MUSIC AND WAR

The last number of Tempo appeared in July 1939. By September, when the next issue was due, the war was already in progress and it was decided, in view of the uncertain conditions, to suspend publication. The ensuing twenty-two months have seen many changes in the English musical world, and those connected with it have been compelled radically to alter their plans to meet the new conditions. It is generally agreed that amateur music-making has thrived with renewed zest, while orchestral concerts and what opera there is are much in demand.

Contemporary music, with which this paper is primarily concerned, can hardly be said to have flourished. The classics are indeed the order of the day, although we are inclined to think that this is due more to economic considerations on the part of concert promoters than to a modification of public taste. Contemporary music having but rarely “paid” in peaceful days, its wartime prospects are naturally yet further diminished. There has, however, been a slight revival of enterprise during the season just past, and to those organisations and performers who made efforts in this connection due praise should be given.

Our own policy concerning contemporary music remains unchanged, and we venture to think that the list of new works published since the war, given at the back of this issue, is sufficient proof of our intentions. Fortunately, nearly all the composers with whom we are closely associated are resident either in England or America, thereby enabling us to maintain our usual close connections.

We have been greatly fortified in our publishing activities by the efforts of our New York house, which has been successful in securing many performances of our recent contemporary publications, and has lately begun to publish on its own account the music of native composers and others now resident in America. In Australia and South Africa there has also been a markedly increased interest in modern music (the broadcasting organizations in both countries are particularly active), while Canada shows signs that she does not intend to be left behind.

Two outstanding features of our business since the last number of Tempo have been the acquisition by us of a number of important works from the catalogue of Universal Edition of Vienna, and the inauguration of a concert agency by our New York branch; these are dealt with in the following pages. For the time being Tempo will not appear bi-monthly, as was originally planned, but we shall continue to issue it periodically when we feel there is sufficient interesting material to make a new number worth while.