

KNOW YOUR CLASSICS

THIS is the first of a series of articles, written for "The Listener" by BESSIE POLLARD, and designed to help the student and the interested listener towards a more complete appreciation of good music. Each article will deal in outline with one accepted masterpiece and illustrate its main themes.

(1) Trio in B Flat, Op. 97 ("The Arch-Duke") Beethoven

THE last Chamber work in which Beethoven employed a piano as an instrument of the ensemble was the Piano Trio in B Flat, Op. 97, known as the "Arch-Duke" because it was dedicated to his friend and pupil the Arch-Duke Rudolf; all Beethoven's ensuing Chamber music was scored for string quartet. The Trio received its first public performance in April, 1814, with Ignaz Schuppanzigh as violinist, Josef Linke as 'cellist, and Beethoven himself as pianist.

The first movement begins with this smooth, determinate piano theme—



That subject is developed a little, and then a bridge passage leads to this subsidiary theme—



The working-out develops and expands in many ways the main subject material of the opening section; and an elaborate re-statement of the principal themes, followed by an energetic Coda (or "musical post-script") concludes the movement.

The second movement is a Scherzo; the 'cello announces this lilting theme, which is taken over later by the violin—



That theme is worked-out considerably; Beethoven changes to the minor mode for the middle section of the movement—called the Trio—opening with a rather strange chromatic phrase which has a vigorous and marked rhythmic background figure providing an air of suppressed challenge to the prevailing subdued harmonic colouring.

The third movement is a Theme and Variations, built on a majestic and serene theme, beginning—



This beautiful slow movement proceeds almost without break into the Finale—cast in the form of a lively Rondo—this infectiously gay principal subject forming the core of the movement—

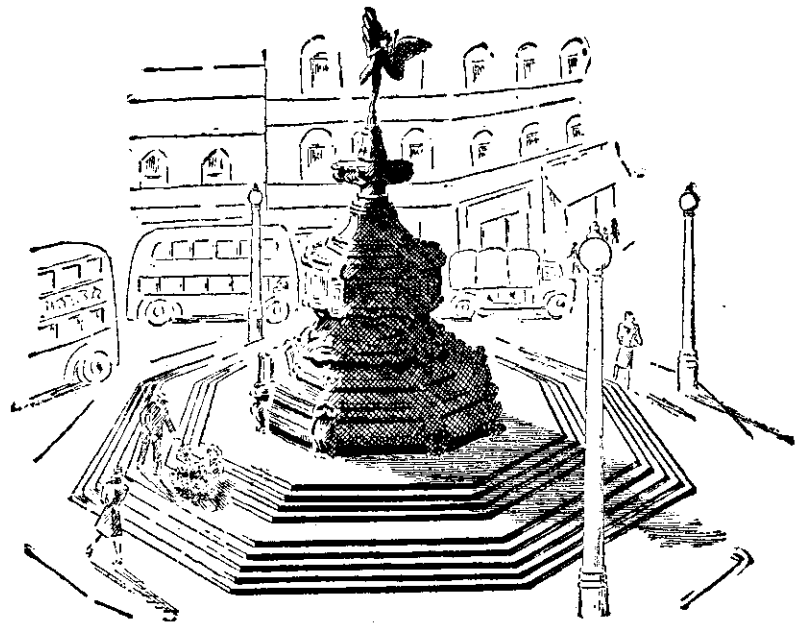


Beethoven's Trio in B Flat, Op. 97 (the "Arch-Duke") for Piano, Violin and 'Cello, will be heard from Station 3YL on Tuesday, July 13, at 8.0 p.m.

NEW ZEALAND LISTENER, JULY 9

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