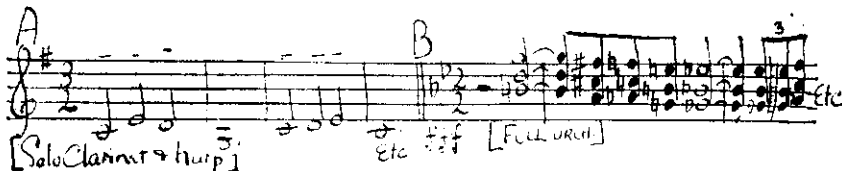


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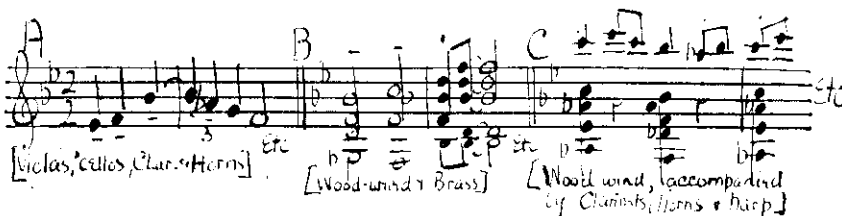
THIS series of articles, written for "The Listener" by BESSIE POLLARD, is designed to help the student and the interested listener towards a more complete appreciation of good music. Each article deals in outline with one accepted masterpiece and illustrates its main themes.

(9) A London Symphony (Vaughan Williams)

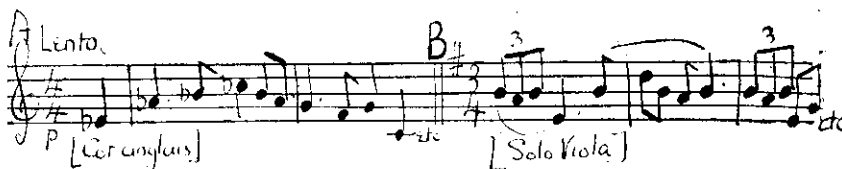
A LONDON Symphony—the second of Vaughan Williams's Symphonies—was introduced in London in March, 1914. The composer explains that *Symphony by a Londoner* would be a better title—"... if listeners recognise such suggestions as the Westminster Chimes, or the Sweet Lavender cry," he says, "consider these as suggestions, not essentials to the music." The Symphony is scored for large modern orchestra, and is in four movements, including an Epilogue. The first might be said to represent a sleeping London with the Thames flowing placidly through the city; then the town stirs and one glimpses its many-sided character, its fun and its bustle. This opening movement is based on a number of themes, and sub-themes, the Westminster Chimes ("A" below) and then the massive main subject ("B" below)—



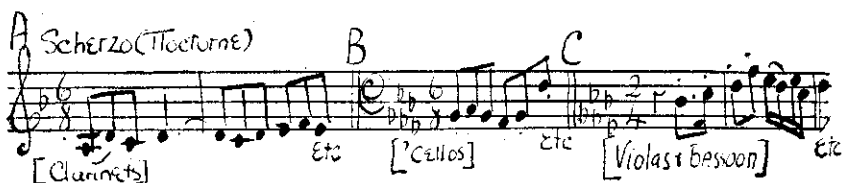
The second subject incorporates several important motifs from which I quote three ("A," "B," and "C" below)—



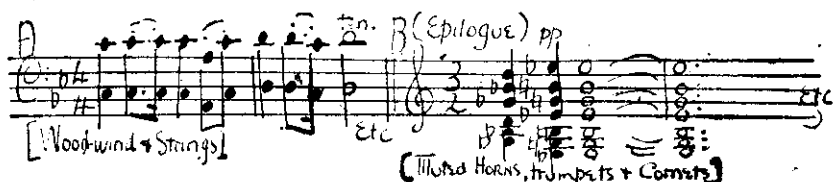
The slow movement has an atmosphere of clammy, foggy twilight, of destitution and tragedy; it begins with a typical Vaughan Williams progression after which we hear the cor anglais theme ("A" below). The middle section opens with a viola theme ("B" below)—



The Scherzo (sub-titled Nocturne) gives a picture of a late Saturday evening. It has two main themes—the first given out by clarinet ("A" below) and the second ("B" and "C" below) again made up of short motifs from which I quote two—



The Finale shows the more relentless traits of the city—the unemployed and the downtrodden. The wood-wind and strings announce a march-like theme ("A" below) and we hear again the Chimes of Big Ben. The Epilogue ends the Symphony, as it began, with the Thames gliding noiselessly and serenely; three beautiful chords are almost breathed out by muted horns, trumpets and cornets ("B" below), and in the resolution of the discord the last notes of the Symphony fade into silence.



"A London Symphony," by Vaughan Williams, will be heard in a programme of British Music from Station 3YA at 7.35 p.m. on Wednesday, September 8.

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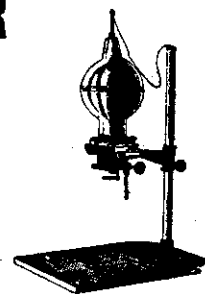
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