The psychology of musical appreciation / by C.S. Myers.

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The Psychology of Musical Appreciation

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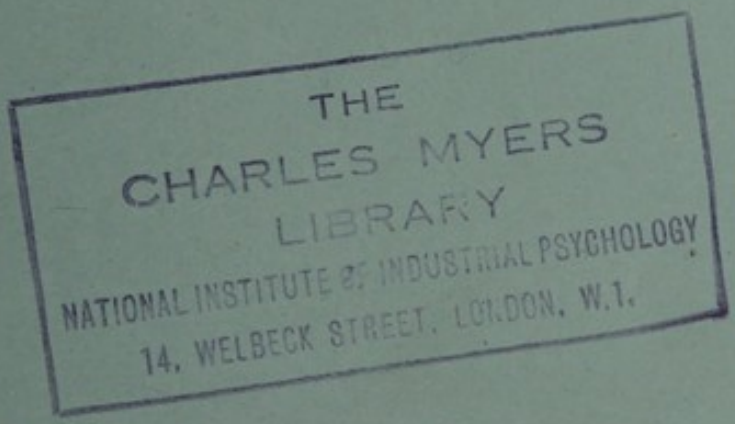

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III.—The Psychology of Musical Appreciation.

(*Being the Sixth Joule Memorial Lecture.*)

By C. S. Myers, C.B.E., (Hon.) D.Sc. (Manch.), F.R.S.

In his book entitled *Musical Composition* the late Sir Charles Stanford relates (p. 143) how, at the age of fourteen, he vainly tried to set to music a long dramatic poem but had to abandon his attempt when he came to tackle the fourth verse of it. But, meeting with the same poem once again when he was ten or eleven years older, he sat down and composed music for the whole of it straight away without any difficulty. An identical interval has passed since last I published anything concerning the psychology of musical appreciation. Like Stanford, I have not pursued this subject during the interval. And now that I have been induced to reconsider it, I wonder whether, like him, I shall be able to achieve my aim with improved success. In one important respect, however, our conditions differ. When Stanford met with his poem for the second time, he had completely forgotten about his previous attempt. Indeed it was not until fourteen years after his song had been written and published that he came across his imperfect juvenile effort in an old box, when he discovered to his surprise that the music to the first three verses which he had then written was vitually identical in melody and harmony with his later, maturer composition. I, on the contrary, in preparing this address, have had before me the published results of my previous work carried on for twenty-five years between 1898 and 1922, which was concerned with primitive music and rhythm, with synæsthesia, and with individual differences in listening to tones and music.[1]

[1] For references to these publications, see note at the end of this address.

I can only hope that in reviewing and trying to integrate these past researches, the same influences of maturer age and thought, the same unconscious processes of consolidation and the same removal of any unfavourable inhibitions may be operative.

It seems to me that we can most profitably approach the subject of musical appreciation by considering the probable stages in mental evolution which have enabled man to experience music as he does, and the earliest functions which human music appears to have served. Accordingly, I will begin by describing the following reported case. A gifted musician was helping one day at a local opera in a performance of *Der fliegende Holländer*, when suddenly, at the end of Senta's ballad in the second act, the music became for him a series of extremely unpleasant sounds—not mere dissonances but the most intolerable noise. He left the theatre in tears. On the following day he happened to hear a barrel organ playing in the street, but again the tune seemed to him only utter noise. He could, however, still appreciate rhythm in dance music, and he could still read music from a written score as well as ever; but whatever he heard was but a toneless noise. I will not stay to discuss the cause of this condition, but it may be regarded, not fancifully I think, as a reversion to a far distant pre-vertebrate stage at which tones could not be discriminated from noises.

When in the course of evolution tones had begun to be discriminated as such, further improvements must have followed in the awareness of finer differences between them in respect of such qualities as pitch, timbre, loudness, etc. It is noteworthy that, especially by the less musical among us, these qualities still tend to be confused: a loud tone is judged by the most unmusical to be of higher pitch than when it is sounded softly, and a tone rich in higher overtones appears to all of us as higher in pitch than one of the same pitch which is of different timbre because it is poorer in such overtones.

In the cries of different animals we find all the material actually used in the music of various primitive peoples of the human species. The cries of some animals are charac-

terised by their glissando character where well-defined pitch is hardly discernible, of others by the use of small distances between successive notes, and yet of others by the use of intervals which appear to us approximately "consonant."

An important step making possible the evolution of music in man appears to have been the appreciation of equal tone distances: some of the most primitive examples of human music consist in a phrase of two, three or more descending tones separated by small, more or less definite and equal distances one from the other. Then came an important development based on absolute pitch, which also arose early in animal life—long before names were given by man to tones of different pitch. It has been observed that when parrots are taught a tune, they will always repeat it in the same absolute pitch; and this is said to hold often for young children. Certain musical instruments, too, such as the pan-pipes and the harmonica, which have a wide distribution throughout the world, the former, e.g. occurring both in Melanesia and in Brazil, the latter both in Burma and in Africa, have been found, despite their wide wanderings, to retain the same pitch. This is probably in part due to the early influence, in primitive man, of absolute pitch. In the construction of tunes, absolute pitch has been important in permitting the pitch of one note to be retained in memory, and thus to serve as a primitive key note. In savage music it is sometimes the first, sometimes the last note, which plays this rôle, influencing the number of descending steps and ensuring that the melody as it recurs in the song shall always recommence or terminate on the same tone.

There can be little doubt that the memory for absolute pitch is also responsible for the development of tone *intervals* as contrasted with tone *distances*. Tone intervals are based on the experience of 'harmony' between two successive tones, the remembered pitch of the first tone appearing in a certain degree 'harmonious' with the heard pitch of the following tone. Whereas the tone distances first employed in primitive music were narrow, the tone intervals, on the contrary, were relatively wide. But these relatively wide intervals arose through an awareness of harmony, not from the

summation of small tone distances, although later they were broken up to give rise to a series of smaller tone intervals.

Our own tone intervals are so often experienced through the *simultaneous* sounding of the two tones constituting any interval, that it is generally supposed that their selection has been due to the 'degree of consonance' or 'fusion' experienced when two tones of different pitch are sounded together. But many primitive peoples who use harmonious intervals sing only in unison, and these intervals occur in the songs of peoples who employ no musical instruments and hence no instrumental accompaniment whatever. The first use of tone intervals seems therefore to depend on the pleasure derived from the relation of two *consecutive* tones, not from the consonant effects of fusion obtained by hearing the two tones *simultaneously.*

It is obvious that the memory for absolute pitch has played an essential part in developing this relation. Indeed musical instruments, so far from developing the appreciation of harmonious (or consonant) *intervals*, have often helped to maintain scales based on tone *distances.* Thus the Siamese and Javanese instrumental scales divide the octave into seven and five *equal* steps, respectively; and our own pianoforte scale consists of twelve *equal* semitones,—a method of tempering which was independently adopted or advocated also in Indian and Chinese music. The ancient Greeks, too, appeared to have formed their scale by adding note after note or by joining tetrachord to tetrachord on their instruments. Indeed they gave a different letter-name to each note, ranging from α to ω; only in Byzantine times was the note following η given the name of α,—the identity of octave tones being at length recognized by identity of lettering.

Some years ago, the essential distinction between tone distances and the fusion effects of tone intervals was demonstrated by the description of a case of disordered hearing, in which the apparent pitch of a certain note was so lowered that its *distance* from another note, when they were sounded *successively*, was judged by the patient to be much reduced; but when the same two notes were sounded *together*, the true *interval* was at once correctly reported.

Not only does each tone, or each successive tone relation, develop its own significance, but also a definite 'musical meaning' is acquired by a whole group of successive tones when integrated and appreciated as a pattern, phrase or melody. Cases have been reported where the ability to hear noises and tones and to distinguish different pitches and timbres has been retained, but musical meaning has been suddenly and entirely lost. "I hear well," said such a patient, "I hear everything, but it is all a jumble." When a selection from a familiar opera was played to him, he was quite unable to recognize it. Finally, with mental development and experience, we reach the ability to appreciate, and to analyse, the component parts and the construction of polyphonic, e.g. fugal and contrapuntal, music.

The music of some extremely primitive peoples is distinguished by its *récitatif* character, that of others by its rhythmical character. In the former case it is closely related to speech, in the latter to movements of the limbs and trunk. In the former case its usual function is to add to the feelings conveyed by language in song, in the latter case to induce and to add to the pleasures of regularly recurring bodily movements. Could we but trace speech and music far enough back we might conceivably reach a common origin in sounds conveying a pre-linguistic meaning, an almost wholly affective non-cognitive meaning,—neither verbal nor musical, but comparable to those vocal expressions of contentment, pain, alarm, anger, lust, etc., with which we are familiar in infra-human animal life. From such an origin may have arisen in one direction the irregular, continuous changes of pitch (and rhythm) and the largely cognitive, utilitarian meaning characteristic of prose language, and, in the other direction, the regular, interrupted changes of pitch and rhythm and the largely affective, non-utilitarian meaning characteristic of music. If we may very broadly define meaning as what a stimulus or a definite series of stimuli or a state of consciousness stands for, that is to say what movements or conscious experiences it tends to call forth, then the meaning of a single written word consists in the *cognitive* ideas and images and consequent actions aroused by it; the meaning of a word or

sentence spoken in a voice, say, of anger or contempt consists besides in the *affective* recognitions or experiences produced; whilst the meaning of a heard musical phrase consists primarily in the emotional and other *affective* mental processes and in the impulses to movement which it evokes, and in the cognitive awareness of its structure.

There are also secondary cognitive meanings in music derived indirectly and personally from suggestion and association, and more directly and universally from the intellectual process of analysing its increasingly complex structure. Beyond this, however, music conveys no meaning. What we call to-day 'programme' music utterly fails to achieve its mistaken aim of communicating concrete, objective situations and specific acts,—unless the hearer is expressly supplied with a programme verbally describing to him what cognitive experience and activities the music which he is about to hear is intended to represent. But all music, whether it be programme music or pure ('abstract') music, succeeds in evoking very broadly similar appreciations of its structure and similar affective experiences in different members of an audience, producing joy or sorrow, appearing harsh or tender, or being soothing or exciting, and thus evoking corresponding visceral, glandular, circulatory, respiratory and other bodily movements among those of average musical ability who listen to it.

More or less artificially, we may divide the enjoyment of music into the enjoyment of sound, the enjoyment of tune, and the enjoyment of rhythm, although few musical tunes are ever wholly devoid of rhythm, few musical rhythms are ever wholly devoid of tune, and neither can be said to be ever devoid of sound. The effects of melody are different from those of rhythm, for melody and rhythm, as we have seen, serve different purposes, and the appreciation and enjoyment of each differ in different individuals. But the complex developments which they have undergone are essentially similar. Just as the enjoyment of melody has been enhanced by the simultaneous combination of different melodies or other accompaniments, or by variations in the melody, especially as practised in advanced European music, so too the enjoyment of rhythm has been enhanced by the simultan-

eous opposition of different rhythms or by complex changes in rhythm, especially as developed (to an amazing degree) among certain primitive peoples. Alike in the higher development of harmony and of rhythm, and for the full comprehension of musical thought, the intellectual acts of synthesis and analysis are required.

It is already clear that music has had various fundamentally different relations in its past history. It may be related to speech ; it may be closely associated with bodily movements, especially with work-a-day movements and with rhythmical movements,—with dancing in particular ; and there can be no doubt that it may also be intimately connected with sexual feeling and courtship. But it would be erroneous to say, as has often been variously said, that every kind of music has arisen from one source—from speech, or from rhythm, or from sexual activity. All one can truly say is that in its various appeals music is closely related to each of these. And thus it is that owing to individual mental differences the same music may show extraordinarily wide differences in its intellectual, motor and emotional effects on different individuals, and that different music may make different appeals to the same person.

We have now reached a stage in which we can examine and better interpret other wide individual differences which are found in listening to music. They consist, however, in differences rather of degree than of kind. Although we shall without difficulty be able to distinguish different kinds of attitude towards music, these different attitudes cannot be strictly and severally allocated to different individuals. In other words, we cannot say that an individual A exhibits solely an X type of attitude, an individual B exhibits solely a Y type of attitude, and so on. No one individual belongs to a pure type. All that we are warranted by our experimental evidence in saying is that in some persons one attitude predominates, in others another. Moreover, in a given individual, sometimes one attitude is predominant, whereas at other times and in other mental and musical circumstances a different one predominates. Let us realise, then, at the outset that the different kinds of attitude which we are about to

distinguish are not separately distributed, but vary in extent and employment both among different individuals and in the same individual under different conditions.

The first attitude in listening to music, to which I will draw attention, arises from what may be termed its *intra-subjective* appeal. It evokes in the listener sensory, emotional or other affective experiences and tends to arouse in him experiences of active or passive bodily movement or desires for or impulses to movement. Let me cite a few examples gathered from the introspections of certain persons who in my experiments listened to various pieces of music: "I felt a restful feeling throughout . . . like one of going downstream while swimming . . . I wanted to throw myself back and be carried along." "During the dance movement I . . . . . felt diaphanous things floating in the wind. . . . The breeze came in contact with my right cheek." "A circular movement. I was being turned round very slowly." "A great feeling of happiness, followed by expansion inside, leading to great excitement and breathlessness for a moment." "I felt the effect of being carried away, partly emotional, partly strain and tenseness of body."

The next attitude to which I wish to draw attention is closely related to and doubtless often derived from these sensory, affective and motor excitements. It may be ascribed to the *suggestive* appeal of music. Here we may meet with every stage between the simple colour images or synæsthesiæ relating to pitch, timbre and tonality, the passing associations due to similarity, and the elaborate day-dreams of phantasy. E.g. "I saw a beautiful grey, a lovely grey with light shadows . . . I saw another grey, just lovely, like glacier water . . . Don't you see the expanse, right on top of a hill?" "There she is," said another of my subjects, "the little fairy . . . Children dancing, not grown-up. . . . Men dressed in red with feather plumes. Don't you see the fairies? Yes. It's a sylvan sort of thing." "A cave, rocks, sea-waves . . . a sea-serpent poking its head out of the cave, dancing spray, with the sun on it. I could draw the exact picture."

The third attitude arises from the *critical* consideration of music. Here the listener is concerned neither with the

sensory, emotional or conative experiences, on the one hand, nor, on the other hand, with the suggestive images evoked in the two previous attitudes to music which we have been considering. He regards the music as something of worth, critically appraising the standard which he considers it to reach, its merit and its value. "It was a mere mechanical imitation . . . ," said one of my subjects, "like a painter imitating a great master." "I noticed the second horn was too loud . . . ," reported another; "when the second tune came with the 'cellos, it didn't stand out enough."

From this objective attitude we may pass to the fourth or *characterising* appeal of music. Here the music, instead of being criticised as an independent inanimate *object* of practical worth, is regarded as an independent, self-active *subject*, and is endowed usually with human qualities, such as joviality, playfulness, recklessness, daintiness, stupidity, insincerity, which personify it. "It tried to be light-hearted," said one of my subjects, "but it was all the time very sad." "There is something sinister about it." "The music seemed as if it were joking with me."

Sometimes the music is characterised not as an independent living being but as a self-active geometrical pattern. "It falls into a pattern . . . ," said one of my subjects. "Then came a pattern of a different type, beginning with zig-zags, obliquely transverse strands from lower left to upper right, going through a horizontally moving pattern." It is easy to see analogies between the forms and movements of such geometrical designs and the rising and falling pitch, the blending and segregation of different simultaneous themes, and the effects of various rhythms and syncopations in music. "Following the pattern," said one of my subjects, "is my greatest enjoyment in music. If I cannot follow it . . . there is no longer meaning in its movement." When, however, this subject can get no patterns of polyphonic or rhythmic origin to enjoy, when for example he is listening to a simple melody, he 'characterises' the music at once with such human qualities as langour, gloom, plaintiveness or menace.

Let us now deal with these four different appeals of music in closer detail, and with their inter-relations, taking the

characterising attitude first. It might be, and indeed it has been, thought that the characterising attitude originates 'empathically' from the intra-subjective attitude,—in other words, that a piece of music comes to be termed by the listener, say, high-spirited, just because it evokes high spirits in him. But that this is by no means necessarily the case is revealed by the following among many other similar reports of my subjects: "I noticed first the mournfulness of the music and then its effect on me." "The piece sounded cheerful in certain parts, but I felt in a contrary grain all the time." "I got the impression of people dancing, I think on the stage. . . . There was a note of sadness among the dancers, a sort of regretfulness. I think that the sadness affected me and came secondarily to the stage sadness." "It's all so intensely sad. All the time I was wondering whether it was cheap or not. I came to the conclusion that I ought to be moved. I *was* much moved by it after this conclusion."

It might similarly be thought likely that the characterising attitude was derived from the suggestive attitude, a tune being characterised, say, as trivial because of the triviality of the suggested ideas and images that it evoked. But, in point of fact, the converse is sometimes demonstrable, some human characteristic being first ascribed to the music and this characteristic then suggesting appropriate ideas and images. Sometimes the character aspect of the music and the train of ideas evoked develop side by side and distinct from each other. Thus to one of my subjects the music seemed trying to be persuasive, while the scene was imagined of a persuader and one who was to be persuaded: "There is no response to the persuasion: it is a failure. The characters disappear: and the music behaves like a Greek chorus, going over what has occurred in a philosophical manner." Sometimes, too, there is a blend of the character and intra-subjective attitudes. E.g. "I felt the yearning character of the first *motif*—a sense of tears in it—which was partly in the *motif* and partly in me."

We can hardly come to any other conclusion than that such characterisation of music is but a persistence of the primitive and deeply rooted tendency of mankind to personify

all natural objects, whether animate or inanimate, and to regard them as independent entities, wholly apart from their practical value or their import to or effect on the listener. It is indeed through this detachment from the human self of art-material and of its immediate experience, and through its contemplation for its own sake, that awareness of beauty becomes possible.

If characterisation is the attitude most favourable to æsthetic enjoyment, the intra-subjective and suggestive attitudes are most favourable for complete sensual and emotional surrender and for inducing a state of transport or ecstasy; while the critical attitude enters readily when the three other attitudes are impossible or are obstructed. When it is the resort of the expert, the critical attitude may facilitate, although it cannot induce, the experience of beauty. Among the less musical, it may, on the other hand, help merely to give music sufficient meaning to arouse the intra-subjective and suggestive attitudes. These latter attitudes are clearly and closely interrelated. The sensory, emotional, and motor effects of music tend to evoke trains of images and phantasies which in their turn, whether thus or directly aroused, contribute to the affective experience of the listener. When the listener surrenders himself to emotion and phantasy, any tendency to characterisation must inevitably be suppressed. But the temptation to such surrender is often resisted, as in the following example: "A distinctly pathetic ring about it. I should have felt distinctly wretched if I had got regularly into it, but I keep myself from this at a concert. I very rarely let myself go." Where, as among the most unmusical, the intra-subjective attitude is congenitally weak, the feeble sensory and affective responses aroused would not be expected to evoke trains of ideas and imagery. The suggestive attitude appears consequently to be rare among the extremely unmusical. But this same attitude is also rare among most highly trained musical people, because they tend to inhibit it largely owing to their adoption of the critical attitude. Thus one expert musician reported to me: "I now nearly always view music from the critical standpoint. I conduct: I compose. I always want to know how the conductor is

getting effects if it is a new work, and what will be his rendering if it is an old one." So he remarked of one composer: "I noticed by what simple means in these modern days he gets his effects. I noticed also . . . how he gathered up his climax by syncopation." And again—"As always in Beethoven, one must notice the tremendous . . . contrasts, especially dynamic contrasts. His *crescendos* always give me pleasure. Beethoven makes scale passages so much more interesting than, say, Liszt." Or once again, "As usual, the violinist uses too much *vibrato*. . . . The sweep up the strings made me feel quite sick."

It is highly interesting to observe that this same subject is nevertheless prone to characterisation and that he yields to it when, through dislike of, or lack of interest in the music, he is off his guard.: "The cadenzas are rather vulgar and horrid," he reported; "the introductory solo accompaniment . . . is in the last degree trivial." And when the music seems trivial, meretricious, 'stagey' or unreal, not only does its character appeal, but also its more lowly suggestive appeal, escape from suppression even among expert musicians. This same observer reported: "I opened this with a dog fight. . . . The opening of the second part was a dance of savages—*this is amazing to me.* I could see the red and blue round the loins. . . . *It is not like me at all*," he protested; "then, I think, I pulled myself together." "The beginning," reported another, highly artistic, subject, "reminded me of a stage, people coming on. It was trivial, theatrical." But see now what follows. "Then it passed to out-of-doors, real, not stage-like, in a wood, with sunlight, a vast procession of people slowly moving . . . with gold-coloured dresses, some green, all brilliant." So too another unaffected subject responded to "unreal" music—"I was up in the theatre, looking down." And yet another—"*I* felt no deep emotion. But there was much emotion in the *soldiers.*"

May we not compare these various attitudes of the listener with the alternative attitudes of the actor who may be either dispassionately looking on while portraying the emotions of his part or, at the opposite extreme, so much more immersed in his part as to feel these emotions in himself? Similarly,

the listener to music may be so carried away as to feel emotion in himself; or he may, in the characterising attitude, as we have seen, attach the emotion to the personified music; or he may, in perhaps some intermediate way, attach it to some person or persons suggested by the music, as in the report of one subject who said: "I was in the Queen's Hall, a fair girl in a pink dress was playing and another girl was accompanying her. The violinist had a sad look about her. I felt she had had a sorrow in her life." "I cannot feel emotion in listening to music," observed one of my subjects, "unless I feel that I am moving in the same emotional attitude as the persons [imaged]."

In the exercise of the suggestive attitude, fairies, fauns and goblins may make their appearance—indicative of long-past juvenile imagination; lovers may appear, indicative of sexual influences; in warlike, barbaric or folk-tune music, soldiers, savages or villages are visualised, respectively; and in orchestral or religious music a concert hall, or church, a conductor, and one or more musical instruments may appear on the scene. What opportunity the interpretation of many of these forms and symbols of phantasy would provide for the psycho-analyst!

At first sight it may seem difficult to decide on the relative values of these four attitudes adopted in listening to music, when one of my subjects asserted: "Music always gives me the sight of so many charming things. That's why I like listening to it," whereas another insisted—"I always try and banish all imagination when listening to music," and yet a third reported—"Sometimes I listen to music seeing the orchestra and attending to the *technique*, sometimes enjoying visions of forests, etc., that come before me, sometimes paying regard to the meaning . . . etc., of the piece." The correct decision must surely be that through the sensations, emotions, actions, phantasies, patterns, colours, etc., which it arouses, music may give exquisite enjoyment, but that in addition music has an inherent meaning, inexpressible in terms of spoken language or felt emotion,—a meaning which becomes more and more clearly recognised, less affective, and more intellectual in character, the higher be the development of

musical appreciation and of musical composition. As one artistic subject of mine observed—" When I see the pictures [i.e. the ideas and images evoked] they take up almost all my attention, so that I have the feeling ' Dear me! I'm not listening,' and then I get back to the music." To his satisfaction one of my subjects reported—" The middle of the second movement [which he started to enjoy] switched me off my imagery and I returned to the pure consideration of the music." And another objected—" I cannot . . . conceive music *saying* anything " ; and as yet another—a highly accomplished musician—explained ; " Music has a meaning, but always in musical terms. I couldn't put it into words. It always irritates me to be asked to do this."

But if we admit that the highest appreciation of the highest music is to be derived from contemplation of the music itself rather than from mere surrender to its resulting emotions and suggestions, let us not lose sight of the originally manifold derivations and functions of music, viz. to express and to communicate emotions, to excite our imagination, and to induce rhythmical movements and other bodily, e.g. sexual and work-a-day, activities. And let us not make the mistake of assuming that the primary function of every art is to arouse an *æsthetic* experience,—the appreciation of beauty. For in its widest sense an art is a craft. No beauty is aroused in the practice of the art of medicine, seamanship and the like. From certain pictures or from certain buildings beauty *may* be evocable. But many pictures are merely portraits, that is to say copies of persons, or, as in the illustrated press, fulfil the function of recording events ; and not all houses or factories can be so designed as to produce an æsthetic appeal. So it is with music. Music may be useful ; it may be regarded from the practical point of view, say of dancing, marching or fighting, from the standpoint of its intra-subjective and suggestive effects, or from the critical consideration of its standard and value for the listener. But for the appreciation of its beauty the listener's personal and practical interest must cease. A certain psychical ' distance,' as it has been well termed, must be interposed. The sailor who is impelled to rescue the heroine in a melodrama by climbing down to

the stage from his seat in the gallery is psychically too ' near ' the play to appreciate its beauty.

Clearly the characterising attitude marks an important approach towards the conditions of ' distancing ' necessary for æsthetic appreciation. In it the listener regards the music as something existing quite independently of himself, and his experiences, and of his value and use of it. He no longer surrenders himself as a passive instrument to be played on, as it were, by the music. As one of my subjects averred—" To me music is never sad or joyful. I only get æsthetic impression." If he regards a composition as marvellously well-fitted to express its purpose, his critical attitude must be impersonal ; that is to say, he must not regard the music as being well-fitted merely to give him enjoyment. If he regards it as ill-fitted, he will be debarred from readily finding beauty in it. If he finds it well-fitted, his experience of beauty may be enhanced by his admiration and wonder. But the mere realisation of appropriateness or perfection will not suffice to evoke an æsthetic experience. A thing of beauty must be viewed not as a satisfying piece of man-made mechanism, but as a ' distanced ' living organic whole. And the adoption of the character attitude strongly favours this view.

But it is possible for us to ' distance ' not only the music we hear, but likewise the phantasies, the feelings—even the sensations—to which it gives rise. And so, a day-dream evoked by music may itself become beautiful ; a feeling of joy or sadness aroused may, by its ' individualisation,' itself become beautiful ; while to the most sensual even the warmth of a bath may become beautiful,—if only it can be adequately ' distanced.' As one of my subjects insisted—" The special *feeling* I get from music makes it beautiful. It gives me a tender poetic feeling, almost pity." And as another explained,—" Certain short phrases give me quite a beautiful thrill, localised in the diaphragm—like the feeling that early morning brightness gives one." Thus beauty may still be appreciated in music, even although the æsthetically more lowly intra-subjective or suggestive attitude is adopted.

Are we then justified in concluding that we need not realise the musical meaning of a piece in order to obtain from music

æsthetic enjoyment? The answer in the affirmative to this question involves an examination of the term 'musical meaning.' I have already used 'meaning' in its widest sense, as being what any external object or state of consciousness stands for or prompts to. According to this broad use of the word, the peculiar auditory sensation of pitch produced in us by the middle 'c' ofthe pianoforte becomes the meaning of 256 to-and-fro movements or periodic vibrations of the air outside us; and the situation which confronts a duckling on its first sight of water has also a certain (extremely vague) meaning for the fledgling. But these are *innate* meanings common to and closely identical in all members of the same species. The more usual use of the term 'meaning' limits it to what has arisen through *acquired* experience and is confined to smaller numbers of any species. Thus the word 'elf' has meanings very different for the Englishman and for the German; and such an object as a motor car has meanings very different for the lady of fashion and for the engineering expert. Moreover, the term is usually applied to meanings which are fairly permanent, not to those which are established for temporary use and are to be later discarded, as, for example, the meaning of a knot tied in a pocket handkerchief for a reminder.

I propose to employ 'musical meaning' to the exclusion of any extreme possible uses of the term. I shall not apply it to sensory experience, common to and innate in all men, as the meaning of certain external vibrations in the air. Nor shall I apply it to the purely individual, rarely or never recurrent, associations, phantasies, or emotions which may be experienced on listening to music. Excluding these uses we are left with much in music that may be rightly said to have musical meaning,—much that is fairly permanent in the listener and is fairly common to a large number of listeners of the same musical ability and experience. We may, I think, correctly speak of the emotional musical meaning of a composition when it evokes some similar emotional response in large numbers of an audience. But unless the listener is absolutely devoid of musical ability, it has always at least some intellectual, in particular some formal, musical meaning, as well. Such meaning is given to music by the mere appre-

hension of the pattern of its melody or of its rhythm, as well as by the understanding of its polyphonic, fugal, or other formal complexity, or by the appreciation of the thought and the balance of the entire movement, sonata or symphony; and among the more musical it is essential for musical enjoyment.

Musical meaning enables a song to be enjoyed even when its words are sung in an incomprehensible language; as a Papuan once remarked to me when I asked him how he could appreciate a certain song, the music and words of which had been introduced to his island from another island, of the language of whose inhabitants he understood nothing—"It is not the words, but the music that counts." It is the difficulty in discovering the musical meaning of ultra-modern and exotic compositions, in addition to the repulsive unfamiliarity of new combinations and complications of tones and new musical idioms that prevents their initial appreciation. The violent criticism and opposition with which Mozart, Beethoven and Wagner first met is always repeating itself in the history of music. The meaning and hence the values of music are ever changing in appreciation.

So long as the listener (in his critical attitude) is worrying about the cognitive or intellectual meaning of music, it is impossible for him to enjoy it or to appreciate beauty in it. "No central idea in it," reported one of my subjects; "never knew where I was." Or as another said—"Too much bothered about finding meaning to be able to see any beauty." When the listener fails to find a meaning, his attention may *faute de mieux* revert to mere fleeting sensations, emotions, or images. Thus one subject reports "The whole has no meaning in the least to me. I don't understand it. I am catching hold of any image I can get." Some understanding at least, then, is necessary for the musician's enjoyment of music; otherwise what can at most happen is the mere enjoyment of sound,—the substance, not the form, of music.

We have seen how incompatible the character attitude is apt to be with the intra-subjective and suggestive attitudes, and the critical attitude with all the other three attitudes. We know that the repression of any incompatible mental process or attitude may be often successful: it will then lie

dormant and cause no trouble. Yet try as the more musical may to inhibit all emotion, phantasy, or characterisation in their desire to obtain æsthetic enjoyment from the intellectual contemplation of music, these are, as we have seen, never permanently kept under control but are ready to emerge from their repression whenever they have the opportunity to do so. The musician does not usually welcome the intrusion of 'associations.' Yet, as one of my subjects observed—"I object to these suggestions, for I find that the music . . . is not listened to for itself. But when the suggestions and the music absolutely blend, there is the completest and greatest enjoyment, greater than when there is music alone. They won't blend here," she adds, "because the dramatic scene will go on quite well independently of the music." And so we must conclude that the fullest and highest appreciation of music occurs when the whole of its varied and complex influences to which I have endeavoured to draw attention—when all the different attitudes which it may evoke—are in the most perfect harmony.

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