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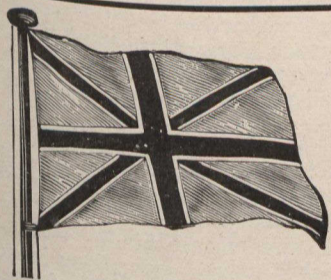
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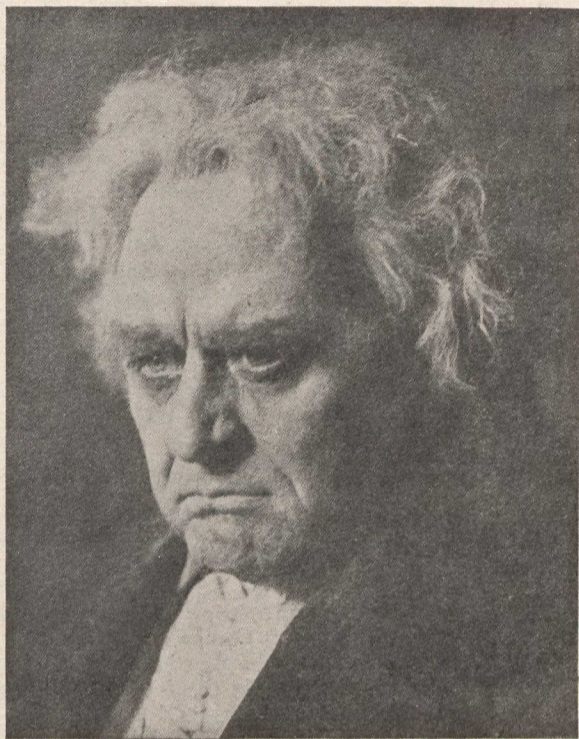
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## MUSIC IN CANADA

**B**EETHOVEN'S Seventh Symphony was given by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra last week. The Seventh has not been much given in this country. In most respects it is a noble work. In some respects it must be admitted that the orchestra did not quite satisfy the desire for complete tonal expression. This is not depreciation of the orchestra. Beethoven himself is said to have had no end of trouble with the orchestras of his day getting them to interpret his symphonies. In all probability the best orchestra of Beethoven's time was inferior in many respects to the Toronto Symphony. Modern orchestration is less than a hundred years old. In these days we have become so accustomed to the beautiful big noise from orchestras that we have become rather spoiled for the sedate, unsensational delights of a band which does its work unostentatiously and with a conscience, with fidelity to detail and extreme care as to intonation; with eminent respect to the composer's meaning and intention — which by some bands we have heard has been sadly overlooked.



Sir Beerbohm Tree's Impersonation of Beethoven in the dramatic portrayal now running at His Majesty's Theatre

There is no movement in any of Beethoven's symphonies which for beautiful utterance surpasses this—not even the immortal *Adagio* of the Ninth. Only in this movement does one observe the customary emotional content which is credited to the average symphony. The intimations are of that profound character which does not belong to what may be called absolute or pure music of which Beethoven was the great apostle. In fact in few of his great symphonies does Beethoven allow himself to be drawn into merely emotional expression. In the Ninth this element is at its height; as though he had quite exhausted the possibilities of constructive pure music and had a direct message to convey of a spiritual sort. Where Beethoven left off others have begun; until the modern symphony has become first of all a soul-picture such as in the case of Tchaikowsky's three greatest and last culminating in the *Pathétique*; such as has been credited to Elgar's First Symphony produced in America by the Damrosch Orchestra last year.

In many respects the world has been the gainer by this evolution on the work of Beethoven, who probably never expected to traverse all the possibilities of musical utterance and surely never anticipated a Strauss or quite apprehended what the world would do with Wagner. In fact the drama music of Wagner and the programme music of Strauss are a huge illumination, or as the case may be perversion, upon the pure music of the Beethoven symphony. They tell a story or portray a picture. Beethoven was largely satisfied to produce a state of feeling which should be elevated and refined without being sensational. Seldom does he permit his mere love of noise to dominate. Here and there in the Scherzo of the Ninth he does so; also in the improbable vocal utterances of the Choral movement. Now and again in the *Presto* and the *Finale* of the Seventh he does this and the effect is not always grateful.

Taken all in all, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra may be said to have given the Seventh in a true Beethovenian style—without exaggeration and with careful attention to tonality and balance of tone and blending of instruments. For in the case of music like this the small details of technique are essentially part of the interpretation; which cannot be said so clearly of the more modern symphony. Mr. Welsman has attempted and achieved a good deal in Beethoven since the orchestra began. He has given now four of the great master's works. none of them so well as the Seventh—which many people in Toronto once upon a time expected to see danced unto by Isadore Duncan but were disappointed.

### BEETHOVEN ON THE STAGE.

**B**EETHOVENISM in England has been getting a new and rather sensational turn from the latest development of Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree who has undertaken to dramatise the story of Beethoven's life for presentation at His Majesty's Theatre. The play, if such it can be called, is not one with a plot; rather a series of episodes in which the various stages of the composer's career are presented, his only love affair delineated, his symphonies impersonated by fair maidens, and the composer's deafness given a stage setting that is altogether of the unusual. The biggest thing about the drama-tisation is Sir Beerbohm Tree's make-up as Beethoven. What he really knows about the scores of Beethoven is not understood. Perhaps there is some excuse for the rather flimsy monstrosity in the attempt to universalise Beethoven. Very likely quite a number of people will get their real knowledge of Beethoven from Beerbohm Tree; which is a shade better than none at all. Now if some one will put the shade of Richard Wagner on the stage—!

The Montreal Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Prof. Goulet, has just given a performance of a varied programme, of which the principal numbers were Schumann's Second Symphony, the overture to Massenet's "Phedre" and Erdmandorfer's orchestration of Rubinstein's "Bal Masque" music.

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