

Young Authors' Club

FLORITA COOK, Editor

SENIOR CONTRIBUTIONS

PROGRAM NOTES ON A GREAT COMPOSER
(After reading an album of phonograph records.)

Original by Philip Dick
William Friedrich Motehaven was born on December 24, 1791, in the small Austrian town of Andorf, in the Tyrol. Unlike Mozart, he was born of humble parents, and so his musical ability was not noticed until he was almost grown. His father, Heinrich Motehaven, was the owner of a brewery, and his mother took in washing. When he was twenty-two (having had only a nominal amount of music lessons on the organ and piano) he took the position of Kapellmeister in the newly court of the Prince of Salzburg because vacant, and the Prince called for those interested in filling the post to come forward.

On an impulse, Friedrich Motehaven decided to try for the post and against the disapproval of his family and friends set forth from Andorf to the royal court. In order to gain the desired post it was necessary for him to demonstrate before a body of learned musicians his ability to play, compose, and improvise. Although he did not gain the position he remarkable playing came to the attention of Kauffler, then a guest of the prince, and this learned musician decided to take the young man on as his pupil.

Under Kauffler, Motehaven became greatly skilled in both composing and playing. In the year 1817, when he was but twenty-six years of age, a composition of his, "Eine Freudig Laiden," was performed by the Royal State Opera Choir, and so successful was this piece that Motehaven was invited to come to Vienna at the request of the Archduke. And, so bidding goodbye to his old teacher he set forth toward the great Austrian city, where most of the masters before him had found their first fame.

During the period 1819 to 1824 when he was in Vienna he turned out the first three of his seven symphonies, and besides these, a violin concerto and several piano works. Now his fame was assured and he was known throughout Europe. His symphony was hailed (as was Brahms') as "The Tempest." But in 1824 the Archduke quarreled with the Prince of Salzburg, and Motehaven unfortunately sided with the Prince; the result being that he lost favor with the Archduke and was turned out of the court. A witness described it:

"Friedrich was almost as angry as the Archduke. They approached each other, and both began talking in angry tones almost at once. The huge Archduke towered over the slight musician, and as their anger increased we feared that he might seize him bodily and do him harm. Finally Motehaven turned on his heel, the angry words of the Archduke still ringing in the air, and left the room. That was the last time he was ever seen at the Court."

After this episode Motehaven followed in the footsteps of Haydn and Handel. On March 9th, 1825, he left Austria and went to England. There he was greeted with all the acclaim he could desire. He lived there, writing almost all of the time. An opera of his was barely saved from intrigues and was finally performed successfully. But now the composer was beginning to feel the first twinges of the illness that was to mean his death.

"We could all see that he was sick," wrote Kurt Myer, a friend of his. "He would sit before the window for hours, looking at the English countryside. Sometimes he would look up at me when I came into the room with something for him. He never seemed to smile. I could see that he was thinking of Austria, and although he had said

that he never wanted to go back I know that he would have liked to have spent his last days there."

Friedrich Motehaven never returned to Austria. Barely a month later he passed away, and a place was arranged for his body at Westminster Abbey. But the burial party carrying his coffin lost their way, and through this accident he was buried in an unmarked grave outside of London, and to this day no one really knows where he lies. He left, when he died, almost five hundred compositions, ranging from chamber works to a group of song cycles. Later a complete edition of his works appeared under the famous "B. & H." (Breitkopf and Hartel) name.

(I think I'm just naturally big-hearted, Philip, to publish this because, you see, I have always discouraged this type of contribution as it is much too encyclopedic, literally to fulfill the requirement of the column that work should be strictly creative. One of the most difficult writing feats is to put someone into this type of work. I dislike to think of the effort being wasted though—so here it is.)

CREDIT LINE

Four credits for Philip Dick,
September 22, 1944.