

and a formidably efficient whiteprint machine is on the premises for reproducing manuscripts. Students may enrol in the University Orchestra and Chorus, the Chapel Choir, the Opera Group, the Collegium Musicum, and the Musicology Colloquium.

Courses available are as follows: Beethoven (Professor Erich Hertzmann); Bach (Professor Douglas Moore); Twentieth-century tendencies in music (Professor Jack Beeson); Folk music and Ethnic music (Professor Willard Rhodes); The history of musical instruments (Professor Curt Sachs); Music bibliography (Mr. Thomas Watkins); Wagner and Verdi (Hertzmann); History of Music, 1000-1600 (Hertzmann); History of Music, 1600-1900 (Professor Paul Henry Lang); Advanced composition (Beeson); Advanced orchestration (Mr. Rudolph Thomas); Composition (Moore); Psychology of Music (Dr. Edward Arthur Lippman); Philosophy of Music (Lippman); Pro-seminar: introduction to musicology (Hertzmann and Lang); Seminar in musical composition (Professor Otto Luening); Seminar in musical theory (Professor William J. Mitchell); Seminar in musicology (Lippman); Research seminar in musicology (Hertzmann and Lang).

Related courses include Professor Hofstadter's lectures on "Philosophies of the Arts" and "Studies in the philosophy of criticism."

## LETTER

THE EDITOR, *TEMPO* 13th March, 1957.

DEAR SIR,

Recently in Bournemouth The Western Orchestral Society Limited held a Course for Young Conductors. The Course took place over a period of four days, during which time the twelve students selected from over forty applicants were given opportunities to rehearse the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra in a programme of selected works, and also attended lectures given by our Conductor, Mr. Charles Groves, Sir Arthur Bliss and Sir Adrian Boult. One morning was devoted to discussions with principal members of the Orchestra. The Course culminated in a public performance at which the three most promising students were given the chance of conducting. No fee was charged for the Course, but the students were responsible for their own expenses, accommodation, etc.

The objects of the Course were threefold:

- (1) To give student conductors an opportunity to demonstrate their talent with a professional orchestra—a facility which is normally almost impossible to obtain.
- (2) To ascertain if there existed a potential source of supply of conductors (for this purpose younger conductors who are at present able to obtain professional engagements were not included).

- (3) In the event of any outstanding student being discovered, to offer him employment as Musical Assistant, ideally for a minimum period of twelve months, to enable the student to work and study in a professional atmosphere and at the same time provide him with opportunities for conducting the Orchestra and generally assisting in such things as the compilation and preparation of programmes, etc.

Perhaps the most important of these three points is the last, and as a result of the Course we have decided to appoint a young man, who is a New Zealander by birth, as Musical Assistant.

As you may be aware, this Society is handicapped by a lack of financial resources, but it is hoped to raise sufficient money to make it possible for the Conductors' Course to become an annual event. In this way would be provided a method of selection for suitable applicants, and should there again be someone very promising we would hope once more to offer the position of Musical Assistant. This would not necessarily follow as a result of the Course being held, but only if there is someone of great promise and ability.

We envisage the Musical Assistant's job as being in some ways similar to that of a répétiteur in an opera company and is, perhaps, the nearest approach that an organisation such as our own concerned primarily with symphonic music can get to this. For

him to receive sufficient practical experience of conducting is a difficult matter for us to arrange as we are so constantly occupied with problems connected with the box office and, as you will know, so far as rehearsal time is concerned few British orchestras have sufficient of this at their disposal. The number of concerts which we are obliged to perform in order to balance our economy necessarily leads to a cutting down of what might be regarded as ideal rehearsal time. Naturally in his early days a young conductor can hardly be expected to have any box office appeal, and therefore if he takes part in public performances the Society must also bear the financial risk of this.

I have perhaps inadequately described our motives for holding the Course, but we feel, as one of the very few organisations in this country controlling permanent symphony orchestras, that we must look to the future and assist as far as possible both British artists and composers.

Yours, etc.,

KENNETH MATCHETT,  
General Manager and Secretary.

## BOOK GUIDE

THE LETTERS  
OF EDWARD ELGAR

Edited by Percy M. Young.  
(*Geoffrey Bles, London, 4/2-*)

In reading through the Elgar letters which have just been produced under the editorship of Dr. Percy Young I have asked myself what would be the impression they would make on someone who had never known him.

I knew him well but not intimately for nearly thirty years and I am sure the letters would not have told me much about the true personality of the man unless, that is, I had been a peculiarly gifted psychologist. The fact is that he never seems to have revealed his true self even to his most intimate friends in his letters. That was, I fancy, because he was essentially a shy man at heart. Nothing bears this out more strongly than the comparison between the letters he wrote to his nephews and nieces from Germany and the rest of the correspondence. In these letters we see the real Elgar. They reveal the delicate appreciation of just the things which really interest children and for that reason they have a charm all of their own.

One very strong impression I get from all the

rest of the correspondence, even those letters to his closest personal friends, is that for him the writing of a letter was always something in the nature of a composition. One can imagine him re-writing certain sentences to round it off and give the letter a certain character. One cannot learn anything like so much about Elgar from his letters as one can from his music because, I suppose, music was the natural medium through which he expressed his emotions. His letters are witty, clever and often amusing. He has a love for coining a new word of his own, yet there seems to me to be an artificiality about his letters which has nothing to do with his real character.

One point which struck me and which reinforces my argument is that in all the correspondence Dr. Young has chosen covering the period between 1914 and 1918 there is no more than a passing allusion to the terrible crisis we were going through. No one can imagine that such an intensely sensitive person as he was, could have been otherwise than profoundly affected by what was happening. Perhaps he confined his remarks to the letters to Lady Elgar, which of course do not appear in this correspondence, or again he may have been conscious that his emotions on this particular point could not be expressed by words so he did not try.

Speaking generally, there seems to be one quite obvious omission. While most of his major works were published by Messrs. Novello he nevertheless retained a close relation with Boosey's, and indeed published much of his most famous and popular music with us including not only most of his best known songs but all his famous marches. During the whole of his career he was in constant touch either with my father, Arthur Boosey, or his brother George, or later on myself, yet the sum total of that relationship appearing in his correspondence is a postscript reference to my father concerning the singing by Clara Butt of *Wind at Dawn*. There must be somewhere in the archives of the company some interesting correspondence concerning *Land of Hope and Glory* since it was largely at the instigation of my father that this famous melody from Pomp No. 1 became one of the best known songs in the English speaking world. It may well be that we failed to produce the material for Dr. Young because we were notoriously lacking in historical consciousness where our correspondence was concerned, if so it is a pity, because the correspondence might have been interesting.

Leslie A. Boosey.