

Motets; Purcell: Te Deum, and Motets; Mozart: 'Requiem,' and Symphonies in G minor and E flat; Beethoven: Symphonies in C minor and E flat; Brahms: Symphony in F minor, and 'Requiem'; Dvorák: 'Stabat Mater'; Verdi: 'Requiem'; Franck: The 100th Psalm, and Symphony in D minor; Parry: 'Job,' and 'Blest Pair of Sirens'; Stanford: 'Requiem,' and 'Stabat Mater'; Vaughan Williams: Mass in G minor, 'Toward the Unknown Region,' 'Mystical Songs,' Fantasia on Christmas Carols, 'Sanctus Civitas,' 'Pastoral' Symphony; Walford Davies: 'Five Sayings of Jesus,' 'Men and Angels,' 'Christ in the Universe'; Holst: 'Hymn of Jesus,' 'Ode to Death,' Two Psalms; Dale: 'Before the paling of the stars'; Armstrong Gibbs: 'Before Dawn'; Elgar: 'For the Fallen,' Symphony in E flat; Kodály: 'Psalmus Hungaricus'; Bainton: 'Hymn to God the Father.'

The comprehensiveness of this list is reflected also in Mr. Cook's broadcast organ recitals—details of which unfortunately do not always appear in the *Radio Times*. We are sometimes told that the organ repertory is limited, yet somehow, week after week, Mr. Cook manages to make up a one and a quarter hour's programme consisting almost entirely of real organ music of unquestioned interest, and representative of all periods and styles.

However, Mr. Cook is first of all organist and choirmaster of the Cathedral, so something must be said on that side of his work, although the wider public is naturally more concerned with the activities described above.

The predilections shown in the list of works performed on Saturday afternoons are reflected in the service lists for Sundays and the daily Evensong. Like most musicians of so-called 'modern' sympathies, Mr. Cook is intensely appreciative of both old and new, but disinclined to take for granted much that comes between. So we are not surprised to find plainsong taking a regular place in the services of Southwark—not the compromise known as 'Gregorians,' but the pure milk of the word. Of few other English Cathedrals (if any) can this be said. Unaccompanied polyphony is well represented, the bulk being drawn from the Tudor and Elizabethan composers. Room for this old music, and for such moderns as Vaughan Williams, Holst, Charles Wood, Martin Shaw, and others, is made by the dropping of the weaker examples of the Nares-Kent school. Mr. Cook rightly holds that there is nothing to be said in favour of emphasising the weakest period of English Church music; the obvious course is to retain only the pick (in order that the continuity of the line may be shown), and so enable the English polyphonists, past and present, to take their rightful place.

The importance of the Cathedral as a rallying point for diocesan musical activities is realised to the full. Last year Mr. Cook revived the

Southwark Diocesan Choral Association (which had been in abeyance since 1916) with such success that over a thousand singers joined in a fine service, the music of which included Vaughan Williams's 100th Psalm (first performance in London), Martin Shaw's 'A Blessing,' Walmisley's Evening Service in D minor, &c. The 1931 Festival promises to be no less successful.

A few biographical details: Edgar Cook was born at Worcester, and was naturally articled to Ivor Atkins, afterwards becoming assistant-organist. During this time he was also organist and choirmaster at Newland, near Malvern—a noted plainsong centre. From Worcester he came to Southwark Cathedral in 1909. He adds to his many duties a professorship at the Royal College of Music, his subjects being choir-training and organ accompaniment, harmony, and counterpoint.

The portrait that appears elsewhere in this number may be supplemented by a verbal character sketch that can be done in a sentence: in manner and method he is singularly free from ostentation; there are, in fact, few musicians who do so much with so little fuss. H. G.

PHILIP HESELTINE

BY BERNARD VAN DIEREN

Tragedy is a much-abused word. But the death of Philip Heseltine (whom an even wider public knew as Peter Warlock) was a tragedy. An exceptionally gifted artist, in the full vigour of healthy manhood, suddenly silenced, incalculable potentialities unfulfilled—such a loss must ever be mourned. There is nothing here in which one can find consolation.

The extent of the loss music and musicians suffer could be gauged by a studied survey of his compositions only, but the time is not yet ripe for that. Their significance assures them a continued attention from which an adequate critical appreciation is bound to result. At this moment it will suffice if one speaks of his remarkable personality.

Heseltine's career was to some extent determined by the inevitable Eton-Oxford upbringing that family tradition prescribed. He had the originality of the creative artist whose spirit revolts against the pedagogues' concerted efforts to force intellectual activity into the moulds their wisdom considers best for the greatest number. The idealist resents indiscriminating discipline; Heseltine, like so many gifted youths before him, was inspired to spiritual rebellion by it. And throughout his life he gave a sympathetic interest to all idealistic rebels when he saw society ready to crush them, and to all art and endeavour that faced extinction because it was too subtle for popularity.

But his penetrating mind could distinguish relative merit, and he kept a grasp on facts in spite of this predisposition.

His unflagging devotion is movingly shown in his lifelong battle on behalf of Delius; but the results of his championing are also an eloquent testimony to his strength of character and conviction, and to his efficiency. The unceasing combat he waged, as a true knight errant, made him at times tilt at some academic windmill, or thrash some shepherding yokel who would have remained in obscurity but for the distinction of being thus attacked as if he were knight or giant.

In the midst of continual chivalrous warfare, a man may easily become aggressive without being contentious. This was recognized by many who had provoked his ire, and who, when they judged that they had a grievance, could not help seeing that here was one who was a loyal friend and a loyal enemy. They were ready to forget irritation, not only for his incontestable intellectual honesty, but no less for his irresistible personal charm. His integrity of mind was too convincingly apparent for denial, even by those who personally resented its effects. Mental qualities like these grow in depth by virtue of their very being, and although Heseltine became increasingly impatient of all convention that betrayed any family likeness to smugness and hypocrisy, it is significant that he was always unfailingly able to appreciate the beauty and power of any venerable tradition. In the very centre of his being he was too much an 'institutionalist' to deny respectful interest to anything shaped by sincere faith and patient effort. But quite naturally his deep-rooted distrust of all things so elegantly cloaked that they could hide cant, engendered an almost systematic caution directed against the risk of self-deception.

That state of mind must occasionally reveal a hesitancy which a casual observer could regard as a sign of inner conflict. When such a conflict occurred, Heseltine knew how to defer the clash until the opposing elements are revealed with the sharpest definition. He never evaded the issue, nor sought escape, but avoided hasty conclusions by applying his amazing industry to subjects unconnected with fundamental problems. He worked desperately hard during the recurrent spells of creative inactivity with which all artists are familiar, and this throws light on his mental attitude; because in the course of similar periods most people would fritter away their energies on irrelevant occupation. Heseltine, on the contrary, acquired in what was practically his 'spare time,' a scholarship of which any man might reasonably be proud. This was made possible by his extreme tidiness of mind. Very rarely has an imaginative and emotional spirit this highly valuable disposition, which implies the power to arrange life's experiences in the memory with such consistent precision that existence becomes a continuous and coherent adventure in which the overwhelmingly important and the seemingly

negligible take their right places. Heseltine himself was quite conscious of his powers in this respect, and frequently toyed with the idea of a short but all the more lucrative business career that would enable him to exploit them. A few tentative efforts confirmed his and his friends' belief in this side of his versatility, but circumstances denied him a full chance, and in this, as in other matters, a multitude of acquaintances were puzzled by what with some confused information, they hastily regarded as waywardness. And Heseltine never felt disposed to explain himself or his actions; he had the sensitive man's instinctive dread of being seen as 'his real self.' That of course is simply the spiritual counterpart of the fear of nudity that one feels where all go fully clothed. Necessarily, therefore, the exterior he presented to the world was deceptive, and unfortunately, it gave rise to much silly legend.

I have heard him described as Mephistophelian. He certainly had the caustic wit, but he had none of the callousness or of 'the spirit of denial'—on the contrary, he was generous and kind, and possessed the warm-hearted enthusiasm of the born artist.

These were the qualities that in his worldly wisdom he tried to hide; he knew too well that a man cannot risk the revelation that he remains a boy, and a rather shy boy. Yet that is what anyone with so fine a sensitiveness always is, and it is this that made him all the more lovable to those friends who knew him well enough and at the same time could value his great talents.

Genuine kindness, the delicate considerateness of the true gentleman, and brilliant wit, made him a most delectable companion. The ready response, from all who met him, to such appeals, naturally consolidated the delightful conviviality from which otherwise he might have fled. Here at least could be found an escape from the elemental loneliness that every poet knows and dreads. When the years show that no friendships can assuage the bitter melancholy that pays for the power to feel with the intensity which drives to poetic communication, the spirit falters in fear. The tribulation may be unknown to the critics who have in a loud voice spoken of Peter Warlock's 'roystering songs.' Certainly, some of these shine with the light of glorious fun to which the creative artist can claim a right in return for the sadness that is his natural heritage, and that assails him after every phase of concentrated activity. 'Let us drink: it will make us all jolly!' sing the students in 'The Tales of Hoffmann,' and to a heartrendingly sad melodic phrase! It is the poet's fate to deceive all but himself in the whole range between 'gentle wistfulness' and the black horrors that Borrow fought so heroically with only once an Isopel Berners to stand by him.

But if the jolly drinking song does not signify a riotous existence, the yearning melancholy song should not lead to the Philistine's absurd

belief that 'the poor chap feels all done in.' Poetic yearning is not what Nietzsche called the exasperation of impotence; it is born of indefinable desire, the longing for the eluding land, beyond the horizon, where is the Golden Fleece.

No artist could 'live' all that speaks from his works, were he as robust as Leonardo! It has been said that Heseltine doubted his talents. The creative artist who does not is past redemption. Deep down in himself any talented man knows his own worth. It is true that Heseltine was one of the very rare composers who are genuinely modest about their work. He heavily discounted any praise given to them. Yet he was a most discriminating critic, who could find the flaws in his own productions with sufficient certainty to justify his absolute artistic honesty when he ought to admit to himself their excellence.

His heaviest burden possibly was his distracting versatility. In his earliest days he found himself burning to write about music, with the conviction that he could say more than others, and say it better. Delius's timely and discerning advice made him see that he was a composer first and foremost. Later, in a brief career as a concert reporter, he speedily discovered that a daily paper is not a suitable medium for the dissemination of ideas or the propagation of convictions.

After he had already established his fame as a composer, he returned again and again to musical journalism with conspicuous success. On a wider basis of literary endeavour he aimed higher, and again justified every ambition. As editor of the *Sackbut* he displayed a brilliance that compelled the admiration of his adversaries, and his own contributions to this and other periodicals always gave proof of an ease beyond his experience, and a knowledge beyond accepted sources. In his independent literary works (he published several 'full-dress' books) he eclipsed all these achievements and revealed a mastery of prose style, a lucidity in argument, and a constructive ability that in themselves would suffice to establish an author's reputation.

Neither Philip Heseltine nor 'Peter Warlock' wrote music in the grand manner or planned on a large scale. The very fact compels us to respect his artistic integrity, for he possessed all the technique required. But he distrusted the sweeping gesture as much as he feared the possibility of, like the lesser artist, repeating himself, whether for gain or fame or from habit.

Very much was still to be expected from a man who at thirty-six had acquired a sound scholarship that enabled him to meet with unwavering confidence, and on their own ground, experts schooled in the course of long lives of specialised work.

Such capacities were gained by him while an unabating flow of transcriptions, arrangements, paraphrases and adaptations—all of incontestable merit—came from his pen, never

betraying haste or the complacency of routine, but utmost conscientiousness in every bar. Here was already a productivity, of high merit, on which a man's fame could securely rest. But yet all this was only part of his activity. He wrote some enchanting works for small orchestra, and enriched music with an impressive number of songs of the most exquisite workmanship, and dictated by real inspiration. I need not draw attention to their loveliness; most of them have already become well-known. In their finely-drawn melodic lines, their beautiful transparency and balanced structure, they show, as in everything Heseltine did, a consummate orderliness, a perspicuity and understanding that make them worthy counterparts of the words which, with unflinching taste, he selected from the best of English poets. Can one give higher praise? If I knew how to, I would do it.

But if genuine emotion, infinite charm, and grace, can preserve a spirit as a living reality for future generations, the tribute of my admiration is unneeded. Much of 'Warlock's' music will have become a national treasure when all that was ever said or written about it to-day will be forgotten.

BACH'S KETTLEDRUMS

BY C. SANFORD TERRY

Prof. Percival Kirby's 'The Kettledrums' (O.U.P.), a work at once erudite and practical, has sent me to my Bachgesellschaft cabinet. With Bach and Handel, he observes, the instrument was chiefly rhythmical in its usage; the roll or unmeasured tremolo was of rare occurrence; the drums were for the most part treated as transposing instruments of restricted compass; were generally tuned in fourths (tonic and lower dominant); and remained unchanged in pitch during the whole movement.

I have found it instructive to look through Bach's scores in the light of these remarks, in hopes to discover the rules or conventions he observed in his usage of the drums. And the first conclusion that emerges is the comparative neglect of them in his orchestra. In his purely instrumental scores they are found only in the Violin Sinfonia in D (B.G. xxi (1)) and the two Overtures in D (B.G. xxxi (1)). He employs them in all the Oratorios, but in none of the Passions; in the High Mass, but not in the other four; in the Magnificat and Sanctus in C (B.G. xi (1)); in thirty-six of the Church Cantatas and seven of the secular Cantatas—in all, fifty-two separate works.

In the second place, Bach almost invariably uses the Italian 'Tamburi' to designate the instrument, though the word strictly indicates the big drum or 'Trommel.' His preference, otherwise explicable, is congruous with the practice of one who liked to give his own name an Italian style on his scores. The only exceptions to his habit are in Cantata 100, where he writes 'Tympalles'; in the revised (D major)



Photo by]

[Herbert Lambert, Bath

PHILIP HESELTINE