theme, a calm melodic line which evokes the call of the Soul of Wine. To represent the stimulus of the juice of the vine, the musical development grows more lively. Syncopated patterns in the brasses enter in a crescendo; a tango tempo, with the characteristic fourths in the piano accompaniment, and the melancholy sixths of the saxophone solo, develop a picture of the erotic effects of wine. A mighty crescendo mounts to a powerful climax, to be followed by the second part, *zartbewegt* and shimmering, which paints in the most delicate colors what amounts to an erotic intoxication.

After a diminuendo to *ppp* in the violins, a portion of the second division recurs note for note, serving as a transition to the closing section, in which the theme of the orchestral prelude is again taken up, thus endowing the aria with the form of a three part song. The reflections of the lonely souls are compellingly set forth by reminiscences from the corresponding parts of the first section. A powerful crescendo for full orchestra, followed by a slow diminuendo resembling a coda brings the work to its close.

The multitude of figures that is entwined in this apotheosis of the power of wine, is really astonishing when, on more de-

tailed study, we realize that the important musical events all arise from the following twelve-tone series:



Here we have a fine example of an artistic attitude that finds in the economic shaping of given material the highest goal and the incentive for achieving mastery. Even the figure of the twelve-tone series given above shows itself suitable for a song form to be developed in a cantabile line which may be considered as an "aria." The scale-like course of the first half furthers the construction of such lines and the building up of chords in thirds. An absence of augmented and diminished intervals heightens the singability of the work, which makes unusual demands of dramatic and emotional skill on the singer. The *Aria* is dedicated to its first interpreter, Madam Ruzena Herlinger, who commissioned the artist to write it.

We see in this lovely work, developed with perfect artistic control, not merely a successful revival of an old art form but a promising preparation for Alban Berg's next opera, which will set to music the *Lulu-Tragedy* of Frank Wedekind.

Willi Reich

NEW MUSICAL RESOURCES

HENRY COWELL has been doing much laboratory research and making interesting experiments with *materia musica*. The results are to be found within the covers of a recent Alfred A. Knopf publication, rightly named *New Musical Resources*. Mr. Cowell, who "wants to see the wheels go round," has been experimenting with the piano's percussive and acoustical properties, dissecting the overtone series of the scale, finding logical reasons for new chord formations, discovering new relationships between sound and movement, and pointing out the inadequacy of our present system of notation. His speculation may open the way to an extension and explanation of the harmonic, melodic, and rhythmical boundaries of music. He challenges the past and encourages the future. He makes provocative statements, sets forth his arguments with conviction