hierarchy, values and all. But with the masses dormant and their potential leaders diverted into self-advancement, what hope was there?"[13] One of my consistent objections to any sort of universal system of comprehensive schools has been to question whether, in view of all the disturbance required, they would be worth the trouble. Are the few advantages obtained, even considered intrinsically and without reference to counter-balancing disadvantages, really worth a social upheaval?

On the practical level there are other obstacles. One is the indirect result of the comprehensive system giving rise to various types of non-descript independent schools. If the extension of comprehension means an even greater mushrooming it would be wholly disastrous. An additional practical doubt concerns the availability of sufficiently talented head-masters. It may, in fact, be the case that the challenge of these wholly different institutions may develop the kind of leader that will be required, but this is a speculation and casts serious doubt upon the availability of suitable leaders from within the existing pattern. One fear is that the comprehensive school headmasters will begin to take on the functions of the American high school principals who so often, and to the great detri-ment of their schools, become mere administrators; however enlightened such a person might be, he would be wholly removed from the classroom and a tragic figure at the very centre of the process.

I have considered the arguments for and against the comprehensive school in order that a fair re-assessment can be made. Sometimes the issues have been drawn sharper than was kind in order to spotlight the problems. Unfortunately this is a necessary action since it is practically impossible to discover a champion of comprehensive schools who is objective enough to state the snags honestly. It is time such a prophet emerged since the cries of vague idealism and hurt sensibilities to which we are accustomed give little chance of progress born of constructive criticism.

The Crowther Report writes fairly that "we cannot afford to lose any good school, whatever its classification"[14]. This is surely true, but it also implies that there is much in the existing system which is best preserved.

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1 Ministry of Education Circular No. 144, June 16, 1947.
2 Statistics of Public Education: Ministry of Education.
3 A. D. C. Peterson, *Educating our Rulers*, p. 48.
4 Report of the San Francisco Curriculum Survey Committee, April, 1960, pp. 13-14
5 Brian Simon, *The Common Secondary School*, p. 107.
6 Crowther Report, paragraph 614.
7 J. B. Conant, *American High School Today*, p. 77.
8 S. C. Mason, *Leicestershire Experiment and Plan*, p. 9.
9 IAAM, *Teaching in Comprehensive Schools*, pp. 43-4.
10 Mrs. H. R. Chetwynd, *Comprehensive School*, p. 16.
11 S. C. Mason, *Leicestershire Experiment and Plan*, p. 9.
12 *Ibid*, p. 16.
13 Michael Young, *Rise of the Meritocracy*, p. 44.
14 Crowther Report, paragraph 619.

MUSIC—

CENTENNIAL: FREDERICK DELIUS

NEVILLE CARDUS

FREDERICK DELIUS was born in Bradford on January 29, 1862, and now in a centenary year his music is about to be submitted to an aesthetic climate entirely different from the one which was breath to his nostrils. I doubt if any composer, or indeed any artist of any order, created in a climate of imagination as alien to his own as the present climate of 1962 is alien to Delius's music. He would have hated the Zeitgeist which today governs artistic creation nearly everywhere. He would have found a tight-lipped satisfaction in the knowledge that his music receives no, or hardly much, response in an age of organized materialism, of open and even brutally expressed cynicism and pessimism. Delius himself was no optimist, but he wore his rue with a difference. He contemplated the passing scene of our mortality, and for him it passed from the mist to the mist, with no hereafter. But man's inner vision of the show of existence, birth and death, springtime, summer and autumn, the first bud and the last falling brown leaf—all was changed to beauty in imagination and heart. He was, as composers go today, anachronistic—he was a poet. In 1962 few of our makers of music, and fewer still of our writers on music, reveal unmistakable evidences of unashamed connection with poetry.

A scientific epoch, with a pervasive scientific, or scientifically based, aesthetic or *ethos* is bound, if it is honest, to listen to music such as Delius's as a thing remote, "out of touch", even artificial. The *Cyrenaic* attitude in 1962! A connoisseur of the senses—really! A great critic of music, Samuel Langford, wrote prophetically these following words more than a quarter of a century ago: "Beauty once sat enthroned over all the arts. We have come almost to a time when beauty is never mentioned in con-nection with them." "Beauty", in fact, is among artists representative of 1962 a naughty six-lettered word. The fact that Delius believed in inspiration definitely "dates" him. "I don't believe in learning harmony and counterpoint," he once said; "learning kills instinct." The truth is that Delius in his 'prentice years in Germany "learned" quite a lot of counterpoint, and was no fumbler with the academic tricks of the trade.

One of his most characteristic works, characteristic of his sensitive backward glancing Delian nostalgia, is cast in variation form—*Appalachia*. I have written pages of it myself," confessed Delius to Eric Fenby, referring to "cerebral" or "paper" music (see Fenby's fascinating book on Delius); "but I had the sense to burn it . . . It is against my nature to write music like that. The English love that sort of thing." And the Germans, too, he might have added. Only the genius is able to form and evolve a tone, a style, a diction, which unmistakably tells of his presence, reveals the man himself. Whatever you may think of Delius's music *qua* music, there can be no doubt about the voice that is speaking. A couple of bars will assure you that it is none other than Delius. Not long ago a certain humorous professor of music made a "tape" of short

passages from different works of atonal composers, so that they played in sequence, one after the other. Experts in atonalism and related methods were unable to say with consistent accuracy which composer had composed this or that quotation.

The music-critic assessing any artist in a centenary year should try to look at his works as in his heyday his own period regarded and reacted to him. The yardstick of 1962—of all years!—is not certain to appear infallible even a decade from now. Half-a-century ago several of Europe's most progressive musical thinkers had no hesitation in ranking Delius as an original, considerable and, indeed, one of the "advance-guard". "I wasn't aware," said Richard Strauss, "that anybody today, except myself, was composing such good music as this." Delius won the admiration of Busoni and Ernest Newman. Mahler towards the end of his life was studying the score of *The Mass of Life*. The music criticism of 1962 will be rash—young though it is—to imagine that Delius came to reputation in a period of soft-centred "sensitive plates" and "romantics". Delius was certainly not soft-centred. He lived his life dangerously. To call him "escapist" is cant and nonsense. He was a man and artist of a wide range of ideas, intellectual and amoral. Compared with him most English-speaking composers of his day were parochial and merely gentlemanly. Much the same might be said to the present hour. Consider English music in bulk of, say, 1901, when Delius's *Paris* was composed, or of *The Mass of Life*, 1905. Even Elgar was composing then with a German accent, his English-ness coming through a texture of Wagner (the prelude to *Gerontius* is *Parsifal* baptised in Worcester Cathedral), Brahms and Strauss. Delius was never a *bourgeois*, never the "English gentleman", either of Kensington Gore or county, Church or State.

To those of his critics who complain of his persistent flow of chromatic harmony, suggestive of disintegrating autumnal hues, let me point to the opening chorus of *The Mass of Life—O Du mein Wille*. Only Strauss in our time has equalled the reckless brass writing of Delius here. *The Mass of Life* no doubt exposes Delius's rhythmical repetitiveness cruelly, notably in the High School "la-las" of the four-part chorus in the "Forest" section. But where in any choral work of its period, especially in a British composition, does a composer equal the power of Delius's imagination and his sure orchestral grip, masculine and reliant, to be heard at the beginning of the final part, leading to the great baritone meditation?—*Die Sonne ist lange schon hinunter*.

A certain feature of Delius's music likely to keep him apart from today's musical susceptibilities (to use a polite word) is an entire absence of vulgarity. Another is an equally uncompromising aloofness. He is never "socially committed". A great liver and lover himself, his music is seldom, if ever, erotic. The love music in *A Village Romeo and Juliet* is as fresh and unsoiled as Pamina's and Tamino's in *Zauberflöte*. The beautiful *Nocterne* of *The Mass of Life* is an expression of awakening depersonalised love, with the passing of the night's beauty as certain as the awakening of mortal transient passion. In a time of violence the want of excessive contrasts of tone, the absence of brash dynamics, spectacular changes from loud to soft—here are other characteristics in Delius's music which might estrange him from musical ears nurtured in recent years. Also Delius never composed the incisive percussive rhythms fashionable since Stravinsky—always in fashion—dominated the scene. The essence of the Delius style is harmonic flow and evolution. In a brilliantly searching study, Wilfred Mellors has written: "The essence of the music may be flux of sensation . . . the fluctuating chromatic woof." Or, if I may quote from myself: "Chromatic harmony was his natural element . . . Though Delius has melody enough, it is never of the kind that could be more than half suggested in a series of statements or subjects. It is the product of his style of harmony, not the source of it. Melody which can be treated contrapuntally must exist in and by itself; it is a cause, not an effect, of harmony. In Delius melody is the flower and harmony the soil, or the harmony is the translucent flowing water and the melody the play of light upon it."

The impersonal content of Delius's music is yet another obstacle to wide appreciation of it in 1962, which for all its pretended collectivism is as egoistic as any period in recorded history. There are no humans in his music reducible to Freudian analysis. The style of Delius is personal indeed, but what he says would be relevant in a world in which the drama of all men and women had gone with the wind, the strife over, the happiness and aches and desires and frustrations now nothing more than the movement of the grass, the leaves on the trees, the risings and settings of suns and moons, the ebb and flow of tides and seas. "The golden moments of our life fly past us and we see nothing but sand"—thus quoted Peter Warlock when writing of Delius. But I won't take the view that Delius was all ecstasy of regret and acquiescence, that he was perpetually the connoisseur of poetic detachments from the everyday scene. There is a passage in *Brigg Fair*, just before the main melody is transferred to trumpets and trombones (*con solennita*); here are exultation and manly vigour—though nine times out of ten conductors allow the theme to overwhelm the active rapturous winding accompanying figuration. The finale of *The Mass of Life* is one of the overwhelming "Yea-sayings" in music and—I am pagan enough to think—better as choral and orchestral music pure and simple than the Finale even of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

Delius's faults were inevitable to his manner of composition and to his idea of the function of music. He, who didn't flatter us by putting ourselves and the flesh and the devil into his music, arrogantly believed that music was for him a means whereby to develop his personality. At all costs, he maintained, an artist must follow the impulses of his own temperament and damn the world's responses. Consequently when the inspiration failed, Delius lacked the knack of mere music-making. He had no gift for weaving "abstract" shapes and patterns. Naturally enough, he failed in his efforts at chamber music. He failed in his operas for much the same reason; he could not project his mind into the minds of the characters. The unforgettable moments in *A Village Romeo and Juliet*, for example, occur when Delius is reflecting on the action, not directing or taking part in it, as a true-born operatic conductor should. Moreover, as opera

composer he too frequently gave to the vocal parts music which seems grafted on to the orchestral texture. These parts are not sufficiently differentiated.

Give him a vocal text which resolves into a meditation and then he writes eloqently enough for the solo voice, setting words with a fine sense of accentuation and shapeliness. To prove this claim—seldom put forward on behalf of Delius—I can refer confidently to Zarathustra's invocation in *The Mass of Life*, especially at the line *Ein rosenseliger brauner Goldweingeruch.* (For the benefit of readers coming fresh to a study of Delius, perhaps I had better explain that *The Mass of Life* is a setting of Nietzsche in German). There is the *Zarathustra* appeal in Part 1 of the contralto, another instance of felicitous word-setting. Consider the rising interval on the word *weinten.* There is ample evidence in *The Mass of Life* and in *Sea Drift* that Delius could, granted the right poetic and verbal spur, compose vocally and beautifully. As to his choral writing—for sheer loveliness (*not* liveliness!) of sound it has been equalled perhaps only by Debussy.

But his heart and mind were usually given to the orchestra. Despite that his scores were many times badly in need of precise supervision, his instinct and mastery over instrumental tone and character, blended or exposed, was pretty complete. Sir Thomas Beecham, in his autobiographical *A Mingled Chime*, wrote this way of the first performance in England of *Appalachia:* "The piece made a deep impression . . . but in all that was written or said about it, its two outstanding qualities were hardly noticed . . . the remote alien sound of it, a note in English music stranger than any heard for over 200 years; and the masterly and personal use of the orchestra. The instrumental combinations . . . were a revelation of what the orchestra could be made to utter, and although 40 years have passed away since it was first put down on paper, the whole work still astonishes by its variety of atmosphere, loveliness of tone, and the unorthodox exploitation of those *tutti* moments which are handled by most composers old and new in such depressingly stereotyped fashion."

Delius's limitations?—I could make a list of them longer than any compiled by a detractor of Delius. Shortage of thematic contrast and thematic development. A sameness of *movement*, of direction. A tendency of chromaticism to fall into a mannerism. A meandering unpercussive rhythm, hinting here and there of some weakness of pulse. And all the rest! But we are free to chastise an artist (if ever we *are* free) only if his technical stock-in-trade is not suitable to the theme he is setting-out to express. I can find in Delius's best music no serious short-circuitings as he applies his technique and his tonal language to the matter in hand. You are at liberty to say in 1962, that you don't like Delius's music, that it doesn't mean much to you, that it is "dated". All of which is not criticism; it is nothing more than an account of your own inability to get on to the right wave-length. Delius was not a great "universal" composer, maybe. That he was unique, that he gave to music a precious store of remembered beauty, that he was an original artist with enough technique and power of organization for his purpose, that if the purpose called for it he could compose a balanced design such as *In a Summer Garden, Sea Drift*—that he could achieve these things is surely obvious to the meanest unbiassed intelligence. Will his music "last"; will it "come back" for good? Frankly I am not interested in the future of it. Perhaps the purpose of it was for a certain period, one that at the present moment seems gone for ever. I don't myself listen much to Delius nowadays; the "times are out of joint". But in the past this music has filled my mind, enriched my awareness to life in a rare way, thrilled my senses, musical and other.

"I have read," Sir Thomas Beecham writes in his book on Delius, "during the last two decades attempts to denigrate nearly every outstanding figure in music of the past 200 years . . . On the other hand, numerous experiments, that have not five years of real life in them, have been hailed with satisfaction, or at least serious respect. But through the vast cloud of mental obfuscation hovering over the present musical scene peeps the modest visage of the average man of commonsense, general culture and musical sensibility, to affirm in quiet but firm tones his preferences and predications. Generally, if somewhat belatedly, he is on the side of the angels; and I venture to hope—and indeed think—that the future of Frederick Delius may rest securely in his hands."

A loyal wish, but doubts persist. Delius did not address himself to a large world, certainly not to a culture and civilization such as that of 1962, with its latest excellencies and its latest signs of the beast. After the "celebrations" are over and the lip-service dutifully performed, Delius may well be left to himself again, a composer with a musing ear. His ghost won't, I fancy, mind. The earthly echoes of his music, should they reach his present habitation, will go on satisfying him, as the real thing did in his lifetime, a consummation which will amply content him.

THE HEART'S GLASS

Every window is a window onto the world
Because each outward view is a mirror to that within,
And that contains the whole world in the heart—
A universe where flaming planets spin,
An ocean that no instrument dare chart,
Whose light, whose water, gathered in a glass
Throw brighter than the sun a narrowed shine
On feather of snow and bird, on the twig's black line
Drawn on the white cover of that outer world
Spread like a table for the eye's delight
In each small delicate sight—
The weaving pattern of claw-prints frail and fine
Of each flown visitant, through the snow's silence come and gone,
The first point of the hidden final flower.
Such import have these histories, not borne down
By weightier tales whose shadows on this hour
Can never fall, through print and petal pass
In a day's passage. Never cry Alas
Now whither flown the bird?—the tracks by snow new-blown
Gone too—the green spear broken? Every sight
Seen by a lover's eye becomes its own
And lives in that fond light.

MARY STELLA EDWARDS