

on the most urgent transcriptions to be published.

The study of musicology has developed rapidly in the last twenty years. Steps to improve the situation for the English scholar must, therefore, be taken instantly. England, indeed, offers great possibilities for the development of these studies. The English libraries, especially the British Museum and the Bodleian Library at Oxford, hold an immense number of priceless musical MSS., medieval treatises on music, and documents relating to the development of music in England, which have never been investigated or published.

But apart from the need for scholars to carry on this work there will be a great demand for musicologists to lecture on the history of English music, to prepare editions for practical use, to train teachers, to provide lecturers for the B.B.C. and the British Council with reliable text-books on English music and musicians. The University of Oxford has recently taken the necessary preliminary steps to give the History of Music a more important place in the syllabus; other universities, too, are including the subject in their courses of lectures on music. But this is not enough to provide for the training of sufficient undergraduates to meet the need.

It would be possible to divide the study of music as it exists at present in the

universities into two parts, one for those who want to become composers and organists, the other for those who want to become teachers, lecturers and scholars. It would also be possible to attach the study of the History of Music to the faculty of History and to demand a certain knowledge of harmony, counterpoint, fugue and composition from those who want to take a degree in the subject. The latter scheme conforms to that of the continental universities, and has been proved successful.

But we must not forget that the problem of training some thirty to fifty young musicologists is an urgent one, and time must not be lost over the discussion of the methods by which the subject is to be organized in the universities—a matter which each university must settle according to its individual needs and the teaching staff at its disposal. To-day, England has an opportunity of taking a leading place in the field of music comparable to that which she held in the Elizabethan Age and in the days of Purcell; she is on the verge of a new great period of musical composition, and also, if action is taken in time, of musical scholarship. This is, therefore, the right moment to encourage the study of the History of Music in this country and to prove that the great work which has already been done can find enough of the right successors to carry it forward.

ANTON WEBERN (1883-1945)

NEWS has reached us from Vienna of the death, in September, of Anton Webern. (Some mystery seems to surround the event, which seemingly was the result of violence.) While reserving fuller consideration of the composer for a later issue, tribute may be paid here to a musician who pursued his ideals, unusual though they were, with constancy and vision. Webern's path was a narrow and lonely one: his music, esoteric and refined to the last degree, found acceptance in a limited circle during his life-time, and is unlikely ever to command a wide audience. Yet it has its own logic, its premises are genuine, and the intensely personal conception of beauty there revealed is not beyond the ken of the open-minded music-lover. The deep impression made by the cantata 'Das Augenlicht' in Queen's Hall in 1938 is still remembered.

Webern—a pupil and staunch follower of Schoenberg—was undoubtedly a master of his craft, while the orchestral and choral concerts which he conducted mainly in Vienna earned him the reputation of an unusually penetrating interpreter of both old and modern music. A letter recently received here from a Dutch musician who studied clandestinely with Webern during the war is a reminder that he was also a teacher of rare qualities. The writer describes at length the inspirational nature of Webern's teaching, and also stresses the personal integrity that Webern preserved under difficult political circumstances—his music had, of course, been banned as 'bolshevistic' by the Nazis long before the war, and he was forbidden to undertake any professional work.