

# The Musical quarterly

Volume 10, Number 1, Winter 1977

Editor: [Name]

Editorial Board: [List of names]

Editorial Office: [Address]

Subscription Information: [Details]

Advertising: [Details]

Copyright: [Details]

ISSN: [Number]

Printed in [Country]

Published by [Publisher]

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# *The Musical Quarterly*

D. G. SOXNER, *Editor*

TITLE-PAGE

AND

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Vol. VII, 1921

(Printed as Part III of Vol. VII, No. 4, October, 1921)

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New York : G. Schirmer, Inc.



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O. G. SONNICK, *Editor*

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NEW YORK

# THE MUSICAL QUARTERLY



NEW YORK G. SCHIRMER BOSTON





**THE MUSICAL QUARTERLY**

# THE MUSICAL QUARTERLY

O. G. SONNECK, Editor

Vol. 7, No. 1

JANUARY, 1911

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PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

TRIED BY MAIL A YEAR

ALBANY, N. Y.

SEVEN-FIVE CENTS A COPY

Entered as second-class matter December 22, 1910, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y.,  
under the act of March 3, 1879.

NEW YORK

G. SCHIRMER

BOSTON

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# THE MUSICAL QUARTERLY

VOL. VII

JANUARY, 1921

NO. 1

## AGAINST MODERN "ISM"

By CONSTANTIN VON STERNBERG

**M**USICAL criticism in recent years has taken the hyper-modern or modernistic composers more and more seriously. Confining itself no longer to an acknowledgement of their unquestionable ingenuity and their novel contributions to the technic of composition, it seems to have allowed these technical matters to mislead its judgment so far as to differentiate no longer between legitimate modernity and its licensed caricature—modernism. Some of the usually nervous critics of America and England—not to mention the French and German who speak, of course, *pro domo*—when judging some out-and-out modernistic work, impress one of late very much like the man who, upon being told that a live fish was walking in a certain street, laughed very heartily—at first; but as more and more people rashed by his window in the direction of that street to see the wonder and some of them urged him to come along, his laugh gradually abated; he began to feel uneasiness, then shrugged his shoulders, finally put on his hat and followed the hoard throng, saying: "Well—maybe—who knows?"

This attitude of earnest critics must cause great alarm among such musicians and music-lovers as demand from the divine art more than mere "cleverness." They must needs feel dismayed by seeing high praise bestowed upon compositions which, technically clever though they are, lack the very fundamentals of art, Ethics and Sincerity. In the presence or, as it may be, the absence of these two elements lies the chiefest difference between art and artifice—in other words, between modernity and modernism. A perfect analogy to this distinction can be found by comparing commerce with commercialism where, as with modernism, it is the "ism" that changes the good into the bad.

Commerce enriches a nation, and not only materially, for it also brings people and knowledge from other lands; it causes travel, exploration; it broadens a nation's outlook upon the world. It was, inevitably, though innocently, the cause of the Renaissance, and it is—or is supposed to be—based upon the principle of "fair exchange." In one word, commerce is an excellent human institution, while commercialism is a reprehensible, greed-begotten malady. Too rapacious to be content with the proper returns of legitimate commerce, commercialism tends to sacrifice the principle of fair exchange on the altar of money-getting, it tends to turn every human endeavor into inordinate monetary gain and to steeer at any effort that is prompted by higher, nobler impulses. It readily takes advantage of the unfortunate with a view to out-shine him; and, if he be of the type that regards proper monetary returns as a necessary but natural incidental, Heaven help him! The "ism" implies the abuse of the legitimate for monetary gain beyond proper returns; and it is precisely the same with unbridled modernism, as will presently be seen.

Like the promoters of "get-rich-quick" schemes, the modernists have armed themselves with many arguments which, however, reveal their spontaneity upon the slightest scrutiny. Whenever the merit of their work is doubted or denied they say at once that "all innovators were at first antagonized," and then attempt to support their argument by quoting Palestrina, Monteverdi, Beethoven, Wagner, Liszt and others. They carefully suppress the facts in these cases. They never mention the sober reality—that Palestrina was not a modernist in any sense; he was a purifier of church music, rather the opposite of a modernist. Monteverdi was a contemporary of just such a type of dilettante modernists as infect our time; he did use some of their "tricks," but only for artistic purposes, not—as they did—for their own sake. He and Palestrina were men of that soul caliber for which the present musical world waits with fervent hope. The name of Monteverdi's modernists may be found in books on the history of music; their works, however, are dead, dead forever, while his own Madrigals are, when properly performed, still full of life and show that he was—for his time—very modern, indeed, but not modern-like by any means. True, he used the unprepared dissonances, suspensions and other harmonic innovations of his contemporaries, where they were applicable with good taste; here and there, as opportunities had he supplied, but of all the substantial musical meat to which to apply them. He did not make a meal of the spices. And he was not antagonized by his public. Neither was

Beethoven until he reached—in his latest works—what might be designated as the "period of prophesy." From the works of this period the public—far from antagonising him—kept only aloof for a while; which was natural, since prophecies need time for their fulfillment, though the time in his case was not very long. These "prophetic" works, however, appeared in the last quarter of his life; they were, after all, legitimate extensions of principles under which he had grown up. They were in no sense "departures" from them, while our modernists begin their casual life with departures. Monteverdi, too, did not adopt the modern style until late in life. He wrote his first opera "Ariana" at forty. Verdi changed his style with "Aida" at the age of fifty-seven. That Wagner was antagonized is true, but it was a purely personal antagonism partly called forth by his paganistic personality and partly by the—more or less secret—orders from the reigning German courts because of his—only too active—participation in the revolution of 1848. The public at large, however, took him to its heart at once, and such musicians as were not directly or indirectly dependent upon the Courts (e.g., Court-conductors) combatted the Court intrigues vigorously, often imperiling their livelihood thereby (the present writer among them). As for Liszt, the most modest and self-effacing of all composers, he was never antagonized by the public; his wider popularity as a symphonist had to wait but a short time until orchestral technique had developed sufficiently to cope with his works.

The argument of antagonism against modernism is cleverly selected to shield any new classical monstrosity and to repel any attack upon it; it might have served this purpose if it did not happen to be the very argument which William "Brother Jasper" resorted to. This negro parson preached that "the earth an stand in' still, yeth, steadfast and the sun in heavin' roas' an' roas' it." When he was told that he was being laughed at he consoled his flock and himself by saying: "The's all right! Galileo was laughed at, too, an' he was to'ward in heavin' yeth, my brethren, in' heavin'!" Galileo and—Brother Jasper! Monteverdi, Beethoven, Wagner and—the little modernists! What a parallel! Would any sincere man take refuge behind such an argument as that of antagonism?

Our modernists claim that every composer has a right to have his own style, and the claim is quite just; but there is a world of difference between style and mannerism and of this difference they seem to be quite unaware. "Style" is a personal, characteristic way of expressing a thought, and it demands dignity and

distinction. It applies, not to the thought, but to its expression. It is one feature in the physiognomy of a work, not the work itself. It is a trait which adapts itself to any thought. Beethoven's E-flat Concerto differs so entirely from the Chopinque one in G major that, were it not for the style, one could scarcely believe them to have come from the same mind. The same diversity of thought, unhampered by the canons of style, prevails in his Symphonies, Quartets, Sonatas, etc. With our modernist masters are reversed; instead of dressing their thoughtlets in their favorite manner, they handle only such little ideas as will fit their stereotype manner of dressing.

"Eulenspiegel, Don Quixote, Salome, Elektra"—are they images of normal humans engaged by some great passion? Are they not, mystically, grotesque caricatures, and have their literary originalities not intended some of them to be caricatures? There is, of course, no reason why a musician should not occasionally indulge in caricature; Wagner did it in the "Meistersinger"; but—in caricature a musical life-guard? The mannerism of Richard Strauss makes one suspect that he aims at the questionable honor of being called a "musical Hagarth."

Another one of our modernist psychopaths, like a cat in a china shop, uses all sorts of possible and impossible discords; of course, pianissimo, feeling quite rightly that, after all, there are some things which should not be said "right out loud." He has discovered the venerable hexatonic scale—(percent que note sei)—and with it and the everlasting chords of the ninth and eleventh he succeeded in producing what may cheerfully be granted to be a new "color"; but since it blinded him to all other colors his compositions sound all alike. This is sheer, unadorned mannerism, not style. He, like all the modernists, does not fit the clothes to the children of his brain; he selects the children to fit the clothes.

It might be said that without intrinsic merit the works of the modernists could not have acquired the vogue which the public accords to them. Vogue? Indeed? Vogue, that French euphemism for "fad." Whatever the cause or causes may be, we cannot help noticing that the restlessness and superficiality of modern life has grown to a degree so alarming as to make "vogue" a totally untrustworthy criterion. What dominates our musical taste is, unfortunately, no longer artistic merit; it still finds its appetizers, no doubt, in the creative field of music, but in the creative field it is mere sensational novelty that attracts the public. And as sensationalism (another "fad") is by

its very nature of but short-lived attractiveness, the public change their fads almost as often as they do their garments. They are either mentally unequipped or too frivolous to take the time and interest to satisfy themselves as to the depth or shallowness of a composition. And, really, why should they? A kind, fatherly government tells them what to eat and, especially, what to drink; the papers tell them what to wear, what to think, what to hate, what to like, and the public's unwavering obedience to these dictates has almost the dignity of military discipline. Hence, as long as a composition is new—new, above all, pleasantly or painfully new—raises enough unnecessary noise (we love noise, don't we?), employs a needlessly huge apparatus, and is much spoken of in the papers, the public will toy with it for a while. In utter disregard of the fact that the things in art which were only new never lived long enough to grow old. Thus to the public—taking them by and large—all music is but a moment's market, a trifle, soon to be forgotten for the next one.

To prevent this forgetting as long as possible the modernistic creation manufacturers employ, beside their specious arguments, all the proven methods of commercialism. Not only do they engage propagandists (some of whom are holding rather high artistic positions), but they also have their press agents. Many papers, daily and weekly, keep public attention alive by the sort of personal gossip which has nothing whatever to do with art; they tell the public "what the great A is going to write, when";—"what the equally great B thinks of writing, some day, possibly, perhaps";—"what prices they get for their manuscripts; what private quarrels they have with one another." The pictures of these musical obscurists *d'industrie* are shown in the papers as they look on board ship, on a canoe, at the tennis court, at breakfast, playing with children, sitting in their library with scholarly pose, in their studio where a photographer caught them—purely by chance, of course—brooding over some deeply problematic piece of music; on horseback, swimming in the sea or, in fact, in any attitude which the late Anthony Comstock or the police would not have objected to.

Our modernists do not stand aside of the whirl and turmoil of the frivolous world, detaching themselves to their schools and letting the passing show wind its silly way—(back of Brahms?)—oh, no! They go right into the very thickest of it, straining every nerve to catch the cheap, "jazzy" slogans of the day and, having caught it, they turn not away from it with a pitiful smile, but they chase lustily in.

great

"Sensations, is it?" they say, "why, you shall have them! Just hear, friends, brothers, fellow citizens! Here are sensations for you that will make your blood curdle and give you the creeps! Here's an Opera, a drama without action, 'Nicely-Nic and Pale-and-Sandy,' seen through a gauze curtain as it is a haze. Everything in it is scholastic, sensory, costume, character, music—everything! The whole thing as worked as a morphine dream, so nerveless as a cocaine victim. You need not understand it—it must be 'sensed'! And the music: every harmony an unprepared unshowered, every change a jolt to prevent ease. Methodically mad. Come one, come all! It's the 'thing'! All the ladies that go to Paris for their gowns say so. They ought to know!"

Here's another sensation! "The Bible dramatized! Ruth? Magdalene? Deborah? Not much!—Salome! Ferociousness glorified! You'll shudder physically and morally—but surely be hanged, we give you sensations! Isn't that what you want? The old masters gave you what you needed; they lifted you to their height, but now you're cheap and soft. We come nicely down to you and give you, not what you need, but what your aesthetic demoralization and morbidity craves!"

Nice ethics, that! And why all this to-do? What for? Only and exclusively for the few dire phobias in terms of ears which the late Wagner regarded as "scholastic." Modernism—commercialism!

In the opening paragraphs of this discussion will be found an unstated acknowledgment of the modernists' ingenuity. Their orchestral "effects," though mostly without "cause"; their harmonic twists and kindred locus pocus tricks, are certainly ingenious; but the first syllable of "ingenius" declares the absence of genius. Ingenuity provides new means—genius has new purposes. Ingenuity does clever things—genius does great things. Ingenuity contrives—genius creates. Ingenuity—and this is an essential point—acts consciously, genius acts unconsciously. No fair-minded critic can dispute the modernists' ingenuity, for they do some remarkably crafty things. They must have brooded over them like Mene over the broken sword, and over their—often overplanned—harmonies they must have worked very hard, so hard, indeed, that—from too much sedentary work—they all contracted the musical asthma. They seem to be no longer able to think a melodic thought out to its natural, logical ending; they start it, one measure or two, maybe three, and then—pft!—the breath goes out; they have to take a fresh breath and—start something else. Their works—like Kipling's "Bandolier"—seem

all the time on the verge of achieving something, but—again like the Bauhaus—they never come to anything more substantial than noise. There is never any real development, no real flow—only broken scraps of sentences, a starvoing dribble of ideas.

Nevertheless it may be cheerfully granted that some—or even many—of their innovations are well worth preserving until—well—until some real master, some genius appears who will—speak with Handel—"know you is do not 'noj" who will use them *à la* Monteverdi, for purposes beyond themselves, who will handle them with sovereign mastery, as an architect may employ some new building material. Until this master appears, the modernists can be regarded only as paraversors or fiddlers of just such material; technical material of which the ethical value in the field of composition is not much higher than—*musica confusionem*—that of Coenig's studies in the field of piano playing. The industriousness of the modernists deserves credit, no doubt (so did Coenig's and Clementi's); but when their doings begin to affect young students, causing them to neglect the great masters, as so many of them do, when these students go into raptures over a little detail like a new chord-succession and lose the solid ground on which the marvelous edifice of music is built, until they get lost in a mire of cacophony—the time has come for a word of serious warning.

Our ear is a defenseless and, therefore, a very complaisant organ. It is in one respect like the stomach. As the latter can become accustomed to poisons like arsenic or cocaine, so can the ear (only too easily) become accustomed to any sound, from an alarm clock to a detuning vocalist. This complaisance of the ear, due principally to its defenselessness, should neither be abused nor speculated upon; on the contrary, the ear should be kept so keenly sensitive as to reject any cacophony that is not justified by artistic-dramatic necessity and sparingly, judiciously used. As the medical effect of poisonous drugs depends entirely upon the dosage and becomes aqueous by over-prolonged use, so do musical disorders lose their dramatic effects altogether when through their over-frequency our ear becomes accustomed to them.

As for the plea that our modernists have a new "message to the world," the reply to it was furnished long ago by a very wise man who said,

*I hear the message well enough—  
—also, I don't believe it.*

## CHAMBER-MUSIC : ITS PAST AND FUTURE

By CYRIL L. SCOTT

### I

**I**N the days of "good old father Haydn" as he is often sentimentally called—though why not equally "good old father Handel or Bach"? For, if anybody is entitled to the name of father, certainly the latter is, considering he had twenty-three children—in the days of "good old father Haydn," I repeat, the writing of chamber-music was not the brain-taxing affair it at present is. If we judge from this old master's idea of writing a trio, which was only *trio-escape* in the sense of having three instruments, but resembled more a duet so far as part-writing was concerned, and if we then compare it to the Trio of Beethoven, we shall see what tremendous possibilities were latent in that simple form, and what great strides music has made within the last hundred years or so. Indeed, it seems that in those days Haydn considered he had adequately done his duty by that particular form when he entrusted that his *cello* should proceed in unison with, and so reinforce, his *violin* or *base*, whereas nowadays this very incident simplicity certainly does not satisfy our moderns, who are not content to write a *trio* by name but must needs also write a *trio* by nature.

But in the subject of *trios* we shall return anon, for we shall be hindered in difficulties if we do not, at the outset of our enterprise, make some clear definition as to what has been meant, is meant and may be meant in the future by the term *chamber-music*. It is in fact evident that the designation is not a very happy one, being used far too loosely and in a most arbitrary manner. Nor can we fail to see that much which really is *chamber-music* is not so termed; for what could be more suited to a room and less suited to a hall than a *violin solo*, yet how often do we hear, for instance, the *Chaconne* of Bach, or some unaccompanied piece for *violin*, in a big hall instead of in its proper place? Thus one would almost like to raise a plea for keeping types of music (like children) in their proper places—and demand that what really is *chamber-music* be termed and treated as such without any attempt to stretch it beyond its inherent capacities. In my country [England], for instance, a singer will



appear in the middle of an orchestral concert and sing several songs with pianoforte accompaniment, the anti-climax—after the performance of large orchestral works—being deplorable. But the fact is that for some perverse and unaccountable reason, voice and pianoforte in conjunction do not fall into the category of chamber-music; the result being that such a conjunction finds performance anywhere from the small dimensions of a *salotto*'s boudoir to the colossal and all-sounding dimensions of the Albert Hall. And yet if this martinet procedure obtains in connection with singers, it also obtains with a violinist or 'cellist—who likewise in the middle of a large orchestral concert (where usually he has played a concerto) comes forward with an accompanist and unblushingly plays a *sonata da camera* to the tinkling of a pianoforte. This is in fact a convention, and one which has developed largely from unnecessary reasons—i.e., the soloist has been engaged, and therefore the audience must have its money's worth, however martinet and unesthetic that money's worth may be.

Now there is no gaining that a solo-violin or solo-'cello sounds in itself very thin in a large hall, but when it immediately follows upon the enormous volume of sound produced by a large orchestra, the effect is highly detrimental to the very greatest and most accomplished artists. Cello-solos and violin-solos—in fact all solos excepting those which never take place in solemn concerts (I allude to trombone, oboist or bass-tuba solos)—belong to the domain of chamber-music and only to that, and the sooner this is realised the more artistic and æsthetic will our concerts become. I grant that, as regards the voice, there does exist a certain difference, in that the vocal cords of a singer like Madame Clara Butt (who possesses what is termed "a magnificent organ") are capable of producing more actual noise, or I ought more politely to say, a greater volume of sound, than the output cords of a violin or 'cello. But strictly speaking (for Madame Butt is an exception), all songs without orchestral accompaniment are exclusively chamber-music, and even more so than compositions which demand a greater number of instruments, and which being termed such, are never introduced into orchestral concerts. Nay, who has heard of, let us say, a pianoforte-quintet or a string- sextet being introduced between two choral works or two symphonies by way of an interlude?

I shall, of course, be saying the obvious when I remark that six instruments produce more sound than one, just as two pigs under a gate (to quote the old riddle) produce more squeals than one; yet why, as already inferred, music which is more of the chamber order is not regarded as such, while music which is less so is hardly termed chamber-music at all, is a question I leave open for those "hearted

lifen?" who are fond of engaging in controversy. However, if this article succeeds in calling attention to the necessity and aesthetic value of proper categorization, it will not have been written altogether in vain.

## II

I was about to state that at one time nearly all music was chamber-music, but on prompt reflection—for certainly the music which brought down the Walls of Jericho was not chamber-music—I must amend the statement and be content to point out that a large percentage of what we now have as symphonic music was performed in rooms of varying sizes, and seldom in a hall larger than one we should regard as suitable for our present-day chamber concerts. I am reminded of this, in fact, by certain pictures, picturing a musical evening in the time of Frederick the Great, in which half of the room is taken up by the musicians (and the chandeliers) and less than half by the courtiers. As to the instruments, I see a certain number of strings, wood-wind and a harpsichord, and perhaps a harp—which after all, is a very tidy little orchestra. But even this includes pictures picturing comparatively modern times, and if we go back farther to the days of Shakespeare, it becomes almost as strangely out of place to imagine people attending a set concert as to imagine those attending a motor race. Indeed, leaving purely instrumental music aside, we can only consider madrigals, rhapsods and glees/songs as chamber-music in one sense, even though these did often take place in the more poetical atmosphere of a garden, or perhaps a village green, or in the snow-clad street outside "my lady's window." Yes, well might we say, in those days music was small and choice, whereas nowadays, music is largely the opposite, we have gone to the other extreme, and but a few years ago the scene of a musical treat (so many people which I personally should be impelled enough to consider unseasonably) was to hear Handel's "Messiah" with a chorus of three thousand, if not more, and an orchestra, or let us rather say a band, of two hundred and fifty performers. Really it almost suggests Palestrina in his maturity—or was it a forerunner of "Big Bertha," the gun that shot seventy-two (or was it one hundred and twenty?) miles?

All the same, in considering the probabilities and possibilities of our subject, it is fairly obvious that in this connection, at any rate, the reaction has already set in, and one thing strikes us very forcibly: in chamber-music we are not increasing our number of instruments, but rather utilizing their fullest capacities instead. Indeed, if you will have it phrased in a homely way, we are economizing in players

but making them work the harder . . . And yet, let it not be thought we moderns are the first to have done this; for I remember hearing an anecdote about Beethoven, who, after writing a certain passage and confronting the players with it, discovered they rebelled and declared the passage impossible of execution—whereupon they were simply told to go home and practice it, which they did, with the desired result.

At this juncture we may review the past and certain of its forms—those forms of chamber-music which, although praised by great masters, have, for reasons which this article may attempt to explain, not stood the so-called test of time, but have been banished to that semi-oblivion which constitutes them so of mere historical interest and nothing more. And I allude to such forms as trios for strings only; that simplest of all forms which come under the arbitrary heading of chamber-music. Now, I am inclined to think there are two reasons why certain types of music become so soon antiquated, the first and obvious that in our modern days of polyphony, they sound too thin and are too easily understandable, like a Wordsworth poem about a toy boat and a laggard boy, but if that is the first reason, there is yet a subtler and more psychological one which has every bit as much, if not more, to do with the matter. I allude to the fact of the novelty having worn off—novelty being a far more important stimulant of interest than people are apt to suppose. As I have pointed out in my book called the *Philosophy of Modernism*, however much we may revere John Keats, and however often the first line of *Endymion* may have been on our grandfather's lips, the fact remains that "a thing of beauty is" not always "a joy forever." To apply the adjusted adage to the case in point, the beauty of this music may fade as a once beautiful photograph may fade, and for that matter become thinner and more beleaguering until there is nothing left. But the question arises, is all "thin" music doomed to oblivion, both of the past and the present? The answer leads one to reflect, and is instructive. It brings, in fact, to our notice that if the "thin" music is sufficiently ancient, it pleases us exceedingly. And why? Because the very quaintness of its harmonies and other devices falls upon our ears as novel ones again. How delightful are some very old madrigals, and how delightful again some old folk-songs with their original accompaniments—and not the ones superadded by a later composer (Beethoven, for instance, who set accompaniments added to his own day

to many of these old airs). And yet, was not Beethoven a greater master of music than these old madrigal composers? This admitted, why have his particular accompaniments failed to reach a satisfying immortality, and still more, why have his string-trios failed to do so? Because, as we pointed out, some things of beauty are not always joys forever.

There enters into this whole question what we may term the element of musical suitability, or, perhaps better said, poetical suitability. To illustrate my point, I may mention, that one day long ago when I attended a performance of one of Shakespeare's plays in the theatre at Frankfurt-on-the-Main, at a certain juncture of the play, there struck up the strings of a few mandolins and violas, a piece of incidental music so poetically suitable and so novel in sound, that both the composer with whom I was at the time and I were fascinated and charmed. Here was a little "fantasia" of "chamber-music" or garden music (yes, why not garden music?) which appealed to us so the very essence of appropriateness, not only in connection with the play we were witnessing, but in connection with the actual musical content to which these few violas and mandolins gave expression. And yet, charming though this was, who could conceive of a lengthy and pretentious chamber work composed in sonata form, and containing four movements, and lasting half an hour, written if you please, for three mandolins and two violas? (I hear a voice within me saying, *Herrn!* one of your best friends may be doing this very thing ere long—you never can tell. True, but nevertheless I will not retract my question.)

It is just this lack of poetical appropriateness which I feel to be responsible for the bad wearing qualities of the string-trios of the Beethovenian and pre-Beethovenian epoch. To be appealing nowadays, it is not harmonically subtle enough, not poetically picturesque enough, not melodically quaint enough. I am, of course, aware that this statement may shock certain chamber-music enthusiasts. This I cannot help, besides, the capacity to be shocked is not a quality to be encouraged, being rather a decadent quality than otherwise. After all, someone must do this dirty work of thinking and saying for the first time (aye, is it for the first time?) what hundreds of people are dying to think and say, if the phrase be not too prosaical. When will people have the initiative, for instance, to put their feet down and say: "We heartily dislike the sound produced by violin unaccompanied?" The argument is that if such a person as Bach thought it beautiful, that is good enough for "us" (but wait a minute) would not Bach be scathingly distressed if he heard his chords appreciated in that highly disconcerting manner

which the modern violin bow forces its handlers to adopt? For I wonder how many people—indeed, how many violin virtuosos—are aware that the old bow was made in such a way (curved and with a possibility of ducking the hair) that the chords did not need to be broken? Alas, change is not always progress, and when we talk of "all modern conveniences," we forget to include several modern inconveniences.

But we have digressed for a moment during our little *causé*. To return and add just a few words more about the string-trio, the question is, will there come a day when we shall listen to those old trios with a renewed pleasure? And why not—days may not the day come when they, too, will sound so old as to sound new again? After all, it seems to be with music as it is with pictures, for I hear that in The London National Gallery, certain pictures are put away in the cellar for a time and then reconstituted. Thus, what is not appreciated in one age is appreciated in another, for the prosopopoeia to the weakening of appreciation towards a work is, that it must be very new—or very old. I know of a great painter, for instance, who loves Cimabue but heartily dislikes Raphael the latter, forsooth, is not quaint enough!

### III

I alluded awhile to the Haydn type of piano-forte-trio as a form of diet, even though it entailed three instruments, a fact which every observant student must have noticed for himself. He will equally have noticed that Beethoven considerably improved on this, as did also his successor Franz Schubert. But was Haydn merely careless in his treatment of this form or did he know no better? It is hard to say, but speaks of carelessness, there is an anecdote which says that Beethoven, who was Haydn's pupil, chided the latter with some asperity for having left a mistake in his (Beethoven's) harmony exercise. Did the latter also chide him for not writing true trios? History does not relate. I think, however, a good many modern musicians chide him by not playing his works, preferring the new by nature and not only by name. And yet one wonders why these ineffective trios exist, when his quartets were up to his prevailing standard of excellence; so "all that they should be," indeed, that they leave us nothing to say on the matter. Nor would it profit us materially in connection with this *causé* to continue his followers along this line, the masterpieces of Beethoven and Schubert; all one might say of the latter in the shape of friendly criticism is that he failed to combine at times that brevity which "is the soul of wit." As to the quartets of the still later composer

Robert Schumann, it is curious to note that although he was a poor hand at writing intrinsically orchestral music, his chamber-works were singularly effective, and full of a delicate charm. Strangely so, because as a rule the composer who has little sense for orchestral color, fails to produce the most effective chamber-music, as may be seen by a close and critical scrutiny of the works of Brahms. That Brahms wrote beautiful and useful music as such, few will deny, but that he always contrived to produce beautiful sounds is another matter. It is all too obvious that at times he wrote what has been not ill-described as *paper-music*—that is, music which when read by our mental ear looks beautiful of content, but when it comes to be played sounds hideous. Indeed, could there exist a more ill-sounding work than the last movement of the Sonata for 'cello and piano in E minor? Not altogether without reason have I heard this movement irreverently described as "cat's music" on account of the grating and scratching produced by the quills, but ineffective writing for the 'cello in a totally unsuitable register. Read this work on paper, however, and gradually it will be enjoyable. But, after all, as music is intended for performance and not for mere perusal, we must regard Brahms as being lacking in a very essential part of technique, or in a quality which is highly valuable to the composer. It is true, I have picked out the worst example to be found among his many works; nevertheless, there is no denying that even when writing solely for the piano, Brahms indulged in thick bass-choords which sound far from esthetic. I have also heard it said by string-players engaged in rendering his quartets, quintets, etc., that it is only with the greatest difficulty they can make these works "come off." And I think the secret of his deficiency lay in the fact that his imagination was of that order which rendered him inadequately able to picture reality—he thought in music but not in pure sounds. It is, in fact, curious that one or two Germans have manifested this same deficiency, whereas to my knowledge none has a Frenchman. Bort was an exquisite instrumentalist, or, shall I say, sound-colourist; the works of Antonin Thomas and Georges invariably "come off," such as they are; and Berlioz and Clair French, whether strictly French or not, may be added to the list, while the colour-talents of Chausson and Debussy are too well known for mention. The Russians and the immortal Poles, Chopin, had this same capacity, for even though the latter confined himself almost exclusively to piano writing, he used that instrument in the most well-sounding manner imaginable, and one previously unknown. To this list we may add Dvůřák and Smetana, who also undoubtedly possessed a tone-colour sense in varying degrees.

We have now mentioned a fair number of deceased celebrities who have been drawn to the chamber-music form, but the list were not entirely complete without Felix Mendelssohn, for I, as probably many others, had almost forgotten his several works of this order. Still, in the days of my youth they were occasionally performed at the Frankfurt Conservatoire concerts; these terrifying ordeals usually termed "Change-Abende," which means Exercise Evenings, Practice-Evenings, or however one would most euphemistically translate it. Yes, terrifying ordeals, I repeat, for was unto the student who really *did* practice on such an evening, and breaking down had to start again. Never has the "complete and turned out goods" in the shape of the fully equipped musician suffered from such nervousness, I warrant, as he or she did at those old Practice-Evenings. And what an audience for us as yet unripe choristers to have to play before, comprising such celebrities as Maxilian Schumann, Hugo Becker, Hugo Hermann, Professor Stackhausen, and on one occasion even Anton Rubinstein.

But I have wandered again far afield, and now, after all this preamble to a few remarks on Mendelssohn as a chamber-music writer, there is very little to be said. I remember, however, that our professors, when they wished to favour me with a special confidence on the subject, used to allude to his marvellous, especially certain writing of piano-passages of an arpeggio type, from which he was unable to *lose himself*. Nevertheless, the Mendelssohn chamber-works were not deficient in *musical* propensities, although, in these works, he never seems to have invoked a novel effect, as he did in orchestral writing (though with the dust of years, so to speak, even his orchestral effects do not strike us as such nowadays). As to why one hears so little of Mendelssohn's chamber-music at the present time—well, the secret may be in the splendour of his facility. Mendelssohn was a most facile writer. I have heard it said somewhere that he could get a whole work into his head before he wrote a single note down, and that, while he was actually engaged in writing it down, he could carry on a conversation. I admit, this story sounds a little "steep" and hardly credible, but, as there are Indian pundits or mental gymnasts who can actually think of twenty-eight different things at once, perhaps Mendelssohn had also been a bit of a pundit in a previous incarnation! Be that as it may, at any rate the result of such facility is that nowadays one hears (in my country) save for the "Elijah" and the over-charming and delightful violin-concerto, very little of Mendelssohn, and personally I have not heard a single chamber-music work of his since those old days in the Conservatoire.

## IV

One is apt to imagine that the Russians, including Tchaikovsky, were the first to introduce "effects in chamber-music," but let us beware of this notion, since it may be entirely false. The truth is, as I already hinted, that an "effect" is only perceptible (with few exceptions) in the periods in which it is written. When the dust of years has dimmed its variety, as to speak, it ceases to appeal to the listener as an effect at all, in other words, it has become embedded in the musical content. One hears, for instance, a great deal about the "effects" of the modern and hyper-modern, and when a critically minded person is looking to pick holes in works, as he invariably is (strange, how some people like to perform the office of worms), then he talks of So and so's inescapable fondness for "effects," forgetting that every novel-sounding tone-colour cannot be anything else. It is in fact just this capacity to create new sound-combinations in addition to new matter, which indicates the difference between the very greatest musical composers and the less great: the very great invents in all directions, the less great does not. It is true that a man may have a talent for sound-combinations alone, without the adjunct of true musical inspiration, and I am inclined to think that Beethoven furnishes us with an illustration of this sort, though one feels about his music at times, as if he had deliberately set about to think out new effects, irrespective of whether they were beautiful or not. Thus he gives us the impression of being too much of an experimentalist. However, let us be grateful to him. We owe him much; we indirectly owe to him some of the Wagnerian sublimities. And evidently Wagner in his day must have sounded full of effects, though nobody talks of his effect-productive nowadays, for the reason already pointed out.

In a word then, we must go vastly when we attain to the tone-colour of the modern and comparatively modern in contradistinction to that of the ancients. How can we be certain that the Mozart and Haydn quartets did not appeal to their listeners as equally novel in actual tone-colour as in musical content? Nay, who indeed shall say, since we can now only regard them with ears incapable of accurate retrospect?—"perverted ears," the old fable would say, though as to that there are slight differences of opinion. We may safely state this much, however, that whereas each musical epoch has had its special characteristics—polyphony, melody, structure and so on—the characteristic of the present age is tone-colour, what has been termed by Frenchmen the *couleur de sonoritè*. Perhaps we may also say that as far as chamber-music goes, the Russians were



the best to embark on this coloristic adventure. Is there not a whole scheme written in harmonics, by Beethoven? And as to the Trios by Aronky and Tchaikovsky, are they not richer in sound than anything invented before them? I think the answer is certainly in the affirmative. These indeed were epoch-making trios, after which came an interval, until the second was again looked on (to use a sporting term & in Percy Grainger's) by that lightly inventive Frenchman, Maurice Ravel.

With the mention of this remarkable man, we come to the chamber-music of the present day. Firstly, I do not hesitate to say that the Ravel Trio is a most astonishingly novel work of art in more directions than one—say, in all directions. No more does he subscribe to the old trio idea, but presents us respectively with a sans-serif prelude, a postlude, a passacaglia and then a finale. Thus, to begin with, the form is novel, in addition, the harmony and polyphony are novel, while most novel of all is the sound-colouring; with the result that this work is very difficult. I recently heard an admirable performance of it in London by Miss May and Beatrice Harrison and Mr. Hamilton Harty. That Ravel must have a very intimate knowledge of stringed instruments is obvious, for it would almost seem as if he had drained them of all their possibilities.

If Ravel has proved himself a master of effects in this Trio, his string-quartet is equally rich in novel colour. It goes even Debussy one better in this direction. Indeed, I unhesitatingly say that the Ravel quartet sounds more remarkable than any hitherto penned, with the Debussy quartet not far behind in the running. And yet both these Frenchmen showed themselves latterly not content with the usual chamber-music combinations, and before his death, Debussy had conceived a scheme to write chamber-works of an entirely new nature. We have also Ravel's *Septet* for strings, wind, and harp, a most effective work.

Thus, finally, we come to what may be the future of chamber-music, and its latent possibilities for diverse kinds of combinations. How charming, for instance, would a piece for flute, viola and harp be, or oboe, viola and harp. The harp, in fact, is not used enough in chamber-music, partly because of its incapacity for quick modulation, and, though this has now been overcome by the introduction of the chromatic harp, partly because a certain conservatism prevents people from using the chromatic harp, their excuse being that its tone is not so rich as that of the diatonic harp. Still, a very sensitive tone is not so necessary for chamber purposes, and I, for one, shall gladly see the day when other composers besides Debussy employ

the valuable new instrument. The clarinet is another instrument far too little used in chamber-music, even though Brahms tried to set the fashion. Our present-day music is highly suited to its employment, especially if harp be used instead of piano. Nor must we forget the horn, which likewise Brahms employed without finding many followers, in spite of all the great possibilities that offer themselves.

I am aware, of course, that there are certain practical reasons why it will be difficult to "popularize" unusual combinations, although there be quartet-parties who make a habit of practicing together year in and year out, as soon as a great variety of instruments are required, difficulties immediately arise of a purely practical kind. An oboist or harpist considers himself an unorthodox player, and at any rate in this country (England) is seldom available for any other purpose. Thus, when a chamber-work of an unorthodox order is produced, it is inevitably inadequately rehearsed. Therefore, what we shall require in the future, are wind players who make a point of being chamber-music performers before everything else; we need, in fact, more players after the type of Louis Fleury (Paris), who never plays in orchestras at all. And I believe it must come in that eventually with the drift that chamber-music is taking in the hands of the moderns. For instance, I am glad to see that in America there is the New York Chamber Music Society embodying a number of wind instruments, though, so far as I know, no harp is added. I hope that there will be more such societies as time goes on to fulfill one of the demands of the coming age, for, although I do not contend that the string-quartet is "played out," and likely to be laid aside in the future, from a purely pianistic point of view it is by no means the most perfect combination. Looking at it with the most critical scrutiny, the volume of sound produced by the "cello is "out of proportion" to that produced by the violin, with the result that unless very carefully manipulated it inevitably comes too much to the fore. I have also noticed that when string-quartet players become very enthusiastic and passionate and "lay in for all they are worth," the result is apt to consist to be unadorned music, and becomes more than tainted with an admixture of their noise. There is likely to be a scratching and a grunting of vehemently confused strings which is anything but pleasant to the ear, and hence exceedingly disconcerting to all, except to the players themselves, who seem to be thoroughly enjoying the effects of their exertions. I am also constrained to add, that on these occasions the tonality becomes very dubious, which does not add to the beauty of the general effect. Some may regard what I have said as hypercriticism, especially

string-players themselves, but my honesty compels me to say it nevertheless.

As to using the voice in, or with, chamber-music, we have some excellent examples from the pen of Dr. Vaughan Williams, string-quartet and voice being, indeed, a charming combination. Also, such a device as voice and flute alone, has most potential possibilities, if the music written be consistent, that is to say, sufficiently atmospheric. In fine, we are confronted with a whole new field of effects wholly or only very partially explored as yet, and well may we cry: "Composers, be daring, go in and win, explore the new regions, manifest the divine discontent which, though revering the old, ever seeks the new!"

## ERNEST BLOCH

By GUIDO M. GATTI

*Le temps de la douceur et du dilettantisme est passé. Maintenant il faut des barbares—Ch. Louis Philippe.*

FROM far-away America there reaches us the voice of a musician who is virtually unknown to the public of the old continent; it is a hale and hardy voice, prominent amid the multitude that swell the contemporary musical chorus—the voice of a man who cannot be classified as belonging to any given school or any given tendency; who stands by himself in splendid isolation; whom we feel to be a-quiver with our own agitation, and who at the same time is not a product of modern environment; who is both traditional and venturesome, primitive and modern. In a word, he is some one with something to say.

This man, who engages the attention of everybody in the transatlantic world, is a European, he was born in the heart of Europe and lived there until some four years past, ignored by the great majority, admired by a few artists and a few students. His musical output, abundant and estimable remained unpublished until yesterday, when a courageous and high-souled North American publisher brought it to public attention, and also assumed the initiative for its general introduction.

Ernest Bloch, a French Swiss, an exile from his country, is about to return to us after a long absence; but none of his pages has lost sight of its inspiration during the time of expectancy. Whether to-day, or yesterday, or to-morrow, the act of Bloch lays hold on our feelings and incessantly claims our attention; rather a product of fashion nor linked to the destinies of any faction, representing as it does a man and a race, it has not suffered in consequence of changes of taste. When listening to Bloch's music one seems to hear old voices from eternity, from something within us that is revived only with the creation of a favorable atmosphere of exaltation and severity. Trains of majestic colonnades with statues gigantic and severe, of marble trophies overlaid with fire gliding and tapestries, of fabulous processions worthy of the Queen of Sheba, of all the biblical splendours, records

<sup>1</sup>By courtesy of the author reproduced from *Le Suisse Romand*, April-May, 1928.



Ernest Rusk

of sacred tones and of vanished wisdom, heartache for fainter past; a night contemplation of slavish creatures repellent as the sea and distasteful as the Spkyran; echoes of sacred dances, slow and voluptuous, within precincts saturated with the fumes of incense, of myrrh and cinnamon; fleeting moments that leave, none the less, a deep trace and make themselves felt again, after the sound has died away, with tenacious obsession.

Of course, not all of Bloch's compositions with which we are acquainted are significant and valuable in the same degree; on the contrary, we can affirm without reserve that the works by which he ought to be known begin with the three Hebrew Poems, written in 1913—if we make an exception of *Maeshok*, certainly more interesting as a specimen of the mass-drama than for maturity of intrinsically musical expression (All of which was noted with particularity by Finetti in the first—and until now unique—study dedicated by Italian critics to the Genoese musician. But we shall return to *Maeshok*.) It might be affirmed, besides, that as Bloch's experience of life went on gathering new stores of powerful impressions, his musical expressiveness gathered substance and grew more and more robust, and asserted his rough and impetuous personality against every external influence. The years of more onerous physical toil, from 1906 to 1913, were practically void of creative effort, it was as though all impressions received from the exterior world were continuously accumulating and condensing in the artist's mind. Years of harrowing crises, soul-searching and clearing, in whose course there were doubtless many attempts at self-expression, though not one gave full vent to the tempest agitating the musician's spiritual life. There are certain characteristics of his maturity which are traceable in the earlier works as well, but these are scattered and incomplete, not integrated to constitute that positive esthetic figure which is manifested in full in the works of the Hebrew Cycle. Who cannot readily recognize, in *Schelomo*, melodic traits in common with the calculating scores of the Shakespearean drama? Who would not identify, in the instrumentation of the *Passion* or of *Schelomo*, the author of the instrumentation in the poem *After and Primitivo*, and in the first symphony? At present, surveying the road along which Bloch's compositions stand to mark the several stations in the development of his esthetic, there is revealed to us the process (if we may so express it) by which this latter, while divesting itself little by little of the traces of foreign influences, came to the highest potency and possibly appreciated the individual and

genial notes. After successive classifications, growing more and more refractory to extraneous elements, the personality of Bloch—constricted, as it were, with regard to the many-faceted manifestation of emotion and impression—has formed itself compact and unmistakable, homogeneous and substantial. In the works of the Hebrew Cycle there is naught else than Bloch; in passing judgment one may admire or not, but one is constrained to recognize that these pages were nothing to anybody. Like their author, they present a unified and pre-convulsive type.

The symphony in C sharp minor is the earliest work of Bloch's with which we are familiar (it was preceded by a symphonic poem, *Five-Seven*, and a forgotten *Sinfonia orientale*); he wrote it at Munich between his twenty-first and twenty-second birthdays. Two movements of it were performed in the year following its composition at Basel, and later the entire work was brought out at Geneva by Starobogatov. But the first real performance was that which took place in 1912, conducted by the author. Renaud Roland, who was present, wrote to Bloch:

Your symphony is one of the most important creations of the modern school. I do not know any other work in which is revealed a more exalted, a more vigorous, a more impassioned temperament. It is marvellous to think that one has to do with a first work. Had I known you at that time, I should have said: Pay no attention to the faultfinding and the praises and the opinions of others. You are your own master. Do not let yourself be turned aside or thrown off the track by anything. Go on expressing yourself in the same way, freely and fully. I guarantee that you will become one of the masters of our time.

And, knowing neither the Pauline nor Soléfano, he was a true prophet, even though his cordial enthusiasm suggested the language of a friend rather than of a critic. This symphony of Bloch's really shows the qualities and defects of the youthful works—among these latter in particular a tendency to discursiveness, besides echoes of other personalities. "At that time (Bloch told us) I was neither completely myself nor completely independent"; and this may be accused in an artist hardly over twenty years of age. Thus the beauty of the work resides rather in the moving power of the formal construction, and in the ardent force of conviction that guides the composer to an unerring truthfulness of expression, than in the originality and lucidity of the musical ideas.

According to the author's intention, the symphony aims to delineate his life as a youth, with its struggles and hopes. Its

joys and disappointments. The first movement, beginning *Andante*, yet agitato, represents the tragedy of life—doubts, hopes, joys; the second, *Allegretto* and *Andante*; the third, *Andante*, and of a dolorous reflection, portrays the ironies and sarcasms of mankind; the last interprets the triumph of the will and final serenity of mind.

Analogy of sentiment led the musician involuntarily to appropriate here and there celebrated passages of kindred inspiration, as when the orchestra is at times attracted by the fascination of Strauss's instrumentation. But even then the sympathy was far more than a promise; the first movement, more particularly, is worthy of a place beside the most dramatic pages of Brahms, Mahler, and Bruckner.

The conception of *Macbeth* antedates the first representation of *Fedra* at Milanese, and the work was finished the following year. These chronological details are not given to furnish a possible question with regard to derivation—anyone who has heard or read the *Macbeth* of Bloch knows what a disparity of conception renders the two works—but to establish the almost contemporaneous appearance of two music-dramatic compositions which I do not hesitate to coordinate, together with *Fedra* by Puccini, as assertions of a will to innovation in the contemporary music-drama. I hasten to explain my idea. *Fedra* is, for me, a perfect work in every respect—in its total conception as a drama or as a musical realization of character, of sentiments, and of scenes. Debussy labored for ten years on this masterpiece, and attained maturity of expression after a long series of experiments. Consequently, neither *Macbeth* nor *Fedra* is a perfect work. Debussy finished his composition at forty; Bloch wrote the Shakespearean drama at the age of twenty-three, and Puccini began the creation of his work at twenty-nine and ended it three years later. Neither the one nor the other was then capable of giving us what they gave us in the sequel, especially in those latest years and in other fields; and what they assuredly will still give us to-morrow, the former with *Jacobi*, the latter with *Belshazzar*.

*Macbeth* ought, therefore, in our opinion, to be considered as a not wholly successful attempt in the field of musical drama, but nevertheless one which will always hold our interest and win a frequent hearing through the perfection of its dramatic expression. The work has compelled our consideration since our reading of it some years ago. Accustomed as we were to all the conventional melodramatizations of the end of the nineteenth century, assuaged by the everlasting repetition of the forms and formulas



from which were constructed, after the fashion of a mechanical toy, the musical works of the ultimate Verdians, of the Stravinskis and the Puccini-Massenet following, irritated by the indolence of the younger generation, who were incapable of facing—and still more so of solving—the dramatic-musical problems, while making instead a great show of chasing after success with an exploitation of every artistic and inartistic means,—then, after reading through Bloch's *Maestro*, one felt oneself in the presence of something new and beautiful. And one had a feeling of keen delight, as one finally meeting a beloved and cherished friend after long and wearisome wandering among unprofitable and unsympathetic folk. In *Maestro* we have, first and foremost, a musical drama; all is subordinated to that: we do not find—with one or two exceptions—musical episodes, that is to say, fragments, *hors-d'œuvre* which have a life of their own and, in consequence, possess a considerable value when detached from the scene or the act; there are no compositional self-indulgences to cause stagnation or deviation, and to distract attention from the development of the plot. Bloch follows the dramatic design with his every musical faculty; he is in the center of the action and molds the characters, and moves them, and endows them with sentient life, bearing in mind at every moment the necessities of the drama, leading up to its climax and dénouement with ever-increasing intensity.

The musical speech of *Maestro* is of a fascinating simplicity. If we make exception of the two grand choral scenes which close, respectively, the first and last acts,—and in which Bloch discovers in full his wonderful skill as a contrapuntist and constructor—there is not a page which has not an appearance of leaness, beneath which, however, there lies an unsuspected emotional potency. A rhythmic figure which repeats itself measure after measure like an inexorable fate; a harsh chord that gathers and spreads abroad like a portentousness; and, above them, a grave, sustained melodic declamation which seems absolutely void of acoustic quality, yet is incisive and expressive, and truly sympathetic to the word. Through these means Bloch creates atmospheric poignant with meaning, comparable to those inventing the drama of the two lovers in Debussy's opera, but with this difference (which, for the moment, is of chief importance): that within this atmosphere the personages lead a radically human life, and comport themselves under the influence of passion in a manner for which we find a parallel in certain conjunctures of our own lives, giving themselves as a plastic relief which

unless their powerfully expressive of their soul-life. Whereas, with Debussy, the figures sometimes fade away, dissolving in the atmosphere and appearing, so to speak, like vague phantoms created by the very movement and color thereof, in Bloch's opera the dramatic process—and here I mean more particularly that terrible pair, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth—stand out from their environment and dominate it, themselves at times even creating the atmosphere. Their volcanic spontaneity of intuition stamps them indelibly on the musical material; their bodies cast obscure and gigantic shadows; their voices have a vast resonance like the words of a man whom the drama has transported at a bound into the very heart of creation, and who, though still a mortal, thinks and speaks with the soul of a hero. Should I desire to point out the next of kin—in music—to Macbeth and his tragic spouse, I should have to seek them in the barbarous and nihilistic-dramatic drama of Modest Mussorgsky, in that primitive figure and—by reason of the complexity of his pathos—obscure personality, Boris Godunov. Certain scenes in *Macbeth*—for example, that culminating one of Duncan's murder, of which, though it passes off-stage, we see the living reflection in the face and the words of Lady Macbeth, with its terrible silence and the fearsome whisperings of the night, and the dust that follows apocalyptically, by fits and starts, with spectral hallucinations ("Macbeth has murdered sleep")—find their counterparts in certain scenes of the Russian drama, such as those of the convent and of the Tsar's death. This juxtaposition of Bloch and Mussorgsky assumes a noteworthy interest and importance, and we should dwell on it, were we not urged by impatience to enter upon the mature period of Bloch's work. Finetti, however, did devote an *Macbeth* in his essay, which—like everything he writes—is acute, but, for obvious reasons, he did not tell us of the affinities that subsist between his drama and that of Bloch. Now, these affinities are numerous and of diverse character, they concern the man in his rounded-out conception of art, in his music-making, and, in the specific case, in his intuitive grasp of the music-drama. A comparative study of the works of these two musicians, alike and unlike, yet born in the same year, though at an interval of a few days, would not be void of interest and would assume a character far more profound than that of a pure coincidence; but we must press on without further delay, though not without mentioning, in this connection, among the "Mussorgsky" numbers the *Torture Scene* and the *Death of Feira*—pages which will be admired for many a long year.

For as the most prominent defect in Bloch's score is its comparative monotony in rhythm and harmony. The musician sometimes takes overmuch pleasure in the monotony of certain agonic figures and certain altered harmonies; to be sure, his resolution almost invariably arises on the one or the other as an adequate expression of the momentary dramatic situation; but then he dwells and tattles on it far too long a time; and it happens that the situation is left behind, while the symphonic commentary which it evoked still lingers. Syncopated figures, and duplo times in triplet-rhythm, abound; the well-nigh continuous alternation of these two movements, while it may share in leading to the dramatic action that shade of gloom and depression which it is keeping with it, finally grows tiresome and develops a sense of impossibility in scenes where the music ought to express progress. Moreover, the severity of vivid contrasts contributes to the leveling of the successive dramatic episodes; one is conscious of the absence of those violent shocks that occur so frequently in the later compositions—of those fantastic divergences which threaten at every step to capsize *Sokolovs*, for example, while agitating the hearer with a swift and poignant emotion, or raising him to a sudden to the loftiest heights of lyricism. But whatever is lacking in *Macbeth*, although it may affect its musical value, is no wise diminished in importance in the history of the musical drama, wherein Bloch's opera should be recorded among the two or three—the new—most significant specimens of their kind in the twentieth century.

The *Polmes d'Antanas* for voice are of decidedly minor importance; the individuality of Bloch, though sometimes emerging with its distinguishing features, especially in the vocal line, often strays into reminiscences of French lyric, and discovers a mundane physiognomy bearing no resemblance to the musician's own. On the other hand, in the symphonic pieces *Miser* and *Prinseppe*, which are played in direct succession for the sake of contrast, we find the finest characteristics of Bloch, the water for orchestra—his calculated economy of resources power, the mellowness in the blending of textures, the processes to make of each instrument a living personality, and the clean-cut contours of the phrases confined to the solo instruments. Bloch's melody is never undulating, sinuous, pliant of outline (this man never incarnates himself into your soul by dint of flattery, but—if he can—overmasters it with violence); it is a melody which, even when sweet, melancholy and dolorous, is never tender. Even when (as in the symphonic piece *Miser*) the principal theme

of the English horn tends to create an atmosphere of Hebrew desolation, to depict a gloomy and mournful landscape. Bloch's sadness of heart is that of his race, recalling and invoking their native land in the Babylonian captivity. It is a fervent longing, a striving which, however impatient, is resolute, an energetic and centrifugal concentration of spirit. It is not, therefore, the vagueness of a confused dream, or the capricious aspiration for the remote, for the fantastic and unreal. Bloch's instrumental themes—the more so because of their strongly vocal type—give us the impression of pouring from the heart of a priest or prophet, in whose voice the people hearken to the eternal verities and recognize the true end of life.

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The *Hebrew Pages* ("Trois pages hébraïques") constitute, as the author himself has stated, the initial opus of a new period, which consequently begins in 1915. This new period, now still running its course, includes the works of the Hebrew Cycle down to the *Jacob* symphony and the opera *Jacob* (in preparation), together with the string-quartet, though this seemingly does not belong to it.

This great cycle claims the appellation "Hebrew," not because Bloch employs Hebraico-Oriental themes and modes in the works of which it is constituted, but for a much profounder reason, which he himself commented to us:

I do not propose or desire to attempt a reconstruction of the music of the Jews, and to base my work on melodies more or less authentic. I am no archaeologist. I believe that the most important thing is to write good and sincere music—my own music. It is rather the Hebrew spirit that interests me—the example, potent, agitated soul that vibrates for me in the Bible, the vigor and impetuosity of the Patriarchs, the sadness that finds expression in the books of the Prophets, the burning love of justice, the desperation of the peasants of Jerusalem, the sorrow and grandeur of the book of Job, the sensuality of the Song of Songs. All this is in me, all this is in me, and in the better part of me. This it is which I seek to feel within me and to translate in my music—the sacred re-creation that lies dormant in our souls.

And when "Jews" are spoken of, I would add "ancient." Bloch seems descended, not from the tribes of Israel dispersed throughout the world, despised and neglected, who are already perfecting their terrible weapons, patience, persistency and astuteness, but from the free sons of Judah, Asiatic shepherds, wandering from pasture to pasture, to-day masters and to-morrow slaves,

joyous voluptuaries of life and aduers of a water-pod, the enemy and destroyer of all moral precepts. Nowadays, such a race is inconceivable; it exists only as a splendid tradition. Of this tradition, which he has felt reawakening within himself with the fervency of a live and urgent necessity, Bloch has fashioned the basis of his cycle, and for this reason he ought to be considered as the first, and perhaps the sole, Jewish musician that the history of music affords us. (Per contra, there exist many musicians of *Jews* more or less influenced by certain melo-dico-rhythmic traits of Hebrew origin, from Mendelssohn to Meyerbeer, from Rubinstein to Carl Goldmark, from Ferdinand Hiller to Mahler, the last-named possibly the most characteristic from this point of view. But none of these reveals as pregnant a racial personality as that of Bloch; in the artistic line they all appear like descendants of Mendelssohn, or rather *déjà* of Debussyan ancestry.)

But now, having established this characteristic of the esthetic figure which is Bloch, further insistence on it would be ill-advised. For this would lead to establish at the same time, to a certain degree, a limitation, a constraint, that the works of Bloch do not show, in their broader expression these works stir the heart by typically human characteristics, by a universality of pathos, which do not readily lend themselves to classification. For the rest, we cannot contend that Bloch will still continue to reveal so conspicuously certain racial traits; from a man of forty, in the full vigor of his creative powers, there may be expected any day a work exhibiting some predominant feature of a different sort; of this, we may add, some symptoms are already discernible in the *Suite* for viola, one of his most recent compositions.

*Dance—Rite—Cortège funèbre*—these are the titles of the three Hebrew Poems for orchestra. In the first there is a great display of colors, from the most vivid to the dulcist, seen through a series of reflexes and apalescent veils; the employment of Oriental modes and of certain muffled sonorities lends now and again a sense of sensual languor which well expresses the mystico-voluptuous character of the Hebrew dance, while penetrating a dim, mysterious background thereof. The *Rite* is of a more emotional character, notwithstanding the presence of "something solemn and remote, as in ritual ceremonies." In it Bloch incorporated scenes of sacerdotal poverty, wherein, as against a measure of golden ornaments and richly decorated hangings, the sacred words of the Celebant slowly issued. For in the *Rite* we already find that broad phrasing, full of majesty and meaning, which later forms one of the finest peculiarities of *Schölerer*,

In these two preceding compositions, of an essentially decorative character, is rejoined the dolorous finale of the *Funeral Procession*, wherein there is only sorrow, an infinite sense of demystical grief. Written on the death of his father, it might bear as epigraph the biblical sentence, "If there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow." Here we find another of Bloch's characteristics—the already noted insistence of a rhythmic figure, as if it were intended to arouse an impression of the fatality which looms up and runs its course without heed to the aspirations of mankind. The third Hebrew Poem forms one *crescendo* from the beginning to the moment of eternal separation, when sorrow finds expression in the most despairing and incoherent outcries; yet there enters one ray of light to penetrate the gloom in tender melody, sorrow and chants) and pour the balm of resignation. The earthly part dies, but the spirits of our dear ones remain with us; the more we loved them, the nearer will they be, in silent communion with our hearts; the greater our despair at their death, the deeper the consolation they give us for all the tears we shed. This sublime Israel-evangelical admonishment is set forth on the final pages of the *Cordoba Cantata* with all the warmth of firm conviction.

The musician drew his inspiration directly from the verses of the Bible for the three next-following works—three *Psalms* for one voice with orchestra. Edmond Hug, the composer's excellent and faithful collaborator, adapted (with certain textual liberties) three masterpieces of Jewish poetry, *Psalm cxxxv*, *cxxxvii* and *xxxii*. In them all there reverberates the hoarse voice of the people of Israel, and towers the majesty of the race; the musician re-creates the sensations of vehement expansion and energetic speech which we have already noted as peculiarly his own. Bloch's imagination reveals in many-colored, animated frescos, in brilliant landscapes teeming with impassioned life. When he composes for the piano-forte—and this came to pass, originally, only in the *Poèmes d'Isidore* and in the *Suite* for viola, which he straightway hastened to clothe in a symphonic vesture—one feels the orchestra; the piano-forte, that most perfect medium for the creation of an atmosphere of intimacy and delicate coloring, does not suffice him for portraying the vast complex of his visions. Consider for a moment the picture represented by *Psalm cxxxvii*. The Jewish people, captive in Babylon, is dispersed along the banks of the river; hanging their harps on the branches, they weep for Jerusalem. And the people of the oppressor require of them songs of mirth. "How shall we

sing the Lord's song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy!" And again, the immense assemblage rise suddenly to their feet, with arms upraised in frenzied agitation imploring and conjuring their God: "Remember, O Lord, the children of Sion in the day of Jerusalem, who said, Silence it, cease it, even to the foundation thereof. O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed, happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones!"—This scene, of which only the biblical verses can bring home to us a vivid conception in its crude realism, and which Mendelssohn alone might have depicted with his terrible artistry, Bloch's music succeeds in expressing in admirable relief. Fashioned, as it is, of violent contrasts, of well-nigh brutal alternations of sonarity, stful and exclamatory, it attains a vivid immediacy of dramatic emotion. Its asymmetries, its capriciousness, its barbaric simplicities, even its rhythmic monotony and its insufficient variety of harmonic combinations, all aid it in matching the power of the biblical narrative.

And there is still another point on which we should dwell. Bloch's more recent music is not interesting mainly, in that acceptance of the term which is general among us students of modern music, one does not enter its harmonic subtleties or instrumental refinements on reading it from the printed page, on hearing it, one is moved by its impetus. Bloch's technique are extremely modern, he quite calmly allows himself certain liberties which neither Schönberg nor Stravinsky nor Casella ever dream of taking. Yet his compositions cannot be called ultra-modern, perhaps because the extraneous elements in his mode of expression are in themselves not important, but are founded on those which I will term traditional, using the word without any shade of depreciation. Certain tonal shocks, certain bizarre shifts of tonality, do not surprise us, for they seem quite natural and logical in music like that of Bloch, barbaric and refractory. All in all, the exceptionalities of his speech—either with regard to the harmony or to the rhythmic design—does not strike us as peculiar (we do not say *displeasing*) by an excess of refinement and intellectualism, as in many a page by contemporaries, but, as it were, by a primordial instinct impatient of bounds and conventions. The cause of many modern norms is us beyond the school; that of Bloch, before it. The former has no memory of its past and attempts the construction of a future; the latter has no past, but is radiant with the youth of uncalculated

and happy peoples without a history. Of these it possesses all the defects and all the qualities; even the defects are engaging, for they are ingenious and calculated to set the good qualities in a stronger light. The level monotony of the background, at times exasperating, makes the fiery transposition of certain melodic exclamations stand out in marvellous relief, emblazoned through like arabesques of lightning against slightly skies.

Bloch has reached the perfection of his music with the *Sheheer* rhapsody for solo violinello with orchestra, which bears the name of the great king Solomon (Salomon). In this, without taking thought for development and formal consistency, without the fetters of a text requiring interpretation, he has given free course to his fancy; the multiplex figure of the founder of the Great Temple lost itself, after setting it upon a lofty throne and abdicating its functions, to the creation of a phantasmagorical outburst of persons and scenes in rapid and kaleidoscopic succession. The violinello, with its ample breadth of phrasing, now melodic and with moments of superb lyricism, now declamatory and with robustly dramatic lights and shades, lends itself to a re-embodiment of Solomon in all his glory, surrounded by his thousand wives and concubines, with his multitudes of slaves and warriors behind him. His voice resounds in the devotional silence, and the sentences of his wisdom sink into the hearts as the seed into a fertile soil. "Vanity of vanities, with the Pleasures, all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun? One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever. . . . He that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow."—The orchestra palpitates in all the colors of the rainbow; from the vigorous and transparent orchestration these emerge waves of sound that seem to soar upward in stupendous vortices and fall back in a shower of innumerable iridescent drops. At times the sonorous voice of the violinello is heard predominant amid a breathless and fatal clamorously throbbing with persistent rhythm; again, it blends in a phantasmagorical paroxysm of polychromatic tones that through with silvery clangors and frenzies of exultation. And when one finds oneself in the heart of a dream-world, in an Orient of fancy, where men and women of every race and tongue are holding argument or leading insubductions, and now and again we hear the mournful accents of the prophetic orac, under the influence of which all bow down and hither reverently. This vivid coloration is lost in the passage from the orchestra to the piano-forte, in the pianistic transcription the design, the sketches,



one might say, of this immense panorama remains; yet the central figure still retains features of the highest interest. The violoncello-part is of an remarkably convincing and emotional power that it may be set down as a veritable masterpiece, not one passage, not a single beat, is inexpressive; the entire discourse of the soloist, vocal rather than instrumental, seems like muted expression intimately combined with the Talmudic prose. The pauses, the repetitions of entire passages, the leaps of a double octave, the chromatic progressions, all find their analogues in the Book of Genesis—in the verities, in the fairly epigraphic collocation of the adjectives ("and all is vanity and vexation of spirit"), in the unexpected shifts from one thought to another, in certain excesses of emotion that end in explosions of anger or grief uncontrolled.

The statement of characteristics which has just been made, and which results from an examination of the greater part of Bloch's works—namely, that this is never "absolute music," that it does not present itself as a simple outpouring of sonority, but always claims to have a precise meaning, to interpret the rhythms of spoken language or of the emotions—appears to be contradicted by the advent of a recent quartet, which is indeed one of the finest things the Genevese musician has written. Yet such is not the case; even in this form, the parent of all, we discover unmistakable traces of Bloch's aesthetic (akin to that of Messiaen in this respect, as well), magnificently attracted toward the dramatized word and toward that instrumental declamation that we noticed in *Soleluna*. Even in this quartet we do not experience the physical pleasure afforded by the harmonic cohesiveness and interpenetration of the parts, or by the brilliant fusion of the timbres of the several instruments, but we have the sensation of hearing voices that appeal to us by diverse characteristics, but are always essentially dramatic and expressive of emotions. Even in the quartet we are again haunted by this constant conception of a drama, for the musician never takes delight in constructing for the pleasure of hearing the four instruments sound well. Bloch carried over into the quartet those same objectives and those same expressions which he employed in the *Prélude* and in the *musical drama*; he did not bend to the requirements and conventions of the form, but sought to mould it to his will. In this he was not irretrievably successful, his already noted excesses of musical speech being here yet more clearly revealed. (In this there is, of course, no intention whatever to depreciate the technical value of the composition, which is

Handwritten title: *Symphonic, Grand* - No. 11 -

A page of handwritten musical notation for a symphony. The score is written on 18 staves, each with a clef and a key signature of one flat. The notation includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings. The handwriting is in dark ink on aged paper. The staves are numbered 1 through 18 on the left side. The music appears to be a full orchestral score, with different parts likely assigned to various instruments.

Facsimile of two pages from Grand Beethoven's score of his symphony Grand

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very great, and once again demonstrates—as though that were necessary—Bloch's assured mastery of the means of expression.) Concerning the emotional content of the quartet the composer has disclosed his program, which we present below, without, however, attaching special importance to it. The composer of the conception represents (he tells it in his own words), the direct expression of my feelings, of my view of the world, it is a part of my life, a reflex of my joys and of my sufferings. The first movement is a lament of partly Hebrew inspiration, a blending of bitterness, of impassioned sadness, and of anguish; the second describes a vision of human obliquity, the meetings of perverse passions and the heroes of a desperate strife; the third movement, of a pastoral character, represents a reverie amid the sublimities of Nature, sincerely true and convincing; while the finale returns to the visions of strife, and concludes in a resigned position.

The question whether the composition communicates, more or less, the sensations of these four psychological phases, interests us up to a certain point; nowadays it is an admitted fact that in music every one finds what he is capable of feeling or disposed to feel. And some find nothing in it—the fault being sometimes their own, and sometimes that of the author, who put nothing into it—What is beyond all question is, that Bloch's quartet merits a place beside *Sabbath* as constituting one more proof of the musician's great creative power, and as making the ignorance of European audiences with regard to his best work seem the more deplorable to us—that is, their ignorance of that which, as we have seen, had its inception in the *Hebrew Poems*, and whose latest examples (with which we are not acquainted) are the symphony *Israel*, the opera *Israhel*, on which Bloch has been working for some years, and the *Suite* for viola which took the Coolidge prize and was performed, according to the conditions of the competition, at last year's Berkshire Festival with most triumphant success. On the strength of American criticism, furthermore, we stated that this *Suite* marks a new orientation in the composer's art and makes us look forward to his future with ever-increasing confidence.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This work (second *Suite*) was first played, in its original version for viola and piano, by Louis Belli and Harold Bauer at Pittsfield, Mass., on September 27, 1917. Even those who denied the suite could not but admire the marvellously subtle performance. The suite was played for the first time in New York, at Astor Hall, November 1st 22, 1918, by Louis Belli and Harold Bauer who appeared later, Belli for the second New York performance before the Society of the Violins of Mann on January, 1920. The first performance of the suite as its version for viola and orchestra took place with Louis Belli as violist at concerts of the National Symphony Orchestra under Arne Rudovsky at Carnegie Hall, New York, on November 4 and 5, 1920. The very

Blach's music—and never, as in the present case, could it be spoken of as the complex of all his compositions, without making distinctions and classifications—possess the character of the man; it is a music practically lacking in variety and adornment. It seems rough-hewn with a chisel from a rude block of granite. Its lines are not smoothly bent, nor do they stretch out in soft curves, nor do they voluptuously caress the senses by the insinuation of grace. Blach's music grips you and shakes you; it seizes you like a savage and aways you at will. His music makes you suffer; it is the expression of an intense nature that gave ear to it, and it is the most faithful and fearful expression of the impression made on one by hearing or reading Blach's compositions. In *Sérénades*, in the *Proces*, there are no twilight locusts or langurs of tenderness; the music of Blach does not know the meaning of that Verlaineque phrase offered to evoke within us a sort of voluptuous stupor, an artificial paradise wherein the senses grow dull and a soothing atmosphere unfolds us and affirms us into dreaming and the extinction of Nirvana. Blach's music reveals to us the tragic meaning of life; it unfolds before us the eternal panorama of the world, where warring

difficulties were resolved a reading which other notable conductors and artists will find a hard to surpass.

These remarkable performances again sharply divided those who profess to be bored and repelled by what they call Blach's "impurity and general musical ugliness" and those who like him more deeply, aware with his fantastic but logical composition, its un-conventional elements and technicalities of utterance, its pungent implications—and its force. To be sure, not the least, of a "strong atmospheric feeling" which in Richard's first recording seems, perhaps controlling the line and feeling of most of our first recordings, overblown. (The third recording had a better feeling and atmosphere with especially calculated orchestral colors, a quality which only that recording was given.) The music was recorded with the finest in each genre. But the Grand of Gode's "West-Indies Division" led at the first, showed that of Paris and beyond. That account for Blach's work and further enclosed "impurities," operations and "impurities" which apparently as centered many of our recordings who were taking anything "up" in the orchestra of the century, Strauss's otherwise lively symphonies. Each genre, from the symphonies, have retained equal, say now and passing strongly that when there by success. They are related and forthwith rendered the most work as a general work. This, however, too, it could seem, largely constant. It is the way that, most of us who as these years brought and that for the first symphonies, even as later work the age who a good a symphonies, glass, for which—what—say was necessary, revealed how of the changes was an available, calculating substance.

There are other vital signs of Strauss when the Grand of Paris "Symphony of the Red Death," "King Phil" or "The Copper World" shows later quality. His of degree, as shown we will be known of music in a days during work of grand the Blach's work have will release all the symptoms of "up" in their recordings. Besides of but the technical system of the work is preferable to the original system with grace by a matter of time. In certain ways the original system seems more compelling than the technical—and not only, but upon, perhaps to analyze the system the still system. The essential fact remains that in later version Strauss Blach has given us the greatest work for work in musical literature, and what is more important, one of the most significant and powerful works of our time.—Ed

passion clash and on the horizon hovers the dazzling red of a conflagration continually renewed, that fitfully illumines the fatal struggle of humankind.

The Hebrew does not see the happenings amidst which he is living. It seems as though he had lived always, and had already sung in the reign of the son of David. His art appears anachronistic, because it is eternal: its themes may appear emphatic and exaggerated if we measure them by the standard of our social practices, of our conventions, of our mediocre egotisms and pyrrhic hypocrisies.

The times in which we live, those of my generation—that is, of the generation which is about to arrive at its fortieth year—have produced a Debussy and a Bloch, and never has a more striking contrast appeared to one who is familiar with the works of these two musicians. But Debussy is much more representative of his period; if one were to name the musical admirable Creches of the vicissitudes preceding the world-war, he would have to say, without hesitation, Debussy. A vicissitude of bewilderment and expectancy; anxious, painful years; an epoch of crisis of values, and of the weakening (even the negation) of ethical values.

Bloch's period of creation synchronizes almost exactly with the tremendous conflict whereby the world has been convulsed and overturned as by a terrific earthquake; and this signifies that the new epoch is beginning, and that, in matters musical, Bloch is to be its leader? To affirm this seems venturesome; and yet we venture to do so, so many see the signs and follow which present themselves to confirm us in our idea.

Certain it is, that the intensity of the drama whose final scene has not yet been shown, the primordial grandeur of the struggle for the hegemony of the world, the revelation of mankind to elemental passions guided to an orbited of paroxysms, and, finally, the astrophysical domain for every acquired habit of a refined and cultivated consciousness, find echoes and utterance in the most beautiful pages of the Genesis musician. In them we recognize that musical expression which best succeeds in conveying the impressions of the life unfolding all around us, in them we desire the lightnings of the tempest, we hear the fierce voices of men hurled one against the other in furious turmoil;—and we listen to the voice of God, that reaches us through a rift in the clouds and reaches our flesh in life.

To-day it seems to us that Bloch's creative activity has thrown off its shackles; his affirmation of will and of strength

awakens echoes in our inmost souls, shaken by the tempest; his musical speech, that yesterday told of the storm, is to-day an expression of the necessity for our introspective refreshment at the wellspring of all spiritual life, and for the wholesome development of our spiritual nature and of intellects capable of sane and fruitful thinking.

If it be indispensable—as it is—to be immersed body and soul in the life we are living, and at the same time to nourish one's self on the substance of the past, new senses will be needed for interpreting the world, a new language lies from all transcripts for expounding its ultimate meaning. Yes, in very truth: *il n'est pas de la musique!*

#### BIO-BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The life of this musician is not devoid of interest to any one who devotes himself to the study of his works; it will, therefore, be opportune to describe it here at some length.

Ernest Bloch, of Hebrew parentage, was born at Geneva, July 28, 1880; his father was a clock-merchant. None of his family had pursued musical studies or had shown any special aptitude for the art of tones. The boy began by studying the violin in his native town, but at the age of eleven he decided to devote himself entirely to composition. He made a solemn vow to do so; this vow he wrote down on a sheet of paper which he burned in the open air on a heap of stones, as if carrying out a rite of his people. Naturally, he encountered the opposition of his parents, but he nevertheless succeeded in repairing to Brussels (violin with Schuy and Lays, composition with Rasse) and later to Frankfurt, where he entered the school of Ivan Koern. He passed something over a year at Munich under Theile, then two at Paris, and returned to Geneva in 1904.

As usually happens—and it would have been a wonder if, in the case of a musician of Bloch's talent, matters had gone otherwise—no one cared to interest himself in him or his works, orchestra directors and concert managers equivoically "took under advisement" the scores of the unknown writer, who—it should be added—was not of a temperament to seek favor instantly or to resort to indirect means for the accomplishment of his object. Bloch was not excessively perturbed, his tenacious will and a characteristic spirit of intension sustained him then and thereafter, even when destiny was still more cruelly opposed. His father's affairs were rapidly becoming difficult, a dreadful future was impending

over the musician and his family. And all at once Bloch begins to sell cuckoo-shocks; he takes entire charge of the slender paternal interests, learns in brief space the science of commercial accounts, and commercial laws and customs, travels in Germany as salesman and agent for his goods, is daily absorbed in business. Meantime he was working on his *Moskoff*; in November, 1918, the opera was produced at the Opéra-Comique, and Bloch hastened to Paris, remaining there for the time required to assist at the rehearsals and to attend the representation. Chauvignotte criticised it skilfully; it was a public success, but the class of his Parisian colleagues consigned the work to the trash. Bloch philosophically returned to Geneva and resumed his dual rôle of administrator and artist.

During this period (1909-20) he conducted the concerts at Lausanne and Neuchâtel; after two years his post was taken by one of his pupils. Bloch did not want profane; he assisted at the new conductor's rehearsals, and aided him with his advice. In the following year he was chosen professor of composition and esthetics at the Conservatory of Geneva, but in 1915 he was dispossessed of that function. He retired without animosity, and fell back on his work.

His compositions were brought out for the first time in Switzerland, but the name of Bloch did not pass the frontiers, for Europe he is today—no repeat it—virtually unknown.

But Bloch clings, above all, to his freedom. He is a man of fantastic pride; he cannot be tamed by hunger. If Fortune does not come, he will not go in search of her. He submitted himself to the most onerous toil to gain a livelihood for himself and his family; but no one has made him swerve by a hair's breadth from his path. He knows whither he would go—or, rather, he knows what he can do, and does it; to him nothing else matters.

In America, where his genius is celebrated and his works are continually performed, he arrived as a man unknown, at the head of the orchestra accompanying Maude Allen, the dancer, from Ohio he came to New York without a penny, without friends, with nothing whatever, and he sought nothing of any one. His compositions have made their way on their own merits. In America there exists a cult of such fighters of tough fibre, of such muscle-throats whose moral stature is of a sort that towers above the crowd. And when the crowd recognizes them, it prostrate bows down before them and worships them as gods.

Of Bloch's compositions listed below, those with an asterisk have been published or will be published shortly by the New York house of



G. Schizmas, both in full orchestral score and in piano score. *Maestri* class is the property of G. Astor & Co and printed by Knott & Co of Paris.

1895—*Symphony*, symphonic poem.

1896—*Père-Jérôme*, symphonic poem.

1897—*Le Soudan*, symphonic in C sharp minor.

1897—*Maestri*, (five scenes in a prologue and three acts). Book by Edmund Flag (after Shakespeare). First performed in Paris, at the Opéra-Comique, Nov. 28, 1897.

1898—*Three Præfates*, two symphonic poems.

1898—*Polmes d'histoire* (B. Hédou), for voice and piano:

1. *Le Vagabond*

2. *Le Dérivé*

3. *L'Abîme*

4. *Invocation*

1898—*Three Polmes poés*, for orchestra:

1. *Hérou*

2. *Érie*

3. *Contage hédou*

1898-99—*Two Polmes* (adapted from the Hebrew by E. Flag), for soprano and orchestra (or piano):

1. *Polme 114*

2. *Polme 127*

1898—*Solomon* (Solomon), Hebrew rhapsody for violinello and orchestra (or piano).

\**Polme* (adapted from the Hebrew by E. Flag), for baritone and orchestra (or piano).

\**Wing-quartet* in B minor.

1898-99—*Yarnal*, symphonic in F.

1898-9—*Soudan*, (five scenes, book by E. Flag (in preparation).

1898-99—*Suite* for viola and piano (or orchestra). Took the *Credito* prize in 1898.<sup>2</sup>

(Translated by Theodor Baker.)

<sup>2</sup>To this list must be added the *Yale Sonata* of 1895. The composer is also said to be composing a symphonic concerto. Courtesy to the behalf of his distinguished father within the life of Edward Black has not been a bed of roses in America of which country he has become a naturalized citizen. His countrymen seem not to have of late realized the magnitude of the struggle to make a living as teacher and composer. It is to be hoped that the recent appointment of Edward Black as organist and director of the new Cleveland conservatory will not interfere with his creative work as a composer. In saying this I have in mind the experience of noted American scholars who become college presidents and whose administrative positions compelled to abandon creative work.—Ed.

## ARE THE CLASSICS DOOMED?

By D. C. PARKER

**A**RE the classics doomed? If we ask this question it is because there is a current of opinion in some quarters which it would be futile to ignore. The modern spirit of enquiry is abroad and no mere sentimental consideration is permitted to arrest its activities. Bach, Mozart, Beethoven and many others on whose brows History has set the laurel wreath of wisdom and heroism are subjected to a close scrutiny by those with new ears and new eyes. There is nothing alarming in this. Every reasonable person knows that the verdict of competent criticism is more to be desired than the falacious flattery of assumption, and the masters will leave the hands of the most rigorous expert with plenty of virtue to their credit. We can understand the man who says in effect, "I have been told Beethoven is a great composer— I am not content with what I have been told— I am going to put the assertion to proof." But we have to face a kind of impatience or dissatisfaction that is manifesting itself at the present time. What are you going to say to the man who tells you that Bach is a bore, Mozart trivial, Schubert saggy, Beethoven tedious?

What we must do, I think, is to search for the cause of this sense of dissatisfaction. Is it in the man himself? If it be due to an obvious inability to recognize a good thing, there is nothing more to be said. If it be not, we have to trace the feeling of disappointment to its source. This, I believe, is to be attributed in many cases to the effect of modern music on certain temperaments. The music of these times is ubiquitous. Of necessity, criticism is largely concerned with composers whose works provide ample texts and are prolific in critical interest. Stravinsky, Schönberg, Grieger, Strauss, Ravel, Debussy, Casella—the commentator finds a multitude of themes to discuss in connection with their art. Along with this goes, in various centres, frequency of performance. So some people hardly alive to the value and interest of contemporary music are quite naturally influenced by it. What to the rigid conservative is chaos is not chaos to them. What seems daring to the orthodox is to the explorer the merest commonplace. The quickness of thought, the freedom of form, the teasing aside of cliché—with all of these the eager student of modernity is

thoroughly at home. The appearance of the unexpected does not disturb his equanimity, for he expects the unexpected. The details of conventions trouble him not at all, for unconventionality is itself a convention.

We have to imagine one immersed in and much affected by a study of the modern bands listening to Schubert's C major Symphony, or the C minor of Beethoven. He may tell us that Schubert is inferior. The composer takes a long time to tell his story. We can often anticipate what is to come. The variety and attractiveness of up-to-date scoring are not present to speed the work on its way. To get anything out of this situation it is necessary to remember that appreciation is a very subtle thing. To examine the rationale of appreciation would necessitate a lengthy exercise which cannot here be permitted. But it may be assumed that appreciation is of three kinds, intellectual, sensuous, and intellectual and sensuous. Intellectual appreciation fails because music is an emotional art and the ultimate test of any composer is his power of song. If a composer have no wings he cannot by any reckoning be called great. To say this is not by any means to say that intellectual appreciation does not bring thrills of its own. Sensuous appreciation is that of people who are content to allow music to play upon them, to excite or otherwise affect them; they have no curiosity concerning it, no desire to find out how the effect of this or that is obtained. There remains that kind of appreciation which is a delicate blend of mind and soul, the kind of appreciation which neither makes of music a mechanical affair, nor yet regards it as an incantation. The difficulty of teaching this point with advantage is substantially increased by the fact that in appreciation apprehension plays a large and important part. The artistic nature knows that such and such a thing is right, and this knowledge is founded on an instinct and cannot be proved by mathematics.

It is plain, then, that music is largely what we bring into its presence. The "approach" is always a vital matter and if we listen to the classics we must listen without vain preoccupations. It is foolish to expect the tempo of the twentieth century from the nineteenth, the melody of Wagner from Mozart, the mood of the romantics from the contemporaries, the scoring of Liszt or Rimsky-Korsakoff from Haydn. The literary man knows very well that the vocabulary of Chaucer is not that of Henry James, the style of Shakespeare not that of Flaubert. But he does not judge the earlier writers from the standpoint of the later, and one has no right to judge the classics from the standpoint of the moderns.

There is a unanimity in all human effort, as Emerson remarked. Ultimately all good musicians meet on common ground, in that they seek to express that which is in them. It is the methods of expression which differ, and allowance ought surely to be made for this simple fact. One must, consequently, be aware of the temper of the age, the master-thought of the time, the prevailing customs, the means at the disposal of the composer, if one is to do him justice. Without the exercise of the historical sense it is difficult to see how the musician can arrive at any accurate assessment of writers, whether of the past or the present.

Do we compromise when we ask for the exercise of this historical faculty? I do not think so. What does the intelligent person expect from Mozart or Beethoven? Obviously what Mozart or Beethoven has to give. If you are not unreasonable in your demand, you ought to find some grounds for satisfaction. This notwithstanding, the objection may be put forward that in spite of all the talk about environment and the spirit of the time, the music of the classicists is, frankly, dull. One must be sure that, in saying this, one has given it the benefit of approaching it with "a clean slate." There is the larger view which if a man possess he will not allow himself to be robbed of many riches by a conspiracy of circumstances. He will not allow himself to be robbed of the past because he has penetrated the secret of the present. He will not gain Scriabin at the expense of Mozart, Stravinsky at that of Bach. The world is a large place. It has tape for the hubs, instruments for strong hands, a store of memories for the aged. On every side lies untold wealth. Petofi sings the freedom of the plains, Scott the hard of the mountains and the flood. Art, like the world, is a mirror. To the vital and interested personality every hedgerow proclaims its beauty, every man is a history, every city a great stage on which is acted daily an unending drama. But one must trust that the reality of all this beauty and romance and pathos and interminable interest is evident only to those with eyes to gaze upon them. In music we must take the large and open view. We must see the blood-relationship between the past and the present. The secret modernism is that which has a strong sense of association, which makes us conscious of the links in the chain that the centuries have forged, which recognises the growth of ideas, which subscribes to the fact that all artists have their ancestry. It is this modernism which shows us the figures of the past and present rubbing shoulders on the vast tapestry of history. I say this as one intensely interested in the music of the time, as one aware that the present

"modern music" represents much. Eclecticism is an admirable thing, and it is not an enemy of the right kind of catholicity. He pays a big price for his understanding of and delight in modern works who finds the music of the past utterly destitute of interest and charm.

The plea for the exercise of the historical sense is, therefore, a thoroughly justifiable one, the more so because to see the classics as they are is not easy, and to see modern music as it is, decidedly difficult. The measure of a man's dissatisfaction is not the measure of his education unless discrimination be enthroned. It is, surely, an aim of education to give a man a sense of the real richness of art, to develop his power of selection, to help him to derive the greatest possible benefit from all that has been accomplished. One does not need to be told that the good thing and the valuable is not to be found only in our country or in our period. The entire world holds up its gifts with both hands and asks just acceptance in persuasive accents. The question of praise or blame is concerned solely with merits or defects, and these can be dealt with satisfactorily only if we equip ourselves patiently for the task. We may meet our jettled modernist friends to the extent of agreeing that a restatement of our attitude to the classics is imperatively called for. The musical Homer sometimes nods, the musical sun is not without its spots, and the classical master must be neither a superstitious nor one of a group of inflexible beings. We sometimes feel that mechanism shows its triumph over inspiration, and long for the composer to get into his stride again, there are moments when the homage paid to traditional etiquette seems to us altogether excessive. But the recognition of this gives no sanction for wholesale condemnation. Our concern is to hold the balance justly.

It is inevitable that estimates of the music of the past should change from time to time. In its own way and according to its own fashion, every generation sets about the business of giving or withholding marks. New discoveries mean not only an enlargement of music's domain, but an alteration in our attitude towards what is familiar to ear and eye. Monteverdi and Gluck, to cite extreme cases, are not to us what they were to their contemporaries. To-day few people are likely to discover in Gluck and Spontini all that Berlioz found there. The emotional effort is all to the good. It has a twofold effect. It tends to make us conscious of the defects of a man, and of these we ought to be conscious if we are to see him as he is; it tends to make us conscious of the greatness of a man whose powers have not hitherto been fully acknowledged.

A really important matter to recognize is that a distaste for or impatience with the music of the past advertises a distinct limitation of sympathies, that it is, in fact, a defect, and not a proof of superiority. Much could be written against false and excessive adoration of the classics and the vain repetition of the items by which they are most widely known. And who can measure the amount of harm done to the cause of classical music by the impetuous advocates and the objectionable defenders? How often, alas, does the man whose mind is closed, barred and bolted against liberal movements and progressive tendencies pose as the staunch champion of Bach and Mozart and Beethoven in a wicked world running its riotous and unseemly course to the waning and unshamed strains of modernism; how often does he speak as though he and he alone had access to their inner secrets and knew the magic formula which opens the treasure-chest? Nevertheless, as I have hinted, the classics can stand the most searching criticism in that, after all has been said and done, they will yet have something to say to us. Bach, for example, is full of suggestiveness. The vigorous fibre of his music and the vital play incidental to the contrapuntal style make him far more modern than many writers of more recent date, and Mozart, whose sense of economy, balance, and note values has been achieved by many composers, still has an interest for those occupied with the technique of writing.



There are times when we are impressed by the odyssey of the art-work. At its birth it has much antagonism to face and, if it survives the encounter, it passes to the slightly less hostile atmosphere of controversy. This phase is usually succeeded by that of almost general acceptance. Then comes, perhaps, the attitude of disengagement. So what commenced its career in the salon of the rejected may terminate it in the metropolis of art, the museum. Art is long and life is short, and man, an ephemeral animal, sees things in terms of his own duration upon the earth. The hills and sea alone are the silent witnesses of the death of what we call immortality. Are the classics, then, immortal? Will Beethoven be played a hundred years after this date? This latter question we can safely leave to posterity. It is for posterity to set the matter in the right focus according to its light. What we are called upon to decide is whether the classics have any interest for us, whether they touch a responsive note in our humanity, whether they give us visions that leave us less barren.

Let the reader pronounce judgment according to his temperament and disposition. But let him not forget that what has meant so much to so many musical people will not be dealt the death-blow by the cheap disparagement of egotistical superiority. That that of giving the classicists and the modernists their places, few more urgent critical tasks exist. A thing is not great because it was written by one whose name is to be found in impressive volumes; a thing is not small in interest and unworthy of attention because a man named Smith who lives over the way praised it. We must concentrate on the essential and bear in mind that true insight is born of sympathy.

## THE WAGNERIAN CULTURE SYNTHESIS

By WILHELM PETERSON-BERGER

**A** PROMINENT historian and Wagner critic, H. S. Chamberlain, in his great work "The Foundations of the 19th Century," makes a distinction between the *welt* culture and civilization. The former word he applies to spiritual development, the latter to material, a distinction which seems to be new and more generally accepted. At the same time, he includes under the term culture the three spheres of religion, science, and art.

If one accepts this distinction and division, then the evolution of culture must be looked upon, not merely as a parallel movement within each and every one of its three spheres, but rather as a reciprocal action, and above all as cooperative. For it is clearly evident, that not one of these three spheres, isolated from the others, could satisfactorily carry out the idea of culture.

This, then, is the essence of synthetic art. And as, in consequence, all direct cultural development is manifested chiefly in a struggle for completeness and unity, so the climax and rhythm of the movement are marked by more or less comprehensive syntheses.

Without attempting to set forth in detail the general laws by which culture synthesizes come into being, we shall now try to find out by what right one may call the artistic result of Richard Wagner's life-work a culture synthesis.

It is peculiar to the idea and nature of art, that the innermost being of an art work must always be presented in such a way as to act upon the sense of comprehension. This action, as we know, does not need to be direct. It depends upon the inclination, education, susceptibility, disposition, freedom of form or subjection to pre-conceived notions, and other qualities of the person, whether he must look or listen once or many times, before he apprehends the spirit of the work. But when he does apprehend, it is not his intelligence, his knowledge, or his will, but it is his sensibility that is first touched and made to vibrate, and which, at this touch, instinctively comprehends the essence of the work.

Therefore it would be of great value to our investigation, and would give us a suitable starting-point, if we could, in a general

Translated from the author's "Richard Wagner als Kultur-Synthetiker" (Chapter IV: Sein Wagnerische Kultur-synthese).



way, determine the conditions under which a sufficiently interested and educated, but at the same time sufficiently unprepared and fairly unprejudiced listener, receives his first really conscious and intelligent impression of a Wagner drama.

There are many Wagner admirers to be found to bear witness with regard to their experience in this respect, but before appealing to them, I shall cite a case which falls within my own field of observation.

This case dates back to some twenty years or so ago. It concerns a gifted and intelligent man who, born of the peasantry and brought up in a thinly populated district, found opportunity only when of mature age to follow his natural bent and devote himself to study. Of course, he wanted to be a preacher. His tone of mind, as well as the devoted spirit of the educated people with whom he had hitherto come in contact, scarcely recognized any other course of study as honorable. For the theoretical art, of which he knew nothing, he cherished a horror which had been instilled into him, and was possessed with the preconceived notion that its influence was something injurious, if not dangerous, for the spiritual welfare of mankind.

But he was musically inclined, and was attracted to the art of sound. Of worldly music he knew little, but so much the more of liturgical and church music. His knowledge embraced the field of oratorio, and he admired both Bach and Hindel, and Mendelssohn as well.

During his course of study, this man came out into the world somewhat, and coming in contact with other music lovers, he often heard Wagner's name mentioned, and his art discussed in such a way as to arouse his curiosity. Obtaining a closer knowledge of this artist's life and work, he found to his great surprise that there was and had been for a long time a controversy as to the legitimacy and truth of his work in both art and theory. It was something strikingly new to him, and difficult to understand, that art could be a subject of controversy. And his surprise was not diminished by the discovery that in some respects this controversy resembled the spiritual conflicts and passionate outbursts connected with the many external difficulties and inner struggles and crises of the early Christian church. His historical training put him in a position to see the resemblance between the Wagner movement and a missionary or religious excitement.

Indeed, it is scarcely necessary to add that his curiosity was only increased by this discovery, and that at the earliest opportunity he broke his resolution not to attend the theatre. When a

Wagner evening was announced at the opera house, he promptly bought a ticket for the performance which was, as it happened, "Tristan."

Before discussing the effect which this drama had upon him, let us consider for a moment if the case is sufficiently typical to be of value as evidence.

The man was, without doubt, in the matter of esthetic preparation, a truly ideal Wagner listener. He knew none of the "aims" of art, and was pledged to no party. But he possessed an ideal temperament and a certain simple, general culture. He understood various music, and had by virtue of his calling acquired some experience in interpreting the words, both of song and recitative. To be sure, he was governed by an ethical prejudice against all scenic art; but, as we shall see, this does not lessen the general significance of the case, but, on the contrary, strengthens it. Therefore, we may accept this listener as reasonably typical for our purpose.

Meanwhile, it remains for us to determine whether or not "Tristan" was the most suitable drama for presenting the Wagnerian art to such a completely uninitiated, though otherwise suitable listener. The question is not difficult to answer, if we remember that the cosmic life problem, which in varied forms and acts constitutes the foundation of reality and experience in all of Wagner's dramas, here in "Tristan" takes on its most universally intelligible and, for the majority of people, the most easily recognized form; and that this work, for this and other reasons, occupies a strikingly central position among Wagner's productions. We may say therefore with certainty, that the choice of drama which chance made for our curious Wagner novice was the best that could have been made.

It is hardly probable that the presentation was a model one. Nevertheless, the impression received by the listener was to him entirely unexpected—new, rich, deep, and thrilling. Afterward, he summed up the details and expressed the key-note in a single word—*weakship*. All the factors in the work, the life problem, the action, music, characters, all fused into something with which he was familiar in the calling he had chosen—a public religious service, the observance of a cult.

It can not be denied that this characterization is striking. The ordinary unconverted open-eye perceiver, indeed, the unconscious of the Tristan drama, and its close connection with Christian religious views, yet always, as it were, through the veil of worldly amusement. This unprepared listener, with his prejudice against

all forms of theatrical art, discovered at the first glance the strongest, deepest, and most distinguishing characteristics of the Wagner art, its various religious notes.

Indeed, it must be admitted that this is especially conspicuous in "Tannhäuser," with its many distinctly religious ideas, motifs, and situations, as sin, repentance, prayer, pardon, consecration, holy pilgrims, Madonna pictures. But this has a specifically Catholic stamp—and the librettist was an orthodox Lutheran—and we all know how easily, in an ordinary unscripted opera presentation, one's attention is turned away from the essential and directed toward distracting details, such as new singers, costumes, theatre parties, decorations, or scenic arrangement. All these and similar details are what the superficial, habitual theatre-goer first notices. Therefore, when this man, totally inexperienced as he was in this line, first of all perceived something else, it was due entirely to the fact that his being was attuned to the key-note of the work, so that he instantly vibrated in unison with the singing force which welled up through his consciousness, in spite of a host of bewildering and half understood details.

Numberless listeners, among them both greater and lesser critics—Wulfgang, Gläser pp., Schmidt, Chamberlain, and others—have been affected in a similar way, in particular by "Tannhäuser." One can, in fact, read this more or less closely in their conversations and analyses, and yet, most of them have been so bound by their æsthetic and musical theories that the question which lay so near at hand, as to whether this religious spirit might not possibly be common to all of Wagner's productions, has never once occurred to them.

Yet such is the case. Let us imagine that a person such as I have just described, introduced to Wagner in the same way, is impelled by his first strong impression to investigate Wagner's other works. This very reasonable assumption will prove to be particularly significant in its results. We shall find support for our view that all of Wagner's art is fundamentally a manifestation of religious sentiment, and at the same time we shall get a picture of the culture synthesis which we suggested in the beginning.

After such an initiation, the next work which a yearning Wagner devotee gets to know, presumably is "Lohengrin," which follows "Tannhäuser" chronologically. That this work likewise strengthens and confirms the previously acquired impression of religious sentiment, every one who has any conception of its purport feels. The entire drama is a brilliantly symbolic presentation of the highest doctrines of theoretical Christianity, above

all, the doctrine of faith and its significance in the struggle between the powers of light and darkness.

Following "Lohengrin," it is probable that our next comes to "The Flying Dutchman" which, together with the two previously mentioned, belongs to the group of Wagner's most often presented works, all of them being of a popular religious nature. Here in the "Dutchman" he finds again the well-known theme taken from the Christian and other religions, that of sacrifice and redemption, used as the chief dramatic motif.

But at the same time he learns that this theme, on the one hand incarnated in the ghostly romanticism of the Dutchman tradition, and on the other appearing in a milieu of idyllic-erotic commonplaces, is made up of such scattered and destructive elements that the religious note does not always sound forth clearly, although there is plainly an effort in that direction throughout the work. If our Wagner friend remembers that the "Dutchman" is the first real achievement of the music dramatist in this field, he will find the effort still more interesting, and will see in it a confirmation of his first Tannhäuser impression.

We can now imagine that his interest and enthusiasm have increased until, along with his cultivation of the Wagnerian dramas, he begins the study of their mythical, literary, and folkloric sources, the Celtic-Germanic and early Scandinavian sagas, as well as Wagner's own theories of art and critical writings, his life and spiritual development. Therewith two significant discoveries await him. First, he will learn that Wagner himself, in his brochure on "Religion and Art," states that these two manifestations of the human soul-life are intimately related and mutually dependent one upon the other. Second, he will find that among the dramas of which Wagner completed the literary part alone and never composed the music, one treats of Valund the Smith, a confessedly creative-artistic life problem, while in another, "Jorn of Nemroth," Wagner does not hesitate to present dramatically the most religious of all figures in the history of humanity. In general, he will learn that the great founders of religion, among them Buddha, kept Wagner's imagination busy in a characteristic way.

Thus prepared, he goes to see the five dramas next in order after "Lohengrin": the four parts of "The Ring of the Nibelung," and "Tristan and Isolde."

His expectation of perceiving here a religious undertone of the same sort as that in the preceding works, is disappointed when he learns that all these works taken together form a single group

among Wagner's productions, a group which may be designated as the "philosophical." However, that insight into the nature of philosophy which we may assume with him, makes it possible for him to discover, differentiated somewhat from this philosophy, an atmosphere of deep and passionately pulsating religious sentiment. Further, he finds that the purely philosophical element, not only where it steps naked into the light, but even more perhaps where the artist succeeds in blending and fusing it with the whole, impresses upon the work a peculiar stamp of universality, of something which goes beyond the usual boundaries of art. And it is this universality which, without direct religious action, nevertheless elevates and sustains the work within the realm of the religious mood, and calls forth corresponding admiration.

Certain it is, that in a close study of the separate Nibelung dramas, he will encounter unexplainable contradictions in the action, and dull passages in both words and music. But besides this, nevertheless, in such fundamental scenes as that of the death agony in "The Valkyrs," the awakening of Brunnhilde in "Siegfried," and the death march in "The Twilight of the Gods," he will find that underneath it all the stream of religious feeling runs unbroken, watering with its flood the roots of this Yggdrasil of music-dramatics, "The Ring of the Nibelung." This powerful composition, he perceives, is built up as religious myths and symbols, treating not only of the beginning of the world, but of the end, and of its redemption from suffering through love.

By this time, therefore, a fairly complete familiarity with this great work, and the study of its fundamental spiritual note, are calculated to awaken within the mind of our investigator a conception of the entire subject of synthesis in art, and at the same time to develop more acutely his comprehension of the religious element in Wagner's art. He comes now to understand that the religion which is professed and announced in and through the art, is radically far above the stiff, scholastic formulas of the usual dogmas, and is in itself the guarantee of the so-called creed of common life, by virtue of its high spirituality a confessionless, and—further—a nameless religion.

The study of "Tristan" will not disturb this view. The philosophy of this work is that of Schopenhauer, and its acknowledged position is related both to Buddhism and Christianity. Likewise, the part which the "world" plays in its complex of ideas, reminds one strongly of the position which it occupies in the scheme of Christianity. But more than all these external forms, must the unparalleled passionate strength of feeling expressed in

the *Tristan* drama lead the thought into the sphere of religion where alone, up to this time, was such ecstasy known—ecstasy which in itself is of a religious nature, and which, in its fiery glow, melts and transforms into luminous emblems and metaphysical symbols all within its circle. And all this in "*Tristan*" is even more incapable of being formulated, still more incomprehensible and spiritual, than in the *Nibelung* dramas.

If our Wagner friend is the least bit sharp-sighted psychologically—and in this respect he ought to have developed by this time—then this study of "*Tristan*" will surely remind him of a point so often demonstrated by psychological investigation, the relation between ecstasies and religion. And it is in this relation which Wagner brings out so clearly in his art. Yes, one may venture the assertion that Wagner's dramas are so strongly pervaded with a religious fervor or ecstasy, so the life problems are manifestly erotic. This is one of the conclusions to which a study of Wagner leads.

Our coming expert has now progressed so far on his way of initiation that there remain only two dramas, the latest and perhaps the most wonderful of all "*The Meistersingers of Nuremberg*," and "*Parsofal*." We may imagine that in order to familiarize himself with them, he sets out for the festival at Bayreuth, where "*The Meistersingers*" likewise ought preferably to be seen and heard in its national setting. Not one of Wagner's works is better suited to that stage than this happy, smiling comedy with its mild, conciliatory philosophy of life, its humor and its triumphant music, giving as a whole a lightly sketched but fairly historical picture of German temperament, German feeling and culture. No work can ever illustrate more clearly or more brilliantly than this, the national thought and cultural significance of Bayreuth, in its character of the logical and real conclusion of the Wagnerian art production.

It is not difficult to find the religious element in this work. It is wholly and completely embodied in the figure of Hans Sachs on the one hand in a more general way, in his poetry, his understanding and fine resignation in the presence of youth, yes, even in his humor. On the other hand, it is to be seen in his specifically Wagnerian conception of art, which naturally is Wagner's own. This pervades and controls a principal and integral part of the action of the drama, but is summarized in a highly characteristic manner in Sachs' concluding speech by the words "the sacred German art." His entire view is expressed in that one word "sacred."

With Wagner art was a religion, the most generally accepted expression for his religious feeling—therefore, it was "sacred." It never occurred to him in any of his many theoretical works to discuss the nature of art. So true as he was from every trace of skepticism or agnosticism, it was impossible for him even to question this view of art, and he had but little idea of its biological significance. Art had for him an absolute value. The word to him meant origin: in the beginning there was art. Viewed from this standpoint, the personally religious element in the philosophical dramas of "The Nibelung's Ring" and "Tristan" stands out still more conspicuously.

But the art that Wagner meant was not a superficial, plebeian embellishment and decoration of the commonplaces of everyday life; it was brought about by the cooperation of all the separate arts. It was a lifting up of the soul to the spiritualized heights of religion, to the pure realm of deep, though radiantly happy seriousness, to a plane the most immaterial possible in this material world, a plane which presented a picture or interpretation of life as drenched with the tears of pain and joy, so steeped in the silent and eternal sunshine of truth, that in its presence all other pictures or interpretations dissolved and melted away into nothingness.

All this he attained—after years of struggle and effort, and even mistakes—in clearest and most consummate form in "Parsifal," that beautiful work of his old age. With this "Euhemerus-weltstapfel" (that is, satirical play, intended to consecrate, to sanctify the theatre) he sets the final official seal of religious feeling on his entire life-work, and gives us the key to the innermost secret of his being: he was an artistic reformer and promulgator of religion.\*

But with the experience of "Parsifal," and with the discovery of its relation to the personality of its originator, our Wagner investigator has concluded his initiation, and he now emerges a full-fledged expert. The magic circle of the great dramas closes about him as a symbolization of the highest religious sentiment. Here in "Parsifal" he receives once more his first impression, though endlessly widened, deepened, and purified. Here he finds again not only the Tannhäuser struggle between elemental eroticism and religio-esthetic renunciation, but also the richest faith symbolism of "Lohengrin," the redemption theme of "The Flying Dutchman" and "The Ring," the noble gentleness of "The Meistersingers," together with the light and joy of its waldmännischer mood

\*That Wagner is his teacher in "Euhemerus und Art," shows every sign of founding a new religion, or, rather, of rebelling against the conventional of that statement, since it is a question of what he did, and not of what he thought he was doing.

been subdued to the Good Friday spirit, and finally, even the intense fervor and passion of the "Immanu" music, now purified of all worldly desire or earthly dream. "Paradise" is the essence and sum total of the entire Wagner dramatic art, the synthesis of synthesis.

If now we try to get a survey of the store of knowledge which our Wagner expert, during his analytical investigation, has accumulated in his memory and in his library, we shall find that it comprises all the essential results gleaned from Germany's spiritual evolution up to the middle of the nineteenth century, and that it gives a very complete picture of the cultural and religious history of the German people, its history, dramatic, and musical development, its philosophical productivity, its legendary treasure, its race lifelines and origins.

On this basis, it becomes clear that Wagner's artistic life work may be truthfully designated as a culture synthesis. And this becomes still more evident if we now follow up the association of ideas which all our previous reasoning logically requires, and thus disclose the connection between the religious key-note of the Wagner art, and its manifest character of a musical culture synthesis.

" "

When Chamberlain, the author mentioned in our introduction, undertook his division of culture into three spheres, it is not impossible that he may have had in mind one of Goethe's most remarkable aphorisms: He who has art and science, has Christian religion; he who has neither of the first two, may have religion.

So runs the great poet's conviction, remarkable for the reason that it expresses so clearly the well-known, intensely universal and synthetic nature of his genius. He obviously formulated his thought with intent, to the effect that religion may take on two entirely different aspects or forms of evolution, and must not be looked upon merely as a point of departure or hypothesis, but also as the final conclusion and quintessence of development of science and art. It is clear that to him, as well as to many other spiritually great minds such as Beethoven or Wagner, that the word religion did not mean any definite dogma or fixed creed. Such things, indeed, merely signified an incidental, though perhaps at times long extended mediary period in the evolution of religion from simple materialism to the highest form of conscious idealism. No, Goethe's religion, like that of many others before



and since, undoubtedly may be described as the positive attitude taken by the willing, feeling, and knowing—perhaps still more, the unknowing—human being, toward the mysteries of reality and infinity, those mysteries which can not or be explained logically, that is, as to cause.

And this attitude, which is revealed in the lower stages of development in unconscious myths, and in conscious symbols in the higher stages, is but the expression in its most generally accepted form, of the passionate awareness of life, and the struggle of the linear being to attain, by way of the highest truths and deepest facts, that completeness which alone constitutes the true value of all genuine religious feeling.

But culture as a biological phenomenon is, as we recall, the highest manifestation and application of a surplus of life energy accumulated in a being capable of development, during centuries of struggle with environment, and liberated only when, in some way, a destination is brought about in the pressure of the external hardships of life. This surplus—which also may be called a sort of superqualification of pure animal existence, and which therefore distinguishes the primitive people capable of development from those incapable—is the force which has impelled the religion of the past to lift itself from the simple, materialistic stage of nature common to all, up to the plane of highest spirituality and idealism. Such an evolution of necessity emerges sooner or later as a culture synthesis.

But if we try to imagine the different phases of this development, we must first and foremost admit that Goethe was right when he conceived religion as the hypothesis and first source of science and art. Out of the myths, the emotionalisms, the doctrines and theories of the original materialistic religion, gradually evolves a desire for truth, for investigation and knowledge. In the same way comes the evolution of art from the practical side of religion, from the forms of primitive worship, in especial from the ceremonial use of rhythm as a means of exciting emotion, as well as from externals such as amulets, symbols, images, or temples.

Science soon splits into many branches and groups, consciously free itself from religion, and often attacks and opposes her forms of revelation. Likewise, art divides into a number of individual forms, all more or less separate from religion, and endeavoring still further to develop independently of one another.

Nevertheless, unattired and without ceasing, the surplus life energy is driving the cap of religion up through both of these sheets from her stem, thus nourishing the process of development.

And during the course of this upward movement, religion herself is developed, purified and transformed, like a gas that is filtered and rarefied. When the individual sciences approach the zenith of their special line of development, she is the secret force which enables them ever more to come together in a synthesis.

The sciences unite to form a comprehensive, universal science, philosophy; and the separate arts in the same way bring forth universal art, expressed in the music drama. But when this happens, religion herself also reaches her highest point of refinement and becomes, so to speak, a universal religion, the quintessence of all typically human religious experience and feeling. But as such, she is too immaterial, too incomprehensible, too unassertive, to possess body or form of her own, so she borrows one from art, and takes, very naturally, the form of the most ethereal and most ideal of all, the art of music.

Music has on its part, during the period of isolation, developed to the highest point of spiritual worth and power. Thus, through Bach and Beethoven it has been expanded and refined until it forms the strongest expression of the tragic-humanistic conception of life, and as such becomes the body for the spirit of purified religion. Religion becomes music, and music, religion. And in this form of manifestation, she unites with the two lower syntheses of universal science and universal art. They are absorbed in her, and the last combination takes place and produces the culture synthesis, the symbol of music-religion, the true music drama.

As we have seen, Wagner's art corresponds fairly well to this theory and characterization of the origin of the music drama. But naturally, Wagner's culture synthesis is not the only one possible or conceivable in our day, from the fact that it has, along with the typical, too many individual or incidental features. Such individual features, as we have previously pointed out, are the note which creates plays in all of the Wagner productions, and the opposition of this avowment to religion. This opposition has its analogy and secondary manifestation in the contradictory relations between love of the world and love of art, which may be seen in Wagner's attitude toward music as an individual art.

On the other hand, the more or less fundamental religious atmosphere is a necessarily typical feature. For whatever the musical culture synthesis which Europe and humanity may yet bring forth, certain it is, they must have the same roots as Wagner's art. The fibres of life must run back to that first wonderful culture synthesis, the Greek music drama, which, originating in

a form of worship, the Dionysian cult, continued to be a religious service up to the time of its highest development.

This music drama, whose greatest creators, Aeschylus and Sophocles, were deeply imbued with the ecstatic and mystic religious spirit of their time, this drama, whose mission was religious purification through instinctive sympathy and awe, began to decline the very moment that religion passed away. It was then that the art of the music drama lost its soul and became an ordinary "public entertainment."

We now know that this decline resulted in complete withering of branch and stem. Life withdrew to the roots, and all efforts at revival continued artificial and fruitless until, after the lapse of centuries, the spirit of tragedy again entered into the drama, when a genius was born, humanly strong enough and nobly endowed to embody in his art the most synthetic of all elements, religion.

For the religion which Wagner so passionately proclaimed—which only as music drama can be proclaimed—is tragedy itself, the essence of the culture synthesis, which we have seen evolve from a tragic-humorous conception of life, through centuries of struggle and changes of time, among the highly gifted races of northern Europe.

(Translated by Roderic Collingtree)

## "NICHT MEHR TRISTAN"

By B. M. STEIGMAN

PHONOGRAPHED music is an eminently suitable objective for the slayer of Paderewski and the slayer of them with great slaughter. For one thing, its devotees are so many that the warrior has cause enough to appeal for Jehovah's thunder against them. Then it proceeds from a mechanical corruption, hateful, accordingly, in the ears of the true believer. More than that, it has become commercialized, and with amazing success. It is therefore unmistakably a contrivance of the Children of Darkness. It is an imitation, an automation, banal, crude, lifeless, soulless.

It is as if it isn't art. Its present significance only the deaf could deny. That the mechanical contrivance eliminates time and space as obstacles to the hearing of good singing and playing may have far-reaching effects. It is because music more than any other of the dynamic arts is actually only of that point of time we mean by the present, that so much popular misunderstanding as to its "meaning" exists. The interpretative faculty is given scant footing. The photograph, however imperfectly, does its performed music for further observation. This leads to understanding, which presently becomes critical. The opera record gives a colorless exposition of what might otherwise have escaped unnoticed.

Now it is not at all unlikely that one of the first results will be the insistence upon operatic sense as well as sound. The words may have to pass muster. Of all the readers about the opera the strongest is the complacent acceptance of the unbelievable drivel that is the general tenor. The sharpest theatre-goer, who, if the same crude and absurdly colored hair were laid for him in a play, would utterly condemn it, swallows the whole affair at the opera-house and even believes he has partaken of a rare feast. What matters the story or the language? Who insists upon such extraneous matter cannot possibly care for opera. The passionate lover of music should be blind and deaf to the impenetrable stupidity, the wisened and painted goodness, the gluteous paunch and spattering and fuming, of his beloved. The closer view and

bearing of what it really is may bring him to his senses. The photograph may help to dispel the enchantment which the distant stage has lent.

The foreign language is something of a refuge. For someone appears blatantly exposed only when it stands in the vernacular. The alien tongue is more successful, for to most of us it is not altogether transparent. The leader the lover of grand opera, the more reluctant, it would seem, should be to have it translated. In English, to be sure, it is all earnest rot, but, look you, such may be the thoughts and feelings far away where there are Cossacks that each other out, the Anthropophagi, and men whose heads do grove beneath their shoulders. They perhaps do express themselves in just such bombast and are naturally given to the macella and tawdry.

Such considerations may have had little to do with it,—it may have been only the natural inertia of the opera companies that until the outbreak of the war preserved most opera and music drama in the original. The force that overcame all doubt and inertia was the force that in 1848 preserved civilization on the fields of France. Yet it was not at all spent in the performance. It carried on where there could not possibly be any need for it. It struck with particular violence—of all things—the music drama, the activity than which there is none at a further remove from the daily activities. We might as well have sent an expeditionary force into Arimaquia or Kanada. It must be admitted that it was the simplest way of showing resentment against the German language. It required merely a negative insistence, preferable certainly to a positive abolition of the German press or to a cutting forth and burning of a hundred thousand German books. Beside this, the banishment of Wagner was much easier to effect, much easier, peradventure, to endure.

And then after a decent interval of time he may be restored. But he must first turn English. Considering it all, it may be an unnecessary tribute to the past. We have with charity above-thought forbore from insisting upon translations of French and Italian opera. We recognize in Wagner's dramas truly noble poetry such as may well grace our tongue. We had them staged recently in Morsleben, in Nibelheim, at the bottom of the Rhine-maidens' Rhine, at the top of the Valkyries' mountains, where poetic rapture is more likely than, say, in Violetta's drawing-room in Paris or in the real home for boys in the Golden West. We had them, moreover, set to music that is of acknowledged greatness. The combination, we feel, may bear the closest scrutiny. Fix it

for the ear by photographing it and it will remain music and poetry. Well, that ought certainly to stand translation.

But the tribute which the general demand for Wagner in English implies turns into grotesque insult when this is carried into effect. The sound and sense and spirit of the new words will no longer fit. They bulge here and strain there and are warped and wry nearly all over. The general form, fixed by the sense, remains the same. The poetry it is meant to give is a dead and senseless weight.

If it were only possible to submit proof—photographic proof that could be considered leniently—of how it would turn out, there might be less enthusiastic subscribing to the ugly perpetuation. Only a partial representation, the graphic, the black and white, is possible. It is at least instructive. As it is the more so, the greater the beauty of the original, the proof here submitted is of "Tristan and Isolde."

That of all incredible nonsense that is called translation of this music drama the *Carriers'* is the generally used English libretto, is evidence of how specific is the accepted regard for the text. The libretto is usually anonymous, a saving indication of sense by the authors. Here is a sample from the opening scene:

## FRANZISKE

Dem Wanderer über Heide,  
dem hochgewachsenen Mann,  
dem Helden über Olaf:  
das Kälteschiff hast und Hund!

## ISOLDE

Der sagen die dem Helden  
mit Richtigem er hat,  
was aus dem er die Leide  
für seinen Mann gemacht?—  
Schild er dich du dich,  
mein Gefährt?

## FRANZISKE

Exalted by every action,  
The happy country's pride,  
The hero of creation,—  
Whom here or high and wild!

## ISOLDE

In drinking treacherous  
his chance he seeks to hide,  
while in the long, his relation,  
he brings the cup to his lips!—  
Sings it, or senses  
what I say?

Well, let the reader judge.

Tolerable poetry is perhaps the hardest to stomach. We spare the unknown conceit out of our mouths. The *Carriers* are noteworthy at least in that their harshly holds the reader's attention. There is nothing mediocre about it. At times it is so pronounced as to be quite impressive. The interpretation of the meeting of the lovers is an example. Possibly the part of the English text is set by the customary action on the stage of Tristan and Isolde immediately after drinking the love potion. The two come bare or so that it takes to get the lovers started is used by the singers according to tradition for muscular activity familiar on

the baseball field as incidental to the pitcher's warming up. When at last they do go to it their speed and control are relentless.

Wie glüht  
Überwält!  
Überwält!  
Ewig! Ewig!

Endless gleams!  
Boundless triumph  
N'er to cease!  
Never! Never!

As the poetic rapture of the second act rises, the Coeders translation begins to froth and run. The reader will hardly believe that the following, for example, is the accepted version of part of the duet, reprinted from the standard libretto:

Sag es Rosen  
was sich die Liebe,  
beachte ich dich  
Starr die Wunde  
Ein dummer Fehler  
sich) emporen,  
wie dumm sagst  
die wunden,  
Hör es Her. du.  
Starr an Mund,  
Es ist alles  
in'rer Hand.—

Had our hearts gray  
tonight's gleaming,  
how would bloom  
from stars' tender healing.  
To thy enchantment  
we surrender  
beneath thy gaze  
no wunden lovelier,  
heart to heart  
and lip to lip,  
each the other's  
loves we die. Etc.

Further quotation might be spared. But it is not only from the fury of the existing translations that the good Lord is to deliver us, but from threatened further barbarous invasions. Which to prevent, the terrifying record of those who in the past have sought to affect anything like a landing, is herewith dutifully exposed.

To the natural difficulties which the unfortunate translator encountered in the German sentence structure, transposed as it is beyond the limits of our widest poetic license, must be added such onerous requirements as rhyme, which produced distortions such as "When in the sick man's bosom blade she perceived a notch had been made"; and alliteration, responsible for monstrosities like "Blutguilt gets between us," "Mindful beams our eyes are kindling." They there are many abstract terms, especially those that have distinct Wagnerian connotations, that cannot possibly be translated. "Wahn" is not "folly" (the Coeders turned "Welcher Wahn" into "What a whiten!"), nor is "Leid" the same as "Glee." "Is (Isoblen) selig nicht ganz verging" is supposed to mean "not sink at once into bondage bliss."

The greatest obstacle is, of course, the fixed melody, not of the larger, simpler and more obvious "dances-for-a," as Wagner names it, into which a stanza or whole verse paragraph may be

made to fit, regardless of the position of individual words or even lines, but melody that is an intense and beautiful reading of the poem. Freckle tarted equivalence is hardly ever possible. And even slight transpositions result in utterly meaningless singing. Thus, "er sah sie in die Augen," the last word of which is linked with the corresponding music, becomes "his eyes as mine were fastened," to which the music is quite unrelated. "Das Schwert—ich las es fallen" is turned into "The sword—dropped from my fingers," in which the fine expression and suspense of the passage after "ich" and after "las" are lost by the anteposition of "dropped," and the following words made merely redundant. "Mit dem Blick such nicht mehr beschauen!" where the significance of text and music depends on the word "Blick," is in Corder English "my emotion then might be ended," with its equivalent of the loose syllable "mo." Isold's unspeakable contempt "Der Cornwall wüßte König" is clumsily made a geographic aversion, "the Mark, the Cornish monarch."

The page from which these examples are taken is representative of the whole work. There is hardly a passage but has its shortcomings. And every now and then there was into truly monumental lapses, like Isold's panting

Wie das Meer den  
 umlag' erdruht,  
 voll und toll  
 im Sturm quillt

How his heart  
 with his sea  
 wildly happy  
 beats in his breast

and Marke's shrieking

"Wißt er hell was I habe" . . .

Why, indeed!—

In the preface to his translation Jackson attempts to indicate the climactic effectiveness of the drama by quotations such as: "The waves of melody rise higher and higher, as if the distant portals of heaven opened to the vibrations of two hearts"—The most serious of literary illusions certainly must be his who imitates a high-winded Sigh by flapping his blunt feathers and believes the wispy disturbance he makes indicative of altitude and speed. The prefatory divisions is left throughout the work.

© Isold's Angst  
 Isold's Horror!  
 Isold's Mark,  
 vermagst du's zu sagen?

© Isold's Bloodshed  
 Mark's cursing,  
 Isold's danger's  
 Isold's despairing!



Jackson's diction is noteworthy. Tristan considers the potion "heart-misdealing," Isolde calls him her "Yuthless enfolder," and while Brangäne is "blooming and smiling to heaven," the two lovers are in chewing-gum rapture over their "hazelnut delights." The translator throughout shows vast range, now gabbling forth that

das Quälen muß  
 nachhals Wahn  
 result to wrong dabot

The gulping brew's  
 Epping current  
 Marrows so merely so.

now in a business-like manner begging to state that

Dein Loss was selber  
 magst du dir sagen!

Thy loss had truly  
 Been settled duly.

The Earl of Rosenmann's rule for translators is never forgotten: "The' gross innumerable Faults abound, in spite of nonsense, never fail of sound."

Of regard for the music there is probably less here than in any other translation meant to be sung. Even outstanding conformity is ignored. Brangäne's "was dich quält," with its implication both by voice and orchestra of the key motif of the play, is made meaningless by "to me confers." "Der Wahn, die die plagt," with its continuous suffering in chromatic descents, is in line and mood and dramatic contrast to the following line, "getreulich plig sie da"; and the effect is destroyed by singing both ideas in the first line: "She heald the wounds that pained him," and then adding, as Jackson seems to have a means for doing, trite and irrelevant details: "And watched him night and day." Similar ruthless treatment is accorded the admissible setting of "das Schwer—ich lies es fallen": "It fell—for thee alone meant." The absurdity to which this indifference to the music led him is well exemplified by his disregard of the four bars that separate Brangäne's reply to Isolde's request for the cloak—a passage necessary dramatically for Brangäne to cross the stage to fetch the cloak, and musically to develop the phrase associated with it—from her exposition of its contents. Jackson's sentence is left dangling, broken in two by the passage.

With a passing mention of the Beckmesser vocalization ("Be'fore the sun shall set," "whatever Y'solde com'mand," etc.) and the distortions that they produce, such as "No insult such would twice to give they desire to" and "In custom search" ("Fragt die Bitte")—the chamber of "Tristan" known has received sufficient notice. We pass to Eduard C, the Chapman version.

The inevitable crippled and club-footed lines are here, too, in abundance. Especially cruel is the constant dismemberment of the text, sentences and phrases being ruthlessly lopped off where the music and the drama call for a pause. Speeches: "dem Egenhold" (text): "forthwith be told, he"; "was ihm" (text): "now hear what"; "Und was er Marke" (text): "and if to Mark he." The exigencies of rhyme make it necessary for Isolda to "mend" Tristan; of alliteration, to "waken the deep and the greed of its greed"; of stanzaic conformity, "from this wonder, run to murder."

The text has in general the usual defects. There is such senseless translation as that of "Welcher Hahn" into "This is I-huh," "Hast am Ziel" into "Right at hand," "Lieberwonne" into "Love and passion." "Diese wunderwilde Welt" becomes "This wonderful fair, a wife"; "Schonacht Noth" is "reliefful pain"; "Isolda lebt und wacht" means "Isolda lives aright." The significance of "Uverpassen" is "out of thinking." The music becomes often meaningless, as when Isolda's scornful reference to the king, "Stehen wir vor König Marke," is turned into "We shall ere long be standing"; or, when orchestra and voice suggest "Lachen wandel Getra," the words are: "(My) branches are thus misled." Nor are there lacking such special features as Tristan's suspicious account of how he obtained that powerful drink. Somebody "dipped it" to him, he says, and he goes on to relate how "bliss with rapture" he "ripped it." Isolda, as befits a lady, takes it of course only for her health. "This draught will do me good," she says.

The Jameson translation clutches fastidiously to the original. It aims at perfect word and even phrase equivalence and does succeed better than any other. But it follows that much of it is utterly unidiomatic, and some of it even absurd. The disregard for rhyme and alliteration is conducive to coarseness, but the removal of such restraints makes the poetic rapture of the drama fly outward into apparently irrelevant directions. Unhindered lyric expression that can give the expressed effect of the rhymed (as Tennyson's "Dunes, idle tides" does) is rare. The ordinary attempts succeed. Jameson at least writes prose. At worst his accurate following of the German leads to such constructions as "No day nor morrow" ("Nicht heut noch morgen") or "True he to me!" ("Wahr du mir treu!"); or to such felicities as "his peerless first of lovers" and "he looked beneath my eyelids."

Forman's translation is certainly not prose. If eight pages of appended prose notions (quoting among others Swinburne and Watts-Dunton) can establish anything, it ought to be magnificent.

poetry. It is presumably the best that has been done by way of "Tristan" translation, and is therefore the most illuminating. It permits of judgment of a product finished in conformance with the Wagnerian requirements. It follows carefully, as the title-page promises, the mixed alternative and rhyming metres of the original. It is not intended, however, says the author, "to be taken in strict and continuous company with the music," and he has "not considered it necessary to print the numerous alternative readings which would be requisite for such a purpose." Whence it is implied that the alternative lines are more singable than readable. It would be rather interesting, considering the "readable" text, to see these alternative lines which have been kept prudently out of print. They baffle speculation as possibilities in grotesque.

For the printed version is as fantastically pulled up a piece of writing as the affliction of "style" has ever produced. It is really astonishing that anyone of our own age should care to accept the tired legacies that were Kuglers'. Not here they are, packed up on impossible stiles, those mechanical contrivances of elaborate indirections and bar-fetched phraseology, that deny a period of senseless sound. And it has not even the occasional gl'ib cleverness and fancy that some of the assassins of wit attained. It is altogether ridiculous. "Let laughter," says Isolde when she extinguishes the torch, "let laughter as I strike it, be the sound!" And surely no audience will disappoint her when the next thing heard is

Isolde. *Trübsal Kollid!*  
 Tristan: *Selbsts Feind!*

Isolde. *Faithfully loathed!*  
 Tristan: *Destitutely decried!*

Isolde: *Wie ich die Harnen  
 wagen erlöset,  
 wie alle Harn  
 wagen erlöset!  
 Selbster Mörder,  
 selbstmörder Hölzer,  
 selbstmörder Lieder  
 erlöse Götter!  
 Jack in des Herze  
 juckende Lieder!*

Isolde: *How in our hearts  
 to bilious are shaked!  
 My mind 's a compass  
 of madness is taken!  
 Licks me the song  
 of a man beyond name!  
 Fills me a pining,  
 gladdening fame!  
 My bones the bliss  
 can bear out of the!*

Provided the audience hears it. Typographically it is certainly no more preposterous than phonographically. Whether they be read or sung, such phenomena must be encountered as "hope of hap," "unshuddering slip," "for harmful draught 's backward ban," Tristan is here a "bride-bewoker," "in truth the most untuning." The alternative copy makes the last stagger ("From

him back you will hear," "see thou wouldest Iager not right to") and bloup ("He panted at lip," "The sword—I downward sank it"), and go off into besotted gibberish ("A moon that scarred her head," "who loold' could see and in loold' not mackion to melt his soul"). Which suggests the literal subject-matter of *Tristan's* reference—irreverent and unconstitutional though it be—to that accursed drink "whose foam with Miss I sipped and swallowed."

If a final demonstration were needed of what Wagner is like in English it is furnished by Le Gallienne. His "*Tristan*" is unrestrained by any consideration for the music or the original metre, rhyme, and alliteration. The freedom thereby gained should be promising. Yet the product is very tame indeed. It is sometimes incorrect as translation, often sloped, rather wearisome throughout. Illustrative passages might be taken almost at random, but Wagner translations probably the reader's bosom "more can bear not of this."

An interesting sidelight upon the subject is cast by Oliver Huckel's effort to translate into narrative blank verse both the words and the action of the music drama. For though his name, certainly unlike Le Gallienne's, is one of seven hair and ruby lips, his version is the more readable. But only when Wagner is lost sight of altogether, as in "*Tristram of Lyonesse*," is English poetry evidently possible.

Mention should be made of Mr. Kochlik's new translation of the "*Liebsteht*," which has been sung at several orchestral concerts. It is a faithful enough version, but there is nothing about it to modify the conclusions already drawn. It is better than the Gordon' exhaust finale of "sinking, be drinking, in a him, highest him." And yet, more than such dancing prose can hardly be given "immerse me, disperse me, wittingless had sweet him." "*Immense*" and "*disperse*" have none of the connection and sequence that "*retaken*" and "*revisited*" have, except the rhyme. And "*wittingless*" is a brainless bubble-intrusion of the kin of *Wanna, surf of Cedric the Baron*.

Reference has already been made to the suggestion that the drama be translated into French. The difficulties, however, would be similar. Besides which, the spirit of French, its genius, or whatever it is that gives any language atmosphere, is more alien even than that of English. The theme of "*Tristan und Isolde*," as conceived by Wagner, is especially beyond French expression. The translation becomes sharp, polished, pretty, at times even elegant. Such impression has not merely a surface origin in yellow paper covered books. It goes deeper. In considering a language,

the style is the people. The emotions of Wagner's "Tristan" are not of the French. Taste is enlightening.

The best of the French character makes of love not a passion but a gay banquet, tastefully arranged, in which the service is elegant, the food exquisite, the silver brilliant, the two guests in full dress, in good humor, quick to anticipate and please each other, knowing how to keep up the gaiety, and when to part.

Of the five French versions, that of Le Comte de Chambour is admittedly unamiable, and that of Wittke has been discarded as impossibly crude and inaccurate. D'Offel insists that his is far singing only. His excuse excuses when the words are sung, he says, their imperfections, only too apparent when read, will disappear or at least seem slighter. The implied license enables him to conform fairly well with the music. Lyon's is a laudate prose translation, too literal to be idiomatic, poetic, or musically sensible. That of Ernst is the least unsatisfactory. But although his work is sufficiently careful, it is quite impossible to consider it as anything more than a correct French gloss. How disillusioning seems Isidie's *Lebestand*, how matter of fact, when she can give so precise an account of it as: "Dans la Vie soufflé harmonie du Tout, me perdre, m'entraîne, sans pensée, toute joie!" That's all (Lyon's is "Me mener, Disparaitre, Inconscience, Surprise volupté" D'Offel's: "se perdre, se fondre, sans pensée, à bonheur") The dramatic concepts lose their connotation. "Wahn" becomes either "L'erreur" or "Aveugle"; "gotisch ew'ges Un-Vergessen" is Lyon's translation as "Du divin, éternel, présent éternel"; in D'Offel's: "Toujours divin, total, éternel"; Ernst's is "que l'éternel divin nous berme"; and of "Ich war, wo ich war je gewesen": "Fût-ils aux sources de mon être." Good enough perhaps as science, but hardly as poetry.

More detailed consideration can profit little. Whether in English or in French a translation can give merely the literal substance of what in the original is the greatest of tragic drama. The characters are mechanical contrivances singing mechanically contrived words. They are not the characters Wagner conceived "nicht mehr Isidie, nicht mehr Tristan." None of the translations is really deserving of any serious criticism. And their repetition here is in part to induce to such as may want to venture again upon so wild and waste an undertaking the unhappy fate of those who perished before them. The main concern is of course the suffering that may be inflicted upon the audience. It is sincerely to be hoped that any proposed text will be submitted on the

typograph at least for general inspection before it is made into the great and inflexible, almost permanently fixed, record that is an opera company's performance. What the verdict would be it is fairly safe to forecast. And if the musical setting could be added and we could try out the "record" at close range, there could be no doubt about it.

## TONIC-SOL-FA; PRO AND CON

By J. A. FULLER-MATTLAND

**I**N two articles in the April, 1908, number of *The Musical Quarterly*, the Tonic-Sol-Fa system comes in for hearty praise, which in truth it well deserves. As I gather that the system is not in such universal use in the United States as it has been in England, I may perhaps be allowed to refer to some aspects of its working in the country of its origin. The time has gone by when one was obliged to take sides about it, and either to admit as a whole-hearted partisan of T.S.F. anything all music that could not easily be written in it, or else to be classed among the "high-brow" musicians who knew nothing about it and cared less, condemning it as superficial and associated with the 'lower orders' and non-conformity in general. In the present day, one may recognize, without going thereby as part of one's life, that it has defects as well as merits, and that it is eminently useful in certain ways, though in others it has the effect of keeping back musical progress.

It is striking that its great asset, the constant reference to the tonic of the key, is nothing new: this was recognized under the Henscheloidal system, just as clearly as the principle of the movable *Do*, though that was called by the original name of *Ut*. The truth of Just Intonation is contained in the T.S.F. modulator, though it is a curious fact that this is not intentionally or expressly taught. The fact that G sharp and A flat are not the same note, though the same key has to serve for both on the piano, is conveyed, or might be conveyed to the pupils of T.S.F., but by a very singular accident, the modulator which hangs on the wall of every elementary school in England, and the book which the teacher holds in his hand, were formerly at variance as to which note is the higher. This discrepancy remained unnoticed so long, that it is fair to conclude that the valuable information contained in the system was not turned to much account in practical teaching.

Consciously or unconsciously, the pupils of T.S.F. do sing better in tune than other children, and this of itself is no light matter. The ease with which a single part of a vocal composition can be read is of course a very great advantage. As long as the

attention need only be kept to the singer's own part, and as long as there is a competent conductor to superintend matters, there is no comparison as to which is the more successful notation, and the experimenting which goes on while the T.S.F. system is being practised, is not to be despised. Again, there is the fact that some kind of musical nourishment is given to a large class of the community who, if confined to the staff notation, would never take the trouble to learn music at all. Perhaps the most useful work of T.S.F. is as the best possible introduction to the staff notation. Just as the workmen of old times used the *Carrot* (i.e. the plan of the Guddeman brass-boards), side by side with the more elaborate notation of the staff, so the wise music-teachers of the modern world would do well if they used the T.S.F. principally as a stepping-stone to higher things. For who, having any wide survey of the history of music, or of any period of its development, can doubt for a moment which of the two systems is the higher? The staff is in truth a language of universal application, and the attempt to set up the T.S.F. system as a rival to it is bound to meet with ultimate failure. Nevertheless, a great number of people in England are now under the impression that the two systems are rivals, and tell you, with a smug complacency, that they do not sing from "the old notation."

But before going on to the practical effect of T.S.F. teaching, I may be excused for summing up a few of the charges brought against it by those trained musicians who have been at the pains to understand it. The abolition of the ideas "up" and "down" in connection with sound, is claimed as an advantage by the ordinary teacher, who can see that there is nothing actually high about a "high" note, or low about a "low" one. We hope that this abolition will not proceed so far that the Shakespearean commentator of the future will be pestered to know what can have been meant by the line "that can sing both high and low." When all arguments have been exhausted to prove that one end of the keyboard, for example, is not in a more elevated position than the other, the human instinct still persists, and in the effort of singing a "high" note there will always be some psychological correspondence with the notion of actual altitude. A less doubtful defect of the T.S.F. system is the difficulty of reading anything like a score so as to give the composite idea of a harmonic progression by the sight of four rows of letters; it may be attained, but the difficulty of attaining it leaves all the difficulties of reading the usual notation far behind. The representation of rests, and in general of the endurance of notes, as well as of changes, is so imperfect



in T.S.F. that its strongest advocates will hardly claim that it is perfect in this way. The absence of any indication as to the length of time during which the one part upon which the singer's attention has to be fixed, should keep silence, makes it exceedingly difficult to impart even to an intelligent choir any composition of a polyphonic character. With a very first-rate conductor who can be trusted to give each part its cue, the result may be satisfactory, but as a rule it is one of a choir-trainer's great difficulties that singers will not understand that the blank space on the paper they are reading represents an exact space of time.

In the early days of the movement, I have heard that there was some difference of opinion concerning the notation of the minor mode in modern music. Whether this were so or not, the fact remains that the tonic of the minor mode is called *Lah*, so that the *Doh* is not quite as movable as some people might wish it to be. For, of course, the base, final, or keynote of the minor mode is the note a minor third below the keynote of the major mode to which it stands in the relation of "relative minor." It is not merely an offshoot as it were of the major mode, to be constantly referred to the keynote of that mode instead of to its own keynote. The same erroneous definition, as I venture to think it, is even more glaringly seen in the attempt to force modal music into the T.S.F. notation. Each final should be called *Doh*, and the only really logical way of adapting the new notation to the old modes would be to use the "accidentals" syllables much more freely. The following is a table of the modes in what would be their T.S.F. notation if this were logically carried out (it will be observed that no modification of the syllable *Ray* appears to exist which would indicate the second step of the Phrygian mode):

I Dorian	III Phrygian	V Lydian	VII Mixolydian	IX Aeolian	XIII Ionian
d	d	d	d	d	d
ra	ra	r	ra	ra	r
l	la	l	l	la	l
o	o	o	o	o	o
f	f	fr	f	f	f
ma	ma	ma	ma	ma	ma
r	ra	r	r	r	r
d	d	d	d	d	d

I wonder whether it is really the case that "the Roman Catholic like the notation because it fits in so well with the Gregorian system." (*Mus. Quarterly*, vol. iv, p. 194.) In one way no doubt it fits in well with the Gregorian system, in that its imperfect

notation of time is not felt as a drawback in singing *Psalmes*. But the expression of the notes in the T.S.F. system leaves a great deal to desire.

Another defect inherent in the system is in connection with its process of modulation. Sometimes half-way through a simple hymn-tune, the Sol-faist is required to change his keynote, and go through an elaborate mental calculation to the effect that the note he has approached as *Sol* is for the next few bars to be thought of as *Do*. This is of course in regard to the simplest of all modulations, implying a half-change in the dominant, but whether complicated or not, the change of tonic does require a psychological change of attitude towards the old key and the new, which is beautifully left in a kind of uncertainty in the staff notation. The use of accidentals there is understood as indicating no new attitude towards another key; this, when required, is effected by a change of the whole key signature. But every slightest modulation in T.S.F. requires a shifting of the mind to the new tonic, and, what is worse, a quite definite acceptance of the new key as established. Now in much of the music that has best stood the test of time, and in much that has been most universally accepted as the greatest, part of the charm it exercises over mankind is due to the gradual change in the hearer's attitude towards a new key, to the gradual discovery of the point to which the modulation is going to take him: his pleasure will be greatly lessened if he is obliged at every note to have a clear idea in his mind as to the whereabouts of the key he is stated to be in at the moment.

The weightiest objection which trained musicians have to T.S.F. is based on the quality of the music provided for its pupils. It is beyond question that some of the greatest choral compositions can be expressed in T.S.F. and for the popularisation of such works as *Motets* or *Elpis* by its means, we should, I suppose, be thankful, even though the value of these two masterpieces in England has prevented lovers of Handel and Mendelssohn from intimacy with the other masterpieces of either composer. Perhaps some bold T.S.F. advocate has tried to put Bach's B minor mass into this notation, but, if so, I am sure that most people who have attempted to learn it by that notation will have flown to the safe simplicity of the staff. As the use of the T.S.F. system is virtually compulsory all over England, and as school inspectors are easily dazzled by hints of so called "reading" which seem to them phenomenal, the financial success of the system has brought about the composition of an enormous quantity of music whose sole excuse is that it is well adapted for the notation for which

it is intended. Most of it has no other merit whatsoever, and it is a sad experience to go into a school in some part of England where all the children's voices are of beautiful quality and all or nearly all possess strong natural instinct, and to hear the kind of trash that is being forced into their throats and being called "good music." Nowhere is the commercialism of the musical world of England so rampant as in regard to the poisonous haldendash with which the taste of the children is being corrupted. I spoke above of "so-called reading"; it is only too evident that most teachers and inspectors of schools are quite satisfied when the children have read the notes together with the T.S.F. names for them, without regard to the words provided in their copies. Very few people seem to realize that the work of reading has only proceeded half-way when this is done; and here is another defect of the T.S.F. system, that the singer's mind is always hampered by the temptation to repeat, instead of the words put down for him, the actual syllables which he is accustomed to associate with the notes he sings.

As an independent musical system, even within its limited sphere of choral singing, the T.S.F. cannot take a very high place, though it is invaluable as a stepping-stone to the other notation. Apart from the intrinsic merits and defects of the system, we may consider some points of its practical working in England. Of course it has the very great merit of making choral societies a familiar feature of English country life, and so of providing the raw material for those competition festivals which are an ever-growing influence in national music, and which will no doubt pursue their successful course now that the war is over. But the difficulty of expressing any of the more complicated kinds of music, and the kind of attitude generally adopted by Societies towards real music, has caused the managers of many festivals to forbid any competing choir to use T.S.F. It is a merit, no doubt, that the cost of printing T.S.F. music is so low, but this is rarely counterbalanced by the corresponding cheapness of the artistic quality usually attained in the compositions that are printed in it. While the system gives much encouragement to the cause of vocal or rather choral music, its unavoidable discouragement of instrumental music is a very serious drawback. For one cannot conceive of any advocate of T.S.F. being so enthusiastic as to attempt to play any instrument from his favourite notation. The experiment of printing instrumental compositions in T.S.F. may have been tried, but it has certainly made little way even with the public that is accustomed to use it for singing.

## UNPUBLISHED LETTERS FROM VERDI TO CAMILLE DU LOCLE (1868-76)

By J.-G. PRODHOMME

THE letters of Giuseppe Verdi, which we publish here for the first time, after the original manuscripts, were gathered from the Library of Archives of the Opéra, whose keeper, M. Baubé, had informed us years ago, with his customary obligingness, of their existence. But the events of the period just past prevented us from undertaking their selection and publication.

Of the correspondence addressed by Verdi from 1868 to 1876 to his French librettist, Camille Du Locle, comprising more than two hundred letters or notes, we have chosen those which seemed to us to have the most important bearing on this decade of the maestro's life, which extends from *Don Carlos* to the *Requiem* (Mass dedicated to the memory of Mazzini). It is true that these familiar epistles do not shine by reason of stylistic refinement, but therein resides their peculiar value, for they all the better depict the man as he was, with his somewhat rough frankness, his forthright sincerity, and that peasant simplicity which never forsok him, even at the height of his fame and worldwide success; and the artist no less, with his equally plainspoken and defective likes and dislikes. Once again, on perusing these half-century-old pages, we recalled the so frequently cited epigram of Buffon's: "The style is the man."

Moreover, an analysis of his handwriting, of the maestro's own "graphics," made by a learned graphologist, M. Yvanovitch, furnishes additional confirmation of the traits of his energetic and independent character under the cover of a genial artistic temperament. "The first impression that emanates from it is an intense vitality, as of a nature peculiarly vigorous and vibrant. The intelligence reveals itself as clear, alert, and exact; the culture is visible in the simplifications, the numerous calligraphic forms, likewise indicating originality. The official faculty is well developed, the liking for contrasts is marked, the sense of order is good. The graceful and lofty inspiration is manifested more especially through power. Some elegantly formed letters bear a certain distinction, but the general aspect of the handwriting, taken as a whole, is more energetic than elegant. The musician's writing presents, altogether,

a character rather popular than peculiarly aristocratic, thus differing from that of Handel, Rousseau, or Gluck, for example. The talk of men seems more familiar to Verdi than the language of gods and heroes. Handwriting of this description reveals a strong individuality, not tempering with its convictions but, on the contrary, clinging to them with obstinacy, although without seeking to impose them on others. The nature of the man is good, sufficiently affectionate, straightforward, loyal, and moderately communicative. Verdi did not like important persons, and was fond of withdrawing into the circle of his intimates. The somewhat flourish surrounding his signature is a self-revelation in this respect, and the signature itself, of like dimensions with the text, betrays no pride. During fifty years it does not vary in letter after letter—a sign of constancy.<sup>1</sup> (*Vincenzo Ferrero de Marinis editore, Paris, 1915, pp. 160-165.*)

In the "Souvenirs" of his publisher, Léon Escudier (1895), we may read the same conclusions from personal contact. With Verdi (so Escudier says) his faults are the excesses of his very qualities. Coolly reserved when in company with mere acquaintances, he threw off constraint when among those to whom he had given his friendship—a friendship that only death could sever. Stiff, frowning, unsmiling, his enemies called him a bear, and this sobriquet did not seem to displeasé him; he himself was the first to adopt it (see especially his letter of September, 1866).

Could Du Locle was one of his few chosen friends, and—even in letters dealing wholly with business matters—Verdi never failed to slip in some affectionate words. Relations between the French librettist and the Italian maestro probably found their inception at the time when they were discussing the adaptation of Schiller's *Don Carlos* as a piece for the Opéra at Paris. Up to that time Verdi had brought out in the "grande capitale" *Nabucco*, *Il Proscritto* (*Evans*), *Le Due Foscari*, *Le Trionfo and Ripulisti* at the Italian, besides (in French) the two best named works, his revised *Macbeth* and *Le Bal Masqué* at Carvalho's Théâtre-Lyrique. The Opéra had produced translations of *Jerusalem* (a new version of *J Lombardi*), *Louis Miller*, and—the first work written especially for this theatre by a French librettist—*Les Vêpres siciliennes*, during the Exposition of 1855.

Following a silence of five years—for Verdi, after *La Forza del Destino*, had written nothing but the French version of his *Macbeth*, which did not succeed—*Don Carlos* was his second attempt with a French libretto. It gave him slight matter for self-congratulation; and the eight months that he had to abide in Paris for the rehearsals



Children of Nesh (about 1894)

By John Brown



C. The Lark

1. spiritual about the office

left a memory equally unpleasant and enduring. In his letters he omitted no opportunity of recalling it with unadorned bitterness. Our correspondence unfortunately breaks off before the representation of *Aida* in Paris (at first at the Italian, later at the Opéra), which was followed, at a long interval, by *Otello* and *Falstaff*. But it appears that to the end he kept up his scathing criticism of "le grand boutique" (the big shop)—his familiar name for the Grand Opéra of Paris.

A great reader, Verdi kept himself informed concerning contemporary dramatic production, always on the lookout for some new subject calculated to awaken his inspiration and appeal to an audience; he would ask his collaborator and friend to send him a certain book or play, and would indicate by a critical word the value, from his viewpoint as a dramatic musician, of any given play or novel. But nothing of all he read during the ten years we are about to explore, could hold his attention. Only the "Egyptian progression" of Mariette, which it was apparently intended to offer, besides, to Grand and Wagner, the subject of *Aida*, scribbled by Du Locle and thereafter translated into Italian by Ghislanzoni, could arrest him, and we know what a remarkable score—one might say, what a masterpiece—he made of it.

After *Aida*, he returned simply to Shakespeare—to Shakespeare, who certainly was Verdi's great literary idol, whom he admired above all the poets from whom he had borrowed subjects for operas—Byron, Schiller, Victor Hugo. After Marlow, he had long cherished the idea of writing a *King Lear*; he himself sketched the scenario, which after his decease was found among his papers. He had also thought of *Cleopatra*. As for *Hamlet*, we shall read the few curious and severe lines which he addressed to Du Locle with regard to the libretto that Barthe and Camé concocted for Androché Thomas. "Povero Shakespeare!" he exclaims.

Amusing the highest importance to the action, the drama, Verdi, once in possession of a libretto, revised and corrected it to suit himself, recklessly overturning the sapient arrangement of airs and recitatives elaborated by his text-writer; for he was, above all, a man of the stage, even holder of violent emotion than of purely musical effect, or, at least, not separating the one from the other. This it is that partly explains the opposition which his works met with on the part of the directors of 1840.

For contra, he cannot find stringing epithets enough to hurl at the stage-ettings—too luxurious for his taste—of the Forbidden Opéra, which for him are no substitute for the *fioc*, the enthusiasm, that he encounters in the lesser Italian theatres.

Having written the score, or ransacked it for a revival in Italy or France, Verdi detested nothing so cordially as the rehearsal. But when this critical period was finally past, and the work on the stage, he demanded from his correspondent an unvarnished report of the reception accorded it by the public, fearing neither the criticisms of some nor the prejudices of others, and dreading above all things, with his honest and sincere artist-conscience, incapable of concessions, to be the dupe of accounts colored by a desire to please.

And now a few words concerning Camille Du Locle, the librettist of *Don Carlo* and *Aïda*.

A son of the sculptor Domenico Du Locle, known under the name of Daniel, he was born in 1828 at Orange (Vaucluse). The son-in-law and secretary of Perrin, the Director of the Opéra from 1858 to 1873, Du Locle had produced (with Méry) on that stage, in the same year as *Don Carlo*, *Le Fiancé de Corinthe*, music by Dugazon. In 1859 he was appointed Director of the Opéra-Comique (*Opéra bouffon*, as Verdi called it), a position which he had to vacate in 1876, after mounting Bizet's *Carmen*, in a very difficult situation, leaving to his father-in-law Perrin the task of setting its affairs in order before ceding his post to Carvalho.

A better artist than director, in the commercial sense of the term, Du Locle had no exaggerated fondness for the old-time repertory of his theater, and a typical remark of his is still current. One evening when the receipts for *La Dame blanche* had been insignificant he observed, with unguessed delight: "At last! The White Lady is no longer making money!"

Between times, Du Locle had verified the libretto of *Aïda*, after a romance by the learned Egyptologist Mariette Bey, thereafter he collaborated with Boyer, to whom he gave Sifaro and then Salamô (after the celebrated Carthaginian romance by Flaubert). In 1868 he still produced *Méry*, music by Alphonse Duvonnoy, at the Opéra. He died in October, 1888, at Capri, where he had dwelt for several years.

In this correspondence will be found several letters written in French by the hand of Madame Verdi (Giuseppina Strepponi). This cantatrice, who had created *La Traviata*, became the maestro's second wife in 1858. At that time she was forty-three years old. She was born in Cremona, and died three years later than the maestro, in 1891.

J.-C. FROSTMAN.



Genoa, Feb. 18, 1866.

Dear Du Locle,

I was glad indeed to receive your letter from Thebes<sup>1</sup>, and to learn that you are safe and sound, and satisfied with your journey. I am writing you immediately to Paris, where, if you enter on the 23rd as you say, this letter of mine will be among the first to greet your hand most heartily and to give you a "welcome home." When we meet you shall give me a description of all the happenings on your travels, of the wonders you have seen, and of the beauties and beauties of a land which once possessed a grandeur and a civilization which I would never bring myself to suppose.

Now take a rest and, at your leisure, send me a libretto of *Hamlet*<sup>2</sup> directly if it is printed, for I am anxious to know how your poets have treated Shakespeare here.

You can readily imagine with what pleasure I again repeat "welcome home," and I dare not say with what delight I am looking forward to meeting you. Good-bye meanwhile. Best regards to your Maria, in which Pippino joins, and believe me now and ever

Your affectionate,

G. Verdi.

Genova, March 14, 1866.

Dear Du Locle,

Thanks for the information you sent me, and thanks for the libretto of *Hamlet*.

Poor Shakespeare! How they have mistreated him! What have they made of the character of Hamlet, so lofty, so original! And then, where is that grand, sweeping action, that elevated, grandiose, sublime atmosphere that we breathe when reading the English *Hamlet*?

The stoker cut like a comic opera taken seriously. And Thomas has done wonders if he conquered success with a libretto built as a whole and in detail, saving the dust in the third act between Hamlet and the Queen, which seems to me very well treated.

Now for Don Carlos, you say?

What do you think, your son, of *Missaolonghi*<sup>3</sup>? Ah, if you could persuade your orchestra that there are efforts which they neither obtain nor can produce! And to think that the Bologna orchestra, conducted (say) by Madama, sounded better than yours, and even the orchestra at Rome (which is a poor orchestra) brought out effects which yours does not know how to bring out! Ah, if you could convince the Smea that her part is better than she thinks! With us the Smea took the leading part. You will see that she will take it at Milan, too! If you could work those two minutes at the Opéra, Don Carlos would be better than it has been so far.

For you, whose legs are perpetually in motion, would it not be well to come here for a few days and to return by way of Milan, to hear Don Carlos? It will go on the stage at the end of the month, perhaps.

<sup>1</sup> Du Locle had just made a trip to Egypt.

<sup>2</sup> *Hamlet*, music by Amédée Thomas, libretto by Barbier and Carré, was to be brought out at the Opéra on March 19th.

<sup>3</sup> *Missaolonghi*, composer, singer and teacher from 1847. Died 1868.

room. How, too, about a month of rehearsal? But hold!—let me tell you if it is worth your while to go to Milan. There is a sufficiently good company, for certain, an orchestra of one hundred players, a change of one hundred and twenty, sixty-six boxes for the closed season. As, if Mariani went to Milan, success would be assured.

I leave you, my dear Du Loche, and inform you that your lovely piece of calligraphy has remained in Egypt. I have not been in the mood to decipher that piece of Gavetti's, to which please give my best regards.

Good-bye; kindest regards from us all for your Maria.

Write me, and always remember me kindly.

G. Verdi

Brescia, St. Agata,

May 3, 1858.

Dear Du Loche,

Although I wrote you only three or four days ago, I let this letter follow, that you may satisfy my curiosity on one point. If you can

I have seen a statement that you are doing *The Cid* with Sardou. Is it true? I will tell you why I ask this—possibly—irrelevant question. Last year, while I was still in Paris, they wrote me from St. Petersburg asking if I would like to write an opera, and suggesting *The Cid*, by Gutzwill. Having Don Carlos on my hands just then, I immediately answered, No. This year they have again approached me with the same proposition. I have not accepted it, and have small chance to accept it. And even this small chance would vanish if you were writing *The Cid*, and it does not seem possible that I could find a protect<sup>r</sup>.

Returning to Mazzolani, I find it most singular that now he should have become impossible, when six months before everybody placed their hopes on him and expected a success.

This is one of the phenomena which do not occur at the Opera!

Do me the kindness to explain to either the ultimate of Paris (or actually Lugaresse to him, which is hard to believe, for Mazzolani is lively and robust, or you have raised him by ill-considered studies (which is more likely).

Good-bye. Write me about *The Cid*, and believe me a very poor

G. Verdi

Brescia, St. Agata, July 18, 1858.

Dear Du Loche,

I do not need to tell you, and I repeat for the hundredth time, it is a blessed hour for me whenever I receive a letter from you, whether you speak to me about your capital, or about your Opera, but still more so when you write about yourself and your wife.

So I thank you ever so much, and Poppa likewise.

<sup>1</sup> A version of *The Cid* by Sardou, Du Loche and Gavetti was really announced at that time as if it were to be produced at the Opera. *The Cid*, which appeared more than twenty-five years since on the stage, or in manuscript, was produced for the first at the Opera, with Verdelin, under the title of *Chimborazo* in 1794, and then by Blaquiere, produced five or six times between by Deshayes, Louis Gallet, and Ed. Blau after that by St. Cyrus and Corville.

I am not surprised at what you say about *Heroldsson*,<sup>1</sup> and the Milan's associations do surprise me. The devil of Parisians have said and done so much for her, that it is quite natural if her head has been tossed a little. What will be still more natural and surprising for you will be to see the Director of the Opéra passing under those *Chausées Fables*, and if it can do no better, engage her even at that rate.

As for *Don Carlos*? I had pretty much forgotten it. What would you make of it with such launched grandeur and ignominy?

Do you know that I have been in Milan? I had not seen it for twenty years, and found it completely renewed and very greatly embellished. There is a new *Colonnade* which is really a beautiful piece of art. While there I paid a visit to our great Poet.<sup>2</sup> Poor old man! If you could see him in all his simplicity and naturalness! I felt like falling on my knees before him, for he is in very deed a serious writer, who will be known not only as the first of our time, but will be reckoned as one of the greatest of all times. He left a great work, a real book, the lover's heart of our lyrics, and sacred Hymns, than which the Prophets made no better. And all is perfect!

What a long string of talk—very likely of no interest to you. You must excuse me. What would you have? . . . . . When I find something fine or good (and we have so little of either), I stop in ecstasy to contemplate it.

We shall go to Genoa next week. I shall take some umbrellas, and if they do not do me good I may go to Castelletto, and far from Bordoneau. On my way home I shall come to Paris to kiss your hand.

Sincerely, my dear Du Locle. Kindest regards to your wife, in which Paganini joins me, and a kiss for the little girl. Write me often, and keep me in kind remembrance, and believe me

Your affectionate,

G. Verdi.

Teliviano, Sept. 8, 1855.

Ever affectionately, my dear Du Locle! That is truly a fine imagination, that you should come and see this old heron at Bassano! At the present writing I am in Teliviano,<sup>3</sup> a village at the foot of the *Agnezzina*, where there are strong sulphur baths, but I shall be at *San' Agata*, near Bassano, by the 10th. In case you come via the *Stupino*, you will get off at *Vidua*. At *Milano* you will take the railway as far as *Borgo S. Donnino*, from *Borgo S. Donnino* a railway takes you to my house—a short journey of an hour and a half. If you could let me know the day and hour when you expect to arrive in *Borgo S. Donnino*, you would

<sup>1</sup>*Heroldsson*, opera by Meyer and Ballo, made by Felician Pavilli given at the Opéra March 4, 1855, repeated in 1856 and 1857 had been supplied the year preceding the grand prize of composition by the Institute. Camille Du Locle had just received details for *A. Thomas's Mendel*.

<sup>2</sup>*Umberto Benvenuto*, lost by Meyer and Du Locle, had secured thirty three representations at its production in 1857. Verdi, who had received a very important nomination of the night minister of relations of the court, was apparently not anxious to see it revived.

<sup>3</sup>*Televisio* (Milano) [1783-1873], in company of which Verdi was to work, in 1855, a *Bayreuth* Man.

<sup>4</sup>*Verdi*, who had given up going to Castelletto, the municipality in the Province, was then at the birth age of *Teliviano*, seven kilometers from *Borgo S. Donnino*, at the junction of *Tronca*, and consequently not far from the residence of *San' Agata*.

And me at the Station, at all events, you will find at the station name-  
less hospitals that will bear you swiftly to me. If you return by way  
of the Caracole,<sup>1</sup> I will accompany you as far as Genoa, where you will  
see my apartment and humble abode. So hasten no longer, a pack on  
your back, and away. You cannot imagine what a festival I and  
Foppina are enjoying in anticipation, and it would be still better if your  
adorable Maria were to accompany you.

So without greetings, till we meet again.

Affectionately,  
G. Verdi.<sup>2</sup>

Saint' Agata, Nov. 18, 1855.

Dearest Du Lock,

I did not reply earlier—pray excuse me—because I wanted to read  
all the *Dramas* you sent me, but, alas, not one of them is for me. The  
best are too long, too expensive, and just now I do not care to deal with  
that kind. The exception might be *Adriano Leni*.<sup>3</sup>

Most assuredly, there are many fine ones, but none of genuine  
interest except that of *Adriano*. Let us think no more of them. Might  
I dare ask you to read me others?

I venture this blunt request in reliance on your goodness of heart;  
for you have a good right to tell me to go to ———.

So take heart again, my dear Du Lock, look around, make inquiries,  
and send me another lot.

Please remember that I should not know what to do with dramas  
like *Le Tour de Naïk*,<sup>4</sup> or *L'Abbé de Castro*. I want things that are  
more inspiring, more simple, more in our style. I say in our style because  
things like those in *Le Tour de Naïk* or *L'Abbé* now appear impossible  
to me.

We shall stay here this whole month, and perhaps longer, but shall  
be home again before Christmas. Tell me what's going on in the capital,  
and in the big shop. Remember us to your Maria, now for Christmas.

G. Verdi

Saint' Agata, Dec. 2, 1855.

Dearest Du Lock,

How many excuses I ought to proffer you, and how many thanks  
I think to think of all the letters you have written me that still remain  
unanswered. Shame! Shame! Shame!

What are you doing now with that poor *Blanca*,<sup>5</sup> who was so barbarously  
mistreated in that affair of *Les Supplices*?<sup>6</sup> Now, I believe that  
if you had not pushed her so hard, and had held otherwise for only two

<sup>1</sup>The Caracole is the street leading to the *Meat-market* between *Genoa* and *Montefiore*.

<sup>2</sup>The letter is addressed to "Monsieur L'abbé de Castro, par M. Du Lock, 4 à Saint-Agata, par Genova, Jan-1857."

<sup>3</sup>*Adriano Leni*, by Verdi and Agostini, produced in April, 1855.

<sup>4</sup>*Le Tour de Naïk*, by Verdi and Fr. Gualandini, produced in 1855.

<sup>5</sup>As the subject of *Les Supplices*, which took place on Wednesday, Nov. 13, 1855, *Blanca*, who had sung *Le Prisonnier* several times, was to have sung the role of *Valentine*. In the dramatic letter it was suggested that this was an impossible task for her, and she was replaced by Marie Sam. For *Blanca*, the representative, *Blanca* now appearing, was very mediocre. Furthermore, filling the void of *Blanca* was unexcused.

weeks, she would have acquitted herself admirably, if it is a fact that she possesses high talent and earnest for the stage.

Many thanks for the information concerning *Rebecca*. Although not on terms of familiar intimacy with him, I deplore as everybody does the loss of the Great Artist. I have read all the figured editions at his tomb. The one by Ferris is the best. That by Thomas is the worst; he estimates him all from a too narrow point of view. The bounds of art are wider, as, rather, limitless. A *Camacottia* can be a work of art as well as an operatic *Grand Finale*, if it possess the essential inspiration.

I am more than ever embarrassed by that business with St. Petersburg. Do not forget me, and help me if you can.

In view of your grammar, I await another lot of dramas.

Kindest regards from us for your Maria, and—now for Christmas P. S. We shall stay here till the 18th.

G. Verdi.

Genoa, Jan 18, 1855.

Dearest Du Locle,

The big ship was not enough for you, as you have reached out for the little one. But how about Ferris' and the opera? Have you deserted him? Anyhow, I wish you all the good fortune that ever you can imagine.

You are always giving me hopes of seeing you here, but they have never come. For the rest I have to tell you that in a few days I shall go to Milan to assist at the rehearsal of *La Fanciulla del Teatro*. I have reconstructed the last scene, and some gentlemen or other has promised *Blowick* in my name that I should go. In case *La Signorina* is represented tomorrow at La Scala, I shall start for Milan the day after. So before going I am writing you a couple of lines.

Kindest regards again to your Maria from Pappia and myself. I sleep your hand affectionately, and remain,

Your loving,

G. Verdi.

Saint Agata, April 18, 1855.

Dearest Du Locle,

I am very sorry that I left Genoa so suddenly without having had the pleasure of seeing *Nardoa*,<sup>1</sup> which I have wished to do for a long time. But what could you have? The temptation to see the green fields was too great, now that the season of fine weather has come. So I am here, and shall probably stay here until it is time to go to Cuneo, where I hope, or rather expect, to see you.

What do you want me to say to you about your project in the *Opéra-Comique*? Do not lay too much stress on this notion, which may be useless for you, or at least, if not useless, of no benefit whatever. I have never attained to self-expression at the *Opéra*; there is no reason for believing that I should do better at the *Opéra-Comique*. So why lose time, reputation, and money? Honestly, I have a heart's disposition which does not go on all fours with the velvet of the Capital.

<sup>1</sup>Verdi, in a week of a month, seems to have contrived without collaborating with Nardoa, who was about to produce *Faust*. See the two letters next following.

Always bear me in kind remembrance, and always trust in the friendship of

G. Verdi.

P.S. Best regards to your most amiable father-in-law. My wife has been in Cremona for two days to visit a sister. And I shall go there to-morrow, but only for a short, very short, time.

A LETTER FROM MAURICE VERDI<sup>1</sup>

October, 1868.

Dear Monsieur De Lada,

I have read, you have read, he has read, but *Procello*, for all the fine things it contains, is not a piece for Verdi. It neither makes one laugh nor cry, there are no distinctly drawn characters, in a word, it lacks the mystery and originality Verdi would prefer in a comedy-opera. Again—for this time, too. The trouble is, that Verdi cannot make up his mind to cross the Alps, and should you ever succeed in obtaining from him what you desire, it will be only at Paris, mark my word. For some time he has been fixed, rooted like his trees, on the Italian soil, and more particularly in the soil of Sant' Agata. If you knew all the splendid projects that have been finished before his eyes, he tempt him—it is incredible that he should not have taken the trouble to consider them, at least for half a day. So it is, and I have not the strength to strive with that obstinate Neapolitan!

I have seen the announcement of a *libretto* opera by Gardou and Offenbach! What do you say of it? I have heard nothing further from Blumhain directly, I have been assured, however, that his affairs are in the best of order and that he is making much money. So much the better. I do not know what country you will be in when the letter arrives in Paris, for nowadays it would appear that you make your abode with horses and locomotives, but sometime you will receive it somewhere.

Embrace your wife from me, and give little Claire a kiss.

Believe me ever, my dear Monsieur De Lada,

Your devoted friend,

Giuseppe Verdi.

Basovis, Oct. 4, 1869

P.S. We have heard a tenor named Procello very favorably spoken of, and it may help you that I mention him.

To what address should we write you now—Grand Opéra or Opéra-Comique?<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>My title paper has two grand letters from Maurice Verdi in the correspondence addressed to De Lada. The *Procello* mentioned here is a comedy-opera adapted from a piece by Gardou (1844) by de Lassillon-Taligou. He set to music by Maurice Strakosky, that work had been played at the Théâtre on Jan. 8. Libretto revised by Meyer in 1858, with music by Offenbach.

<sup>2</sup>This was probably de des Opéra given at the Salle in 1858.

<sup>3</sup>De Lada was then a candidate for the directorship of the Opéra-Comique, with De Lorent.

San' Agata, Oct. 4, 1860.

Dearest Du Locle,

I have received *Patru!* and read it through in a trice. A fine drama—brave, powerful, and, above all, sensuously effective. It's a pity that the woman's part should necessarily be hateful. There is, among so many, one situation that I find particularly new, when the conspirators threaten and bury beneath the moon the Spanish patriot. Fine, and new? Thanks, a thousand thanks, my dear Du Locle, for not having neglected to send me this fine drama, which caused me to pass a delightful hour, and made me admire still more the genius of Sardou.

So you are continually outside of the railways, and have also actually found a conductor? I compliment you on your feat; may you find all the rest, and so learn your excellent troupe as to fill your theatre twice daily, then filling your strength to overflowing!

And the big show! marching triumphantly upon its laurels! Happy why why, by profiting their successes with a studious, nerveless, bloodless modest performance, fill the theatre regularly! I see nothing new announced for this year! As for that, they are right.

I cannot tell you when and whether I shall come to Paris. It is easier for you, who are always in railway coaches, to make a flying trip to Italy. But there is nothing more to say about that! It is such a short journey now that one can, so to speak, breakfast in Paris and return to Italy for dinner.

Pippino sends her special regards both to you and your Maria, to whom please remember me too. Good-bye, my dear Du Locle. With me well.

G. Verdi.

Genoa, Dec. 5, 1860.

Dearest Du Locle,

Thank you for *Frauena!* which I read at a sitting, and if (as the Review<sup>1</sup> says) it were all as picturesque and original as the first three acts, this drama would be extraordinarily fine; but the last two had some shortcomings, although they are effective, and tremendously so. However *the Frauena* may be, if I had to write at Paris I should prefer, to the outside (as you call it) of *Maffioli* just and *Hobley*, one that is finer and more popular—that of Sardou, with Du Locle to write the verses. But, about it is not the trouble of writing an opera, or the judgment of the Parisian public, that restrains me, but simply the certainty that I cannot succeed in having my music played in Paris so I want it played! It's a most singular thing that an author must always feel himself contradicted when he ventures an opinion, or doubted when he makes a concession! In your constant theories (he it said without a measure of an epigram) you are too knowing! Everyone wants to judge according to his own conception, his own taste, and, what is worse, according to a system, without taking into account the character or the individuality

<sup>1</sup>Paris, drawn in the acts by Gauthier, had been given at the *Parc-Royal-Madeira*, May 15, 1860. Later, Sardou adapted it for an opera with L. Dallot, under the title of *Falafina*, given at the *Opéra* Dec. 30, 1860.

<sup>2</sup>*Frauena*, by Malher and Malley, had been represented at the *Gymnase Dramatique* on Oct. 20.

<sup>3</sup>*Le Reveur des Deux Rois* to which Verdi subscribed.

of the author. Everyone wants to give an opinion, wants to express a doubt, and the author, after living long in that atmosphere of doubt, cannot help, in the course of time, being somewhat shaken in his convictions, and ends by correcting, by accommodating, and, more covertly speaking, by spoiling his work. And that it means, if not finally, has on one's hands not an opera cast all in one piece, but a mosaic, however flat you may think it. It is nothing but a mosaic.

You will raise the objection that at the Opéra they have a whole string of splendid masterworks made in this fashion. Call them masterworks, if you will, but I may be permitted to observe, that they would be far nearer perfection if one did not notice now and again the patches and the jagged work. Surely, no one will call in question the genius of Rossini? Well, in spite of all his genius, in *William Tell* this fatal atmosphere of the Opéra is perceptible, and sometimes, though more rarely than in the case of other authors, one feels that there is something too much, or something too little, and that the musical deviation is not so free and easy as in *Il Barbiere*. With all this I do not mean to express disapproval of what is done in your city. I mean only to tell you that for me it is absolutely impossible to pass again under the *Crochante Fards* of your theatre, that, feeling as I do, no real success is possible unless I write as I feel, free from any influence whatsoever, and without reflecting that I am writing for Paris any more than for the folks in the moon. Moreover, it is necessary that the artists should sing, not in their way, but in my way; that the players and singers "who, in Paris, really possess great ability" should exhibit equally good will and flexibility; that all should depend on me, that everything should be controlled by a single will—my own. This may seem a trifle tyrannical—and yet it is true. For if the opera is made of one cast, there is a *Duty of Conscription*, and all factors should combine to prevent this *Duty*.

You may say, that nothing prevents the attainment of all this at Paris. No, in Italy it can be done, no, rather, I can always do it, but not in France. When I, for example, show myself in the *loggia* of an Italian theatre, no one dares to express an opinion, a criticism, before he is thoroughly informed, and no one ever risks asking irrelevant questions. For instance, in the *loggia* of the *Opéra*, after four chords, one hears whispers all around the, "Oh, ce n'est pas bon!"—"Viel commode!"—"Ce n'est pas de bon goût!"—"Ça s'ira peut-être à Paris." Whatever do these several words mean—do they *put*—a Paris—signify in the presence of a work of art, which ought to be universal?

The aim and substance of all this is, "that I am not a conquest for Paris." I do not know that I possess sufficient talent, but I do know that my ideas with regard to art are greatly at variance with yours. I believe in Inspiration, you believe in Symmetry. I admit your criticism for the sake of argument, but I demand criticism, which you do not possess, in feeling and feeling an opinion.

What I want is Art, however it be manifested, not arrangement, artificiality, system, which you prefer. Am I wrong? Am I right? Be that as it may, I have good reason to suspect that my ideas are greatly at variance with yours, and I will say, besides, that my backbone is not, like those of so many others, so pliant that I will give up and renounce my convictions, which are very profound and actual. And I should also



be very sorry to write for you, my dear De Looze, an opera which you might have to withdraw after a dozen or two of representations, as Puvion did with *Don Carlo*. Were I a score of years younger I would say, "Let us see if your theatrical tendencies later take a turn more favorable to my notions." But time passes rapidly, and at present we cannot possibly come to an understanding, unless something unforeseen occurs that is quite beyond my ken. Should you come here, as you gave my wife cause to hope, we will talk it over again in person; if you don't come, it is likely that I shall make a trip to Paris towards the end of February.

If you do come to Genoa, I can no longer offer you much (a specimen of me at best), because we have no Genoese cook, but at all events you will not die of hunger, and you will certainly find two friends who are most kindly disposed toward you, and to whom your presence will afford the keenest delight.

What a long letter! I really had to give you some explanations, and you will excuse me for not having made them with greater brevity.

A thousand good wishes from us two for your dear Maria, and a kiss for little Clara.

Good-bye

G. Verdi.

FROM MARCO VERDI TO DR LOOZE.

Dear M. De Looze,

Please pardon my long delay in thanking you for the little diary which you were so kind as to send me, and which is very useful. Also you are not ignorant of the misfortunes which has befallen me, and you can easily imagine what sad duties I have had to fulfill, and in how successful a state they have left my mind and heart.

Verdi has not given up his trip to Paris. For that time I was seeing myself to settle my obligations and to show in person my acknowledgments for all your kindness to me.

Kindly excuse the disorderliness of this letter, and give my best regards to your charming wife. Believe me,

Your devoted,

Luigiina Verdi

Genoa, Jan. 9, 1876

Genoa, Jan. 17, 1876.

The Barilli is 38, and has a fine stage presence. A good ballet-dancer. Good actress. For all that, the effect is always raw. The audience admires, but doesn't cook. The fault—her only fault—is her 38 years! Such are the conditions in Naples, and here, too. Every one tells me to take the Laurenti. They all say that she cannot dance like the Barilli, that she cannot act like the Barilli, but that the effect on the public is sure. So think it over and engage the Laurenti, if you can.

I see that matters in Paris are rather quiet. How long will this quiet last!

Is it true that M. Ferry will also take over the *Théâtre-Lyrique*? May heaven inspire him to abandon the routine of your musical tradition!

But he will go on with the idea of this big stage—a heavy stage with tainted blood, productive only of pedants and -winkings.

Good-bye, good-bye, my dear De Luché. I hope to see you soon.  
G. Verdi.

P. P. Pappone has gone away. She is in Cremona, where her mother lies dead—an old lady of about eighty who has been ailing for a long time.

Genoa, Jan. 25, 1878.

Dear De Luché,

Unhappily De Luché you have taken care not to send me the literary writings of Wagner. You are aware that I desire to know him from this side, too, and therefore I beg you to do what you have not done. I beg of you to send *Die Meistersinger* along with them. I still believe that *Meister* might be a subject for a grand opera—always provided that it were in my style. So it would be impossible for the Opéra, but superlatively possible here.

*Fra Scrupoli* has been produced up to now at Naples, Florence, Bologna, Turin and Milan. A curious fact—everywhere the first three acts have been well received, and the last two have met with pedants or disapproval. This agrees, as you know, with my own opinion, but I did not expect to hear this unanimous verdict from the public. So I am obliged to give up the idea of making an opera of this design.

I must speak to you again about the *Donizetti*. Yesterday evening an *Autore* of the theatre told me that she is the best dancer in the ballet—that on the stage she does not look at all old. Corricelli, whom I have known since his debut, was here and said the same thing; and, as regards her age, he could assure me that she was not over thirty-two.

I write you all this because I should not wish to have to blame myself later for my first severe pronouncement. After all, what is one to believe? The operas of Naples was conveyed by a person worthy of all confidence. I ran up the name of the one who spoke about her yesterday evening. You could best decide by seeing her yourself. For the rest, I believe that she is an excellent ballet dancer. Just now she is having poor success at Naples, but to me that is no proof that she might not succeed overwhelmingly in Paris. When the *Comte* and the *De Ferraris* came to Paris, they were no longer an attraction in Italy.

Pappone has returned from Cremona, and, although much cast down—as she wrote you—by the death of her mother, is in very fair health, and desires to be remembered to you and your Maria. So do I. Good-bye.

G. Verdi.

Genoa, Feb. 26, 1878.

Dear De Luché,

Do you want to help me in doing a good deed? It concerns a young musician, known as one of our best, who has written a *Handel*<sup>1</sup>, his name is Pasco. I think you know him by name. This young musician wishes to set *Baron's Patrie* to music, and to this end he requires the permission of the author of the drama. He has applied to me, supposing that I am

<sup>1</sup>Given at Genoa in June, 1874, and at La Scala in Milan on Feb. 7, 1875.

acquainted with Sweden, and I apply to you. Could you, without inconveniencing yourself, do me a favor and assist a young musician by asking Sweden's permission to let him see Parma in concert? I should be very grateful to you for helping Puccini. Let me hear from you as soon as possible, however the conclusion may be.

The weather continues wretched, and will consequently delay my coming to Paris. Before that, I was obliged to go to Saint Agata. And now, what are you doing? Are things running smoothly?—and for how long? So you are finally established at the Opéra-Comique? Do you like it? We shall have a long talk about it in Paris, for the present I am well posted, for, as you know, I read the *Figaro*.

The *Don* has had a genuine success at Milan in *San Ruggenato*, and with her, and at least equal to her, the basso *Medici*.

Kindest regards to you and your Maria, from whom Pippino has had a letter.

Good-bye, good-bye.

G. Verdi.

Naples, Feb. 27, 1870.<sup>1</sup>

The rehearsals of *Aida* with orchestra have not yet begun. Directly after the first rehearsal I shall write you, or telegraph, and then you may be fairly certain that ten days thereafter the opera will be brought out. So you really intend coming to hear *Aida* again? Then do not repeat any such representations as at Milan. Knowing the two ladies, you will not find other artists here equal to those, nor the chorus, nor all the rest of it. Still, the orchestra is good and will certainly rival the execution at Milan. As for the men *in action*, we are a thousand miles behind that in Milan. For a Frenchman, that means a great deal. You, who are satisfied with the luxury of the Opéra, will find it difficult to reconcile yourself to our poverty. As for myself, it is certain that if we could have had, in Milan, the mounting or the scenery that we had in Parma, the rest would have satisfied me. I greatly admire a fine frame, but it must not distract my attention from the pictures. This is the reason that I am not over-enthusiastic for the splendor of the Opéra.

Good-bye, my dear Du Locle. Best regards from us for your Maria, and believe me ever

Your affectionate

G. Verdi.

Genoa, Ma (March?) 28, 1870.

Dear Du Locle,

Two words to inform you that this evening I embark on the steamer for Nice and shall soon be in Paris. On arriving at Marseille I shall send a telegram to you and also to Leon (Escudier) to let you know when I shall arrive.

It's an age since I had news from you, I am longing to get some.

No good-bye, but "in long."

G. Verdi.

<sup>1</sup>Obviously it escaped Mr. Frohmann's attention that the date Naples, Feb. 27, 1870, is impossible. The letter must have been written in 1873 for the simple reason that the dates for *Aida* are Paris December 26, 27th; Milan, February 6, 1874; Parma, April, 1874; Naples, March 24, 1875—42.

Genoa, Sunday  
[After April 24, 1873]

Dear Du Loick,

I am sending you only a couple of lines to say that we arrived here yesterday evening after a delightful journey, and to thank you a thousand times for all the kindness shown me during our brief sojourn in Pisa.

I return the sketch, etc., etc. Do you wish me to tell you my opinion? It is a subject founded on a fable, and on which it would be very difficult to avoid certain well-known effects. Besides, it is not a comedy-opera. Take notice that I am not passing judgment, which would be too venturesome on my part, but merely offering an opinion. Look, and work again, and then in the end we shall find something.

Do not have *il Signore y di Rey translated*, for I have some one to translate it into Italian. A thousand kind wishes for your dear Madda and you from us both. We leave on Wednesday for Sanl' Agata.

Good-bye from your

G. Verdi.

Genoa, April 25, 1873.

Dear Du Loick,

In the book "*Studios sur l'Espagne contemporaine*" I find a summary of a comedy by Lopez d'Ayala<sup>1</sup> that strikes me as excellent for the Opéra-Comique. Look up the work, open it at page 116, and begin reading at the sentence *Le premier acte se passe au milieu des premiers bouffes, etc., etc., down to the end.*

Of course, it is difficult to judge from a summary, but it seems to me that the subject would suit you. If you agree with me, find the comedy and have it translated. I leave to someone for Sanl' Agata, so am writing in haste. Good-bye, good-bye.

G. Verdi.

Sanl' Agata, May 22, 1873.

Dear Du Loick,

I have read the *Espos in duas* by d'Ayala. It is made by a master-hand, but—no neither weeps nor laughs. It is cold, and to me it does not appear adapted for music. I am exceedingly sorry that I induced you to have the translation made. Put a stop to it, if it is not too late.

I have read the Egyptian program. It is well done, the music is clever and splendid, and there are two or three situations which, if not wholly new, are certainly very fine. But who did it? Behind it all is the hand of an expert, familiar with such work, and thoroughly acquainted with the stage. Now let us consider the general foreign situation in Egypt, and then we shall decide. Who would have the Italian libretto made? Of course, it would have to be done in a hurry.

In great haste I acquiesce your hand and say good-bye.

G. Verdi.

<sup>1</sup>Lopez de Ayala, Spanish dramatist and dramatist, born in 1842 at Guadalupe (Murcia), died in Madrid Dec. 28, 1873. His "*Comedias Completas*" have been published in seven volumes (1869-1894).

Saint Agata, June 9, 1879.

Dear Du Locle,

As yet I have not received the two plates you sent me, but perhaps the ink has longed. I have read *Ritornello*.<sup>1</sup> It has little action, and is too serious. I should prefer some comic relief.

There is no telegraph wire to this place; it goes only to Borgo San Donnino. You might send telegrams addressed to Borgo San Donnino, Italy, by post to Novara, but you would not gain much time, for instance, if you were to telegraph at 5 or 10 o'clock in the evening. I should receive the telegram at noon the next day. So one would gain twenty-four hours.

If an agreement is reached on Egypt, you would come here. That is what gives me the greatest pleasure. Now I am really desirous for an agreement, and between ourselves as we can soon come to an understanding with regard to the arrangements to be made. Only try to allow yourself the least time possible.

Meanwhile I will tell you good-bye "all there."

G. Verdi.

P.S. I shall write again immediately after having received and read the plates.

Saint Agata, June 9, 1879.

Dear Du Locle,

Here I am at work on Egypt; and first of all it is necessary for me to arrange time to compose the opera, because we have to do with a work of vast proportions (as if we had the *My Ship* in view), and because the Italian poet has to begin by finding thoughts to put into the mouths of the characters and turn them into poetry. Now, supposing that I can get through in time, these are the conditions:

- (1) I will have the libretto made at my expense.
- (2) I will send persons to Cairo, at my expense, to prepare and conduct the opera.
- (3) I will furnish copies of the score and relinquish all right and title to the libretto and music to the kingdom of Egypt only, reserving to myself all rights in libretto and music for all other parts of the world.

In compensation there shall be paid me the sum of one hundred and fifty thousand francs, drawn on the bank of Rothschild in Paris, the moment the score is sent off.

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This is a letter as dry and formal as a bill of exchange. You will prove me, by dear Du Locle, if I do not dilate on other matters this time. Excuse me, and believe me ever

Your affectionate,

G. Verdi.

<sup>1</sup>Quoted by Cesare Bocchi (*Théâtre de Verdotti*, 1880), after the recension of the same name (1884).

## TELEGRAPHIC REPLY FROM DE LOUVE TO THE FERRARIO LETTER.

[About June 18, 1870.]

Italy. Verdi begs Sign Ferrario per Benetti. Receive the following despatch. Am authorized to inform you that the proposition was handed fifty thousand francs is accepted. The conditions were shall be ready end January. Maestro. Assent. Will send definitive reply to Cairo. Greetings.—De Louve.

SOURCE OF THE AGREEMENT FOR AINA IN VERDI'S *EGYPTIENS*.

With this private agreement between \_\_\_\_\_ and the composer of music G. Verdi.

(1) Maestro Verdi will compose an Italian opera in music (adapted from a program, etc., etc.) entitled *Aina*, to be represented at the Italian Theatre at Cairo in the course of the month of January, 1871, the text to be made by an Italian poet selected by the abovesaid Maestro.

(2) Maestro Verdi will retain all rights in the abovesaid score and libretto for all other parts of the world. In due time there shall be sent to Egypt a copy of the score from which the vocal and orchestral parts shall be copied.

(3) Maestro Verdi is not obligated to go to Cairo to conduct the rehearsals, but he will send a person on whom he relies, in order that the opera may be executed according to his directions. The expenses of this person shall be borne by \_\_\_\_\_, and the expense for the poet, which at present can be set at twenty thousand francs, is likewise to be borne by \_\_\_\_\_.

(4) While the opera is being played at Cairo, Maestro Verdi may, at the same time, have it played in some other large theatre in Europe.

(5) Maestro Verdi will indicate the artists who are to assume the characters.

(6) For this work there shall be paid to Maestro Verdi by the sum of one hundred and fifty thousand francs, payable in Paris at the Bank of Rothschild [sic] as soon as the score is sent off.

Sant' Agata, June 18, 1870.

Dear De Louve,

I am impatient to see you—first, for the pleasure of seeing you, secondly, because I think that in a very short time we shall agree on those modifications which, it seems to me, it would be well to make in *Aina*. I have already considered them, and shall submit my ideas to you.

I asked Benetti if he would be disposed to remain to Cairo in case we made a contract. Now that I know that he is negotiating with Engler,<sup>2</sup> I would not for all the world have him turn down an engagement at Paris, which would be much more advantageous for him.

<sup>1</sup>As a writer of the 18th, assigned to his wife. De Louve agrees that the arrangement is concluded and that Verdi's proposition have been accepted.

<sup>2</sup>Emmanuel Benetti, a pupil of Verdi and his first wife, born in Udine, near Trieste, Aug. 25, 1822, among members of the two Verdi families, and residential musician, in which capacity he was to conduct *Aina* at Cairo.

<sup>3</sup>Engler had been director of the Theatre Italien in Paris since the month of 1861-2.

I am glad that that Egyptian contract has not yet been trumpeted abroad in the newspapers. It seems impossible that France should not have got wind of it! Of course, it cannot be kept secret forever, but it will be quite unnecessary to make the terms known. The sum, at least, ought to be kept secret, for it would serve as a pretext for detaching as many poor devils folk. These would be cited, without bad, the 400,000 francs for the Builders of Memphis; the poverty of Beethoven, the misery of Schubert, the vengefulness of Mozart in search of a living, etc., etc.

The two dramas you read me recently also do not strike me as adapted for making a good opera-romance. The one by Prilhet lacks action—that by Sardon<sup>1</sup> has too much—that is to say, there is too much seeking after effect, too many smart conceits. One scenario is the end. We shall talk about it. Good-bye, but not for long!

G. Verdi.

Saint' Agata, July 12, 1859.

Dear Du Loock,

I have not written you before, because Giulio Ricordi has been here with the poet who will verify *Aida*. We have agreed upon everything. I hope soon to receive the scores for the first act, for then I myself could get to work. We have made some modifications in the plot as the third act between *Aida* and Radames. By this means the hastefulness of the betrothal is mitigated without in the least detracting from the scenic effect. I shall send it to you. I thank you for the information you have given me concerning the Egyptian musical instruments, which may be of service in various details. I should like to give them the Builders of the third act in the finale, but the effect, I fear, would fall flat. I assure that it is horribly distasteful to me to employ, for example, the instruments of Dix. They are intolerable in a more modern argument—but for the Pharaohs?

And tell me whether there were peasants of *Aida*, or of any other divinity. In the books I have skimmed through I find that this service was reserved for men. Let me have these points, and give serious thought to the costumes. If only this matter is carefully done, I shall see that they will serve for Europe, too.

I hear that you have had a success with the *Stabat*.<sup>2</sup> I am glad of it, more especially if it continues and runs up receipts.

I have received the books from D (C). Make a note of it. Kindest regards to your daughter (perhaps).

Good-bye, good-bye.

G. Verdi.

Saint' Agata, July 23, 1859.

Dear Du Loock,

From your silence I begin to suspect that the delirium of the war may have impeded even the directors of the Opéra-Comique to rush to the frontier! Alas! what a calamity is all this war, which, although business for a long time, I could never be so imagined as breaking out all

<sup>1</sup>The probably refers to *Fernand*, by Sardon, produced at the Opéra-Comique on March 14, 1859, and to *Julie* by Odette Prilhet, a piece first played in 1847, which the Comte de Progan had also revived in March.

<sup>2</sup>Verdi's *Stabat Mater* by Saint-Georges, had just come out of the Opéra-Comique on July the 7th.

of a sudden, like a bolt from the blue. What say you of it, my dear Du Loche?

I have heard nothing further about your contract. Perhaps the war has turned the heads of our Orientals, too—or, rather, has turned them aside from matters theatrical. To me they are indifferent, and what we cannot do now we shall do later, and later still. Only we have to think about the libretto, of which nearly half is already done.

So say write to me. First tell me about yourself, then about your theatre, then about the Egyptian contract.

Good-bye, good-bye. kindest regards from us for your Maria, and believe me ever your affectionate

G. Verdi.

Sanl' Agata, Aug. 23, 1870.

Dear Du Loche,

I am heartless over the news from France, and wish that I were, not an individual, but government and nation in one, to do what is not done—and perhaps, what cannot be done?

Yesterday I had allowed my soul to hope, to-day I am protected! Up to now there is a certain fatality in this war, unobtainable—it must be said—with some too much foresight! But French valor will and by overcoming destiny and that fatality you have hitherto encountered! Dear Du Loche, a hundred times I have started to write you, and a hundred times the pen has fallen from my hand. I have seen how about, but for several days, was finally found? I know how well you love him, and what a consolation it must have been to you to learn that he was among the living, and unharmed? I do not dare ask you for a line, but, if you will and can, write only to tell me that you, your wife, your dear ones, are well—I shall be truly grateful!

Good-bye, my dear Du Loche. Take heart, and think kindly of  
Your affectionate

G. Verdi.

Sanl' Agata, Aug. 24, 1870.

Dearst Du Loche,

Under present conditions I have really not ventured to speak to you about the Cairo contract. You ask me for it, and I send it herewith, with my signature, but with reservations regarding two articles which you will find justified, and will have approved by the *Marietta*.

You will have the goodness, I trust, to demand for me the fifty thousand francs for which I send you the receipt. Take from that sum two thousand francs and give them, in whatever way you think best, to all of your brave and unfortunate wounded. With the remaining forty-eight thousand buy me *caffè* for Italy. Keep the papers by you, and give them to me the first time we see each other—and I hope it will be soon.

I wrote you yesterday. To-day I have only to press your hand and say that I love you dearly.

Good-bye, good-bye.

G. Verdi!

<sup>1</sup>Among Du Loche's papers we find, dated Oct. 23, 1870, a bill from the serial number *Repubblica* addressed to Du Loche, 31 rue La Fayette, "A *Provisione* (summa) No. 2 and having by Paul Du Loche. Leggend: Verdi non intende (summa) No. 2, 200 fr." In Verdi's letters there is no passage referring to the purchase of this bill, where later a reference to it



FROM VERDI AND VERDI TO DU LOCLE.

Genoa, Feb. 4, 1871.

Being the most expert in deciphering your handwriting, it was I who read your letter of the 23d (justed to-day) to Verdi and Corticelli, who listened with profound emotion, for we all love you, dear friend, and all of us love our sublime, devoted France. I read your letter broadly, tears choking my voice while perusing those lines that told, with lofty simplicity, of marches of self-sacrificed, of greatness of soul, of patriotism, wrought amidst sacrifices and privations without end! *Fort, dear Du Locle!*—may blessings fall on you and on that great country, even more admirable in disaster than in prosperity! Paris has capitulated; but, while its capitulation was expected and inevitable, its resistance has surpassed anything that one could imagine, whether in length or in heroism! A few days ago I wrote your wife, who must be suffering greatly away from you, unable to aid you in the least in your works of charity among your sick and wounded. From here I can see how you, with your essentially virile nature, and your exquisite, almost feminine delicacy, are helping, encouraging, consoling these glorious victims of a barbarous war, who have found help in their anguish beneath your hospitable roof. Again I say—blessings on you!

I send this letter by way of Brussels, in order that it may reach you more surely and sooner. Verdi wishes to add some lines, so I make room for him.

In your heart of hearts you know, dear Du Locle, that in Genoa there are two hearts that love you—two friends!—(Good-bye! good-bye!)

Giuseppe Verdi.

Dear Du Locle,

You know me, and I know that you will believe me when I tell you that I suffer with you and that my sorrow is equal to yours in the great disaster that has overtaken your country. We, far from the scene, saw matters clearly, and forecast the immense catastrophe. In spite of this, the news came to us as though unexpected, because hope never deserts one, especially him who suffers! What can I say to you? Am you in extremity? No! You of Paris, so brave in resistance, will now be noble and resigned in misfortune. Be patient, and the future, I hope, will be propitious to you. I need not tell you that in me you have a friend who loves you greatly, and on whom you can rely in all things and for all things.

I press your hand and say, with aching heart, good-bye!

Affectionately,

G. Verdi.

(In Miss Verdi's hand.)

P.S. Write as a line about our mutual friends and acquaintances—our details to pronounce their names!

Genoa, April 11, 1871.

Dear Du Locle,

Am very glad to hear that you are in Arcoham. Have thought much of you, particularly during these recent days of such generous sacrifices for your country—but at least you are distant and in the bosom of your family! A piece of good luck, after all! What shall I

say to you about the last calamity in France? It is far worse, a thousand times worse, than last battle! From the havoc of war, a great nation recovers easily after some years of self-denial and self-sacrifice, but who can forget the consequences of this fearful social struggle?

We shall have Guizot to-morrow, and return to our corner in Sant' Agata. When shall we meet?—who knows, and who can tell? I expect to come to Paris, but at present cannot decide on anything.

Give my most affectionate regards to your Marie, who must have suffered. A kiss to Claire. With much love, good-bye.

G. Verdi.

Dear Carlo, dear Marie,

I shall say nothing about the President or about the conflict with your brothers. Your sin is not to be corrected without a rebelling of these moralistic diabolisms. I shall only say that I love you both, and wish for your dear, unhappy France no end of her war! I embrace you, and am, with all my heart, your

Josephine Verdi

Sant' Agata, June 6, 1871.

Dear Du Loak,

I sent you a letter to Alagona about twelve days ago, and Poppino also wrote to your wife at the same address—now I have received yours of June 1 from Paris, and am very glad that you have not had to suffer military impress. I shall not mention your Democratic country, for it is of no use to reopen a wound that still aches. I can only commend your beautiful land to heal her own hurts, and with such resources that will be readily revived if your men of politics look around them, and do not blame others for their own delinquency. So long as you have Fourier, who has eyes only to see Italian conquest, and do not perceive the fatal infirmities which they bear in their own hearts, more and yet more war are indeed to be feared!

Demetri Bey was here for a few hours, and told me he would come back later with Mervine. Oh, if you could be the third! From the moment you come to An,<sup>2</sup> you cannot imagine what pleasure Poppino and I would have. Anyhow, whether with Signor Bey or by yourself, I expect you, and ardently wish for your coming, all the more because just now it will be very difficult for me to come to Paris.

Once again I repeat that I am very glad that you have not had to suffer military injuries, and that I wish and hope all good things for you with all my heart for the future.

Greetings from us for your Marie. I embrace you most heartily. Good-bye. Affectionately

G. Verdi.

Sant' Agata, June 15, 1871.

Dear Du Loak,

I know that Paris is rallying and will recover her former brilliancy, and I wish that she may prosper and find a stable government, for the peace of ourselves, ourselves, and all the world. But what am I interfering in? By this time you will have received my reply of June 6,

Truly and affectionately, in love.

in which I told you that I positively expect to see you, not in Paris, but here from the moment that you come to Am. I believe, moreover, that I have informed you that Mariette Bey is coming to Courge, and in case he should first go to Paris he will be well informed as to how matters stand with regard to Aïda. As you know, Drouot Bey was here for a few hours. He has engaged the Princess as the artist for the part of Aïda, but he still has no means-express for Anserini. He wanted to have this role adapted for the Saxe, but that is impossible for a thousand reasons. I wrote him that I should have a master-singer who would serve our turn, and he answered me that the necessary resources were exhausted. Then why engage the Saxe when it was certain that she would not be needed? Meanwhile, time is passing, and later perhaps we shall find ourselves in trouble.

And you, I fancy, are at work from morning to night! Poor Du Locle! Courage, courage—peace will return.

Pippin has received a fine, good letter from your wife, a real outpouring of the heart.

Good-bye, my dear Du Locle. About the middle of July we shall go to Genoa for a few days. An revoir, then, there or here.

Good-bye, good-bye.

G. Verdi.

Milan, Vienna to Milan, and Milan, Br. Locle.

Dear Monsieur Du Locle,

Thank you for the photographs you were so kind as to send us. We study them with a tremendous interest, but how one's heart is expressed by them! How could a nation so amiable, so loving-softly, so kindly in its calm frame of mind, become so frantic, so cruel, in its revolutionary turn-out! Alas! it is only too true: man is everywhere and always the same when blinded by passion. Progress is like the vast swell of the waves; it advances to a certain point fixed by some mysterious power, and then retreats to begin anew its eternal repetition of the same movement. Under what form of government are you living now? If it is that of Henry V (HEINRICH V<sup>ER</sup>) or that of the house of Orleans,<sup>1</sup> we shall have the war for the Pope! It is a dreadful thing to think of, and I wish I could, though I cannot, share your opinion and your assurance in this regard. I read with delight the passage in your letter that says, "I have taken note of your plan for a trip to Genoa, for my own part . . ." (I could not make out where). Well, dear friend, I hope you will make an excursion to Genoa, and although at Genoa at the summer we are surely camping out, I trust that you will come straight to us and be so kind as to put up with what we can offer you. The memory of what you suffered during the siege will make the feet and hands of your friends grateful to you.

We shall leave for Genoa about the 15th or 16th of July, and shall return to the country about the 15th of August. An revoir then very soon, dear M. Du Locle.

Your letter touched me, my dear friend! You are so frank and good, so unaffected in your manner of expressing yourself, that I seemed

<sup>1</sup>The name de Chambord (Henri V) de name de Paris (Philippe I Orléans).

while reading to hear the sound of your voice, and to see that sweet face, so saddened by the fearful disasters that have overwhelmed you! I wish it were all over, but I do not believe it, and I am afraid that the way has only changed its direction. It was against the North, it will be against the South. That would be heartbreaking! But let us not anticipate misfortunes, they always come too soon!

I thank you for all the details you gave me, which I should not have ventured to ask you for. It is an evidence of confidence which I cherish, and of which I think myself not undeserving, for I love you both and take a genuine interest in everything that concerns you. So in spite of the destruction and ruin in Paris, neither you nor yours have had to suffer directly and materially in any way! Let us thank God together, dear Marie, for there is something miraculous in that, more especially as regards the illness of your old aunt, so near to the conflagration. As for Madame Pirein, I can see her, calm and grave, controlling her grief for the sake of her loved ones. To her, and to all your dear family, I beg you to give my respects and cordial greetings.

At what a moment your poor father departed this life! In what a state did he leave that Paris which he so dearly loved! It appears that Thomas will be his successor, and that is right. I hope to see your Camille in a few days, and you may imagine with what delight I shall press his hand after all that has happened! A kiss for your children, and another for you, my dear Madame Du Loche, from your friend,

Joseph Verdi.

Genoa, July 2, 1871.

Genoa, July 10, 1871.

Dear Du Loche,

I hear that Mariette Rey is in Paris at 130, rue de Rivoli, and I beg you to go to her and tell her that something is going wrong in this *Aida* matter.

Francis Rey has not yet found, or has not wanted to find, the messenger for the part of Amneris, and now he writes me once more that he is out of funds! How am I to blame for it? And why didn't he stop to think before he spent it all? . . .

Danzeth insists on getting the *Wrights of Aida* so that he can send it to Mariette, but I cannot send it to him before this question is settled. No matter how, in order not to lose time, I send the libretto to you, and if you find that Mariette can settle this difficulty, you may deliver it to him for executing the decisions concerning the costumes and scenery.

Under this I send a copy of the letter that I wrote today to Danzeth, so that you may have a correct survey of what has happened.

We have been in Genoa since yesterday evening, and still remain here some three weeks. Now then—are you coming here?

Best regards from Poggio and myself.

Your affectionate,

G. Verdi

P.S.—Let me have a line from you as soon as you send to the Mariette.

*Under the Sign of the Cross, on May 18, 1871.*

Genoa, July 20, 1871.

On returning to Genoa I received your kind favor of the 17th.

It seems to me that before sending the libretto of *Aida* it should be decided who is to execute the part of Amneris. As I had the honor to inform you previously, neither the Span nor the Gross is, or ever was, a mezzo-soprano. You say that the Gross sang *La Favorita*, and *Falst* at *La Traviata*. You and the Albani has sung the *Gianni Schicchi*, and (I think) *La Scaramanzia*, and even the part of *Cosetta* in *Rigoletto*. But what of that? It signifies nothing more nor less than that the singers and managers did not scruple in the least to merchandise the Authors' creations, or to let them be merchandised.

Permit me to relate a bit of history concerning this same *Aida*.

I wrote the opera for the last season, and it was but an inch of time that the opera was not produced.

I was requested to defer its production until the year following, a proposition to which I assented without protest, although it was greatly to my disadvantage.

As early as Jan. 8 I mentioned that the part of Amneris was written for a mezzo-soprano, and later I asked that the conductor of the orchestra should not be delayed without giving me due notice (because I was always hoping to get Mariani).

While I was carrying on these negotiations, another conductor was engaged, and no thought has been given for engaging a mezzo-soprano! Why is that?—and why, when an opera written to specifications is bought, is care not taken at the outset to provide everything, all the constituent elements that could be required for its production? I find it very strange that this was not done, and that Kowalewsky will permit me to observe, that this is not the way to obtain a satisfactory result and a success.

I have the honor to subscribe myself

Your obt. servt.

G. Verdi.

Genoa, Dec. 23, 1871.

Dear Du Loise,

Have reviewed yours of the 15th, and unfortunately the figure that Granger demands is obliterated. Do me the kindness to repeat it in your next, and then, of course, I can tell Signora Stoka what it is. I am sending this letter of mine to Leo Kowalewsky, enclosing the measures which you require, and it will be forwarded to Paris, thus giving its form.

All this is as it should be, but Granger asks too much time for fulfilling the provisions of his contract. Since the rehearsals are advanced—the singers know their parts, the choruses are set, the movements are nearly ready, and it may well be that precisely on the 20th (which is Sunday, the day always chosen for the premiere) the production will take place. So pray see to it that Granger has everything ready not later than the 18th, so that it may be in Milan by the 20th. Keep a sharp lookout in this matter, for delay would be absolutely ruinous. And look out that the work is done as it ought to be. Write me directly about this.

I wrote you that Pergolesi had paid my money after all, but if you wish to be my banker, do not get angry, and pay away—

You will have received news from Cairo. I have two telegrams, which are favourable. We shall see if they are confirmed. I am told that the Vercory has invited Meyer. Oh heavens!—that is indeed a good friend!—and the Vercory has a keen nose. As for that, it is better than this to avoid the annoying praise of falacious reports. Do send me without delay the article that Meyer writes for the *Dibatt*! There will be a reasonable, for certain. But don't be frightened, I am thoroughly started by indifference.

Ever your affectionate

G. Verdi.

(In the handwriting of F. Stolz.)

P.S. All right so far. Teresa Stolz.

Crema, Dec. 27, 1871.

Dear Du Loch,

I know that Poppone wrote to your wife yesterday but I too want to send you a few lines to wish you everything that is sweet and best, health and prosperity. And whatever is better than you may desire.

I shall leave for Milan on Wednesday the 31st to begin the rehearsal of *Aida*. So address your letters to Milan. I really expect that the premiere will be on the 20th, and therefore I implore you and beg you not to forget that the work which Granger is doing for the Stolz should be in Milan by the 18th at the very latest! For the love of God! If this occasion, it will be a most serious matter. Look out for it, and let me know about it.

As soon as the rehearsal have commenced I shall write to tell you more positively when the day will be. Then you can make your arrangements for coming to Milan. How I long to see you!—but what part Du Loch, if you were to assist at a dress? Well, at all events you will experience a sensation and an hour decisive and unforgettable in France or Italy.

Good bye, I press your hand and send my good wishes for you and all your family, and am as ever

Your affectionate

G. Verdi.

P.S. It appears that *Aida* did not go badly at Cairo. That is, according to the telegrams. The letters are yet to be seen. Send Meyer's article to me at Milan. Address to "Alessandro Milano, Milan."

Milan, Jan. 26, 1872

Yesterday the Stolz received her *Agnus*, with which she is greatly pleased. Now I beg you to pay Granger and send me the receipted bill.

In addition I send you amount due to us, and will forth with repay the money you have laid out.

<sup>1</sup>Meyer wrote an introductory article on *Aida* for the *Dibatt*, dated Dec. 27, 1871. On returning home a day or more later, he sent off a second article on Feb. 12 after the 18th performance. These two articles, very favorable to Verdi's new work, were reprinted in "*Notte di Strozzi*" (*Dibatt*, 1872, pp. 100-101) under the caption, "*Giungla di Milano*."

<sup>2</sup>This letter is sometimes mistaken for the principal copyist of *Aida*.

It is almost certain that Aida will come out on Feb. 3. I shall write you again, and if things go as I expect towards the end of this month, I shall send you a telegram.

Mountain good-bye in haste, and a hearty handshake.

G. Verdi

Parma, April 13, 1874.

Dear Du Locle,

Your letter reached me rather late, because I had left Geneva—and I answer you rather late because I have not had time to breathe, so to speak. We have reached the final rehearsal of Aida, and you can imagine how busy we are! Aida comes out Sunday, and the performance will be very nearly like that at Milan, both musically and scenically. On account of these affairs I have not been able as yet to attend to Verdi. His Records is coming here to-day, and I shall turn the matter over to him.

You are translating Aida? For the Opéra, mayhap? Oh! oh! I should be very (delicious) for this combination! In that theatre I accept the name of writer (although it's not big and pretentious for me), but on the musical side, all that is done there is in no way acceptable to me. I have no luck in that theatre! Not a bit of it! Let us stay as we are! I am as comfortable here.

Good-bye, my dear Du Locle. Poppino, who is with me, sends very kindest regards to your Marie, and I express your kind with all my heart.

G. Verdi.

San' Agata, June 22, 1874.

Dear Du Locle,

You were quite right to complain that I have not written you for an age. It is entirely my own fault, for recently I have had hardly anything to do. I am living in complete idleness, nobody disturbs me, and even the Po, which has raised so much of the Ferrarese countryside, has left us in peace. All the better for us—but those poor people! What destruction! It includes no less than one hundred square kilometres, all inundated. It is the most terrible and one can imagine of! Imagine what resources are gone to waste!

Whichever do you tell me?

Never!! Never combined? That is more overwhelming than the magnitude of Ferrara. Only it is less ruinous! All the better! and all the better if Aida affords pleasure to the reader. I believe it will have nothing in performance, if it is played as I would have it. But that is very difficult at Paris!

And you—how do you feel? Is your little shop still prospering? It looks that way to me, and I wish you the same for the future.

Good-bye, my dear Du Locle. And how has the translation of Aida turned out? Put modesty aside, for there are times when one should say exactly what one thinks.

Give our kindest regards to your dear Marie, and believe me ever and ever

Affectionately

G. Verdi.

*The Opéra-Comique*

Naples, Nov. 26, 1878.

Dear Du Loek,

It is an age since I wrote you, but you understand that the journey, the matters I had to attend to at Sant' Agata, and the getting settled here, have deprived me of available time.

I have been here with Pappano about ten days, the rehearsals of Don Carlos are well advanced. The tenor intended for Don Carlos was taken sick, and we have to be content that he has a fine voice, but an unhappy face. But my basos are before you; they are three hardones who are not quite new (unintelligible). Before the end of the month we shall go on the stage—at least I hope so.

And you—what are you doing? I am rejoiced with your FIDE shop—and how is the big shop getting on?

Write me here with the simple address

Maestro Verdi  
Napoli.

All kinds of good wishes to you all, in which my wife joins. Good-bye.

G. Verdi

P.S. Please write posthaste to tell me whether the monks in the last scene in Don Carlos are Inquisitors or brethren of the monastery of San Giacomo. Leave no time in answering this. Good-bye.

Naples, Dec. 16, 1878.

Dear Du Loek,

What? what? You have not received my letter, or, I should say, my two letters mailed after the representation of Don Carlos the same day on which I wrote to Maria and Leon?

Those few words have been lost in the post—but it matters little—no, yet it does matter a great deal, because you have accused me, with reason, of a lack of courtesy and consideration for you.

Well, our Don Carlos is doing finely and the public is extremely pleased with it. Indeed, if not everything is good, being portions of it are superlatively good. The two ladies and the baritone are very fine. The tenor has a lovely voice and is intelligent, but unhappily his figure is too stout for a lover. The basos are just barely mediocre. The mezzo-soprano displeases as regards execution of the crowd. Some scenes are good. Men's choruses good. Orchestra excellent. In the course of the musical execution there is a calm and flow that are always lacking in Paris. Here Don Carlos takes half an hour less than in Paris. It begins at 8 and ends at 10:30.

Unfortunately the performances are suspended because the State has a threat disorder of quite a serious nature.

I shall expect you for Nola, which goes on in February.

With all my heart I wish you a pleasant moment with Giulietta a Basso!

Write me, and believe me ever

Your affectionate

G. Verdi.

<sup>1</sup>His allusion to the upcoming representation of *Bruch's of Judith*, by Grand which, brought out at Capriolo's Theatre-Libretto, was transferred to the Spina-Capriolo Dec. 21, 1877.



Naples, Jan. 2, 1878.

Dear Du Locle,

Thanks for your letter and kind wishes, which, as you may easily imagine, Poppo and I return in kind with all my hearts. I want to see you here as much as you do, but fear that we ourselves will leave Naples very shortly, because the theatre is probably going to close. The management, which has been imprudent, and failed to prepare any alternative opera for the Ballo,<sup>1</sup> was taken by surprise by the State's independence, which has persisted for three weeks. During this forced suspension of the representations of Don Carlos *disapprobation* has set in, and the management finds itself in a very tight place. If the municipality does not help, the management cannot survive, but the municipality will not help, because of a personal grudge against the management.

Well, all the better for me. I shall fatigue myself the less, and can contemplate the beauties of Naples at my ease, and enjoy the mildness of the climate. The windows open all day at a temperature of 15° Réaumur<sup>2</sup> which is about 60° Centigrade! What say you to that, in the midst of your damp, and fog, and cold?

Now good-bye. Should you not come to Naples, it is not impossible that I may go to Paris this Spring. — Best wishes and Happy New Year, and greetings to all!

Good-bye, good-bye

G. Verdi.

Saint Agata, June 14, 1878.

Dear Du Locle,

To-morrow we shall leave for Paris, but we are going to stop over a day in Turin, and shall not arrive till Sunday. I shall let you know the hour.

I beg, I entreat, I implore you, not to put yourself out in any way on my account, and, above all, to tell no one that I am in Paris. I shall not visit any of the theatres, especially the musical ones. I am coming to see my friends, to visit Paris, and to get the rest I so much need.

Adieu! Good-bye.

G. Verdi.

Turin, 1 (July?) 18, 1878.

Dear Du Locle,

How we are the very next evening in Italy, after a delightful journey. The *Fiume* is really a marvellous affair! The splendid incandescent illumination by gas, and the profound external darkness, the fresh air, and not to be suffocated by smoke, are very fine things. — And besides, three thousand metres of earth and stone overhead! —

We shall not leave Turin until 11 o'clock, we breakfast at Pinerolo, and at 7 shall be in Saint Agata.

And now, what can I say to you, my dear Du Locle? How can I thank you for all the kindness shown my wife and myself during our too long sojourn in Paris? You have treated us with a courtesy and con-

celebration certainly not to be excelled, and I, with a faint black smudge on my forehead, can only say, thank you, thank you, a thousand times.

Good-bye. Write me, always to the good address.

Good-bye. And wish me well, as I do you.

G. York.

P.S. When you write to your Maria, do not fail to send her our very best regards. Once more, good-bye.

East Agate, Nov. 2, 1872.

My Dear Du Loche,

I have received your letter, and well understand what grief you felt at the destruction of the Opéra.<sup>1</sup> You will loved it, and who had passed so many delightful hours in it. I myself was moved by the successful tidings—I who, all four times that I have entered it in the capacity of an artist, have not invariably lived through pleasurable moments. It is certainly a genuine calamity for the artists and operators belonging to the Opéra. However, the other edifices will be ready very soon, and besides, your country is so rich that it will easily provide for the needs of all.

Keep me continually informed about yourself, and believe me

Affectionately

G. York.

East Agate, Dec. 18, 1872.

Dear Du Loche,

I thank you for your kind wishes, which arrived most punctually on my birthday. And I return them for you and all your family, also on the part of Poppa. I wish you what you desire, even to being director of the New Opéra. But have a care! These theatres open in a whole new mantras!<sup>2</sup> I would not see you caught for all the gold in the world.

Day after to-morrow, on Wednesday, we shall be in Genoa, to remain there the rest of the winter. Good-bye, and believe me

Affectionately

G. York.

Genoa, Feb. 24, 1874.

Dear Du Loche,

Greetings to my well-beloved legs led—to the sole and singular Tyrant and despot of the Little Shows,<sup>3</sup> reserving its special (the business of handling when you shall have become Count and Sultan of the City) Our You say nothing about Carvello?<sup>4</sup> What has happened? Has he played a dy trick on you, and is everything gone in water? Never mind—however and whatever things may be, I wish you tranquil prosperity, and, above all, that you may see your dreams more than realized.

I am working on my mass, and really with great pleasure. I feel as though I had become a serious man, and were no longer a "barber" for the public, who, to the accompaniment of the big drum, calls out, "Here you are! here you are! Walk in! etc." You must understand

<sup>1</sup>The Opéra was burned down Oct. 30.

<sup>2</sup>The Little had just taken over the ownership of the Opéra-Carvalho. He retained it only up to the middle of 1874, when Carvalho succeeded him.

but now, when I think of "opera," my conscience is scandalized, and I ever myself without delay<sup>11</sup>! What do you say to that? Don't you feel chilled?

But do you know that I shall probably make another trip to Paris this year, after the mass, that is to say, towards the end of May<sup>12</sup>! Why not? Is it because you might not to give yourself all the trouble you took last year? Who knows? Good bye meanwhile.

Prayers send greetings to you and your dear Maria, and I squeeze your hands most heartily. Good bye, good-bye.

G. Verdi.

Wednesday

(A Copy<sup>13</sup>)

My dear Maria, for the love of God, do not send me those unhappy papers. What should I do with them? Everybody will always be in the right as against me, and I in the wrong as against everybody. She must decide something. I should only succeed in having myself hurled at me, and in raising an uproar about my wretched names. Concerning Aida, here is the absolute truth. The real author of the libretto is Mariette Rey, who, having invented an Egyptian story of a certain sort, persuaded the Vicary to have an opera made of it for the opening of the theatre. This story of Mariette's, a few copies of which were printed in Cairo, is in Nutter's portfolio. Because I gave him the copy which I had. The question was, to construct an opera from it. That is what I did, building up and demolishing a scenario with Verdi, then writing the whole thing out in French—not the scenario, but the entire piece, bit by bit, sentence by sentence. Verdi had the piece put in verse by Ghislanzoni, and he was so far from asserting his posterity of it that we read on the Italian playbills *Verdi & Ghislanzoni*—not "poem," as is usually put there. Such is the real truth. I did this work at Bassano, whether I was called by Verdi<sup>14</sup>. All this should be verified by letters and dispatches. A dispatch to me which ought to be found, and which is curious, is the one in which I am given the choice, for Aida, between Verdi, Gounod, and Wagner<sup>15</sup>. Verdi never knew of this dispatch, but I have been ill recompensed. I, who always find that everybody is right as against me, even pardoning Verdi for having taken, over and above the bargain, the rights of translation from poor Nutter!

[Translated by Theodore Baker]

<sup>11</sup>As a note of April 4 following, Verdi announces his arrival in Paris, with his wife, for the 1883.

<sup>12</sup>The copy, in a Russian hand, is that of a letter from Du Locle to his wife. Its date is unknown. Compare Du Locle's letter addressed at Rome, March 26, 1886, to the journal *L'Espresso*.

<sup>13</sup>In June, 1886, Du Locle passed some three weeks with Verdi at Bassano.

## THE EARLY YEARS OF THE FIRST ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE

By W. J. LAWRENCE

THE story of the slow, laborious emergence of Italian Opera in England, of its struggles to displace the hybrid monstrosity which for over a century flaunted itself in its name, this, as it has been written piecemeal by various hands, is a tangled skein before whose complexities even the keenest expert might well stand agast. Error crept insidiously into the tale at its first telling, and subsequent historians, in striving to disabuse it, have only succeeded in rendering confusion the more confounded. When one finds an alert mind like that which was labelled "Colley Cibber" blundering over dates and circumstances well within its individual observation and experience, confidence is shaken and it is difficult to know on whom to place dependence. To-day, despite our scientific methods of attack, we are too remote from events of a painfully evanescent order to be able always to arrest their flight and so fully to restore order out of chaos. But the more difficult the task the greater its fascination for the researcher, and it may not be wholly presumptuous for a lifelong diver into both the virgin soil and the well-tilled fields of English music-dramatic history to attempt the bluing of a trail.

Accustomed as we are to speak of that landmark of the Augustan age, the old Queen's Theatre in the Haymarket, as England's first Italian Opera House, we are apt to forget that initially the term does not apply, and that in it for long opera was, in drummer's phrase, nothing more than an occasionally useful "side-line." Built in 1705 by Sir John Vanbrugh, architect by profession and dramatist by chance, the Queen's was primarily intended as habitat for the veteran tragedians, Betterton, and his associates of the little theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, who had found that their headbox of a house hopelessly handicapped them in their uphill fight with the players of Drury Lane. Each camp in its endeavor to beat the enemy had already fallen back on occasion on the adventurous aid of musical spectacle, and Vanbrugh as controller of the new house clearly foresees that the same expedient would have to be resorted to. There was no idea in the beginning of the Queen's eventually becoming a substantive opera-house, and its ultimate transmutation was due, curiously enough, to a



*View of the Front of the Old Queen's House, Haymarket.*

*Built by Sir John Yastburgh*

*From an original drawing by Dixon, made in 1750*



determining combination of purely fortuitous circumstances. Its defectiveness, acoustically, for the speaking voice, together with the peculiarity of its location, fitted it better for an opera-house than a theatre, and an opera-house it became. On this score, Cibber is an excellent witness. Discussing the defective prospects of Battarion's company just as they were on the verge of entering on occupation of their new house, Colley writes, in the sixth chapter of his *Apology* (1788):

As to their other dependence, the house, they had not yet discovered, that almost every proper quality and convenience of a good theatre had been sacrificed or neglected, to show the spectator a vast triumphal piece of architecture; and that the best play, for the reasons I am going to assign, could not but be under great disadvantages, and be less capable of delighting the auditor here, than it could have been in the plain theatre they came from. For what could their vast columns, their gilded canopies, their immoderate high seats, avail, when scarce one word in ten could be distinctly heard in it? Nor had it then the form it now stands in, which, scarcely two or three years since, reduced it to. At the first opening it, the flat ceiling that is now over the orchestra was then a semi-circular arch, that sprung fifteen feet higher from above the cornice the ceiling over the pit too was still more raised, being one level line from the highest back part of the upper gallery to the front of the stage, the front boxes were a continued semi-circle to the bare walls of the house on each side. This extraordinary and superfluous space contained such an undulation from the verge of every scene, that generally what they said sounded like the gabbling of so many people in the lofty aisles in the cathedra! The loss of a trumpet, or the swell of an organ's sounding note, it is true, might be counteracted by it; but the articulate sounds of a speaking voice were drowned by the hollow reverberations of one word upon another.

To this inconvenience, why may we not add that of its situation? For at that time it had not the advantage of almost a large city which has since been built in its neighbourhood. These costly squares of Hanover, St. George, and Cavendish squares, with the many and great adjacent streets about them, were then all but so many green fields of pasture, from whence they could draw little or no assistance, unless it were that of a milk diet. The city, the mass of court, and the middle part of the town, which were the most essential support of a theatre, and chiefly to be relied on, were now too far out of the reach of an easy walk, and coach hire is often too hard a tax upon the pit and gallery.

Some idea of the troubles that lie in wait for the conscientious operatic analyst may be gained from a full exposition of the perplexing contradictions of the various early authorities as to the date of the opening of the new Queen's Theatre, and the fare presented on that occasion. Downes, who sits nearest to the event (his *unfathomable Notions Anglicanae* appearing in 1786), and who is therefore the least likely to blunder, tells us that

Betterton, finding himself unequal to the struggle, now transferred his company over to Captain Vanbrugh, to act under him at the theatre in the Haymarket, and upon April 20th, 1733, the latter opened his theatre with a foreign opera, performed by a new set of singers arrived from Italy—the worst that ever came from thence, for it lasted but five days, and they being liked but indifferently by the party—they in a little time marched back to their own country.

Gibber, writing thirty years after Downes, begins badly by placing the date of opening in 1706, and then goes on to say that the initial bill professed

a translated opera, in Italian music, called *The Triumph of Love*; but then not having in it the charms of Camilla, either from the inequality of the music or voices, had but small reception, being performed but three days, and then not attended.

Along comes Burney to add to the intricacies of the problem. According to his "General History of Music," the date was Easter Monday, April 3, 1705, when an inaugural prologue written by Garth was spoken by Mrs. Bracegirdle, and the performance consisted of Dryden's tragedy of *The Indian Emperor*, together with singing by "the Italian Boy." Ashton, in condemning Downes' and Gibber's details, seeks to confirm Burney's statement in all but the dating, and relies on the fact that the first Queen's advertisement to be found in *The Daily Courant* deals with the performance of *The Indian Emperor* on April 13, 1704. This of itself is no proof, since Vanbrugh undoubtedly placed his dependence at the outset partly on bills supplemented by the obvious attractions of a new theatre.

Finally, Michael Kelly, in the handy synopsis of early operatic records given in an appendix to the second volume of his *Recollections*, contributes still further to the tangle. While agreeing with Burney as to the date and the prologue, he states that the production was "Signor Giacomo Orcher's *Letter of Rapeto*, set to Italian music."

Notwithstanding this extraordinary diversity of opinion, it becomes apparent on probing the matter to the bottom that the truth can be arrived at by using Downes' and Kelly's statements. The date of opening was certainly Easter Monday, April 3, 1706. *The Triumph of Love*, in which Gibber puts his faith, was not produced until the following July, when it was given at the deserted theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, not at the Queen's, whether Betterton and his associates had temporarily returned, but with

<sup>1</sup> *Street Life in the Reign of Queen Anne*, 1882, II, p. 7.



indifferent masses. Sir Samuel Garth undoubtedly wrote the inaugural prologues, and Congreve the dramatist (who was associated in the beginning with Vanbrugh in the management of the theatre, but retired after the first season), the epilogues. As neither address has been reprinted by any operatic annualist, and as Congreve's epilogue<sup>1</sup> helps materially to solve the problem, I reproduce both:

**PROLOGUE AT THE SECOND OPERA, WRITTEN BY THE OPERATORS OF THE  
QUEEN'S THEATRE, HAYMARKET.**

Such was our builder's art, that soon as man'd,  
This fabric, like the infant-world, was fram'd  
The architect must on dull matter wait,  
But 'tis the poet only can create;  
None else, at pleasure, can duration give,  
When marble fails, the Muses' structures live,  
The Cypris here is now no longer seen,  
Tho' sacred to the name of love's fair queen,  
It's Athens never in pompous ruins stands,  
Tho' finish'd by the hand of Minerva's hands,  
More sure presages from their walls we find,  
By beauty founded,<sup>2</sup> and by wit design'd  
In the good age of ghostly ignorance,  
How did cathedrals rise, and real advance?  
The merry monks used croquet, at ease,  
Large were their meals, and light their penance;  
Parlous for vice was purchas'd with religion,  
And more but signs in rage dy'd reputation,  
But now that grim popu'larity's no more,  
And stages throng, as churches did before,  
Your own magnificence you have survey'd,  
Majestick columns stand where daughth's lay,  
And cars triumphal rise from carts of hay,  
Swags here are taught to legs, and nymphs to fear,  
And bag Minerva's fight mock Blockheads here  
Downsitting goddesses whom our women  
And quip their bright strokes for gilt machines  
Shan'd Jove, for this fair circle, leave his throne,  
Tho'd meet a lightning sooner than his own  
Tho' to the sun, his low'ring eyes you see,  
They scarce cou'd bear the glare of these eyes

Read side by side with Cibber's strictures on the architectural deficiencies of the house, Garth's stouppen assume an ironical flavour. With relief one turns to the

<sup>1</sup>That discovery to be found I think may in a little book entitled 'Prologues and Epilogues collected by their Excellent Majesties' published at Oxford, without date

<sup>2</sup>According to the fact that the knowledge of our language had in 1704 not been so far advanced as to produce the word 'nymph' in the sense in which it is used in the above epilogue.

EPICURE AT THE OPENING OF THE QUEEN'S THEATRE IN THE BATHMARKET, WITH AN ITALIAN PASTORAL. WRITTEN BY MR. COMPTON.

Whatever future fate our house may find,  
At present we expect you shou'd be kind:  
Incensur'd shall our claim be right,  
Before enjoyment and the wedding night.  
You must be lov'd a little ere you range,  
You must be true till you have time to change.  
A week at least, one night is sure too soon,  
But we pretend not to a honeymoon.  
To novelty we know you can be true,  
But what shall we or who, is always new?  
This day, without presumption, we pretend  
Will mostly suit your entertainment.  
For not alone our *Moses* and *Lovers* are new,  
Our *Song* and *Dance*, but it's our *Doctors* too.  
Our *Play* itself has something in't uncommon,  
Two faithful lovers, and one constant woman.  
In sweet Italian strains our *Shepherds* sing,  
Of harmless loves our painted lovers sing.  
In notes, perhaps less foreign than the thing,  
To sound and slow at first we make pretence,  
In time we may regale you with some sense,  
But that at present were too great expense.  
We only for the house may think it hard,  
To be brought from costly plots abroad's  
But in good hearing, sure, they'll once reward  
E'er modesty, when in a stranger mood.  
The day's at hand when we shall dash the noise,  
And to yourself as there your *Dear* address again.  
Fare the reverse of what you've seen to-day,  
And in bold strokes the various turns display.

Not only the heading of the epilogue, but the lines specially italicized, as well as much of what follows, negatives the possibility that the Queen's could have opened with *The Indian Emperor* or any other old play. Compton's reference to "two faithful lovers, and one constant woman" established the accuracy of Michael Kelly's statement for these are characteristics of the plot of *The Lovers of Epseste*, an Italian pastoral printed in 1766 alternately in Italian and English (undoubtedly for sale in the theatre), as "represented at the opening of the Queen's Theatre in the Haymarket" and as "composed by Signor Giacomo Cecher."

<sup>1</sup> Murray says the date of the production of this pastoral was April 24, 1766, when the character of the Spanish Lovers was sustained by "the Italian King" and the girl who sustained a new female called *Mrs. Pantomime*. But since the anonymous Italian composer had many competitors in the high province, he might have suggested that the pastoral or at any rate some sort of other musical production, had been given earlier.

Greber, it may be noted, was a German musician who came to London in 1688, bringing with him the celebrated Francesca Margherita de l'Ermine, the first Italian vocalist of any distinction who sang in England.

All this offering of evidence has been distinctly worth while, as the upshot brings us face to face with a remarkable fact. It was in keeping with the eternal fitness of things that the future home of Italian Opera should open with a pastoral piece sung entirely in Italian by Italian artists. That such homogeneity was not to be experienced there again until the production of *Amiskid* in January, 1710, was due to a question of ways and means. Vanbrugh's initial experience had shown that the congregations were not to be lulled by an association of mediocre singers, and the difficulty and expense of bringing a first-class combination from Italy proved for long an insurmountable barrier. Nothing better than an ugly compromise could be effected. The attractions of a male soprano of the first or second order were sliced out by the more or less competent singing of home-born artists, many of whom were incapable of dealing with any language save their own. Hence that arid bartram in which, in the well-known words of Colley Cibber, Italian Opera masqueraded

in to make a disguise, and unlike itself, as possible, in a language, holding translation into our own language, with false quantities, or metre out of measure in its original notes, sung by our own wretched voices, with graces misapplied to almost every sentiment, and with action flatter and unmeaning through every character.

The bad impression made at the beginning by a foreign troupe of incompetents was consolidated immediately afterwards when Betterton's players came to act at the new house and its acoustic defects became fully apparent. It was a case of give a dog a bad name and hang him. Patronage proved lukewarm, and a painfully dull season ended in June.

Just here I may say that questions of space preclude the possibility of my dealing with the theatrical records of the Queen's save in a superficial, glancing way. But it will remain for the ultimate historian of Italian Opera in England to assemble both the musical and the dramatic annals in order that the sense of proportion may be attained.<sup>1</sup>

With the reopening of the Queen's on October 26, 1700, Vanbrugh's excellent new comedy, *The Confederacy*, saw the light.

<sup>1</sup>See Grant's *Essay* *Account of the English Stage from its Introduction in 1592*, Vol. II for interesting comments of the theatrical seasons at the Queen's.

It was given ten times, but not to the overflowing houses its merits demanded. Three other new plays followed in quick succession, and on February 21, 1899, there was a notable production of Lord Lansdowne's tragedy with Social realist embellishment, *The British Emancipator*, or *No Magic like Love*, a reversion to the Post-Restoration type of English dramatic opera, which met with considerable success and was afterwards removed in reduced and more strictly operatic form. Next in order came, on March 7, Matton's pastoral opera, *The Temple of Love*, a translation from the Italian song to music by Sappho. Unless a later addition, the following allusions in the epilogue seem an "intelligent anticipation" of the Drury Lane production of Marc Antonio Ronconi's *Camilla*, which did not materialize until the proximate date of the month:

Get some fan'd Opera, say how translated,  
No matter, as the 'Other House don't get it,  
Get clothes, tho' the Actors with halfling dispose;  
Get whine, get anything . . . . but Stars.

It is noteworthy that Owen McSwiney, the Drury Lane manager's factotum, who had translated the libretto of *Camilla* from the Italian of Silvio Stampiglia, was seen to be identified with the lectures of the Queen's Theatre.<sup>1</sup> The production itself was remarkable for two circumstances, first for the appearance of Signor Valentino (Valentino Urbani), earliest in order of the male soprano, a singer of the second rank, with a weak but melancholic voice; and again for establishing the absurd system of bilingual interpretation which, despite the protests of the wits, so long obtained. Other countries, however, for similar economic reasons, had been compelled to resort to the same expedient. If Stracchini is to be believed, when Italian opera was first produced in Hamburg, the recitative was given in the house tongue, whilst the airs were sung in Italian.

By way of counteracting the attractions of *Camilla* at Drury Lane, Vanburgh, on April 5, brought out Tom D'Urfog's fantastic comic opera, *Wanderer in the Sun*, or *The Kingdom of Shida*, which may be pitifully described as a John Yemassee tale with a sprinkling of *Richard's Character*. Barring an air by Enoch, the music was all old, compiled from a variety of sources, even Lully being laid under contribution. According to Whinnop "It had several ballads in it that took very much with the common

<sup>1</sup>The detailed McSwiney advertisement notice, see my article, "A Famous West End Man," in *The New School Review* for August, 1902.

people," but although given five or six times, it was not successful enough to establish the vogue of ballet-opera. The necessary impulse for the creation of that long-popular genre was lacking until Gay's satiric genius afforded it in *The Beggar's Opera*.

At the close of his second season, Vanburgh, disappointed in his expectations and wearied with the cares of management, leased the Queen's to Owen Mollwney at a rental of £2 per sitting day, the total sum not to exceed £700. To this arrangement Christopher Rich, the satiric Drury Lane Manager, made no objection, feeling assured that his old lieutenant, who was heavily in his debt, would remain subservient, and that the upshot would be his own control of both houses. Hoping to headwind both players and public, he secretly agreed to the exiting away by Mollwney of the principal members of his company, only to find when the manœuvre had been effected that his quondam satellite had played him false and intended fighting for his own hand. Thenceforth between the two it was war to the knife.

Opening the Queen's on October 13, 1706, with the Drury Lane players, Mollwney was for a time too hampered by lack of means to compete with Rich on operatic lines. All the signs of the hour gave decisive indications that Drury Lane, and not the Hay-market house, was to be the future home of Italian Opera. The vogue there of the hybrid makeshift was trenchantly girded at in Addison's prologue to Swift's tragedy, *Pharon and Hippolytus*, as brought out by Mollwney on April 21, 1707. Doubtless some impetus to the rage for the exotic had been given by the performance at court of *Comilla*, in celebration of the Queen's birthday, a couple of months previously. None ever condescended to visit the playhouses, and, since Mahomet refused to go to the mountains, the mountain at last had had to be brought to Mahomet. Forced by the defection of his players to make strenuous appeal to his patrons' musical instincts, Rich brought out Matthew's *Flamens*, *Queen of Siphia*, one of several futile attempts made about this time to establish a practical school of English grand opera, based on Italian groundwork.<sup>1</sup> Mollwney could only respond by producing a new play or two, and, after missing fire with Mrs. Centlivre's *Platonis Lady*, scored a remarkably happy hit with Pasquhar's fine comedy, *The Swain's Stratagem*.

Proceding at the juncture Fate willed it that an exchange of weapons should take place. A certain Colonel Brett, having become possessed of an interest in the Drury Lane patent, forced

<sup>1</sup>For the characteristics of this position, see G. S. Barrett, *Origines of Opera Libretto* printed before 1800, p. 107E.

himself resolutely into partnership with the scheming Bach, and seriously disturbed the equanimity of that despot by treating the players as creatures of flesh and blood. Not only that, but having arrived at the conclusion that two playhouses were in excess of the requirements, Brett petitioned the Lord Chamberlain to enforce an amalgamation of the rival companies. The result was that the players were one and all commanded to betake themselves to Drury Lane, McFlinney, as a solution, being awarded a monopoly of Italian opera at his house from January, 1709. As will shortly be seen, however, this attempt to establish a regular Italian Opera House, important as was the outcome, proved abortive.

In his new rôle of impresario (the first time anybody had ever sustained it in England), McFlinney reopened the Queen's on January 14, 1709, and proceeded to give separate performances twice a week by subscription. Then, and for some time afterwards, no more than 400 tickets were issued for the fashionable parts of the house, the pit and boxes, which were both at the one price, but McFlinney's custom of asking for subscriptions for the first six nights of each new opera was afterwards abandoned in favour of subscriptions for the entire season. Prices ruled high, and opening was a luxury that only the rich could afford. At last, McFlinney could do little more than mark time while elaborate preparations were being made for his Italian opera campaign, and the season which ended on May 28<sup>th</sup> yielded but little novelty. No particular attention was proffered until the end of February, when Mottoux's pastoral opera in three acts, *L'air de France*, translated from the "book" of Cardinal Ottoboni, and sung to music by Carlo Cocchi, Giovanni, detto del Violone, and Francesco Gasparini, was given eight times. Only about a fifth of the opera was sung in the original Italian. Mottoux was an indifferent writer of lyrics, and his libretti were drawn with most of the absurdities so tacitly unadverted upon by Addison in the 18<sup>th</sup> *Spectator*. It is noteworthy that Valentini, who made his first appearance at the Queen's in this production, had arranged all the choruses with dance accompaniments, after the French manner, the idea being to see whether British liking bowed to the French or the Italian style. For his work he was given a benefit on the last night of the opera.

<sup>1</sup> About which time we find Footingh writing to Lord Mashburn: "I have parted with my whole company (the Queen's Theatre) by market to Mr. Drury, only reserving my seat as he is entire possessor of the Opera and most people think will manage it better than anybody. He has a good deal of money in his pocket, that he got before by the selling company, and is willing to venture it upon the stage."

McSwiney now demonstrated his enterprise by bringing over the first great Italian star to set foot on English shores. This was the celebrated Cavaliere Niccolino Grimaldi, professionally known as Nicolini, a Neapolitan castrato, whose reputation was already so assured that no foreign triumph could add to its lustre. Salaries in Italy were not then of any particular magnitude, and itinerating singers had not yet grown exorbitant in their demands. Consequently Nicolini closed with McSwiney's offer of 800 guineas for the season, a sum little better than half what was afterwards paid to artists in respect his superiors. His delicious soprano voice, which changed later to contralto, was then in the heyday of its charm. Clobber, much as he disliked foreign opera and its exponents, had perforce to yield to the Neapolitan an extorted admission:

Whatever praises may have been given to the most famous voices that have been heard since Nicolini, upon the whole I cannot but come into the opinion that still prevails among several persons of condition who are able to give a reason for their liking, that no singer since his time has so justly and gracefully acquitted himself in whatever character he appeared, as Nicolini. At most the difference between him and the greatest favourites of the ladies, Faccinelli, amounted but to this, that he might sometimes more reasonably surprise us, but Nicolini (by pleasing the eye as well as the ear) filled us with a more various and rational delight.

Steele, who, as press agent to the Drury Lane players, was little disposed to do the foreign singer justice, unites with Clobber in his admiration of Nicolini. Writing in the 113th *Tatler*, he says:

For my own part, I was fully satisfied with the sight of an actor, who, by the grace and propriety of his action and gesture, does honour to the human figure. Every one will imagine, I mean Signor Nicolini, who acts off the character he bears in sight, by his action, as much as he does the words of it by his voice. Every limb and every finger contributes to the part he acts, inasmuch that a deaf man may go along with him in the sense of it. There is scarce a beautiful posture in an old statue which he does not plant himself in, as the different circumstances of the story give occasion for it. He performs the most ordinary action in a manner suitable to the greatness of his character, and shows the passion even in the giving of a letter, or dispatching of a messenger.

Nicolini made his English debut on December 14, 1708, when McSwiney reopened the Queen's with his own version of *Pyrrhus and Demetrius*, "a noble entertainment" (in Steele's phrase), translated from the "book" of Adriano Morselli, and sung, partly in Italian and partly in English, to the combined scores of Alessandro Scarlatti and Niccolò Francesco Haym. The latter composer, who was then resident in London, contributed a new

overture and about twenty arias.<sup>1</sup> An Italian-singing soprano, Nicolini had Valerotti, now deposed from his pride of place, but still popular, Margherita de l'Egine, an old favourite, and the mysterious German lady known as "the Baronessa," who after acquiring her art in Italy, had come to England in 1786. The chief singers in English were Mr. Cook, Mr. Bamondon, and the beautiful Mrs. Tafts, then on the verge of her retirement. No such combination of lyric-dramatic talent had ever been seen before, and it is not surprising that what with the compelling genius of Nicolini and the simple beauty of the arias, *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* proved a great success. Later on, there was a revival of the perennial *Camilla*, followed by the production of another new opera, *Clotilda*, and a remarkably prosperous season ended on May 30, 1789.

Every student of the story of the rise of opera in Italy knows how insistent there were the claims of spectacle, and with what alacrity they were responded to. Probably because aesthetic excesses of the sort in association with Post-Baroque dramatic opera of the type of *The Fairy Queen* had occasioned severe, well-remembered losses, managers were long loath to expect much money on the pictorial embellishment of its imported successes. Records are endlessly silent upon the point until May, 1768, when a paragraph cropped up in the papers saying that "a new set of scenes painted by two famous Italian artists lately arrived from Venice" had been added to the Queen's theatre stock. Apart from the question of expense, there was another reason why elaborate scenery was far long eschewed. The end-of-the-century theatre practice of allowing certain well-selected spectators to sit on the stage and lounge about behind the scenes had spread itself to the opera, where the "looming mosquitoes," as Oliver called them, occupied enclosures ranged along the wings in a manner indicated in Hagarth's picture of *The Beggar's Opera*. It is noteworthy in this connection that when the four Ingegnia Chiefs who visited England in April, 1710, were taken to the Queen's to see *Macbeth*, they were given seats on the stage so that the expectant audience might have full value for their money. The practice finally proved so offensive to singers and spectators alike that it was specially prohibited at the Opera by an order of George I. issued in December, 1712.

No sooner was Owen M'Murphy on the coast of the west than a long same old circumstance to throw him again into troubled

<sup>1</sup>For him, see *The Spectator*, No. 416. He was an accomplished man of letters and wrote a *History of Music*.



water. Wounded out by the purposeful intriguing of his wily co-patrons, Colonel Brett threw up the sponge and retired in high indignation from Drury Lane. There came afterwards of all he surveyed, Rich resumed his tyranny over the players, who, tortured beyond all endurance, made clamorous appeal to the Lord Chamberlain. The result was that the standing theatrical order was annulled, leaving the players free to go whithersoever they pleased.

Without loss of a moment, Wilks, Dogget, Cibber and Mrs. Oldfield entered into an agreement with McFingery whereby the whole five became joint managers and sharers in the Haymarket house, which was now to be run partly as a theatre and partly as an opera house, and this once concluded they set about altering the building with the view of remedying its defective acoustics. In the multitude of counsellors there is not always wisdom. Holy Writ to the contrary notwithstanding, and on opening the Queen's in September, 1709, the new syndicate showed its exquisite bad taste by sandwiching acrobatic feats between the acts of *Orsola*. It was hardly to be expected that a governing board on which there was a plurality of players, and which had evinced so little reverence for Shakespeare, would be considerate in its attitude towards the foreign singers, and it is not surprising to find that there was considerable friction during the season. In January, 1710, came the first operatic production of note, the *Alfonso of Bonaccini*, sung entirely in Italian by Nicolai, Valentini, Cassini, Margherita de l'Épine, and Signora Isabella, otherwise Isabella Girardin. Fearing unnecessarily that the public would weary of the exclusively foreign (and of showy, over-pretentious) music, the management sought to temper the severity by giving vocal intermezzi, sung in English between the acts by Dogget, Mrs. Lindsey and Mrs. Cross. Notwithstanding the artistic offensiveness of this mélange, the opera had fourteen repetitions, and by its success was instrumental in sweeping away the old mongrel type of performance. Writing a year later, Addison pretended that the public had grown tired "of understanding half the opera, and therefore to ease themselves entirely of the fatigue of thinking, have so order'd it at present that the whole opera is performed in an unknown tongue." But that was only Fanny's pretty way.

Of the precise nature of the friction between the controllers of the Queen's and the Italian singers we should know nothing were it not for the lucky preservation in the collection of Mr. Harrison Garfield of Victoria, B. C., of an interesting handbill,

which, as it is now the oldest thing of the kind extant, we reproduce below. It reads as follows:

ADVERTISEMENT

Friday, March the 17th, 1794.

It has been publish'd in yesterday's *Daily Courant*, and last night in her Majesty's Theatre at the Haymarket, that in Moscow (being Saturday the 15th of March) will be presented there, a comedy, with several select scenes of Music, to be perform'd between the Acts by Cavalier Niccolini, Barone Falchini, and Signior Mangano; which sort of performance the said Cavalier Niccolini thinks to be directly contrary to the Agreement made between him and Mr Owen Spang, and that the same wou'd prove a real injury to vilify and prejudice the Opera. He doth hereby request all Gentlemen and Ladies, that his intention is solely to observe the tenour and meaning of the said agreement, that is to say, to sing during the winter season only seasonal operas, and to be always ready to please and serve them according to his duty and usual custom.

Clearly, if the Haymarket players had no sense of the dignity of their art, Niccolini had a deep sense of the dignity of his!

On May 23 following came a noteworthy production of the *Episodes of Francesco Maurini*, in which Niccolini and his Italian associates had the co-operation of a capable English tenor singer named Lawrence, who was accomplished enough to be able to render their tongue. The curious will find an analysis of this romantic Pevoran opera (so meaningly referred by Addison in the 11th Spectator), in Hargrave's *Memoirs of the Musical Drama*. Niccolini's fight with the property has must have been a fight for gods and men.

Meanwhile there was much troubling of the waters at old Drury, where the turmoil was again to affect the fortunes of the rival houses. On June 7, 1790, just as Melchior had signed articles with the donors, the Lord Chamberlain issued a mandate forbidding Rich to give further performances. Among the owners of Drury Lane at that period was one William Collier, a popular member of Parliament and persona grata in court circles. Relying on his influence, Collier gained permission in the following November to reopen the theatre under his own control, the understanding being that neither Rich nor any of his retinue were to have any further say in the management. Acting on this, Collier foolishly spotted Rich, who was living on the premises, and, with what players he could secure—mostly second-rate—

<sup>1</sup>In deference to English regulations their programme being viewed with disfavor, Melchior had the name then changed to "Mac" before his name, but he retained it here.



Miss Mary Ann



Miss Mary Ann

proceeded to open the house. His failure was a foregone conclusion, as it was not to be expected that an inexperienced manager with an inefficient company could compete with the strong and manifold attractions of the Queen's. Huffed in his scheme, he once more appealed to the Lord Chamberlain, and succeeded in effecting a very silly exchange. Melvincy and his joint sharns were presumptuously ordered to remove to Drury Lane, where they were to have the sole right to represent plays, and Collier was given a monopoly of opera at the Queen's. Allied with this was the curious understanding that whenever opera was given at the Haymarket house on Wednesdays, Drury Lane was to remain closed.

Collier, immediately on gaining possession of the Queen's, let the house to Aaron Hill, the dramatist, at a rental of £2000 per annum, and the season opened on November 26, 1710, with a revival of *Hippoclea*. In the brief period he was at the helm, Hill proved himself an imperious of initiative and resource, and contrived to leave an indelible mark on the annals of early Italian Opera. He was the first to appreciate the potentialities of Handel (then languishing in obscurity in London), and to demonstrate that to procure good opera it was unnecessary to go the whole way to Italy. After thoroughly mulling his plans, he set about writing a libretto based on Tasso's *Gerusalemme*, and on its completion, handed it over to Giacomo Rossi to be translated into Italian. That was done, and the "book" given to Handel, who took his duties so lightly (there was no elaborate orchestration to worry over) that the music was written in a fortnight. The result was *Shelah's*, brought out with triumphant success on February 22, 1711. Whitcup tells us that the maestro "then made his first appearance in England, and accompanied the voices himself on the harpsichord in the orchestra, and performed his part in the oratorio, wherein his execution seemed as astonishing as his genius." Thanks to the absorbing romantic interest of the theme, the beauty of the music and the splendour of the spectacle, *Shelah's* was given uninterruptedly to crowded houses until the close of the season. In the judgment of many connoisseurs, Handel's first opera remains his best. Certainly a work which contained these delightful arias, "Ciao Spese" and "Lavinia ch'è piangente" must be far over memorable.

With the sacred name of Handel one must bring this piece to a close. It only remains to add that with the performance of Motteux's comedy, *Love's a Jest*, on August 21, 1713, the players took their farewell of the Queen's, and that thereafter the theatre became a permanent opera-house.

## SOMETHING "BIGGER" THAN THE BETHLEHEM BACH FESTIVALS

By CHARLES D. ISAACSON

IT is over half a year since I made a pilgrimage to the city of Bethlehem, and sat at the feet of old Bach. Ever since, the festival has been alive in my memory. And yet something "bigger" than the event has been arousing the propagandist in me. What is being done in Bethlehem by the citizens of the town, by Dr. Walls, the conductor, by Charles H. Schmah, the millionaire patron, by the salversty officials, by the musicians—wonderful as it is, inspiring as it is, artistic and beautiful as it is—is made pygmy by the something "bigger" which it suggests to my mind for action.



Every year Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, holds its now famous cycle of Bach classics. The choir and organist are assisted by well-known singers and an orchestra that are supported. Doctor J. Ford Walls conducts. Some of the wealthy people underwrite the expenses. The large hall is packed to standing-room for every season, and out on the lawn thousands listen without charge. Indeed the audience consists of pilgrims from all over the States. The performance is excellent. The metropolitan newspapers carry a stick or so about the music.

"Very beautiful, very beautiful," say the visitors, and they go home and maybe they come again, and maybe they do not. All of the facts mentioned are, in a way, very ordinary. The Bach Festival, viewed purely as a musical function, deserves little more attention or comment than any other big musical event at Carnegie Hall or Symphony Hall or the Chicago Auditorium.

As performers of Bach, the Bethlehem musicians are gifted and inspired. True, but so are the Vatican chorists, so are the Metropolitan Opera chorists, so are all the orchestras, ensembles, organists, conductors, and many another festival chorus, small or large, manifests the same degree of unselfish devotion to the cause of good music.

What, then, lifts the Bach festival at Bethlehem far out of the ordinary and what is it that makes them suggest something still greater, something "bigger"?

Here is a community's pride. Here is a development which is ingrained in the social life of the residents. It is the daily gossip and romance of the citizens. It is so much a part of the household care and routine as the water preserves and the summer crops and the dairy business. It is the pet of the whole population, not of a selected set or set. The stagehands are as much in the game as the trombone solo. The school-teachers are as more intimate with the details than the bell-boy at the hotel. Nearly every family has at least one representative in the chorus or the trombone choir, or among the reception committee or the ushers or the publicity men. It is the regret of one's life to be without a relative in the Festival. But worse than claiming no relative in the music would be the disappointment of the villager in permitting a Festival to pass without being present for a season or more. During the Festival the discussion everywhere is about the music, the visitors, "the greatest annual we ever had." For weeks afterward, the event remains the most important topic of conversation, giving place finally to just one other matter more serious—the next Festival!

As I write these words, I have before me the record of a conversation heard in a Bethlehem grocery store. The proprietor was engaged in quite a heated argument over the particular Bach chorale which he believed should surely be included next June! The customer was willing to bet that the price was wrong, that Dr. Wolfe would never think of including it; the customer was in favor of a totally different chorale, one of the later masterpieces.

What does this mean? What is the real significance of the incident? Year in and year out ordinary every-day folk of all types and conditions, rich and poor and healthy and strong, chatter about the music of Johann Sebastian Bach. Parades of parades! It is as though one were to say that the baseball teams of the National Baseball League were leaders in a movement to spread Socrates! That the subway crews of New York were heart and soul in a plan to raise a monument to Dante! That the longshoremen of Hoboken were madly in love with the ninety teachings of Confucius!

When many musicians themselves still inwardly shudder at Bach and put him on their recital programs because it is the tradition to open with something solid and academic, when many musicians still consider Bach an antiquated, unsympathetic,

lifeless cocoon—what should be expected of the people? The paradox grows as Bethlehem's marvel spreads on the canvas.

Yet there is nothing extraordinary about the people of Bethlehem. They are not martyrs, saints or intellectual paragons. In fact, they are very ordinary. Bethlehem is a manufacturing town. Among other things, the encyclopaedia-authority says:

Bethlehem a borough of Northampton and Lehigh Counties on North bank of Lehigh River. Population (1940), 29,855. . . .

During the war of the Independence, part of its well-known Minerva seminary was used as a general hospital of the continental army. . . .

Among the borough's industrial establishments the manufacturing of iron and steel are the most important, but it also manufactures brass, zinc, and silk and knit goods. The municipality owns and operates its own waterworks. . . .

Bethlehem has often been called the American Bayreuth. . . .

The paradox grows, indeed, as the consideration of Bethlehem's love of Bach appears to be the supreme interest in the communal life of the town.

The father of modern music, the head of our musical family tree, the popular idol of a thriving, rushing, bustling commercial American city! The cantor of Leipzig, the patron saint of a population of common business people and professional handi-  
\* \* \*

It was a soft, balmy day in late May when we arrived in Bethlehem. The town is situated in the heart of the beautiful Pennsylvania country. The roads are well kept, the houses are spick-and-span. The river runs through the center of the town, separating the factory section from the homes. The chimney spires rise like sky-giants, belching forth smoke in clouds such as precede a thunder-storm. The steel works spread and sprawl over hundreds of acres, reaching down to the waterfront and stretching to the outskirts. A massive span-bridge colors the commercial aspect of the picture. Bright, modern stores show shining windows to the passer-by; hundreds of automobiles give a metropolitan touch to the scene; smart street-cars, with smart conductors and matrons, are crowded all the time; in the mornings, earlier than seven o'clock, girls and men are rushing to their jobs; in the evening the city is as lively as New York. The lights twinkle, the place is busy and wide-awake.

A very modern city. A very business-like city.

On the other side of the river are the homes and the other stores, and the hills and Lehigh University. There is much

open space and a beautiful view of the country. There are some old landmarks—the Moravian settlement, the Moravian seminary, the chapel, the remains of colonial days and revolutionary days, and early American days. The guide shows the spot which entertained George Washington and Benjamin Franklin and James Madison; she points out the pulpit where the early Moravian ministers preached, and the very spot where the missionaries addressed the Indians.

Thus, the guide insists, is the place where the Indians were halted one Thanksgiving night as they were about to massacre the population—halted by the sound of music in the chapel, halted by the belief that it was the Great Spirit murmuring his protection to the white folk. Further, the guide leads to where the Revolutionary soldiers were nursed, and where the little Colonial ladies were taught to read and sing.

A very historical city—a very quiet, studious city.

But the people? They talk about selling their goods as anybody else does. They dress the same. They are the same. It is beyond contradiction that there is nothing about Bethlehem and its people which makes for a different set of conditions from those which apply elsewhere. Bethlehem is a regular American city.

The only outstanding characteristic is the musical idea. And that is indeed by years of training. If in the earlier days the Oberammergau Passion Play had been introduced, it, instead, would be the big idea, except that naturally other religions would be excluded; if the scheme of performing Shakespeare's plays had been proposed and followed, that would be the driving motive, except that fewer could participate, because a limited number could understand and feel the message. If it had been the custom to hold Greek dancing pageants, that would be the town's hobby, except that dancing is not as splitting and could never have been so fundamental in its appeal as Bach.

When the visitors went to the Packer Memorial Church to hear the performance, they found the lawn covered with thousands of villagers, who sat on the grass under the great shade trees. Townspeople stood eagerly peering into the edifice. They held scores of the Bach Chorale and were poring over the notes and the words. The chorus of harp-players and crickets gave a character to the still atmosphere—for the people were silent as they waited. The visitors entered the high-roofed church. In the darkish twilight of the chapel every seat was occupied. At the front, under the altar and in a white light that streamed through the side windows, was the chorus. They were halted



against the pipes of the majestic organ with the golden trumpets. The women in white, the men behind them—several hundred singers. An orchestra was in the front, and the soloists sat with folded hands.

This is the interesting thing about the chorus, these highly trained students of Bach: The personnel reads something like this: housewife, housewife, nobody, manager's wife, steel-worker, housewife, clerk, etc., etc. There are the workers, the daughters and wives of the workers. There are the foremen, the managers, there are the millionaires in the chorus. There are the pupils and teachers from the university. Nearly every family of Bethlehem is represented.

At the moment of three o'clock, the director comes to his place and lifts his hands. The music starts, ever so faintly, but increases and increases to a burst of sound so tremendous that it is awe-inspiring. Sopranos and tenors and basses and altos blend marvelously. One is lifted completely out of one's self, and carried into the upper regions of purified ideals.

The man Walls, the director, is a fine figure of a man. He has a genial smile and he loves his work. He is Bach's disciple in America. He is everybody's friend, from the wealthiest patron to the lowliest clerk in town.

This is not a review of the music. The dailies have carried the criticisms and will carry the criticisms of the next Festival. There exists an excellent summary of the entire history of the movement, as told in Raymond Walters' book. This volume reviews the development of Bethlehem's music from the earliest days, shows how the expenses have been underwritten and gives intimate pictures of the workers. As a guide to other community workers who would attempt to follow suit, a perusal of Mr. Walters' book will prove invaluable.

My endeavor here is to find the meaning of the work; to point out the principles which underlie the activities, and the something "bigger" which is in the movement, which can be transplanted anywhere. Bethlehem has proved that music can be made a genuine civic enterprise; not the sort of mainly-pamper enterprise indulged in by some cities, not the sort of activity of a "Civic Music Association," which is just the high-flown name of a chorus; not the political trappings of some new-fangled mayors. Bethlehem has demonstrated that there is something in music capable of dominating the collective mind of a community, and providing a vehicle that can be universally popular.

One who would go about making another Bethlehem might safely follow the example of the Pennsylvania town. He may

enter the task with the assurance that an experiment is under way which is not contrary to human nature and American constitutionality. The moorings of the tenets of pessimism are stilled by Bethlehem. Whenever another pessimist remarks on the futility of extending the circle of musicians, let him talk on and then quietly whisper in his ear, "Go to Bethlehem." He will quote arguments beyond measure on American taste, and its failure to respond to good music. He will state the number of hundred million sheets of rag-time compositions which are sold every year. He will compare the rankle audience with the concert audience. He will tell you that artists cannot get their pay out of a direct recital. He will say that Shakespeare and Keats and Demosty and Owen go unheralded and unused, while George M. Cohan, Al Woods and Irving Berlin are knighted and honored with laurel. He will point to the newspapers and show the front page headlines on murders, rape and bigamy; the full page rhetoric on baseball, foot-ball and indoor hockey; the columns devoted to the epics of how to keep the news in order and how to beautify the fading complexion and how to keep your sweetheart's love tender—and then with malicious glare he will exhibit a bare knee inches on last night's musical events. The gentleman with the pessimistic trend will tell you how the operatic society died and how the Philadelphia orchestra came near bankruptcy and how the poor young singer goes through the tortures of the inferno to reach a goal situated about Fortieth Street and Broadway, New York City.

All of this he will tell me, and I will shake my head up and down, which is the affirmative, and tell him that he is right as far as he goes, but that he stops too soon. And that he had better take a trip as far as Bethlehem, the new Jerusalem of music, all over!

Generalizing is the cause of all ills. To generalize on music from now until doomsday will lead nowhere. But when one "gets down to brass tacks," then results develop. Generalize about newspapers; it is true that newspapers are not fair to music. But particularize, make a campaign of common sense and persistence to win over a newspaper, and then watch for results. To illustrate the point, I may be pardoned if I quote the particular case where it fell to my lot to knock down the conventional generalization concerning newspapers, and in the hardest city in the world. In New York City, the Globe is today devoting more space to music than to any other feature, outside of sports. It is not unreasonable for musical events to gravitate to the first page. More

especially, the Globe has fostered musical education and has sponsored free concerts to spread musical propaganda throughout New York. By July, 1923, over twelve hundred concerts will have been given free to the people; and the total population reached in this manner will have topped the two million mark.

Generalize about singers; but it would be easy to list here dozens and dozens of young artists who have won high places with no more difficulty than a similar number of young people in any other walk of life would have encountered to get as far.

Generalize about operatic societies that founder on the rocks. Of course there must be efficient management. Where is a better example to offer in a particularizing way than the "Society of American Singers"? These artists, under the direction of William Wade Hincham, have combatted every tradition. They are singing opera in English (you could never make a success of this, one tradition has it). They are singing grand opera and light opera (you can never do both schools together, runs another tradition). They are singing with only American artists (the public won't go to a company which doesn't offer foreigners as bait, runs still another tradition). They are making an extended run of over thirty weeks (a long season can never be launched, goes the last tradition).

To return to Bethlehem, here is the example par excellence in particularizing, an example which should be both a stimulant to traditions, and an impetus to dogmatism and idealists. If the musician is going to put up his sword and spear because he is afraid, then he will never be music's champion in the new world. But if his spirit is high, if his arms are mighty, if his ambition is undaunted, he may immediately get ready to be the maker of a new Bethlehem. But beware of confusing the community chorus plan with the Bethlehem plan!

How did Bethlehem become the center of such an intense musical interest? By years of endeavor?—Yes! By universality of appeal?—Undoubtedly! By massing of performers and instrumental?—Precisely! By publicity?—Bravo, by publicity indeed!

Some of Bethlehem's own leaders will combat me in declaring the possibility of extending the idea. They will insist that Bethlehem's musical history is an old one—that it has been developing since pre-Revolutionary days. That is true. But the handicap is not difficult to overcome. There can be quicker progress, because it is not necessary now to go over all the ground which was covered in the evolutionary progress of the Bethlehem enterprise. Conditions are different. Interest in music is greater

and more widespread. It is my personal feeling, based on five years of propaganda with the *New York Globe's* assistance, that it would take a very short time to make a noticeable impression on any community. Let us suppose that an ambitious set of individuals were determined to make the town of San Antonio, Texas, the musical city of the South. Within one year, the thing would begin to take root, and show results. Within five years, it could be made the talk of the country; within a generation it would be as much a civic entity as that of Bethlehem.

Universality of appeal! What has so universal a message as music? Surely no sport, no commercial drive, no educational scheme, has such a grip on a community. Try to mass a town on any idea; not a single one can be found which has so general a pull on every kind of citizen as that of a music-festival. There is no taint of gain—it is an art-project. There is something uplifting and yet not unattainable. If the project were the control of a market, it would gain some business men and lose the women. If the project were the development of a monument or a park, what would be the inner joy to the participants?

Publicity! Is it not easy to understand the peculiar psychological effect on every Bethlehemite, of the publicity which the project brings to the town? Bethlehem advanced in public attention when the festivals attained to national prominence. Outsiders turned their eyes upon the spot on the map, and made the journey. The post-office felt the larger mail. The residents found their friends on the outside "looking up" to them. The local newspaper discovered a project around which it could write eternally and furnish outside newspapers with matter to clip—with credit! It takes no stretch of the imagination to realize that residents, especially shop-keepers, felt the necessity of sprucing up and getting in shape so that these visitors would not find the local minds wanting!

Thus develop local pride, local unity, intelligence. Not for one moment would I try to create the impression that every Bethlehemite has become a musician and an expert on Bach. Oh, no! But I do believe that there is not a single Bethlehemite who is not now acquainted with Bach and chorales and good music.

Dr. Wolfe, the director of it all, is a keen student of humanity. He chose Bach, if not consciously, then by inspiration, because Bach is a vessel which cannot be emptied. Being inexhaustible, the singers cannot encompass the wisdom of Bach in a moment. They can never find the last of Bach's values. At first they can

only get a taste of the beauty—then the beauty grows on them; and the first taste of wisdom is had. Then the wisdom grows on them, and the infinite goodness and religious fervor dawn on them. Then these grow on the singers, and the veneration is tasted, and so forth. Why worship a man who is less than a god? This is why Bach has proven such an ideal choice for Bethlehem—and why Bach will always be the saint of Bethlehem. Bach is not dry, or academic—again tradition is dealt a death-blow. Bach is supremely human, supremely beautiful. He was a man who suffered, he was a man who loved, he was a home-man, a father, a husband, a gardener, a hater of tyrants, a lover of friends. A man with enemies, a man who came from a family of artists, but who made his own art, who conceived his own schools, a man of simplicity of taste and catholicity of appreciation. One who lived in the country and visited in the city, who adored the church-elf, and knew the joy of the organ. He could wash the dishes at night, and go then to his organ, and put his wife on the head between him, writing never to go back, suffering because of puppy rivals who stood in his way and barked at him, and dying, as he lived, alone with his family, his organ, his music.

There is a figure to love—and Bach is growing alive in Bethlehem. I have not heard that a marble statue is to be erected in his memory, but a much finer monument has been built in the hearts of the people! And in my mind's eye I could see Bach enjoying it all immensely!

To sum up:

1. Bethlehem's music is really of the people and hence is significant.
2. Bethlehem's music is of a sort to change their whole character and bring beauty ever increasing to the business and domestic life of the community.
3. Bethlehem's music is making the town the Mecca of musicians.
4. Bethlehem's experiment suggests something "bigger," which can be followed, and will be followed throughout the States, and there is a counterpart in every section of the country.
5. Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, Wagner, MacDowell, Brahms, Gluck, Haydn, Handel—and whom one is willing to be brought to life in a community like Bethlehem. It is not necessary to take only one; it is not even necessary to follow a fixed idea, though that is to be preferred.

The something "bigger" than the Bach Festival at Bethlehem will be the sum total of the civic musical festivals in Akron, Belleville, Cleveland, Davenport, Easton, Fargo, Galveston, Hammond—and so on throughout the alphabet of the land!

## THE PASSING OF THE PRESSURE TOUCH

By WESLEY WEYMAN

TO question the efficacy of the pressure touch as a means of melodic expression, is to commit an act of irreverence hardly to be equaled in the whole range of pianoforte technique. Pressure has been the fetish of half a century in the art of tone production. No word has been used so constantly to describe melodic playing, or to guide and stimulate the student to his best effort in that direction. True comparisons have been drawn upon, such as pressing the juice from ripe fruit, even a tremolo of the finger, a legitimate device in playing stringed instruments, has been advocated and not infrequently exhibited on the concert stage. But whatever the outward manifestation, it was always the pressure that was the basis of the principle. It is interesting and important to investigate the historical evolution of a custom so universal, and to study its advantages and its defects.

Four or five generations ago, when our musical forebears were still playing the clavichord, they were confronted by a technical problem so vastly different from our own to-day, that only those who have played both clavichord and modern pianoforte are able to appreciate the chasm which separates the two. One fact alone, however, apart from any other difference, suffices to show the fundamental irreconcilability between the ancient and the modern techniques. The dip or drop of the key was very slight, only about one-half that of the present key; and the force required to start it in motion was little more than a feather's weight—an amount scarcely perceptible to our less sensitive fingers accustomed to exerting two ounces and a half of force to set in motion the modern key. In other words, we find that the clavichord has a phenomenally "easy action," and that the key goes down only half as far as on the pianoforte of to-day. This fact, so admirably adapted to the lightest agility, together with the lack of resonance in the clavichord, and the lack of singing tone and varied noises in the harpsichord, at once explains to us the characteristic quality of the music of the early period. It was limited mostly to movements of extreme speed, and this lightning agility was far more easily obtainable than that it is on the modern instrument. *Piano* technique in the early period depended entirely on the lightest agility of the fingers, a purity

muscular force apparently emanating from the knuckles at the base of the fingers, though in fact lightly controlled by the hand behind them. Evenness was not difficult of attainment as the force exerted was so slight, and the purely percussive quality of touch was inoffensive to the ear in the low range of dynamics at one's command.

As we trace the development of music from the seventeenth through Scarlatti to Mozart and Haydn, and finally to Beethoven, we find this constantly broadening tonal scope accounted for by the concurrent change in the instrument from clavichord to piano and then to pianoforte. Already with Mozart we find sustained adagio and andante movements, although no one felt more keenly than he the inadequacy of his piano to express the tonal effects which he desired. For these he was obliged to turn to the strings and to the voice, while he patched out the rapidly dying tones of his piano melody with a pseudo-cantilena of *resaca*da, repetitions and ornamental trills. But with the advent of Beethoven we find the formation of a new melodic style, and the development of an instrument far more capable of expressing it. The romantic school was emerging from the classical period, freeing itself from shackles of artificiality and false propriety. Music followed literature in its great awakening to the fact that it was a medium of expression for human emotion and experience, and not merely a framework for the development of pyrotechnical volutes, or of involved conceits to be worked out according to mathematical rule. The catharsis of the spirit from the thronos of classical restraint required an adequate means of expression, and the older instruments with their limited resources were forced to make way for others with wider range of tone and greater dynamic power. The harpsichord served only to depict the soulless emotions of conventional figures, as did the contemporary drama through the *commedia dell'arte*; the soul-tragedy of a Beethoven—an underworld of expression in pianistic art—required vastly larger resources. Only a pianoforte could furnish these—an instrument on which one could play forte as well as piano, with the entire dynamic range between. Yet to our modern ears these pianistic attainments would sound as slightly startling as the harmonic innovations of Beethoven and Hummel, with which they were contemporary.

With, then, the romantic period opening to unask the scope of human experience, and the instrument offering a comparatively wide range of tonal possibilities, the superficiality of the old percussive finger touch was inadequate. The problem of the *scandalo* and that of the *cantilena* were quite different. For the expression of a singing melody, the key required a more exact and constant control, and the

element of percussion had to be eliminated. Both these needs could be met by a gentle pressure exerted by the fingers. To press a key one must approach it comparatively gradually, take hold of it, and displace it with intention. Thus the actual touch itself, like the music it was used to express, contained a human element quite lacking in the light and superficial touch of the earlier schools.

This, it would seem, was the genesis of the pressure touch which has for many decades been the basis of all melody playing, and of all expression of tender emotion. It had indeed the advantage of a human element. It showed a vast advance in both art and instrument, in that it made the key an implement for creating varying tone-motions. The performer was forced to take hold of the key and use it to a definite purpose, an attitude of mind which is still, indeed, the last word in modernity, the most important principle in the pianoforte technique of today.

Why, then, if pressure has so great a virtue, if it has served to transfer pianistic art from a basis of mere lines to the realm of color and emotion, if it indeed forces us to the most important mental attitude toward the instrument, that of actually using the key to create definite and exact tones—why need we look farther for our melody touch?

We have seen that the clavier touch was a purely muscular exertion of the fingers, and that the pressure touch was developed directly from it. It remained a purely muscular operation, but located itself in the palm of the hand, beyond the fingers, where the real control of the fingers is more readily felt. In its incipency, the actual exert of this muscular operation was slight, but through the following decades, the development of the pianoforte to its present colossal proportions presented a quite different case. For the tones of enormous volume which we now require, a correspondingly enormous force must be exerted to overcome the "heavy action" of the modern pianoforte, and to produce in addition to this the desired tone. As it requires two and one-half ounces of force merely to set each key in motion, that set alone absorbs a surprising amount of strength, and yet this takes no account of the great force used to produce the actual tone we hear. The pressure is still exerted manually, but has been forced to transfer itself to the upper arm, as the hand alone is no longer adequate. Many teachers carefully locate the melody touch for their pupils on the under side of the upper arm, immediately below the shoulder, and then encourage them to press, press, press, until the amount of force used in playing a passage is gigantic. If actually registered, the muscular energy required even in playing a Chopin Nocturne under these conditions



would astonish us, and would exhaust us by its very connotation. This expenditure, whether consciously felt or not, must necessarily react deleteriously on the nervous system of the performer.

A study of the mechanism of the piano reveals a further disadvantage in pressure. Careful students of the instrument now realize that the tone is actually produced when the key has traversed only half its descent, and not when it hits the felt pad at the bottom. This fact requires us, if we wish to make beautiful tones, and to reproduce exactly the mental vision in our minds, to aim our force with the greatest exactness to this place in the descent of the key. This principle is almost impossible of attainment with pressure, which is bound to aim the force not merely at the pads beneath the keys, but, indeed, far beyond them. The flattened condition of the end of one's finger bears evident witness to the softness with which the active force was arrested on reaching the pads—already far beyond the crucial point in tone production. Indeed, is it not safe to assert that the person who presses is necessarily prevented from aiming his force correctly? This is probably evident in the playing of those who press out fortissimo chords from the shoulder. Is not a really beautiful fortissimo the rarest quality that one hears in one's concert-going seasons? And yet a harsh, unmusical fortissimo is an unquestionable habit in the equipment of one who claims to be an artist, particularly as beauty of tone is the simplest of qualities to attain to, if one knows how one's instrument must be treated. Thus we find the pressure touch, while incorporating the most important mental attitude in piano-playing—that of consciously using the key to create tone—at the same time grossly transgressing a physical law which is incontestable for every correctly produced tone—that of aiming the force exactly at the proper place, and not beyond. One aims one's force with the utmost care and exactitude for every step. Then one inadvertently steps an inch below one's expectation, one receives the same violent shock that the string receives when the force is aimed a quarter of an inch below the point of impact of the hammer with the string.

Again, our knowledge of acoustics reveals the inadequacy of pressure in producing tones of every quality such as must be at our command. We know that the difference between a bright tone and a dull one is one of harmonics or overtones. The bright or brilliant tone is produced by the over-emphasis of the smaller sections or harmonics of a string, through a sudden attack by the hammer. The dull or mellow tone is produced by a very careful and gradual displacement of the string by the hammer, in such wise as to suppress

as far as possible the upper harmonics. In other words, the emphasis of the higher overtones in a tone gives it definiteness, brightness and aggressiveness, the suppression of these overtones gives it hollowness, a vague suggestiveness, and a remarkable carrying power even in pianissimo. This carrying power is due to the fact that the vibration naturally continues longer when the string vibrates as a regular whole, rather than as a series of small segments. Although possessing the meditative character essential to melody-playing, tone of this quality is most rarely heard. The direct reason for this is the practically universal use of the pressure touch which precludes tones of this character. To press, a finger must be curved, unyielding in the knuckles, and inelastic throughout at the moment of producing tone. This combination can only result in a sudden impact of hammer against string, with a tone of brilliant quality in which the harmonics are emphasized. Hence the pressure touch is inherently unsuited to depicting emotions of thoughtful, suggestive or vague quality on the modern pianoforte.

How are we then to get these results so rarely heard in concert and yet so essential to the artist who aims to have at his command the whole range of emotional expression? In these days an artist is indeed poorly equipped who must first himself in a single tone color, or must distort an emotion by depicting it with a quality adapted rather for its reverse. Many pianists are as inconsistent as the painter who paints his grass pink and his sky green. What other force than pressure is at our command?

Only comparatively recently, since the pianoforte in its present orchestral proportions has required of the artist an enormous expenditure of force, have we come to realize that the arm is available not only in its active attitude of exerting muscular energy, but also in its passive attitude of relaxed weight. Here, indeed, we have at our command a gigantic power, capable in amount of meeting any of the requirements of the modern instrument for the loudest forte passages, and since the very creation of the force of weight in the arm is due to a relaxing or letting go of the supporting muscles, the more we let go, the greater force we have. There can be no fatigue in relaxation, and we can in consequence look forward to our forte passages rather as periods of recuperation than as the exhausting and muscle-straining ordeals which the pressure touch has inevitably doomed them to be in the past. The opening pages of Tchaikovsky's Concerto in B Flat Minor, or similar passages of chords, should meet upon one only with the comfort and ease of relaxation, and with the stimulating exhilaration of a mechanism which works with no trace of opposition or strain.

Furthermore, this weight force, powerful as it is when unstrained, is the most easily controlled of all forces at our command. It may be released in every degree from the softest pianissimo to the mightiest forte of which the instrument is capable. It can be aimed to the exact place in the descent of the key where the tone is produced, giving as a result a tone of complete fulness and carrying power. It can be caught up again instantaneously by the mere willing of the emanation of lightness so that the arm with the rapidity of thought is as light as a feather. So immediate, indeed, is the response, that the released weight need never reach the pads under the keys, although the momentum would naturally carry the key lightly down to its resting-place. Yet most important of all is the fact that weight can be used with much greater deliberation than muscular force, through a yielding of knuckles and joints. A fat finger is particularly adapted to weight in melody playing and the joints of both finger and wrist should yield at the instant of introduction. This reluctance in the descent of the key in turn sends the hammer against the string with greatly reduced speed, and the string is set into vibration without the explosion of the undesired harmonics. As a result, we receive the effect of a dull, full, resonant, thoughtful tone in marked contrast to the bright and energetic quality of tone which pressure is bound to produce.

Here, then, is weight of arm, we have a force which fills the deficiencies of pressure in melody playing. It cannot exhaust, as it causes no effort. Indeed its very existence is due to a lack of effort—relaxation. It can with ease be projected to the exact place necessary for reproducing in tone our mental idea. It can instantly be sustained again before reaching the felt pads beneath the keys, leaving the arm lightly poised. Finally, it opens to us an entire new range of tone color quite unattainable under the use of muscular force or pressure. By no other means can one portray the meditative, passive moods which underlie nocturnes and similar melodies, particularly those vague, suggestive qualities which are the very basis of Debussy, and the mystic school. To limit one's tonal palette to pressure and the muscular elements of touch, is to reduce poetry to puritan prosaicality. The artist of to-day who has not the resources of weight at his command is hopelessly old fashioned, and should exhort himself to the cradle and instrument of one hundred years ago, for which his touch is essentially and inherently fitted.

## STENDHAL AND ROSSINI

By HENRY PRUNIÈRES\*

BEYLE was taking a walk in the Giardini at Milan. A German military band was playing and Beyle listened as he eyed the women who passed by. Having grown accustomed to life in Milan he yielded himself to the beauties of art and of nature in Italy, to the charm of amorous confidences, to the delights of the theater and of music. He recognized an impassioned melody by Mozart which "was hundred and fifty feminine wind instruments" played with a "particular melancholy," and his sensitive soul was stirred. Then the band began another piece, and this time Beyle was astonished as he heard the light music, effervescent and sparkling like the wine of Asti, which seemed to twist everybody and everything with its melody. Upon asking who the composer was, he was told that it was "a young man named Rossini," and was urged to go to see the charming *Tamara* of this new, fashionable composer.

From this time forth Beyle heard the name of Rossini on every tongue and was astonished at not having heard his compositions before. Everywhere, at the concerts, at the balls, in the drawing-rooms, in the coffee, on the streets, they played airs from *Tamara* and from *The Italian in Algiers*.

At first Beyle rebelled. All of Rossini's tempi and rhythms were like "ad lib"; and then what did this music, always lively, elegant and smart, pretend to express? It was a reguet, a piquant sauce, a veritable lobster *à la crème* meant to excite blind tastes and jaded senses. But what enjoyment could this deluge of dancing, leaping little notes afford a man, who like Beyle, demanded of music the expression of tender emotions? The form, the "physique of music" concerned him very little. It is, after all, merely the adornment, the more or less sumptuous cloak, which drapes the composer's thought. The latter alone is important. A melody by Mozart, by Cimarosa, gave him the impression of being in communion with the very emotions, with the sentiment which had inspired it. Soul spoke to soul. He could not help finding Rossini amusing, but how much he preferred Mozart, who never amused

\*Taken to the author's office of "Le Figaro" in Stendhal's "Glorious compilation."

him. "He is the man's heart's mistress, serious and often sad, but all the more beloved just because of her sadness." Cimarosa has portrayed here in all its phases with a marvellous delicacy of touch and richness of color. His gaiety is natural, naive, spontaneous. Paisiello charms us with irresistible grace. All three in varying degree and by different means gratify the deeper passions of the soul. Rossini contents himself with an agreeable holding of the equilibrium. His *crescendos*, his *faucets*, provoke explosions of nervous and facetious gaiety, of forced laughter. He electrifies his hearers, he does not move them.

If Rossini had never had other rivals on the Italian stage than Mozart and Cimarosa, Beyle would never have departed from his disdainful attitude toward him. But this was not at all the case. With French audiences accepted novelties with difficulty and remained desperately faithful to works which had once given pleasure, the Italians, on the contrary, grew disaffected with old operas for the sole reason that they had been applauded long enough. Cimarosa, Paisiello, were no longer in fashion. Mozart was enjoyed by a mere handful of dilettanti. His music seemed obscure, learned, of a somber violence. He was admired more than he was loved. Simon Mayr, Paer, Stanetti, Guglielmi, Generali, Maestri, Anfossi, held the boards. It was they who recommended Strakoski with Rossini. Beside Mozart the new-comer appeared little; beside Paer he was a giant.

After the void, the intromissible music, of an opera by Simon Mayr, with his emphatic style, his coarse gaiety of the "good fellow without spirit," the music of Rossini seemed to Beyle radiant with youth. The composer "scattered out new ideas with lavish hands. Sometimes he succeeded, sometimes he missed his aim. Everything is piled up, pell-mell, all negligence. It is the profusion and the carelessness of riches without heart." Music "furnished out of nothing," light, vapoury and subtle, a veritable magic charm woven with rays of sunlight. You shiver when you listen to an opera by that Germanic pedant, Mayr. Go to a Rossini opera, and suddenly you feel the pure, fresh air of the upper Alps, you feel yourself breathing more freely, you seem born anew, it was genius you needed.

The mediocrity of contemporary musicians compelled Strakoski to recognize the superiority and the genius of Rossini. He perceived his fault of Mozart and of Cimarosa, but he admitted that Rossini had renewed the opera art, had infused new life into the decrepit genre. He admitted that men were thoroughly won over by *The Italian in Algeria*, *The Touchstone* (*La Pietra del Paragone*),

The Barber of Seville, even while he celebrated the dictum of the older Stendhal, that Rossini had never written a real *buffa seria*, and that Cimarosa and Paisiello remained inevitable in this style. The welcome given to the first opera of the son of France in Paris brought about the final conversion of Stendhal to "Rossinianism." He had suddenly realized that this brilliant, superficial music, sparkling with malice and speed, was just made to ravish the Parisians. It was for this very reason, to some extent, that the select few chosen of the "Vulture of music" had only partly captivated him at first. When he saw that in Paris France and the Italian in *Alfieri* provoked the shared criticisms of Barton, whose opera bore me to death, he felt his admiration for Rossini rekindled immediately. Beyle was endowed with a marvellous spirit of contradiction. At Milan, he preserved for a long time his "anti-Rossinian" attitude, but with his Parisian friends he became the apostle of the new music.

In his desire to become better acquainted with Rossini's operas, he ended by loving them. As a matter of fact, he was always, to use his own expression, a "Rossinist of 1818." A fervent admirer of the Italian in *Alfieri*, *The Frenchman*, *The Fool in Italy*, and even, though more moderately, of the Barber, he never acknowledged the works of the Neapolitan period.

Passages of *Osello* and of *Moses* moved him profoundly, but he never, in their entirety, accepted these operas, in which the German symphonic style appeared to make itself felt to the detriment of the Italian melodic quality. He could never pardon Rossini for the vocal writing of his last compositions, the vocalism, the flourishes on the clarinet, and the embellishments fused into the melodic line.

In spite of his reservations, in spite of his resistance, his taste developed almost unconsciously. One day he noticed with sorrow that the music of Cimarosa no longer produced in him the same effect as formerly. The feelings, the passions, seemed to him expressed "like one writer," and he had to agree that, while his chosen composer had "more ideas, and above all, much better ideas than Rossini," Rossini, to make up for this, showed an entirely different mastery of style. The same distinction as the case of Paisiello. He was charming, exquisite, but after half an hour of this delirium one surprised one's self in a poem. Only his Mozart worship remained intact, and suffered no harm from his very lively enjoyment of Rossini.

In his own phrase, Beyle would have said that for Mozart he felt the "love-passion" in all its beauty, its grandeur and its purity.

and that for Rossini he felt only the "love-taste," without allowing himself to be misled in any way to the defects of the object of that taste.

If Bayle showed indulgence toward the faults of harmonic orthography which accused the ear of the pedants and of the envious critics of Italy, France and Germany, he did not in return easily pardon Rossini for his insolence, his negligence, his continual repetitions, his errors of sense and taste. Like a diseased lover, he did not fail to mingle a few disagreeable observations with his praises. Now, the defects which he emphasizes are precisely those into which he himself falls. One such criticism, aimed at Rossini, could be applied to Bayle himself without modification. He reproaches Rossini with writing an opera just as he would a letter. Are the *Le Nozze*, or *Rome, Naples and Florence*, anything else than long letters written by fits and starts? In reality, if Bayle feels for the works of Rossini a singular sentiment of mingled admiration and hostility, of sympathy and repulsion, it is because they too much resemble his own works, and because Rossini is a great deal less the Voltair of music than the Stendhal of music.

We must, of course, leave Stendhal's *Le Rouge et le Noir* and Hausser's *Wilhelm Tell* out of consideration; but is there anything which so much resembles Stendhal's early works, with their happy inventions in the way of expression, their delicacy of thought and analysis, the fine observations scattered all through them, but in an inextricable confusion of loose phrases and the signature of reiterated ideas, as the first operas of Rossini, in which a few phrases, a veritable treat for the ears and for the finer understanding, are knit together well or ill by the most insipid transitions and padded out with most banal formulas? I imagine that Bayle discovered a little of himself in Rossini, and reacted the discovery with a certain irritation.

He experienced an analogous feeling when circumstances brought him into personal contact with Rossini. Rossini would have declared that he had never seen this gentleman who was mentioned to him. It is very possible that the musician who, in every town in which he stayed to be present at performances of his operas, had carefully watched a line of some hundred different pass by him, disputing among themselves the honor of being introduced to him, had preserved no recollection of the little, thick-set, whiskered man with keen eyes, who was a party to his conversations with the poet, Monti, or who, seated at the same table, laughed at his sprightly repartees. Bayle, in 1823, spoke Italian but poorly and could not readily have taken part in a general conversation when

a man with such caustic wit as Rossini's took an active share in it. He preferred to keep silent, to listen and to lose not a word. If Stendhal made of whole cloth his story of his meeting with the composer in the inn at Trévise in 1817, it is certain that he saw him often in Milan in the drawing-rooms which he frequented between 1818 and 1821. Before being presented to Rossini, Bayle knew him well through the many anecdotes, agreeable or scandalous, which were told of the composer. He heard not only the hot-meat and galling adventures attributed to Rossini, that supplied material for conversation in the houses at the Scala which Bayle visited night after night, but he could pick up bits of most amusing gossip and scandal about the composer in the salons of Elena Vigano, where he went thrice weekly after the theater. Elena was the daughter of the celebrated choreograph whose glory, in the eyes of Stendhal, equaled that of Caneva, of Houdou, even of Napoleon. She was a charming woman, a thorough musician, with a pretty voice, who used to gather round her, from eleven o'clock in the evening until two in the morning, fifteen or twenty amateurs and artists, who, like her, were passionately fond of music. No formality, no ceremony. One went in those circles in stout boots if one wished, one stretched out at ease on a sofa and was charmed by the art which the fascinating diva sang with consummate art. One was not obliged to contribute to the conversation. One talked or remained silent entirely according to one's natural inclination. There, surely, Bayle heard the most interesting discussions about music, and there he laid in a stock of anecdotes about the composer then in fashion. The amiable "Nina" knew them all. Emma Mayer was an old friend of her father's. Rossini had been her teacher and honored her with his friendship. Michele Carafa was quite at home in that house. Bayle could not be better situated to pick up the echoes of the life of the theater and of music in Italy.

He had, moreover, had a chance, in the house of some other friend, to make the acquaintance of the very young singer, Adelaide Schiavetti, whose angelic face made one forget her slightly deformed body. The daughter of an Italian general and a courtesan, she was "proud as forty aristocrats," and created a furor when she was in voice. Bayle cultivated her acquaintance and took pleasure in hearing her sing Rossini's airs. She sought, but without avail, to make him enjoy the opera of *Mirandolina*, a new composition in which she was interested.

Bayle frequented another house in which the memory of the youth, Rossini, had been kept alive. He was well acquainted with the sisters Marchetti. It was for them, to a libretto written by



their mother, and with the advice of their father, a celebrated tenor, that Rossini at the age of fourteen had composed in Bologna his opera, *Demetrio and Polibio*, which the sisters afterwards sang all over Italy. One of them had married a journalist, Angelo Lambertini, a smart and a fool, an excellent violin player and an intimate friend of Rossini's. At the Marshall house Boyle could hear many a tale of adventure in Rossini's early life, and was amazed to hear father Marshall, who in the days of his glory had been on terms of great intimacy with Cimarosa, Sacchini and Paisiello, declaim against "ornaments and puppets such as he Rossini."

It was not before November, 1818, that Boyle was introduced to Rossini, with whom he was already so well acquainted by hearsay. The conversationist amused him, the man was unattractive, so much wit, nerve, animation and vigour could not leave him indifferent. He took a lively pleasure in observing him, in listening to his discussions with Monti, and received as novel his observations and criticisms in musical matters; but the coarse Epicurean, fond of high living, was repugnant to him. He was shocked to find a man who carried out the principles of "Baynes" to their very last consequences. Boyle, it is true, had formulated the theory of the pursuit of happiness and maintained that every man ought to take his pleasure where he found it, but he did not, in fact, feel much sympathy with those who were too easily contented. He who, at this very period and in spite of his transcendent letters to his friend, *de Marsate*, suffered cruelly because of his lofty passion for Matilde Deminksky-Vlasoffa, was astonished that an artist like Rossini could limit his desires to being courted and petted by several women at the same time, getting them down plainly and without ceremony when he had enough of them, "rolling like three acres, twenty bedsheets a day," scripping, laughing, boozing, making the lover of his mistress support him, in brief, being like "a chattering pig." There were also, in the character of the artist, many things that Boyle could not approve of. Rossini did not conceal the fact that he wrote operas only to make money, and that, when he had had by enough to guarantee his income, he counted on abandoning music and taking a rest. One has gone far afield to find the reasons why Rossini ceased to compose after *William Tell*. It will suffice to cast a glance at Stendhal's correspondence. There, under the date of November 2, 1818, in a letter to *de Marsate* we read: "I saw Rossini yesterday upon his arrival. He will be twenty-eight years old next April. He wants to quit working at thirty." Ten years later, Rossini

having secured the income which he deemed necessary, realized the dream of his life. He snipped his pen in two and consecrated himself to the joys of gastronomic art. This decision, although it stunned the public at large, could cause but little astonishment for Stendhal. He, who cultivated letters for the love of letters and above all for the love of the ideas he wished to express, could not approve of such a corruption of the role of the artist. The pursuit of happiness, as Rossini practiced it, could not but appear to him as a caricature of his dearest theories. And yet he could not bear Rossini a grudge because of this. If a Frenchman or an Englishman had conducted himself in this fashion, he would have despised him. But how could one be indignant with, how could one even take seriously, this Olympian buffoon? He offered sacrifices to his instincts with such tranquil assurance, with such natural ease, with such indifference to opinion! At need, he knew so well how to justify himself with a pun, and to make game of all, of himself before all others. Beyle was too well aware of Rossini's genius to think of measuring him with the common measure, but this somewhat spoiled his great man for him. The more so as his admiration had a certain admixture of antipathy. It is this complex sentiment which manifests itself in all that Stendhal has written on Rossini and his work.

Beyle, driven from Milan in 1801 by calumnies which represented him as a spy of the French government, returned to Paris, where again he found Rossini's music triumphant at the Théâtre Lyrique. After *The Mummy Deception* (*Japanese Folies*), *Toujours*, *The Italian in Algeria*, *The Barber of Seville*, there were performed in the course of two seasons from 1801 to 1802, six Rossini operas unknown in France: *The Frenchman*, *Shakoff*, *Osello*, *The Thieving Magpie* (*Le Oiseau Ladré*), *Cendrillon*, *Mozze*. Regretting always the wonderful voices he had but lately heard, the mechanics of the Scala, so direct and so supple, and the marvellous stage-settings of Senziquira and Pirago, who knew so well how to persuade "the imagination to take the first steps into the land of illusions," Stendhal attended the Italian opera anxiously. There he found Madame Pasta again, who in the role of Desdemona made all Paris weep. He attempted to reconstruct his Milanese life. In the evening he went to the opera or into society and toward midnight he made his entry regularly at Madame Pasta's. There, listening to the music or playing lute by way of distraction with the Italian friends of the diva, he imagined himself in Milan again.

Beyle had rented a room at the *Hôtel des Lalleis*, 23 rue de Richelieu, attracted, without doubt, by the neighborhood of Madame

Paris, who occupied the first floor of this hotel. He had only to go downstairs to imagine himself in Italy. Around the piano the same discussions took place on the subject of Rossini as he had recently heard at the house of Nina Viganò.

In Paris Beyle was surely the man who knew Rossini and his works best. Up to that time there had appeared, in France as well as in Italy, only the criticisms and reviews in the journals, which were written as the works of the master from Pesaro were performed. Of the life of the man not more was known than a certain number of more or less authentic anecdotes. Assembling all his recollections, running through the sketches of his letters to his friends, and aided perhaps by a few scattered publications carefully preserved, Beyle wrote an article on Rossini for an English review published in Paris, to which he was a regular contributor. In January, 1822, *The Paris Monthly Review* published, under the pseudonym of *Alveto*, an English translation of this essay. It reached its aim and profited by the curiosity which the name of Rossini had aroused. Slightly altered it was immediately reprinted in two great British reviews: *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* and *Galignani's Monthly Review*. A Milan journal got possession of it and printed an Italian translation. This article was included in a volume in company with a preliminary dissertation on the aesthetic aims of Rossini's music. This work appeared in Milan in 1824, under the title of *Rossini and His Music*, almost at the same time as the two volumes of *Beyle's Life of Rossini* in Paris.

However ardent a Stendhalian one may be, it is difficult to attribute this great success solely to the merit of the article in the *Paris Monthly Review*. Translated into English or Italian, the grace of the style is dissipated. There remains only the matter stripped bare: facts and opinions. Now, one cannot pretend that Beyle revealed himself in this study as a very well-informed historian or as a subtle critic. It was evidently written to order hastily. The author trusted to his memory for the anecdotes and the information relating to Rossini's youth. It is for the most part wrong, or at any rate very incorrect, whether it be a question of the date of the composer's birth, of his family, or of the beginning of his musical career. One finds, moreover, numerous disputable details in the *Life of Rossini*: an air in Fauced borrowed from a Greek chant, letters addressed by the musician to "Signora Rossini, mother of the illustrious maestro at Pesaro," Rossini's mystification of his travelling companions on the way to Reggio, the first performance of the Barber at Rome, instances of the incredible facility with which the composer worked, etc.

Stendhal had ended his article by artfully mingling criticisms with his praises, as a man who refused to be "shaped entirely by Rossini's whipped cream and lachrymatoes." He admired the extreme rapidity, the brilliance and the freshness of his melodies, but he deplored the fact that the soul could find no deeper enjoyment in them. What will remain of *The Barber of Seville* when that work is as old as *Don Giovanni*?

In Italy the article appeared to the Rossini party as a pamphlet against their god. Signora Gertrude Giugli Righetti, who had created the role of Rosina in *The Barber of Seville* and that of Cindarella, believed herself personally involved in the quarrel, for Stendhal had neglected to sing the praises of her voice in speaking of the Barber. She had retired from the stage, and, married to a worthy bourgeois citizen, lived in Bologna, without, however, resigning herself to oblivion. She took up the pen to confound the gossamer-like eulogies, and to refute, point by point, his lying assertions.

The pamphlet which we owe to the capricious donna's rage is entitled *Notes of a lady, formerly a singer, on Maestro Rossini, in reply to what the English Journalist in Paris wrote of him in the Summer of 1825, as reported in a Milan Gazette of the same year*. This little work of some sixty pages is extremely diverting. On every page the singer's indignation against the foreign journalists breaks forth. Stendhal is not the only object of her invective. Did not an infamous Paris critic dare to insinuate that if, in the book of Cindarella, a hot bouquet was substituted for the traditional glass slipper, it was because the actress who played the title-role had big feet?

In the course of her pamphlet Signora Righetti gives us valuable information about Rossini, about his family, and above all, about the memorable evening on which *The Barber of Seville* was performed for the first time in Rome. Did Bayle know the brochure when he wrote his *Life of Rossini*? Evidently many of the inaccuracies pointed out by the singer do not occur in Stendhal's book. But he may have drawn his information from other sources. It seems hardly possible that Bayle would have allowed certain grotesque details in the lady's story to escape him. He knew by hearsay that the piece which was greeted with hisses the first night was repeated with great success the next day. But if he had been aware of the scenes which Signora Righetti describes the curtain moved interrupting the first performance and then going, the next night, to awaken Rossini from his sleep, invading his bed-chamber to congratulate him in his bed upon the success of his opera, would he not have made use of this in his *Life of Rossini*?

On the whole Signora Righetti does not fulfill her promise. She does not refute Stendhal except in a few biographical details. She confines herself more often to disputing unimportant points and completing certain data only summarily indicated by Stendhal. Her great preoccupation is to keep her own memory green, to remind the world that she possessed "the most beautiful voice ever heard in Rome." In addition she does not fail to slip in a few allusions to her own beauty and to emphasize the boundless admiration that Rossini displayed toward her at the time when she did him the honor to interpret his operas.

While the article in the *Paris Monthly Review* was causing all this excitement, Stendhal sat in his hotel room, writing *An Essay on the History of Music in Italy from 1600 to 1800*. The unexpected success of his article induced him to bring out this new work in English. By the 4th of December it was well advanced, for he wrote to Mr. Byron Sharpe in London that this *History of Music at the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century* had just been translated into English by a friend, and that it would make a volume of about four hundred octavo pages. "There are not many ideas in this little work," he explains, "but it is full of little facts which have the merit of being true."

Through the mediation of a young English barrister, Mr. Lohy, negotiations were carried on with the publishing house of Murray, which had already brought out *The Life of Handel*, but they led to nothing. Beyle withdrew his manuscript and subjected it to considerable modification. During the Winter and Spring of 1823 Beyle worked at his *Life of Rossini*. He had decided that this work should be seriously authoritative. Friends furnished him with analyses of the scores, others sent him from Italy biographical data about Rossini. The salon of Madame Pasta must have been a rich source of information for Stendhal. In 1823 only ten years had elapsed since the triumph of *Tancredi* in Venice, and the history of Rossini's operas was still living in the memories of the dilettanti gathered around Madame Pasta's piano. Beyle wrote the preface of his new work in September 1823 and dated it Montecassino, where he often stayed during the warm season. At this time the *Life of Rossini* was ended with a chronological list of the composer's works. The English translator must have worked with a manuscript copy of the *Life*.

In January, 1824, the publisher, Hookham, in London brought out *The Memoirs of Rossini by the Author of The Lives of Handel and Mozart*. In the preface the translator declines to identify himself with the anonymous author's judgment of the talent of Madame

Colburn. He warns the reader that he has had to cut various passages concerning religion, politics, Italian manners and morals, and that he has added from his own pen information regarding Rossini's trip to Vienna in 1802, and the success of *Semiramide*. As an excuse for the typographical errors which may be encountered, he alleges the haste with which the book had to be printed. Rossini had been in England since December 7, 1802, and we can understand the publisher's desire to bring before the public a work as strikingly opportune.

I imagine that the English *Memoirs of Rossini* represent the first draft of *The Life of Rossini*, revised and corrected by a translator anxious not to let the subject disappear under the accumulation of digressions and accessory details. It is a well constructed work, clear, authoritative, lively, giving valuable historical information and judicious analysis of Rossini's operas. It is, in fine, the material from which *The Life of Rossini* was to be made, but condensed, arranged, reduced by one-half. From the historical point of view this is the first and, without doubt, the best book written on Rossini in the first half of the nineteenth century. For Stendhalians, however, it is far from possessing the same interest as *The Life of Rossini*, which is an improvisation of genius, rATHER with life, bubbling over with ideas.

While Stritch was laboring to translate and summarize the contents of the manuscript which Stendhal had sent him, the latter was at work completing and augmenting it with a view to publication in French. He added notes everywhere. The performances of Rossini's operas at the *Théâtre Lyrique* suggested to him reflections on the execution of these works in Italy and in France. He wrote several new chapters, most of them entirely foreign to the subject, which he intercalated among the analyses of the operas.

*The Memoirs of Rossini* had been out for several months in London, and Stendhal, without hurrying himself, was still revising his manuscript. He had even requested his friend, de Marenco, to furnish him with a chapter on the history of the establishment of the opera house in Paris from 1800 to 1820. He had only to add a note attributing the study to "M. Adolphe de Besençon." In this way de Marenco was enabled to denounce the intrigues of Faer and his associates against Rossini's name.

"If you will not do this chapter for me (writes Hoffé), you will give me a devilish lot of trouble, for I was away and have no recollection of the facts. You can pour out your ink on the whole administration of Madame Catalani, and you can display your genius by sketching out a scheme of organization for the opera.

The good Earl, who looks favorably upon you, can give you all the data you may need, between two handfuls of fans." And Beyle continues to develop his idea on the ideal constitution of an Italian opera in Paris. We shall find them again in Chapter 43 of *The Life of Rossini*. At the last moment the author adds to the end of his manuscript a long letter from Mademoiselle de Langueville. He has succeeded in transforming a coherent work into a mosaic. Let us not complain, however, for the mosaic is a masterpiece.

*The Life of Rossini* by M. de Stendhal appeared in 1824, published by Auguste Beaulard and Company, booksellers in Paris. It was graced with portraits of Rossini and of Mozart and bore as a motto these words, attributed to Socrates in Aristophanes' *Clouds*: "Let your thoughts go out like this insect, which we set free in the air with a string to its leg."

The work was successful and helped to revive interest in Rome, Naples and Florence. Beyle, however, anxious to create the impression that the first edition was immediately exhausted, had a copy of the title struck off with the remark: *Second Edition*, and inserted between the preface and the introduction a notice of four pages on *The Life and Works of Mozart*. We do not know how large a return *The Life of Rossini* brought Stendhal, but it was surely much more than he derived from his famous novels. It spread over the whole world. In the very year of its publication, Professor Wenzl in Leipzig brought out a German translation, or to be more exact, an adaptation. If the spirit and the style of Stendhal were somewhat dimmed by the verbiage of the English translation, they were effaced still more in the German version under the thick coating with which they were covered by the conscientious German editor, who was not skilful in his handling of the explanatory notes and emendations.

In Italy *The Life of Rossini* was much sought after in spite of its high price, but more through malignant curiosity than because of any taste or understanding for the work. Those who did not simply draw upon the book as plagiarists, were pleased to point out its biographical inaccuracies, and to insist that Beyle had been the victim of Rossini's jokes and recollections. The admirers of Rossini found fault with the author for not having handled their idol more gently in his criticisms, and Rossini's detractors were astonished that Beyle should have taken him so seriously.

Even in France it was a matter of good taste among musical critics to treat *The Life of Rossini* as a work of pure fantasy, which did not prevent them from stealing from it, even reproaching entire chapters in biographies of Rossini published in Belgium. Stendhal was bitterly reproached with having fallen into errors of detail, and

even with a lack of sympathetic spirit. "If he had subjected all his ideas to the domination of one fruitful parent thought," wrote Joseph d'Ortigue in 1839, "this writer would have turned out only a little work, a pamphlet. M. de Stendhal has had nothing but spirit; he has written two volumes."

The memory of the famous case of plagiarism of which Bayle had been guilty toward Carpani when he published *The Life of Haydn*, aroused the suspicion that in this case also he might have stolen the property of another. It so happened that in the very year, 1824, Carpani had brought out *His Rossinians*, a collection of letters on the music of Rossini and Weber which had, most of them, appeared previously in the *Biblioteca Italiana*. So much more reason for accusing Stendhal of renewed plagiarism. But this time the reproach is without foundation. There is not a line in *The Rossinians* which could have inspired the author of *The Life of Rossini*. If there are, at times, similitudes, it is a question of commonplace without interest. Better still—whether as a result of chance or owing to a fixed purpose—Stendhal had obtained from commenting on those operas of Rossini which had been treated by Carpani. Fets did not take the trouble to read either *The Life of Rossini* or *The Rossinians* to bring his charge of plagiarism against Stendhal. In truth, Bayle took his material where he found it with a too grateful ease to escape, perhaps, on this one occasion when he was not poisoning, the ill will of his detractors. *The Life of Rossini* is a work at first hand and of immediate conception. In it the personality of Stendhal is manifested unambiguously from end to end with its worst defects and its most admirable qualities.

Those who, on the strength of the title, seek in *The Life of Rossini* a biography in the usual sense of the word, will be doomed to disappointment. It is no more a biography than the *Promenade en Rome or Rome, Naples and Florence* are guides to Italy for the use of the ordinary tourist. Some one has characterized *Rome, Naples and Florence* as "a journal of sensations." One might say that *The Life of Rossini* is a journal of sensations experienced by Stendhal in the course of a voyage through the field of music.

Stendhal was acquainted with only a limited territory in this field: Mozart, Cimarosa, Paisiello, Rossini—but he knew that territory well and not indifferently through others. He was ignorant of all the glorious past of Italy. Allegri's *Miserere*, heard at the Sistine Chapel, appeared to him like music from afar, almost barbarous, contemporaneous with Dante and the Gothic cathedrals, even though he takes note of the last offshoots of the polyphonic style which tradition had kept alive in the schools of Rome up to



the end of the seventeenth century. For Staudal, music begins with Pergolesi, Vivaldi, and Leo. And yet he knew of these charming composers of the eighteenth century only because he had read of them in the letters of the President de Brosses, in the writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and in Burney's *History*. He mentions their names and passes on. Let us be grateful to him for not seeking to make a display of erudition. He would have felt himself obliged to adapt and translate chapters from some more or less well-informed foreign historian. We should have had another plagiarism in the style of *The Life of Haydn*, a strong work, very agreeable without doubt, bearing Staudal's mark, but not contributing much to his glory.

Lamenting his desires to the writing of the musical history of his own times, that is to say of the "era of Rossini," he did not have to borrow erudition from others. It would, moreover, have been difficult for him to copy any other writer for the simple reason that, aside from the newspaper articles, the criticisms and the polemical writings in the genre, no book summing up Rossini's life and works had yet been written. Now, it is not an act of plagiarism to make use of published documents or manuscripts in writing a historical work.

For the rest, the biographical element in *The Life of Rossini* is reduced to a few data: the date of the composer's birth, his family, his education, his debut, the dates of first performances. . . . All this could have been condensed into a paragraph of twenty lines for a dictionary. There were certainly in Italy, among Haydn's friends, at least a dozen persons who could have procured this information for him. All the rest of the book is made up of analyses of operas, anecdotes, and æsthetic, political, moral, critical, philosophical and literary considerations. The printed sources of *The Life of Rossini* are, accordingly, insignificant.

There are found here and there, in this book, passages which give the impression of having been adapted from the Italian, for instance, the technical dissertation on singing in Chapter 23, but Haydn contented himself with translating a few pages from some book, or perhaps he made use of a note written especially for him by some obliging friend. Haydn reserved for himself the task of fixing the collective character of his work. It is not his own personal judgment that he gives from beginning to end, but the opinion, or rather the opinions, which he has heard expressed by those around him.

I pray the reader to believe (he writes) "that the *I* in this work is but a form of speech, which might be replaced by: "They say in Naples

in the salon of the Marquis Berio . . ." or "M. Pruckler of Venice, this well informed amateur, whose sentiments are less, told us one day at Madame Belmont's . . ." or "This evening, in the study which gathers round the smother of Mr. Attorney Antonini in Bologna, I heard Mr. Aggarlo maintain that the harmony of the Germans . . ." or "Count Orsini was of the opinion that Rossini's friend, Mr. Ghisardi, had fought to the bitter end . . ."

And Bayle does not hesitate to declare that "in writing this *Life of Rossini* he has collected from all sides, for example, from the German and Italian journals, the judgments on this great man and his works.

This time he exaggerates. A few years earlier he had claimed that he owed nothing to Carpani, whom he had despised even while he scooped at him. Now he asserts himself to converse us that his *Life of Rossini* is nothing but a "compila" made up of extracts from journals. That Stendhal drew useful bits of information from the newspapers, is quite probable; but as a matter of fact, he made little use of them, as one is quite convinced by looking through the pages of the gazettes and journals then published in Italy. As he himself very justly remarks a little farther on, "the articles in the journals are either hymns of praise or Philippics and rarely offer anything positive."

A historical and critical work like *The Life of Rossini*, could not be wholly a work of fancy. Authorities are necessary. To procure them Bayle certainly made his friends work very hard. We have seen him ask Baron de Mursse for a note on the opera bouffe in Paris. He must have procured from able assistants the analyses of operas which he used in writing his work. One can thus explain certain contradictions which may be discovered in the course of the book between the rather severe appreciations of certain operas and the eulogies paid elsewhere in the book to the various pieces of which they are made up. Stendhal does not fail to point out that he has borrowed his readers in good faith. It is their task to distinguish between the expression of his own opinions and the reproduction of the opinions of others. It is not always easy to do this, and for the uninitiated reader there are often contradictions between the praise and the criticisms of one and the same work. Stendhal is never very kindly disposed toward Rossini, but he worked with notes furnished him by ardent admirers of the master. Hence the conflict, which is, moreover, very amusing to observe when one is initiated. Precisely because of this abundance of argument for and against Rossini's music, Stendhal's book is truly representative of the opinions current in the drawing-rooms of

Milan about 1860. From time to time the musical value of Beyle dominates the hubbub of these impassioned discussions.

As he writes the successive chapters of his book he submitted his manuscript to the approbation of friends so that they might correct the "errors of fact" into which he often fell "like La Fontaine's astronomer who tumbled into a well while gazing at the stars." And he renders account of these suggestions and observations. Somewhere he thanks the "Chevalier de Marchoux, former Minister at Dresden," for valuable corrections made by the latter, and for acceptable and useful ideas which he had suggested. The dialogue which he writes at the head of his analysis of Barber must have taken place often between him and the obstinate whom he interrogated: "Come, let us get to work seriously. Let us open the score. I am going to play you the principal sites. Make a concise and readable analysis."

They are quite exact and very neat, these analyses of Rossini's operas which Stendhal gives us. He makes no display of technical terms and does not consider that he has accounted for a piece by dissecting its grammatical structure. He seeks to give us in words an idea of the music, and complains of his inability to note down for us in simple fashion the musical motives of which he speaks, because he cannot let us hear them. This had not yet become the custom. Even when we feel that Stendhal is reproducing the ideas of others, he impresses his own stamp upon them and intermingles his analysis with reflections and digressions which forbid our being bored. He is something of a "Jacques, the idiot" relating the tale of his amours to his reader, subject to continual interruptions. In the end the analyses are finished and a charming impression remains. This absence of pedantry is not the weakest attraction of Stendhal's book.

We may find in the *Correspondence* judgments on Rossini's operas, which he has just heard, formulated in terms almost identical with those in *The Life of Rossini*. As to Rossini's style, however, Beyle is, in general, more severe in his letters than in his book. He seems to have made use of sketches of letters written in Italy. It is to be regretted that the manuscript of *The Life of Rossini* has disappeared. It must have bristled with passages pointed out and with inserts. To make a note at the head of Chapter 44 he simply pins to his manuscript a fragment of a letter, forgetting that a passage in the second person sounds very strangely in that place!

In music, conversation or discussion never leads to anything beyond the necessary recitative, melodic song, the aria, or a new atmosphere for which one must have a feeling. Now, the feeling is very rare in France

south of the Loire. It is very common in Toulouse and in the Pyrenees. Do you remember the little rascals who sang beneath our windows at Ferrville (on the road to Castelvi) and whom we called up to our rooms? Toulouse . . .

The whole book is written with this concubance, often quite charming, this disdain for pompous phrases and emphatic common-places. Bayle explains himself boldly in the beginning of Chapter 28:

If I have had one constant care, it was to suggest in nothing through style, and to avoid, above all, securing any effect by a succession of considerations or images of somewhat forced metaphor, which would lead me to say at the end of the period: "There is a fine page!" In the first place, as I entered the field of literature very late in life, heaven had denied to me entirely the talent of drawing-out an idea and of exaggerating gracefully. Furthermore, there is nothing worse than exaggeration in the tender courtesies of life.

Like Rossini's early operas, Stendhal's book is an improvisation. When he has once set up his scenes satisfactorily he "broods" it with astonishing ease. At times his threads become tangled and the design appears no longer distinct but just as one begins to believe that the work is irremediably spoiled, order is re-established, and an exquisite flower, of charming color and new form, blossoms out under the busy fingers of the adroit workman. For Stendhal is infinitely adroit in spite of his continual awkwardness. To point out his inaccuracies, his repetitions and omissions, would be to irritate those whom he decides for finding fault with Rossini's negligence. Of what consequence are the hazy transitions, the rapid cadenzas, the curtailed developments, as long as the opera includes a dozen dazzling numbers written with verve and fine feeling? There is not a chapter in *The Life of Rossini* which does not produce some flower of thought, some turn of expression, which in itself alone is worth a whole volume of chastened and unadorned style.

Stendhal never creates the impression that he is forcing himself, but rather that he is indulging in play. He writes "to while away the evening," and the "trick of wit/war" fills him with deep delight. He writes what comes into his head, what he believes, without caring whether he runs counter to or offends the opinions of others. In fact, he takes pleasure in stirring up his own spirits. He does not please himself on his impartiality. This may be a very fine quality for historians, but in the arts it is, "like reason in love, the portion of cold or feebly softened hearts." He says what he thinks without the slightest hint in his own infidelity. He does

not pretend that his judgments are low. He thinks them and so, but he is quite free to admit that others may have received a widely different impression of the same work. He asks only that they be sincere and that they refrain from simulating feelings which they do not experience. He agrees with the best critics in the world that he may have shown himself unjust to the opera in Rossini's second manner.

I myself am probably as much the slave of my feelings as any of my predecessors, when I proclaim that the style of Taucoré is the perfect union of antique melody with modern harmony. I am the slave of a musician who afforded me the most lovely passages in my early youth, and on the other hand, I am unjust to the *Flower of Shyrra* and to *Osella*, which arouse feelings that are less sweet, less entrancing, but are more pleasant and, perhaps, stronger.

One cannot picture a critic with more good faith than Stendhal, or less systematic. His perpetual contradictions give an striking incoherence to his work. He loves Rossini, but with reservations. He has no great affection for the noisy Rossini of *The Flower of Shyrra*. He prefers the spirit, the delicate charm, the grace and the vagabondism of *The Italian in Algiers* or of *Fanéro*. Above all he finds fault with the composer for having encroached on the prerogatives of the interpreter. In Italy Bayle was privileged to hear Voltri and two or three other singers who preserved the method and the tradition of *bel-canto*. He was captivated. Surely, then, it makes little difference what voice they sing. One forgets the composer and thinks only of the virtuoso who transfuses his soul into his song. Voltri with his voice, Pagotini with his violin, Liati on his piano, transfuse the themes which they take as a pretext for their sublime improvisations. Bayle was charmed by them, just as we would still be charmed today if such singers could be found; but Rossini complains that he no longer recognizes his own music. And then, every singer pretended to follow the example given by such high authority. The most mediocre voices became embowered with curls, ignored and bewitched the air which fell to her, and of which shortly no substantial part remained. Rossini resigned himself to the inevitable, but avowed what he could.

He himself wrote out the embellishments and demanded that his interpreters sing the air as he had written them and not otherwise. Stendhal could not reconcile himself to this reform, and found that Rossini was in the wrong, even though he recognized the disadvantages for the art of music which resulted from the excessive liberties in which the virtuoso indulged to the point of abuse. Under the old system the interpreter was enabled to express the

vividest studies of feeling of which his soul was capable at the moment when he appeared upon the stage. Now he was constrained to discover the feeling which the composer meant to convey, and hence he sang with less sensibility. Now, for Stendhal, sensibility was everything in music. "Good music is merely our emotion." Surely his is not a technical judgment. He feels a profound disdain for those who are interested only in the "physics of sounds." Music must call forth emotions in him, must arouse reveries. "Every work which lets me think of the music," he declares, "is medicine for me."

With what authority, then, and—let us speak boldly—with what good sense, he justifies Rossini in the tricks which the composer sometimes plays the sacrament rules of the art. These rules, which hamper the genius of the artist, are life, mathematical stuff, invented with more or less cleverness or imagination. Each of them must needs be submitted to the test of experience. The sure method, the impeccable logic of his master, Trucy, forbids his explicit belief in the value of rules. The Abbé Maitre, when Rossini requested him to explain the reason for his corrections, answered: "One ought to write thus." Beyle rebels against this dogmatism in which he sees a mystification. "If one has the scandalous temerity to want to inquire into the justification of the rules, what will become of the self-importance and the vanity of the conservatory professors?" So much the worse for grammar, if an artist like Rossini offends against its laws. Stendhal has too intense a love and feeling for music to descend so low as to examine minutely its dismounted mechanism. Of what importance is the mechanism to him, when the sound that it produces alone moves him?

Few men were more sensitive than he to the manner of musical expression. He takes pleasure in defining in words its intangible complexity. He discovers in music the passion which he himself has so nobly dissected: Love. On another occasion, in the book which he has devoted to the phenomena of "crystallization," Beyle was impelled to have recourse to quotations from airs by Mozart, by Cimarosa and by Rossini to portray more exactly a certain shade of sentiment. In analyzing Rossini's operas he continues his psychological work, and in order to enable us better to seize the sense of the music, he relates anecdotes which illustrate feelings like those expressed in the music. There is a close relationship between the book on *Love* and *The Life of Rossini*, and the theories formulated in the earlier work are illustrated and commented upon by means of musical illustrations in the latter.

In Stendhal's opinion, we can in no wise understand the music of Italy, if we do not render ourselves an exact account of the soil from which it is sprung. As he writes to a friend: "The species of truth which one calls the Fine Arts is the necessary product of a certain fermentation. To acquire a knowledge of the truth one must know the nature of the fermentation." Here we have, in fine, the whole theory of the influence of environment, so brilliantly formulated and exemplified as the systematic method of Taine.

Stendhal, in order to reveal to us the meaning of Rossini's music, or to be more exact, of Italian music in Rossini's time, outlines for us a picture of contemporary manners and morals, evoking with each page the memory of the manners of times past which have contributed to forming those of the present. There is no more lively element than this in Stendhal's book. To tell the truth, he often severely repeats what he has already said in *Rome, Naples and Italy*, but one has not the heart to complain of that. A definition of this kind we find, for instance, in the account of the representation at Como of *Demetrius and Polixenes*, which ranks among the finest pages in Stendhal.

Convinced that we cannot study the music of a people if we abstract from the land, the customs, the ideas, the passions of that people, he seeks to give a combined impression of the whole, and tries to make the French understand Italy through Rossini's music. The whole book is written with an eye to the French public for which it is intended. Byle, faithful to his rôle of "*bon compare curieux*," harrying the legends of the column with his lance, seeks to excite the curiosity of his contemporaries, and to arouse in them the desire to know more of this beautiful land of Italy where one lives and loves after another fashion than the French. Like all those who have lived long in a foreign land, he is enraged by the self-sufficiency and the complacent pride of those who have never travelled beyond Saint-Cloud, and who live in the firm belief that there is nothing under the sun which can compare with what is done in Paris. As Sainte-Beuve very aptly remarks, Stendhal addresses himself not so much to the public at large, as to the artists and above all to the critics, whom he urges "to get out of the academic circle, too narrowly French, and to become aware of what is going on outside."

In his disdain for the "parotism of the antic-chamber" he hurst the truth at the hands of French musicians. Carried away by his ardor for the fight, he goes too far and at times becomes unjust; but who would have the heart to find fault with him for taking sides against Berlioz? His rebukes for the noisy orchestras, the apostrophisms and verbose singers, seem only too well founded, if we

judge by what our ears suffer to this very day in our lyric theatres.

Stendhal does not confine himself to overabounding with sarcasm the public of the *Opéra* and the *Comœdia*, with ears "hard with parliament." He never misses an opportunity to war upon the national vices, against the defects which, according to him, are French *par excellence*: vanity, the love of ridicule, affectation, materialism in art. He exaggerates a great deal, but what an admirable preacher of idealism is this Epicurean! Noble souls cannot escape the infection of his enthusiasm. "I have read through *The Life of Rossini*," confesses Eugène Delacroix in the pages of his diary. "I saturated myself with it, and I did wrong. As a matter of fact, this Stendhal is an excellent fellow who is right with too much assurance and, at times, reasons falsely!"

Certainly he reasons falsely, but often—and probably Delacroix understood him thus—it is just then that he is all the more right. And then, what luminous aspects, what prophetic views of the future of the art! In particular, he predicts with astounding acuity as early as 1824, the fusion in French grand opera of opposing æsthetic principles of Italian and German operas, a prophecy which was to be realized by Rossini five years later in his *Stella*.

These two great currents of opinion and varying sources of enjoyment, represented today by Massenet and Strakos, will probably be blended to form but a single school, and these unions, forever inseparable, ought to take place under our very eyes, in this Paris, which in spite of the censors and the rigor of the times is more than ever the capital of Europe.

If we overlook certain whims, certain venturesome strokes of the pen, we are struck by the justness of his judgments on the musicians of his day. No one, perhaps, has spoken with more tenderness or sympathy about Mozart. As for Rossini, one is astonished both by Boyle's criticisms and by his enthusiasms, for alas! who knows Rossini to-day? I mean the Rossini whom Stendhal loved, the author of *Fuorvi* and of *The Duke in Algeria*. It is very difficult to judge from the French adaptation of *Le Barbier de Séville* which we are offered at the *Opéra-Comique* and how many are there who have really heard an Italian troupe in *N. Barbieri di Siviglia*? Those who have taken the pains, or rather those who have had the pleasure of studying the operas of Rossini's youth, can only admire the stern equity of Stendhal's judgment:

Vivacious, light, pleasant, never tiresome, rarely sublime, Rossini seems here expressly to throw medicine made into costume. However, though far surpassed by Mozart in tender and melodically situations,



and by Chopin in the comic or in the impassioned style, he is superior in vivacity, relativity, pungency and all the effects derived from these qualities.

To some people this judgment will appear surprising. "What! Is this all that Strakoski finds to praise in a composer about whom he has been telling us in more than five hundred pages? 'Vivacious, light, quaint, never tiresome . . . ' Does an artist who is no more than this deserve our attention for so long a time?" To be never tiresome, this in itself is reason enough for Strakoski. If one cannot attain the sublime heights of Mozart or Beethoven, if one cannot dispense to men profound emotion or serene joy, then, to induce them, to give them a pleasure which is more ready, more available, but which abstracts them from the realities of daily life and transports them into the world of agreeable illusions, is in itself a great deal.

Our age has succumbed to the fascination of the imposing monuments erected by the Romantics. It finds it difficult to imagine that one can listen to music outside of the coffee-house in any other mood than that of receptive ecstacy; that one can enjoy cheerful or tender airs with lively pleasure, and talk or sip sherbets during unimportant recitations. We listen to the Barber to-day as we do to Puccini, religiously from beginning to end. How Strakoski would laugh, and what would he not say of those people who go to the opera as to a sermon!

To be sure, there is music which is nothing but a sublime prayer, which introduces us into impetuous sanctuaries, there is music which fills us with holy horror, which awakes in us delight, vice, superhuman joy; there is music which takes possession of us, carries us along, tosses us upon its frenzied flood and abandons us on the sandy shore, broken as one who recovers consciousness after a long swoon. But is there no place, then, for music of another kind, and is it necessary that the passionate admiration which it evokes forth for artists, highly gifted but failing just short of genius, should still impose upon us for any length of time this sort of honest, respectable work, proclaiming the highest ideals, but which we cannot hear without yawning? Strakoski teaches—and there are people who have taken his words to heart:

There is room for a less serene, a less dogmatic art. I pray you, gentlemen who compose, put aside this superannuated equipment of sonatas, fugues and masses. Do not persist in constituting a dead tongue. What is the use of writing Latin verses? That is good enough for the college. You are no longer, so far as I know, college students. Do not hypnotize yourself with the contemplation of the past. . . . Being

in your own times. It is not given to every one to be born a giant. If Nature has not facilitated you thus, make your effort proportionate to your strength. In seeking to plunge men into ecstasies you risk putting them to sleep. Fly from boredom, pedantry, affectation. Life is hard, full of troubles. Aid men to escape them through the imagination. Ponder the example of Rossini who, lacking neither the strength nor the desire to take Destiny by the throat as Beethoven did, prefers to snap his fingers at her. His hearty laughter dissipates the shadows. We forget our misery, the emptiness of life, and we are transported into a world of illusion and delight, wherein, darted over with golden light, entrancing phantasms are walked into view.

(Paraphrased by Otto Klemm.)

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8 East 42nd Street, New York City.

# THE MUSICAL QUARTERLY



NEW YORK G. SCHIRMER BOSTON

**THE MUSICAL QUARTERLY**

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O. G. SONNBECK, Editor

VOL. 7, No. 1

APRIL, 1921

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### PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

TERMS: DOLLARS 4.00 PER ANNUM

OFFICE OF THE PUBLISHER

SONNBECK, FIVE CENTS A COPY

Entered as second-class matter, October 20, 1910, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under No. 246 of 1910.

NEW YORK

G. SCHIRMER

BOSTON

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# THE MUSICAL QUARTERLY

VOL. VII

APRIL, 1921

NO. 2

## THE RHETORIC OF MODERN MUSIC

By KARL H. ESCHMAN

THE four elements of musical style: rhythm, melody, harmony, and form—have occupied at one time or another, positions of varying importance in the development of music. To the historian who is concerned with the process of development, these elements appear to have originated in the order named, although the critical theorist cannot at once agree with so simple an explanation, for he finds it difficult to conceive of any musical thought without its embodiment in material form. The theorist must also consider the other elements as interdependent as to justify the belief that melody has inherent in what appears to be the most simple rhythmic combination, and that harmony is implied in any melodic succession whatever.

At certain periods, however, one or more of these elements predominate. Rhythm, then, is the outstanding feature of primitive music, as simple melody worn smooth by usage characterizes folk-music; while "poly-melody" is the very definition of polyphony. The classical period is so named largely because of its emphasis upon formal structure, although the change to an harmonic point of view was also important. Following parallel movements in literature and politics, music broke away from the classic tradition and entered a romantic period, which has continued to the present day in Realism, Symbolism, Impressionism, and other contradictory, vestigial remnants of emotional Romanticism. Rhythm, color, and harmony are in the foreground, although the order of importance may vary with individual composers. In the last forty years all three have grown more dominant.

Some, who do not object to the title "Conservatives" at such a time as this, deplore the invasion of cross rhythm, baroque

color, and crushing harmonic distances, whether brutally realistic or subtly expressionistic. They sincerely believe that the modern extremists are on the direct road to barbarism. Others who have unshaken faith in the new "Freedom," believe that the field of Art is unlimited and that nothing is useless or un-material just as nothing in the physical world is entirely useless. Accordingly, they have hope even in the music of the Italian non-musicians.

The critic of modern music is at once confronted by the problem of the materials of the art, the harmonic vocabulary, and the melodic ideas. There is also the interesting question of an amalgamation of the new material with the old. The impression of unpleasantness sometimes resulting from a sudden juxtaposition of the two, may be due to the fact that we are living in a period when the new is strange to its nervous, or this impression may be the result of inherent differences in the two processes. The juxtaposition is nowhere more apparent than in the music of certain lesser composers of the present day, who seem to have decided to insert a few modern ideas in an otherwise mid-Victorian composition. However, we may admit all the newest words in music as long as some balance, other than the composer, understand the language. More important than problems of vocabulary is the consideration of form and especially of what may be called *climax*, in the music of to-day and of the future.



After only a superficial survey of modern music, emphasis upon form seems unwarranted. That it is about the last element mentioned in a characterization of the period is due in part to the fact that design is most successful when inconspicuous and unobtrusive. It is also due to a narrow conception of the meaning of the term. When "form" is mentioned, most musicians think only of the formal and arbitrary arrangements of the classical period and certain extremely conservative tenets of Euler and Fux which were successfully modified by later romanticists and are now fortunately and properly relegated to the past. The impression that rhetorical design is relatively unimportant in modern music is furthered by the fact that some composers are so interested in the vocabulary they are using as to be oblivious to style.

On the other hand, a careful investigation will prove that rhetorical form is much more important than most observers

musical, and that the greatest composers of the present period are experts in style. Contemporary composers likely to be earliest forgotten, are those who are interested only in the magic legends of the new musical vocabulary and who neglect the construction of a real message. It is scarcely necessary to emphasize the fact that great music is the result of a cooperation of the four musical elements. A composer lacking in rhythmic, melodic, or harmonic interest is subject to immediate criticism, although at any given moment in a composition it is not likely that all these are of prime importance. However, the expression of form, the stylistic rhetoric of music, is continuously important. The danger that some modern music may fail at this point is greater than that it may fall into rhythmic or harmonic chaos.

The best music of the nineteenth century is music in which there was an amalgamation of harmony and polyphony. Similarly in the twentieth century, the greatest music will be written when the modern harmonic vocabulary, combined with engaging color and rhythmic interest, expresses ideas with all the force of rhetorical form (using the term "form," as we have come to see the term polyphony in its broad and best sense).

Regard for rhetorical structure does not confine the composer to any specific forms such as the "sonata-form." This emphasis upon fixed design has done much to prejudice the study of true form. Although the purity of outline of the classical sonata is admired and compared to the formal beauty of Greek sculpture, the modern composer and the modern sculptor are not expected to confine themselves to these rather impersonal and static forms.

The Classical School, with its balanced phrases and emphasized cadential endings, wrote beautiful musical poetry, but to-day Scriabin and others have written in a style which more nearly approximates that of prose. This does not excuse the latter from an examination of their rhetorical style; in fact, rhetoric is even more important in prose than in poetry, because of the greater freedom of prose. In this comparison of modern music and prose forms, there is no intention to refer to the emotional content of prose and verse. Much that is, from a formal standpoint, musical prose, is extremely poetic; just as Turgenev's prose is poetic. Much poetry is prosaic. Mendelssohn at times delighted in the niceties of formal "irregularity in regularity" somewhat as Dryden did, and will be read less and less, for the same reason. Beethoven, like Milton, became more deeply philosophic in his poetic style than Strauss succeeded in becoming

in "Also Sprach Zarathustra." It is extremely important that present-day composers face the fact and realize that the greatest criticism of the modern school as a whole, is its lack of depth. Superficial ideas are often expressed with elaborate means, but all the richness of harmony and orchestral color does not prevent the listener from realizing that the composer has no message. Some would say that the new idiom does not lend itself to anything but half-tone impressionism. Surely this is not the case. Modern composers should be able to express themselves with greater force because of their increased resources of vocabulary, instrumental color, and rhythmic variety. Some of the Russians are already doing so.

The secret of such expression is inherent in a complete conquest of its rhetorical aspects. This technique is not to be used in a conscious or arbitrary manner but as an unconscious element in the fluency of expression, for form should enter by the earroot and not the master of ideas. This fluency of expression is absolutely essential for any logical statement of musical ideas and it is a prerequisite for intelligibility. That it is lacking may account for the incoherence of some modern music, although it is difficult to say in all cases whether it is the intelligence of the critic or of the composer which is deficient.

Formal intelligibility does not necessarily demand regularity in structure. In fact, the listener much prefers the subtle and involved, so long as there is a conviction of sincerity of utterance and inherent, if not expressed, form. One of the main reasons why Bach seems a very modern composer is the fact that he found freedom of rhetoric in his style and that his sentence structure is quite involved and gives Messrs. Frost and Beethoven more problems in their mathematics than any other composer they attempt to analyze.

Too much emphasis should not be placed upon a demand for plain intelligibility, even, as some composers, like Debussy, prefer to veil the individual outlines of their forms, and deal in that literary style in which half the charm is the lack of plain statement. There is more promise in music of the new style type than in poetry of that description (although no art can find its own thoroughfare in this direction), for music can approach with safety nearer to truth which cannot be intelligibly translated in verbal symbols. On the other hand, it is well to point out that in the biological world, the higher the organism, the greater is its organization and that animals with strongest vertebrate systems are most important. Of all the arts, music by the very

evanescent character of the medium itself needs careful organization in its structure.

\* \* \*

Two divisions may be made of the problems of rhetorical structure in music: one concerned with the large form of the work and the other, the detailed form of the smaller units, the concerned discourse of the musical idea. In modern music the latter tends to become the more important consideration. Composers have discovered that the large form of a work may assume any structure consistent with the type and mood of the composition, if they keep in mind a few fundamental principles of aesthetics, unity and variety, proportion and development. They may then turn their musical thought in almost any direction, so long as they say something, i. e. so long as there is coherency in the rhetorical statement of ideas. The fixed mold of a large form is no longer needed. Since the middle of the nineteenth century, literary programs and designs, descriptive of external objects, have often been used in the place of the classical models but even programs are unnecessary. While literature and nature will always stimulate the imagination of composers, they need not be called upon to furnish substitutes for formal design. When this is fully realized, a true renaissance of absolute music *per se* will follow. That, after all, is the larger freedom. Many musical anarchists are hoping to find in program music an extreme freedom. Why do they seek to be free of all harmonic and rhythmic restrictions only to enter a greater bondage?

The large form of free drama, in which musical themes are the sole protagonists, will be as free as the composer desires and its development will be limited only by the character of the ideas themselves. Nevertheless, it is always to be remembered that, however free in form his work may become, no composition can ever ultimately free itself from the necessity of form, because form will continue to be the penalty which everything must pay for the privilege of existing. The composer may manipulate the dramatic persons in a musical plot as he pleases. His principal characters need not always be introduced at the opening of the work as they are in Sonata-form. The heroine, frequently the second theme of this form, need not be awaited expectantly at the closing pedal-point of a bridge-passage, with all the other characters on the stage looking toward her entrance. Stereotyped procedure of this sort may secure the expected applause in some theatres but it should not be a convention required in all

symphonies. There is no reason why the general atmosphere of the work should not be suggested by a long dialogue of secondary ideas or by an impressionistic scene setting before any musical idea emerges in a principal rôle. Or even, as in G. B. Shaw, there may be no hero or heroine. Sometimes, the musical idea is gradually revealed in its true character and the work concludes with an apotheosis. There is much to be said in favor of saving the musical climax for the very end rather than placing it at the theoretically correct point, both in the classic literary drama and the musical symphony—at the end of the third act of five (i. e. at the end of Development and beginning of Recapitulation). Dramas long ago recognized this liberty and the necessity for metamorphosis and interaction among the characters until the final curtain, a fact which the recapitulation of the old *sonata-forma* forgets. The "live-happily-ever-after" idea of a recapitulation with both themes in the same key, is rapidly giving place to more artistic and less stereotyped arrangements. In all of these matters, the composer should have complete freedom, consistent with his own idea.

The more important part of modern rhetorical style is the detailed consideration of "sentence" structure. This is inherently connected with the musical idea itself; one can scarcely say which is first and which idea comes later, its importance. At the present time with Renaissance philosophy rampant, any emphasis upon structure calls forth condemnation from those who believe that the "Great Chain" is of the Devil. That Decorum is responsible for all the sins of art, and Society for all the sins of the individual. Musicians of this belief will say that the theme is, of course, quite willing to grant the composer harmonic freedom and even freedom in the large form, so long as he can fixate the servitude of sentence structure upon him.

It is the province of criticism in art or politics, to search for the Law that is higher than all laws. A recognition of the fallibility of human law and of the tendency of forms to become formulaic, does not imply the giving up of all standards and a return to chaos. The old idea of sentence-structure must be recast. Much of it comes from the days when music had more the rhythms of poetry than of prose, in which harmonic and melodic cadences had almost the effect of rhyme and when balance of phrases approximated *verse-form*. Some composers will continue to write in this style, in the future as in the past, but others have discarded this type of musical sentence, believing that there is no practical or theoretical reason why a musical thought, out

in a musical sentence, should always close with an accepted dominant-tonic cadence. Many modern full phrases are purely melodic or the feeling of weight is produced by other harmonic means, and these periodic phrases are just as satisfactory. Musical punctuation does not depend upon harmonic cadences of a fixed pattern. It is indeed convenient in studying the music of some periods, to call a half-cadence a semi-colon or comma, a full cadence, a period, and interrupted or deceptive cadences, exclamatory points, interrogation marks or dashes; but these same effects have been achieved in modern music in many other ways and just as unmistakably and successfully.

Again, the composer must bear in mind that, although there is no longer any need of harmonic cadences, he is not freed from all considerations of structure. Music must be just as intelligible a language and capable of just as much declamation as before, with even greater art. The performer cannot merely repeat words endlessly, he must penetrate and read into the music, the ideas of the composer. Therefore, a coherent rhetorical style is an essential, and more important to-day than ever. To prove that, in the work of great composers of the present, this rhetorical style is highly developed; that it is frequently lacking in others; and, in general, to analyze its processes, is an important field of investigation for the student of modern music.



When an attempt is made to isolate the form of a composition and consider it apart from the spiritual content of music, the protest is often heard that exact vivisection is being practiced; but it is only by some such laboratory method as this, that elements can be isolated and studied. Convenience, also, is the only excuse for the use of examples as symbols. Those who oppose any systematic study of the subject are fond of pointing out the mathematical contradictions of certain theorists. That there have been differences of opinion in details of form, is no criticism of the study in general; rather is it to be expected in any consideration of the intricate structure of music. In the few examples which follow, other analyses may be held equally valid in detail. These are cited not in an attempt to cover the wide field suggested in the preceding paragraph, but as illustrating some features of sentence structure.

An interesting case of extremely elaborate rhythmic and harmonic material, coupled with extreme simplicity (one might

almost any, poverty) of form, may be considered in the analysis of OrNSTEIN'S small piano pieces "Piano of 1912." The adjective "small" is properly applied, for, despite technically, as has been the attempt to depict phases of the world-war in music, these pieces are all on small measures and quite innocently regular in form. Hardly anything but regular four-measure phrases can be found from one end of the set to the other.

I. Introductory 2.

A. 2 (Scale 4, note 2 (producing effect of 4 by addition of a fermata).

A<sup>2</sup> 2-4

A. Same form as before.

II. A. Three of two measures concluded by note of quadruple.

The compound adds two measures to produce complete balance 2-2.

A<sup>2</sup> 2-4

B. 4-4

A. Same as before.

III. A. 4-4

A<sup>2</sup> 2-4

A. 4 quadruple.

IV. A. 4-2

A<sup>2</sup> 4-2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2 (cumulative extension but no real rhythmic irregularity).

A. 4-2 Extended as above to 2 measures.

V. Introductory 2.

A. 4

A<sup>2</sup> 2 (condensed to 2 measures).

Concluding 2.

VI. A. 2-2 (triple extension).

B. 2-2 (two measures extended by regular means, 2 measures).

A. 2-2 (final quadruple suggested by a flourish).

VII. A. 2-2 (extended one measure).

B. 2-2-2

A. 2 (condensed two measures).

VIII. A. 2-2 (cumulative extension) of two measures

B. 4-4

Interlude 2

C. 4-4 (extended three measures)

C<sup>2</sup> 4-4

Interlude 1

C. 2 (extended one measure)

A<sup>2</sup> 4-2

4-2

IX. Introductory 2 measures

Introductory accompaniment figure 2 measures.

A. 2-2

A<sup>2</sup> 2-4

Concluding accompaniment figure 2 measures.



## 3. Introductory 4

A 4/4

A<sup>2</sup> 4/4A<sup>3</sup> 4/4

Interlude 4

A 4/4

Coda ditto (with 8 measures regular extension)

Number eight of the set, which depicts actual warlike, appears to exhibit greater irregularity, but this is in content rather than in form. The formal agreements from regular quaternaries are, in the main, repetitions of final measures to give the necessary periodic effect, formerly produced by harmonic means. So strong is Mr. Quastner's feeling for regularity that he properly adds one measure of rest at the end of this number. If one still abuses the term by "form," stereotyped regularly, it can be found here in greater frequency, perhaps, than in the compositions of Mozart. Toward this fact, the observer may take one of two attitudes: either this music is to be praised for its "purity" of form, or one may deplore the lack of detached interest and wish that the composer had treated the involved subject of a world-war in less rigid musical phrases. One is inclined to miss, for instance, the sagging rhetoric of the Chopin Preludes to which these compositions bear some resemblance. This is not intended as a criticism of melodic or harmonic material, in which there is much to interest the listener and to which he may turn his entire attention, probably as Mr. Quastner intended he should.

Of greater interest from the rhetorical standpoint, are many of Cyril Scott's compositions, notably his Sonata for Piano-forte. They are illustrative also of a skilful use of new methods of punctuation other than the simple repetition or extension of a final measure for periodic effect, noticed in Quastner. Scott's "Garden of Soul-Sympathy" is quite clear in form although it changes time-signatures in almost every measure and is more subtly irregular than Mr. Quastner's set.<sup>1</sup>

The ten Piano-forte Sonatas of Alexander Scriabin constitutes an excellent illustration of the development of newer methods of

<sup>1</sup>The first eight measures are in obviously balanced structure. They follow a supplementary phrase of the form  $\bar{1} \bar{2} \bar{3} \bar{4}$ , and three measures of contrasting material introduced by three changing bar-lines. The measure on which the bar-line in the middle of  $\bar{4}$  is the only one in the composition that. For instance, there are three measures long the "width" of  $\bar{2}$ , as there are the "widths" of  $\bar{3}$  and  $\bar{4}$  in the first measure,  $\bar{4}$ . After a measure of  $\bar{3}$ ,  $\bar{2}$  or regular measures follow. Thus  $\bar{2}$  appears in  $\bar{4}$  time—regular, if the measure and measure of  $\bar{4}$  changed as two of  $\bar{2}$ . The final  $\bar{4}$  is concerning as it shows some of the groups which give interest to the piece. The last two measures are lines provided with changing bar-lines and thus the final measure itself still changing color as repeated three times and a couple of it group the number to a close.

sentences structure and punctuation. The first three Sonatas, written somewhat in the style of Brahms, Chopin and Schumann, respectively, are orthodox in structure. In the fourth Sonata, a change has been made to a newer harmonic vocabulary but each sentence still ends with the dominant-tonic cadence, though this is often disguised by appoggiaturas, suspensions and over-lapping. In the fifth Sonata not a single sentence ends with a full cadence. The impression of conclusion upon the main tenacity, however, is usually produced in this sonata and in those immediately following, by the use of a part of the tonic harmony with added notes. Gradually, with increased daring and the growth of his vocabulary, the methods of sentence structure and punctuation become much freer and more varied. Even in the last Sonatas, however, not only the large form but also the detailed rhetoric is extremely clear and in the main surprisingly regular.

An analysis of the methods by which Scriabin and other modern composers achieve this clarity of form and coherence of rhetoric would involve detailed treatment at some length, but an investigation of the form of the best modern music, with a re-evaluation of the newer rhetoric, should answer any criticism on that score. Rhetoric is only a means to an end, however, and modern composers have yet to convince many that they have a message of lasting worth. While the theorist must acknowledge the relative unimportance of form in itself, yet it is difficult to think of form apart from content, and an eloquent and forceful rhythmic rhetoric should free and inspire expression.

# OUR FOLK-MUSIC AND ITS PROBABLE IMPRESS ON AMERICAN MUSIC OF THE FUTURE

CASUAL REMARKS BY WAY OF SURVEY

By JOHN TASKER HOWARD, Jr.

**T**O prophesy is more than a pastime with man; it is almost his bread and butter. Whether it be the result of the next election, the probable date of the next war, or even such an everyday topic as the weather, every one feels that he must air his views regarding the unknown. It is therefore not in the least surprising that many of our eminent musicologists should make conjectures as to the future of our national music, and it also is no small wonder that their views should largely differ as to the influence our folk-music will bring to bear.

In the first place, we are not as yet agreed as to what is really American in this folk-music of ours. We know that the Africans, for instance, are a musical race; but how much of the American Negro's song is African and how much of it a imitation of the white man is another matter. Some of us are not as yet agreed as to what are Americans. A writer has told us that in a foreign district of one of our large cities a social worker once visited a public school classroom and questioned the children upon their various nationalities. He asked all the Bohemian children to raise their hands. Quite a number responded, and he went on through the list of Russians, Poles, Armenians, Italians, and the rest. Finally he asked for the Americans, and one little Negro girl raised her hand.

Are we to infer that the Negro is the only true American? We trust not, but there are those who say that because the black man came to our shores unwillingly, and more he himself can remember no ancestry of other than American birth, his claim to the only real Americanism is well founded. These same people will further hold that even the American Indians are not indigenous to the soil, for since they probably migrated from Asia to America via Alaska, they are no more native Americans than the Pilgrim Fathers.

It is indeed an unhappy state of affairs if none of us are Americans. But we know that such statements are not to be taken

seriously, and we are coming to recognize that American folk-music consists of those songs which reflect the temper and the habits and customs of the people in various sections of the country. That there will be some impress on the music of the future is undoubted, but it is not easy to determine just what that influence will be.

It is not probable that the impress of the Indian music will be strongly felt. The race itself is dying out, and the exotic flavor of their wild songs and dances is too far removed from the comprehension of the rest of us to ever become vital to our artistic expression. The war-dances of the Red Man, his pagan worship songs are too much a part of him to become a part of us, and although many of the Indian melodies and modal idioms have been woven into fascinating and interesting compositions of larger dimensions, it does not seem possible that such use will ever become general among American composers.

The music of the American Negro, as we know it, is nearer to us and closer to our own conception of musical expression. The Negro has been more strong to than has the Indian, and although the racial distinction has been strongly emphasized, the black people have not been put on reservations by themselves. By intermingling, our musical expressions have found common ground. Whether the melodic utterances of the African ancestors would have been more comprehensible than those of the Indians is a mooted question, but the combination of what the Negro brought with him, and what he has picked up from us is quite within our understanding.

As for the Negro songs and their relation to a characteristic American school of composition we have many divisions of opinion. We find those who hold that the Negro's musical message lies in his own harmonic sense, inherited from the Africans, and that his part-singing and spontaneous feeling for chords will find its way into the American idiom of to-morrow. Immediately the other side jumps to arms, and answers that the improvised harmonies of the Negro were acquired from the itinerant revivalists who travelled through the South, and that the black man's chords are nothing more than the banal "barber shops" of the college boys' glee club and quartets.

There are those who claim that the spiritual nature of the Negro's song is its greatest message, and at the same time we are told by the other side that this spiritual message is not really religious, as the educated and enlightened understand religion, but that the Black Man knows naught but superstition, and an intense fear of the inevitable. These thinkers would have us believe that the great value of Negro music lies in its pagan element, and that its primitive,

almost barbaric characteristics are its greatest contribution to the American art of the future.

But whatever constitutes an American school of music may acquire in the future, of this we are certain—its attributes must be true to the American people. At present the great majority of American composers are following the steps of various foreign schools. The French school has many adherents in this country, and there are those who emulate the Germans. It might almost seem that because of our cosmopolitanism we would always have an assortment of schools, for those who claim that at present there is no American people speak with a measure of truth. None can deny, however, that we are slowly becoming an American people, and that the day is coming, far distant though it be, when we shall be a distinct race with characteristics, and, it may be, peculiarities.

The fire under the melting pot is hot, and despite the attempts of radicals and agitators to cool it, its heat is slowly but surely amalgamating us all into a race with our own traditions and customs. We shall never have those grotesque customs peculiar to people who have been isolated and whose communication with the outer world has been limited, but is it not entirely possible that the customs developed in the day of progress and science will seem fully as picturesque to our descendants a few generations hence? In the days when air travel is commonplace, the Twentieth Century limited will very likely be considered every bit as romantic as the stage coach, and when we have our automatic telephones the telephone operator will seem quaint and a relic of the days of courtship.

Even at this early stage of our development we who would call ourselves Americans have some temperamental qualities quite distinct and peculiar to ourselves. Our foreign neighbors remark on our resourcefulness, our energy, our restlessness, and we pride ourselves on our idealism. The "always in a hurry" spirit is undeniably peculiar to the American business man. Should such attributes prove permanently to belong to the average American, it is logical to believe that American music will reflect them fully as much as will our literature.

We have learned that composers who represent the national schools of other countries frequently draw upon the folk-tunes of their people for their rhythmic and melodic material. We are not in an analogous position to those composers, for we must remember that the same blood flows in their veins that flows in the veins of the people who sing the songs. Few of us have Negro or Indian blood in our veins, and it is not pleasant to think that they prophesy correctly

who say that the workings of the melting pot will eventually join us with races of another color.

We find, therefore, that the great majority of us are merely the audience as far as American folk-songs are concerned, and that the greater part of our folk-tunes really belong to only certain portions of our population with whom we never wish to be joined by ties of blood. The songs of the Kentucky mountaineers are American by residence only, and their unaltered British origin keeps them from ever becoming truly American. This is my personal opinion. On the other hand, some prominent authorities hold that whatever folk-songs of the many European races or nationalities which make up the American nation, have survived the transplantation on American soil, are legitimately to be considered as forming part of the body of American folk-music.

There are, however, certain elements of the Negro music that have had such a strong influence on us that we have taken them to ourselves. The songs of Stephen C. Foster, a white man, breathe the plantation atmosphere so vividly that the uninitiated commonly think of "Old Black Joe," and his other melodies as real Negro songs. These songs were undoubtedly suggested by hearing the Negroes sing songs of their own; hence their Southern flavor, in spite of which the American people from North, East and West have joined the South in making them national.

The popular song of the day is already Negroized, and dance music and various forms of the "rag time" of the renaissance are directly taken from the Black Man. Syncopation has found its way into music of the better sort, and composers have found how fascinating and useful it is in expressing their thoughts.

This syncopation, restless and limited as it can become, seems at times to express the very pulse of our American life. There are few of us indeed who can resist shuffling our feet to some of the most commonplace dance-tunes, so captivating is the rhythm. Is it possible that the discordant shakings of the "jazz" bespeak the feverish American energy? It is well that we may take comfort in the fact that Time is intolerant of the unworthy, and that the trashy elements of such music will be short-lived. But we may rest assured that whatever reflects so truly in our dance-hall music will have a place in our music of the future. From this there is no escape.

On the other hand, what will express our idealism, for Americans ideals are fast becoming traditional? Is there any quality of the plantation melodies or the Negro spirituals which will tell unaged ears of these nobler qualities? Did Dvořák show us the way when he wrote the "New World" symphony?

Time alone will answer these questions. There are, without doubt, contributions from these folk-tales that will leave their mark on the worthy American mass of the future, and many are the prophecies. Would that we could be alive a few centuries hence to see who prophesies aright!

# NATIONAL MUSIC AND THE FOLK-SONG

By SYDNEY GREW

## I

CONFLICTING views are held universally on the matter of nationalism in music. One body of musicians declares that nationalism in music represents a contradiction in terms and that the "national" composer does not and cannot exist. Another body declares that "nationalism" is the beginning and the end of music, and that if a composer is not deliberately and intentionally "national" he can never be a great composer.

Involved in this matter is the subject of folk-music. The nationalist says that British folk-music must be made the basis of British art (i. e., symphonic) music. He says that the composer must consciously and deliberately adopt folk-music to artistic ends, that he must write in the folk-song idiom, and that he must indeed imitate folk-music to the end that his music may acquire "national" characteristics. The anti-nationalist claims that we must reject foreign music or at least refuse to be influenced seriously by foreign ideas. The anti-nationalist says exactly the opposite.

I believe that there is a two-fold cause for these differences of opinion—first, that the nationalist does not think sufficiently far forward or the anti-nationalist sufficiently far backward, and secondly, that neither body of musicians has an adequate idea of the nature of music, of its rise, growth, and ultimate development. I consider that each body misreads musical history, the nationalist recent history and the anti-nationalist history in general.

I try to show in the following pages that the truth of the matter lies midway between these two extremes of opinion, and that both bodies are about equally right and wrong. I try to show that music is formed as a nation itself is formed, and that just as a nation has "national" characteristics so music has the same. Also I try to show that there is a certain fundamental difference between folk-music and art-music, and that British folk-music is not exactly the same as the folk-music of other nations.

The anti-nationalist stresses an argument that, to my mind, has little natural force. The argument is, that since a composer cannot express the whole of his own, and even, again, he cannot help but express in his music features and attributes common to all humanity, the composer is at once and the same time both less and more than national, and so is not national. (This idea of an exact balancing of qualities, declared by the anti-nation-



alist to be necessary in the establishing of "nationalism" in music, is humorous.<sup>1</sup>

If such argument were of value, a stop would be put to our calling anything at all "national." It would put a stop to our use of terms of definition in general. We could no longer say that Bach for example was the great "Protestant" composer or that Dante was the great culminating mediæval poet. It is no doubt true that the national composer does not represent every one of the many moods and emotions characteristic of his nation; but it is still more true that he represents all that nation. He represents the permanent, the vitalities that live as long as his nation. He represents in selective synthesis all that distinguishes his nation from other nations. What he does not represent is the local, the transient, the superficial, the false, and the artificial. I observe that the nationalist does not specify the national qualities which are absent from such composers as Elgar the Englishman, Sibelius the Finn, and Dvořák the Bohemian. I have not seen it noted what essential mediæval thought and feeling is omitted from the art of Dante or what essential German Protestant emotion is unrepresented in the music of Bach. I consider therefore that this particular argument of the anti-nationalist goes for nothing.

But the nationalist in his turn puts forward a proposition that to my mind is quite dangerously fallacious. It is the proposition that music must be made exclusively "national"—that the composer must take thought to represent national traits and characteristics and to represent these only. The nationalist bases his proposition on the assumption that music can be differentiated nation from nation to the degree that the nations themselves are differentiated.

It is here that he turns to folk-music, asserting that since folk-music is exclusively and recognizably national, it has the seminal power to generate neo-music and the power further to mould neo-music to full growth.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I stated that while no composer can be "national" (in the sense in which this word is almost used), the "nationalist" composer or composer who tries to express the national different mental worlds that make up the life and culture of any nation is, say, given protection, a sense of national comradeship can still be felt, by us say, in that work of those who express a phase of life that is generally British.—*George Newman*

<sup>2</sup> "We have a wonderful example of a nation deliberately and self-consciously putting aside foreign elements in music. I suppose no nation today is more thoroughly national than that of Russia. This is because the brilliant group known as 'The Five' set themselves to found a national school of music in the midst of Russian folk-song.—*George Newman* (2) It seems to me that a nation's music must be based on folk-song. When folk music has been the inspiration, music has retained its individuality to a very much larger degree than in countries where it has been imported.—*J. H. Murray*. To assert that "folk music can grow only by a composer absorbing into his music the folk-song and folk-ways of his people in its own spontaneous fashion"—*George Newman*

The nationalist advocates two elements that in art are impossible—*isolation and self-consciousness*.<sup>1</sup> He strives to deflect nature. He tries to arrest at a certain point the great instinctive forces which brought his nation into being and established the national character. He asks for thought to be restricted and for feeling to be subjectivized, for the general and universal to be cut off and made local. He forgets that extreme nationalism, like extreme individualism, is a hermit-like withdrawal that stunts the imaginative faculty and weakens creative power. He forgets that when a nation or an individual has refused external, neighborly influence, that individual or nation has ceased to produce art, particularly symphonic musical art, for the reason that we live, not by nationality or by individuality alone, but by the large and general world of which we form part. Isolation is as death. Self-consciousness is as a manufactured peculiarity.

France teaches us the lesson as to the effect on music of extreme nationalism. Not one of the great German composers is a Frenchman, though several of the more important German critics, theorists, and musicologists are Frenchmen. And the Russian "Free" teach us that even the most definitely attempt to be national in music is not to be effected by a policy of rejection. Balakirev, Rimsky-Korsakoff, Cui, Moussorgsky, and Borodine studied Bach and Beethoven as thoroughly as they studied Russian folk music. They kept themselves well-informed as to modern European music. They knew their Liszt and Wagner and their French contemporaries. Their larger symphonic music is great according to the degree of its agreement with the general musical spirit.

A deliberately restricted school of symphonic composition rarely lasts beyond a single generation. I can call to mind no symphonic work in the folk-song genre that has the vitality of an operatic pot-pourri or a Strauss waltz. Such a piece in England scarcely survives a dozen performances.

Thus it would seem that the nationalist misunderstands the value of the nationalist genre in musical composition. Yet it would seem also that the anti-nationalist understates its value.<sup>2</sup> I consider that the idea of nationality is not generally understood in so far as it relates to music.

<sup>1</sup> I think a country's first duty is to be national, to mean as to everything else. It will be very enough to talk of being international when English people have learned to be so hypocritical in their own companies and companies as they are in those of other nations, and when our professors have learned the trick of translating into music names and emotions typically English.—*Waldemar Barak*.

<sup>2</sup> "The" generally counts for much less in a subject's art and literature than the *non-identification* that is always going on between the culture of one country and that of another.—*Joseph Freeman*.

## II

The fact should perhaps be definitely asserted that in the strictest sense of the term a piece of music can be nationally characteristic—that it can so closely represent the nation as to be recognizably English, Hungarian, Slavonic, and the like.

If then a piece of music may be national, the composer of the piece must be a national composer. His piece of music may be a piece which serves for a short time only, and under exceptional circumstances (as the "Tipperary" song of Jack Judge) or a piece which serves generations after generations and which is perceived by foreigners to be almost ideologically representative of the nation (as Aron's "Rade Bolshakia"). It may be an original composition which represents one department only of the nation (as Dvořák's "Tan Bueling") or one which is so thoroughly charged with nationalistic interest as to represent the entire nation and to make it dangerous in the eyes of the oppressors of that nation (as the "Finlandia" of Sibelius). It may on the other hand be an adaptation (as the "Lidshaker" of Parcell, a song that helped materially to bring about the Revolution of 1848). Whatever the piece, its origin, or its significance, it is national music if it represents, serves, and satisfies the nation, and the composer of it is a national composer—he is the man in whom is most powerfully operative the national spirit, if only for an accidental moment of luck or inspiration.

In the nature of things it might appear impossible that a foreigner should create national music of the above clear type. Yet such is the universality of music that this has been done. Chiefly however, a foreigner can only "assimilate" the native ideas, as the Frenchman Berlioz in the case of the Hungarian "Rakoczy" March, and as the Austrian Schubert and the German Brahms in the case of Hungarian music in general. Speaking generally, national music is the product of a native. Sibelius could not have written the "Land of Hope and Glory" song or Elgar the tone-poem "Finlandia."

## III


As help to adequate understanding of the idea of nationality in respect of music, I mention a few general facts and theories, reminding my readers at the outset, however, that according to the view of the anti-nationalist there is no such thing as a national "type."

A national language is not an accident of place and circumstance. It is a logical outcome and an inevitable result of consistently operative forces. These forces are the national instinct, which gives the nation being and forms its character,

The difference between the English language and the German represents a difference between the national character of the two nations. The English people have by nature a national faculty to perceive particulars. They have a national desire for the perfect observation of the concrete and for the expression of exact shades of meaning. Hence the richness of their language in the matter of synonymous terms. By national instinct the English are particular-minded. Their language is a perfect means of expressing emotionalized thought. The German people have a national faculty to contemplate abstractions. They have a genius for metaphysical speculation (I am speaking of course with no eye on the 19th century). They have an equivalent desire for the objective expression under poetic inspiration of concrete ideas. Hence the poverty of their language in respect of synonymous terms and its intractability in the hands of the poet. Our mental character as a nation caused us to select and retain foreign terms. Our language is richly composite. The different mental character of the Germans has caused their language to remain homogeneous. But the national character of the Germans—the instinct to penetrate to the innermost heart of things, give them a sense of depth and ultimate relativity. Hence the power of the German language to unify conceptions that are apparently disconnected and to finish out in a single sentence an exact image of the whole. (This power is akin to the peculiar power of music, the great and final art of synthesis.)

National ways of speech arise from the national instinct. The Englishman cannot master the Arabian guttural. The German cannot produce our hard and soft *sh*. The Spaniard uses the *sch* sound, but he has no use for the associated *sh*. In the matter of verbal rhythm and accent, the French run with level emphasis to the end of the sentence. Where they stress syllables, each syllable has the ultimate. The English act differently. They throw the stress as far back from the end as is convenient, though under pressure of the national desire for objective clarity they generally accent the root-syllable of the larger compounds. The English place the key-word of an idea at the very beginning of a sentence, as in

SLEEP on the case of always

which converts such phrases into superbly poised anapaests, the verbal parallel of the great musical anapaest—

Certain words are common to all thoughtful races. These are qualified by the national instinct. The result is manifested in the national art. By general consent the mood of melancholy, for

example, is held to appear in characteristic form according to the nationality of the artist. In Russian art melancholy has a morbid cast; it is egotistically pessimistic, the cause being the national tendency toward extreme self-analysis. In several aspects of French art melancholy becomes cynically pessimistic, the cause lying in the national regard for realism, which eventually leads to negation and denial. In English art melancholy has always been characterized by dignity and calmness. It has never been morbid or cynical. It has never been violent or abusive. The cause of this is our great faculty to see things objectively, particularly that thing which is *ourselves*.

In the matter of sentimentality, the German is said to be tormented, the Englishman tenderly idealist, other races alternatingly passionate to the degree of wildness and impassive to the point of inertia.

In the matter of religion and philosophy, Luther could not have been formed by the Italian inquest or Bonaventura by the German; Wesley and Swedenborg could not have been respectively Swedish and English; Carlyle (though not typically British—Whittman calls him "Gothic") and Jacques Thierry, two students of the French Revolution, very adequately betoken by various aspects the nations to which they belong.

Exceptions are but "instances of a law more refined." Many a German has a perfect English accent. The Silvestre Bonnard of Anatole France is a true, humorous idealist. Coleridge was very keenly introspective (yet as an Englishman he found salvation in Chaucer: "His mainly cheerfulness is especially delicious to me in my old age. How sensitively tender he is, and yet how perfectly free from the least touch of sickly melancholy or morbid drooping"). Tolstoy's ultimate optimism is of universal range.

The national character remains. The average man illustrates the type still. The anti-nationalist who declares the opposite is led constantly into contradictions. He himself cannot avoid respect-synthetic generalizations,<sup>1</sup> and since these are the stock descriptive vocabulary of the nationalist, it seems to me that with his own hand he destroys what he has himself erected.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. What is a "Lager"? Cf. We need not waste any time in trying to establish the modern development of French usage in terms of a "French" or "Latin" particularity. Cf. The Englishman who is surprised by his regard for a serious, mildly sentimental, slightly naive creature, or really a lay Bonaventura who lives to have the greatest problems of life solved with a jet. Cf. The French . . . are at last a nation of models. Cf. The record of personal development that sweeps through us now of humanity which is surely South of Mexico (Frank says) certainly the product of purely French influence. Cf. The prevalence of Russian grandeur not comprehensible for much of the individuality of Russian nobility . . . These generalities are quite unrepresentative in English. Cf. Let us break with the misleading theory of race and race-determinism.—JAMES FREEMAN

## IV

Now all the various differences touched upon above manifest themselves in music and make music perceptibly "national" in character. The musician is aware of this by daily experience. The non-musician is able to perceive its possibility. As the medievalist Palestrina could not have written the masterpieces of the fifth century romanticist Chopin, so the Irishman who effected the little turn in the melody of the sixth line of the song "The Last Rose of Summer" could not have imagined the soft wappie cadence of the Hungarian dance or its *alla zoppa* (asymphonic) rhythm. No Frenchman could have imagined the heavy postality of "Down among the dead men." Beethoven could not have written the despairing close of the "Symphonie pathétique," Tchaikowski could not have risen to the spiritually strong and joyous close of the "Sema pathétique." The cause is the national instinct. The result is nationality in music.

We shall discover eventually that in certain respects music is more national than any other art. All art is revealing, and is therefore akin in spirit and manner to what it reveals, but music (the man of the arts, approximation towards which results in perfection in other arts) is the most revealing of all. For music is the entirely spiritual art. It is the one art that is entirely creative. Other arts "produce, change, mendy, not create," as Browning says in "Charles Arden." This art is the direct representation of the soul, and it is by soul, not by mind, that a nation is distinguished and characterized. Its only competitor in this respect is architecture.

Music appears late in the history of a nation and architecture early, partly for the reason that architecture is material in substance and music immaterial, but chiefly for the reason that where the spiritual emotion expressed in architecture is simple, perhaps elementary, that expressed in music is complex. Music and architecture are, however, the same at base, and the nation that has an architectural genius has also a potential musical genius. The former reveals national characteristics. The latter must do the same, but with less immediate obviousness.

The musical power in a nation remains latent until the national instinct is clarified, as if it were made locally active and concentrated upon the building-up of exact and indubitable national characteristics. I will follow out this thought briefly in so far as it has reference to the particular subject in hand.

## V

The national instinct has stabilized itself. It has unified the various native elements. It has synthesized their powers and

brought them to bear on a direct issue—the individualizing and the characterizing of the nation. It has so worked upon the people that when looked on from a sufficient distance the nation appears of one colour, as a star does, or a field, or an old building. It has taken hold of whatever foreign elements were imposed upon the native and subjected them to the same synthesizing process, reducing the whole to a certain homogeneity. It has eliminated dialect and created language. It has made the language an alert and nervous means of expression. In this indeed it has first proved itself. For as the original step towards nationality was a move from tribal independence and antagonism towards national unity and mutual interests, so the first great mental manifestation of the change was the creation of an instrument for conveying general ideas and for expressing thought upon abstract matters—facilities which are absent from patois and dialect.

Previously to this successful operation of the national instinct, the people had a halved-poetry. This may have been splendidly vigorous, but it was concerned with single feeling and single ideas, never with pure thought and dual ideas. It was essentially folk-art. The nation now has an imaginative literature. It produces drama, also poetry that translates easily and directly into other national languages—the supreme demonstration that the national instinct is perfected and the nation on the way to that universality of understanding which is the ultimate goal of all humanity.

Previously again to this operation of the national instinct, the people had a form of music. This was akin to its halved-poetry. It was, of course, folk-music, later in time than its poetic equivalent, yet much the same in nature—concrete, non-dual, restricted in significance to the elementary mind of the "folk" and for that reason the more obviously "national." It was not akin to art-music. Its point of view was relative, not absolute, its interests were local, not universal.

The appearance of art-music in a nation is proof that the nation has achieved a fulness of being.<sup>12</sup> There was in the middle ages no pure and absolute art (in the sense modern usage gives to these terms) because the national instinct was imperious. Except for England, Western Europe was intellectually and, in many ways, emotionally, as one nation. There was one religion. Latin was the

<sup>12</sup> It must never be forgotten in the course of time, it is becoming an everyday happen-  
ing at certain moments to doubt the fulness of being. A new subject in the locality  
or a difficulty of the way for once a week reminds of a general movement through-  
out the world, what is true so far as music is concerned, things perhaps preliminary,  
out of which the new interest in classical perfection grew by a repetition of the  
synthesizing process.

common language for art, science, and politics. Feudalism was the prevailing social condition. Gothic architecture became the general style. Music was a branch of mathematics, the companion of arithmetic and geometry, very beautiful at times, but impersonal in mood and utterly without national character—again with the exception of England.

As soon as the mediæval peoples began to shape themselves into nations, all this was changed. National thought clarified itself. National languages were established. Imaginative literatures arose. Architecture began to take on national individuality. Music returned into its heritage. The superb mediæval mind ceased to be no more than potentially music. With the dawn of modern nationality, and simultaneously with the rise of that objective ideal we call humanism, but aided not at all by the revival of classic paganism, music for the first time in recorded history became a warm and truly living art. It became spiritually emotionalized, representative at once of the individual composer and of the nation to which he belonged. (On a lengthy musical essay the statement might be proved by a comparison between the South German Froberger and the Italian Frescobaldi, still more by a comparison between the Englishman Wilbye and the German Schütz.) The national instinct had been stronger in England than on the continent between 1500 and 1600. The English were in consequence the great musical nation of those centuries. The famous rule "France is Britain's" (c. 1600) is some two hundred years ahead of European music in the matter of technique. The very beautiful two-part song "Fowles in the Spring" (c. 1574) is as original in its way as Bach and Beethoven. The Elizabethan composers are very nearly as "universal" in the way of music as is Shalonspeare. Their music is equally "national." Music in England has risen or decayed according to the activity of the inner national instinct. Its folk-music arose chiefly between 1550 and 1650, as did that of most other European countries.

## VI

Music therefore depends on nationality and must express the same. Yet music of character is never definitely or exclusively national. It is never parochial. It is the modern art, identified with the chief feature of modernity—the feature, that is, of large, extra-national thought and feeling. It reflects the general move to a unity of spiritual interests. It is the common spiritual language, as a thousand years ago Latin was the common intellectual language. It can never confine itself to the national folk-music.



Nevertheless art-music is moulded by the forces that made the nation. It is coloured throughout (but coloured only) by the national instinct. It is marked by idiosyncratic peculiarities. It starts with, and it never descends even in such mighty universalists as Bach and Beethoven, what John Galsworthy has termed "the local atmosphere and flavor which is the background of true art."

The national character is in any country the root of the tree of art. The branches of the tree may touch the branches of other trees. It must breathe the common air. But the roots must remain in the national soil (though to make the circle complete, these roots may stretch underground until they interlock with other roots, and the ground they cling to is inseparably joined to all the other ground in the world).

## VII

The foregoing implies that since national character vivifies itself in music, folk-music, in which that character finds exact representation, must enter into the composition of art-music. This is indeed the truth of the matter, but it is a different truth from that declared by the "nationalists." Art-music comes from folk-music; it does not stay with it, or go back to it. It cannot be supplanted by it.<sup>1</sup> For folk-music is a thing of restricted significance, as peculiar to time as to place. It loses value as its own country as the people of that country change and develop. It affects music with a sort of brogue. It presents a leaf where a fruit is needed—which is the point of the quarrel between our nationalists and anti-nationalists. Yet folk-music is necessary for art-music and it has always been present, whether the composer be a Bach or a Dvořák. I will justify this apparent paradox in a moment, when I have made clear the difference (difference amounting to antagonism) that exists between these two types of music.

## VIII

The difference between a folk-song or dance and a symphony is about as great as the difference between the mediæval telling of the story of King Arthur and Shakespeare's "Lear" or between an ordinary fairy tale and "Macbeth or Night's Dream."

In origin and intention folk-music represents the average simple man, the peasant, art-music the highly organized man, the man of modern complexity of mind who has returned by power of thought

<sup>1</sup>There comes, my readers, back folk-song (original and isolated) in effects and construction — it goes there.

is simple feeling again.' The one represents things as they affect the individual as a detached entity, the other represents them as they affect all men, the individual in this case being the synthesis and summary of his nation and of the whole human race. The folk-musician sings of and for himself. He is the complete lyric. The other sings of and for all men. If he is a Palustris or a Bach, his art is epical, if a Beethoven, it is dramatic. The folk-musician produces subjective art, the symphonic-musician objective. Folk-music is an artless, art-music is as Sir Thomas Browne's "art (that) is the perfection of nature."

Subjective art is false to any world or time but its own. An English folk-song of 1800 may be as meaningless to an Englishman of 1890 as to a Chinaman. It may be as unwanted for symphonic treatment as an Irish song may be for the dancing of the Hungarian gypsies. It can be loved into a foreign world only by an intrusion of Nick Bottom's offer to enter the lion's den as gently as any sleeping dove. Only when a piece of folk-music has some quality of universality can it have value for other times and places, as the traditional setting of "O mistress mine," which moves us to-day as deeply as it did four hundred years ago and which would probably move men of any nationality. But this remark is of general application. It applies to the dead world of medieval music: Arndelt's "Ave Maria" still inspires us, and Arndelt was before Palustris. Therefore when such subjective art as folk-music retains significance, it is because it is not subjective at all, but objective, i. e., general and impersonal, common to all men and all times.

Until we can go back in soul to the conditions which produced folk-music, that music in most cases is only a curiosity, to be read as with a glossary. And if we so go back we arrive at conditions where art-music is neither possible nor desired, folk-music itself affording all the music wanted.

I do not say to ignore the point that imitated folk-music is valueless. Music is creation, not imitation.

Thus folk-music and art-music are antagonistic, belonging to different mental and spiritual worlds.

### IX

It is only during the past hundred years that the folk-song problem has arisen and confused musical composition. The great masters worked wisely. They made of folk-music a means of

<sup>1</sup> "In finished literature, as in moral life, the progress is from lyric freedom, through dramatic, to epical that is heral." Felix Claret, in "Poetry and the Remains of Wonder."

approach to the highway of pure music. The smaller men of the 18th century followed it into what now seems to be little more than cul-de-sacs. We English are already tired of the greater part of Russian music, as (for different reasons) we are tired of contemporary German and French music. With the common sense that we apply to our own cases we have as a nation consistently rejected the similar mistaken efforts of our own composers.

We have in England made a *tertium datur*. We have first misunderstood the nature of music, both folk and symphonic, and we have secondly misunderstood the practices of the great and successful German masters—we have imagined that our folk-music was like theirs and that it could be passed in the same way into art-music.

The German composers up to Bach (1700) were helped by the circumstance that their national songs and dances had an objective character. The German folk-song is akin to pure music. It is large in mood and solid in style, choral in design and intention, and orthodox in form (i. e., in rhythm, sentence shape, and general structure). It is "harmonic," not "melodic" in effect, apical, not lyrical. The church chorales and the love-songs are almost equally collective in mood. They are quite equally choral in plan. These remarks apply also to the folk-dances.

Therefore in the first period of German music, folk-songs passed readily into art-forms. In fact, they created these forms. The Bach organ chorales are no more than idealized representations of Lutheran hymn-tunes, and these pieces are the flower of German music up to 1700.

The German composers after Bach (1700-1800) had the same convenience. The change from Bach to Beethoven was very complete. It was from the deeply spiritual and intensely religious to the ardently human. The type of folk-music incorporated now into art-music was the peasant-dance, which—far more than the concert, as is generally supposed—created the Beethoven scheme, the head of the second phase of German music.

But another factor entered into German music with the passing of Bach—the factor of outside influences, the losses of which is ignored by our present-day nationalists. German music by 1700 had exhausted the power of German folk-music of the type hitherto available. It required something fresh. This it found in the greater rhythmic movement of the folk-music of nations adjacent to Southern Germany. Haydn was a Croatian. Mozart lived in Austria. Beethoven went to Vienna almost as a youth. Schubert was Vienna born; he went further than the others and confessed freely the symphonic borrowings from Hungarian folk-music.

After these three centuries of musical experience, wisdom was engendered in German composers. Even Schumann, introspective by nature, the genius of German romanticists, made no errors. He taught us what to do when in "Papillons" and "Carnival" he incorporated the old "Gemeiner's Tune." Brahms also made no errors. Richard Strauss the same, in whose "Till Eulenspiegel" is a touch of the folk-song spirit even more perfectly effected than the instance I have indicated from Schumann. Only the smaller German composers fell into error: Hindemith's "Musical Rhapsody" is an unedifying as Liszt's "Rhapsodie espagnole."

Now our English folk-music differs from German, Austrian, and Hungarian. It differs also from Bohemian, Swedish, Russian, and other types that have passed in one way and another into art-music. If it is to pass into our art-music, it must be by an entirely different process. It is utterly unmelodious. It is monophonic, lyrical, lacking in passionate rhythm (I am of course speaking volubly), and has little of the genius that has made music in the past. If I am wrong in my opinion, I still ask where, after a full generation of "nationalistic" effort, are our equivalents of the fifty-one mazurkas of the Pole Chopin, the innumerable pieces of the Norwegian Grieg, the fifteen rhapsodies of the Hungarian Liszt, the twenty-one dances of the Hungarian-German Brahms? The answer might indicate a few pieces by Percy Goetsinger and one or two other composers—ten or a dozen works still unapproved by time against the many hundreds that have withstood from one to three generations? We have failed in this respect because of error. We have not failed because of lack of musical genius.

## X

I would not be taken as inferring that British folk-music cannot pass similarly into art-music. My belief is that it can and must so pass. But this will be by a process of assimilation, not of imitation or of deliberate adoption, still less by following the procedure of foreign composers who have a different order of musical will which to deal.

I think indeed that in some respects the salvation of art-music depends upon our native folk-music. The time is ripe for a new departure. The German genius is weary. It has been weary for forty years. The genius of other races is immature. That of France is non-musical, the only great French music is the product of the Belgian-French César Franck. The British genius is very nearly as promising for music as it was for drama in the early days

of Shakespeare. We have in Elgar the one great classically-imbued composer of the present generation. And in our native folk-music we have as rich a material as Bach had, or Beethoven. Only it is not as theirs. Yet like theirs it must be assimilated, and left to create as theirs was its own pure and absolute form.

The English capacity to adapt and assimilate is, I believe, the greatest in the world. We took many things belonging to poetry from Italy in the sixteenth century, and immediately evolved the mighty pentameter of Shakespeare and Milton, with its constantly varying feet and measures of iambic, epicurean, and chiasmatic, its suspended emphases, movable accents, and extended enjambment. We took Hebrew philosophy, history, and poetry, and after adapting not only our own prose and poetry, but even our very language, we produced the one perfect translation of the Bible,—perfect, I mean, in the way of absolute art. The English have united the many racial elements of the nation more compactly than have other nations; the process is being repeated in the United States. But in nothing have we succeeded where conditions were determined abroad, or where circumstances had essentially a four-square metrical exactness of character. Always have we needed the freest plasticity of both material and pattern; and as we could not, by nature, and quite apart from other considerations, have done much with music during the period from before Haydn to Wagner. The lesson for English composers is that which Shakespeare learned,—to know your subject, absorb its material, and re-express it in its own form. This, I perceive, is about to be done in England.

Our composers will then be national. They will represent the nation. They will also be extra-national, representing the whole world. Every one of us may find himself in Shakespeare, Bach, and Beethoven. Who finds himself in the self-conscious make of our strict nationalists? I sometimes think as things are in this respect that it is our nationalists who are un-national and our un-nationalists who are most truly and sensibly national.

## THE SONGS OF CHARLES KOECHLIN

By E. H. C. OLIPHANT

THE race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, but in the arts the struggle for reputation is apt to end in favour of the loudest. Ability may be lost sight of, if it be not accompanied by a flair for advertisement. It is to those who can best make themselves heard in the din of contending rivals for popularity or for fame that the prize is likely to be awarded, the public attitude being not infrequently that of a member of an Australian cricketing team which visited England. In this man's eyes everything he was shown was more than matched by something in his own home city, and the comment he made after hearing a performance by a famous concertist was, "We've a far better player in Hobart. If they were both playing you wouldn't want this man." So I am afraid that some people seeing the title of this paper may say, "Charles Koechlin? He can't be much good; we haven't heard of him." It is, after all, only very few who recognize the truth of Swinburne's saying that fame is but an accidental attribute of genius. Were it otherwise, the subject of this article would be known throughout the world of music as one of the recent and finest geniuses of the time.

I am dealing here only with his work in song, meaning by "song" a composition for a single voice with an accompaniment by a single instrument. On this definition, Koechlin's published songs consist of one song without open number, five contained in a first volume of "Rondeles," six in a second, eight in a third, sixteen in a first second, fourteen in a second, and twelve in a third—a total of sixty-two.

To obtain an adequate idea of the necessity of any song-composer, one of the first things to be done is to take note of his choice of poets to set. If it be true that a man may be judged by the company he keeps, it is no less true that a composer may be judged by the poets whose work he selects for illustration. From this point of view there is scarcely no fault to be found with the subject of this article. Every one of the baker's dozen of poets on whose work he has drawn for his published songs is a poet of note: none than half of them—Bouffet, Fernand Gough, Sully-Prudhomme, Hirsch, Hubert d'Annunzio, Paul Bourget, and (in a French translation) Rudyard Kipling—supply but a single poem



Charles Barkley

each, and André Chénier, but two. The remainder may be described as his favorite poets—Edmond Harncourt, with half a dozen songs, Verlaine, with seven, Leonate de Lisle, with nine, Albert Samain, with eleven, and Théodore de Banville, with twenty. The total of Verlaine and Samain has been increased in the unpublished fourth series, in which are also five songs by Pierre Louÿs, some Kingpins, a Villiers de Hile Adam, and a Claudel.

The list is significant. Of the two French poets who have been most favored by composers of class, Paul Verlaine is far from occupying with Kœchlin the predominant position he holds with Debussy and Fauré and with others of his school, and Victor Hugo is ignored. Kœchlin's list contains, in fact, the names of only two men whose poems have been largely set by other composers of rank, and neither of these two—Verlaine and Leonate—is represented by the songs by which he is most widely known. Verlaine's pre-eminence popularity with composers is shown by the frequency with which they have fastened on "Il pleure dans mon cœur," "Mandoline," "Le ciel est par-dessus le toit," "La lune blanche," "En sourdine," and "Chanson d'automne", but the only one of these set by Kœchlin is the first-named. Judging by what he has done, he has no little cause to dread comparisons that it does not seem likely that thoughtfully affects the reason for his avoidance of songs frequently set by others. What is more probable is that, as a result of his very individual outlook, what appeals to Debussy, Duparc, Fauré, Ravel, Charbonnet, Bortol, Hahn, "Poldowski," and others does not appeal to him. That is, from our point of view, matter for regret, for there are few better tests of any composer than comparison with other composers in the treatment of the same poems.

When we look over the list of Kœchlin's poets, we find the Pagan element strong. Samain, Leonate, Heredia, Chénier, Banville, Harncourt are all worshippers of the antique, all, in varying degrees and in varying ways, classicists, and all Greek in the flowlessness of their forms. The poems chosen for musical illustration show Kœchlin's fondness for vastness, for abysses of time and space, for the dreadful, the unknown side, we see, too, a love of the old Pagan god when beauty was worshipped for its own sake, and a melancholy realization of the fact that it has gone, never to return. We see him now tough, now playful, now dreadfully barbaric, now treading a contact with the grace of a scurrier of the Grand Monarque, now glorying in the brutal heat of a tropical forest, now looking across the sea at some phantom ship that never was and never will be, but his most characteristic moods are those in which he is obsessed by a sense of immensity and those in which he lives again a huddled life



in a deeply-considered past. As to how his genius is aided by the several poets he has interpreted, that is a matter for subsequent consideration.

The first quality to be looked for in a song-composer is respect for the words he is seeking to clothe in sound. He must never sacrifice either the form or the fit of the words to his musical necessities; he must never set expediency above interpretative truth. He must avoid that fault so common in Rubinstein (whose one American critic met amusingly almost the ten leading song-composers), the fault of supposing that words and phrases may be repeated ad lib. to suit the exigencies of his melodic line, and he must also avoid that fault of almost every English-speaking composer, the fault of treating the verse-rhythm as if it were something with which the musical rhythm need have no connection. From the first of these two faults Koebeln is almost entirely free, save in his treatment of the "Rondele" of Théodore de Banville. The rondele is an artificial form of verse, with repetitions provided for in certain specified places, but that fact does not warrant the composer in introducing repeats of his own—in deed, absolutely *behind his doing so*. In the matter of accentuation I know no composer more careful than Koebeln. He fits his music to the words with a deftness of handling that is amazing. His sense of artistic fitness is almost unerring, and his rhythmic suppleness is extraordinary. In him the continuous changes of time-rhythm, so common in modern composers, are particularly marked, and some of his finest effects are got in this way.

It may be truly said of him that each of his songs has its own individuality, its own manner; yet the individuality of the man is over all, and one feels that, however the style may change, it is always his. In every song he strikes the right note almost infallibly; and not only is he correct in his general conception; he also thinks wonderfully for us words and phrases. He lays his foundation with care, and the most minute detail of his architecture receives the same thought attention, with the result that every song is a finished work of art. His thoroughness is displayed in the re-writing to which most of his songs have been subjected, and his attention to detail, by the character of the instructions accompanying each song. Everything is thought out with the utmost care, and nothing is left to chance. The easy "à plaisir" of the casual composer is not for him. He is too sincere, too genuinely artistic for such slipshod methods. He is a self-respecting artist, proud of his work, and not a professional purveyor of pot-boiling popularities. If the composer of that stamp is at the extreme of indifference, Koebeln is at the

other extreme of meticulous care in regard to the literary relations of his work, so that his instructions are very frequent, very minute, very exact. I know nothing of his methods of work beyond what I can learn from the evidence from his song-volumes, but I do not think I am wrong in judging him to be severely self-critical.

Unless I woefully overestimate him, he is a song-composer of an unequalled sense of largeness and grandeur of design. That is where he differs from other great French composers and approaches Wagner. He is indeed musically a blend of French and German, as is not unfailing in one whose parents were Alsatians, though he himself was born in Paris and received there the whole of his musical education. He is usually ranked with the impressionists; but his impressionism is very different from that of Debussy, Ravel, or Poulenc. He is sometimes heavier handed than they are wont to be (though nothing can exceed the lightness of his touch in songs where he desires lightness called for); but there is not one of his fellow-composers that is capable of his transcendent landscapes. They work on a small scale; he, on a large one.

Koechlin is an experimentalist, like every other great Frenchman; he is not content to accept and follow conventions, he prefers to make his own. In his later work the element of unexpectedness is continually intruding itself: in fact, one feels at times as if he is seeking to give us the unexpected. He offers material of a wonderful richness of texture, with curious and original harmonies, strange progressions, and an ignoring of modulations in favor of dissonances and chords transported directly to unrelated places, the key having at times a merely nominal existence. Often the melody is unspunly fused with the accompaniment, melody and harmony being conceived as one. The shading is not always as delicate as it might be; but the harmonies are of extraordinary variety, and for that reason do not stay, as Debussy's are apt to do. His accompaniments are elaborate in the extreme; and his work is of enormous difficulty—a fact which has doubtless stood in the way of its acceptance. Singers are apt to look askance at songs that call for such a combination of qualities as do many of these, and accompanists may be pardoned for desiring accompaniments that demand the possession of three hands—in place, indeed, even four hands.

Koechlin has, of course, his mannerisms—e. g., a fondness for triplets (and, in the accompaniment, for broken triplets) and for the tremolo, to which he is even readier to resort than Bartók is to resort to arpeggios. But his conventions, such as they are, are his own. His daring is without limit: he writes to please himself, and if the expression of his ideas be responsible of accomplishment without

an ignoring of traditional laws, he refuses to consider himself bound and promptly cuts himself free.

In the songs of Koehlin there is much more than skilful writing, much more than an inexhaustible wealth of harmony; there is an abundance of ideas. The composer invariably knows what he wants to say, and it is rarely that he does not succeed in saying it. His vastness of design sometimes goes beyond what seems to be the limits of a song, but his conception is ordinarily well sustained throughout, even when, in the excess of his pictorial quality, he becomes most kaleidoscopic. His work is interesting for both subject and treatment, for both its musical beauty and its intellectual strength. He may at first unfortunately strike one as affected, but the idea does not survive a study of his work. What he feels he writes, what he writes he feels.

I have spoken of him so not altogether French in the largeness of his vision. There is also about much of his work a certain grandness that marks him as one apart from the other great French composers, but in most of his other qualities he marches abreast of them, especially in his freedom from scholastic restrictions, his hatred of the commonplace, his precision, his power of enveloping his subject in an atmosphere that springs from and is natural to it. As with most of the modern French school, with him the idea is predominant, and also, as with them, the main development of the idea is to be found in the accompaniment, the pianist's position being thus in many of the songs lifted from second place to first. Some of these songs are in reality duets between a singer and a pianist; in others the pianist is the principal performer, and the singer is but an accompanist. This is in accord with one of the main tendencies of modern song; and it is to be feared that, though the song has gained much thereby, it has also lost something. To realize the gain, one needs to look back to the thin and commonplace melody of the French song of the seventies, to its firm and colorless harmony, and to its regular and unenterprising rhythm.

Both his best and his most advanced work—and the two are not necessarily the same—are contained in his *recueils*. Between the *Koehlin* of the first volume and the *Koehlin* of the third there is a world of difference, and the second volume shows the transition, though it is only its last number that is in the manner of the third volume. The first two series of "*Rondeaux*" are obviously earlier than any of the *recueils*. The third is of much the same period as the first *recueil*—rather later, on the whole. The dates are as follows:

*Rondeaux*, no. 1, 1890-1894, 2, 1895-1898, 3, 1899-1900.

*Recueils*, 1, 1, 1898-1901, 2, 1902-1904, 3, 1905-1908.

The one song not included in any of these volumes, a setting of Roussel's "Moïsson préchaïn," I judge to be one of the very best among the composer's earlier works, though in spirit it shows an approach to his later manner.

It is wonderful to note that the first song of the first second Hammarcott's "Chir de hane," is of the same date as the earliest of the "Koechlin," for it is one of the composer's altogether perfect things. In it Koechlin emerges fully armed, a Pallas Athene springing from the head of Zeus. It is a fit preface to a marvellously fine volume. Had I space, I could dwell rapturously on almost every song in the book, but the loveliest of all, to my thinking, is Lécroix's "Le colibri," a glorious piece of tempo-rising, gorgeous in color, and expressing to perfection the idea inspiring it, a gem beside which Chausson's setting of the same lyric, beautiful as it is, seems pale and insignificant. If, in my opinion, it comes first, I still regard it as only pinnacled into pure, for quite unsurpassable are the gentle melancholy and dainty grace of "Le Menuet" (Grieg), the delicate playfulness of "Dance du ciel" (Hammarcott), and the truth and beauty of the three numbers composing op. 55, three wonderful pictures based on verses from Lécroix's "Poèmes sauparés."

The second record contains three songs on the same lofty level—a transcendent setting of Lécroix's "Les deux morts," a Faure-like rendering of the "Sur la grille" of Hammarcott, with a marvellous cinematograph picture of the movement of the air, and, perhaps the finest thing in the volume, a setting of Verlaine's "Mon rêve lambeau." In this the atmosphere is wonderfully caught, the idea being realized and departed perfectly. The right air of mystery is maintained, and, though the tone is subdued throughout, due emphasis is never lacking. The time-changes are delicate and effective, and the greatness and daring of the finale could hardly come from anyone but Koechlin. One would have thought that this fine poem would have made an appeal to many composers, but I can recall no setting of it save this. It is strange to note, by way of contrast, that in some of the other Verlaine songs Koechlin gets nearer to ordinary "prettiness" than he does elsewhere, though there is none of them in which the tendency is not set off by solid excellences.

In the third volume we come upon a new Koechlin, though a Koechlin shadowed in "Aurora," the last and the latest in date of the songs of the second volume. If greatness in song be defined, as I hold it should be, as "a beautiful rendering of a complete realization of a worthy idea," every one of the songs in the first two volumes answers the requirements, in the third we get some—"Le

coûté d'ampélète." "La maison de maître." "L'île auvent"—that do not. They are, all three, of no little excellence, are all settings of lovely poems, in all the spirit of the poet has been thoroughly entered into, and all are interesting; yet there is something lacking. It is, in a word, beauty. The voice part is overshadowed, fragmentary, often little more than a recitative, as subordinated to the accompaniment that it ceases to have any separate interest—even any interest at all. These songs are, in fact, not vocal indeed, from the voice part all trace of melody has been carefully removed. It is not to be supposed that there is no sort of beauty in these numbers, but it is not a consistent and sustained beauty. There is a vagueness, an indistinctness, an anxious grayness that is very far removed from the clearness, the straightforwardness, and the overwhelming vitality of the earlier songs. Much of the composer's individuality is gone, the harmonies have lost their inevitability, the melody is no longer full of life and meaning, and the old variety—in itself a marvel—is lacking. Some of these numbers are wonderful experiments; but the best of these in the earlier volumes are much more than wonderful experiments. They are wonderful songs.

Writing thus, I feel that I shall have no disagreement with me not merely perverted young technicians, but also the composer himself. That is, it is true, only an inference; but it is grounded on the fact that the security that marks these later songs is no less obvious than the security that distinguished the earlier ones, so that the new attitude of the composer is no mere pose. It seems to follow that he entertains the conviction that by his present means he is getting nearer to truth and beauty than he did before. Personally, however, I do feel that in this volume he has come under the influence of Debussy, and that the influence has not been altogether for good, and has led him at times to seem afraid to be himself. The old certainty, breadth, security, and beauty have given place to an "indefiniteness" which is due to his thinking of nothing but atmosphere, and it is a singular, and, to me, unaccountable fact, that while in every other respect he shows all his old care and exactitude, he exhibits in two of the finest passages in the volume, "Le vent du Canope" and "Améthyste," especially in the former, an unwarranted prosaic carelessness. After coming to regard him as inflexible on such matters, I resent having "tendresse" represented by  $\text{♯} \text{♯} \text{♯} \text{♯}$ , and "valour" by  $\text{♯} \text{♯} \text{♯}$ .

It must be understood that these strictures are only relative. If less satisfactory than either of its two predecessors, the third

venal is a fine volume nevertheless. The spirit pervading it is a somewhat elusive spirit; but, once it has been caught, the inherent loveliness of the finer songs becomes perceptible. They may be described in colloquial phrase as "growing on one." Moreover even in the case of the less pleasing songs, I regard the method and the manner of them as illustrating a phase in Koechlin's development. I feel sure that he has not sacrificed his special individuality on the altar of a modernity which appeals only to the intellect, even though that appeal is made through a beauty of its own—a beauty that is subtle and complex and evasive. There are plentiful indications that the soul of the composer has remained the same, though the manifestations of it have changed. The composer of the *Sonnets* in this volume is the composer of the *Chansons* in the first, in which there is as true an atmosphere as in the best of them, together with more loveliness. The difference is that the loveliness is, in the later songs, seeking to find a new form, and has not always succeeded.

It is not only the three songs I have singled out for mention that are more or less successful; it is not only in them that Koechlin's gift of lovely melody shows itself mostly in brief, unextended stretches. Some of the others are far more fragmentary than they, far more vague, more indefinite, more elastic. If I rank them higher, it is not that they have more unity, but that they have more beauty; not that the voice-part has more independent interest, but that the reception of the poem has more inherent loveliness. Where the voice is so distinctly in the background as it is in some of these songs, there needs to be superlative beauty in the accompaniment for full statement to be made. I am not going to endeavor to defend my attitude (which may indeed be quite indefensible) when I say that I would rather have one passage of supreme loveliness in a song than a more commonplace beauty sustained throughout.

There are doubtless young musicians who will, by reason of certain technical qualities that characterize it, proclaim the latest of the songs contained in this volume, "*Ses poèmes*," to be the very crown of Koechlin's work. That will be to get the means above the end, the effort above the achievement. Technique is merely the road by which the artist travels to attain the beauty that is his aim, or, to change the metaphor, the tool with which he strives to carve it out of the unexpressing rock. Technique is to be judged not for its own sake, but for the effect it creates. In this case the composer has achieved a work of beauty which will appeal only to those who are able—whether easily or laboriously—to enter into the spirit that animated him, but, finely conceived as it is, I cannot think that in it the composer has exceeded himself.

The first song in the volume is the earliest in date, being ascribed to the years 1896-1897. These are probably the dates for the original work, the song's position at the very end of the book indicating perhaps that the piano-forte version was made later than the original orchestral score. It is a very Wagnerian work of quite barbaic grandeur, with a reminiscence of "Die Walküre" that can hardly be unintentional. But for one drawback, it would rank with Koehler's greatest work in song. The drawback is that it is not really a song at all, but rather a cantata. An author is almost as far from being a song as a novelist is from being a novelist, and this "Chant de Kala Nag," if not a music, certainly treats the poem as one. Its repeats may be quite in place in a choral work, but they are altogether opposed to the spirit of the Song. Having regard to its original form, the work must be pronounced wonderful; it is only when it is regarded as a solo song that any fault is to be found with it.

The composer's op. 1, constituting his first series of "Rondels"—the "Rondels of Théodore de Banville"—must, taken as a whole, be pronounced immature; but the immaturity is that of a man of genius. Here we see what is not very perceptible in even the earliest of the three series, the influence of Koehler's first master at the Paris Conservatoire de Musique, Massenet. The influence of his later instructor, Fauré, is more evident in the later work, here it is the influence of the older, the more melodic, the less sincere, and the less vital composer that makes itself felt. In the third series, op. 14, we get nearer to the true Koehler, the Koehler of the songs already dealt with. There is, however, a much finer and richer development in the first series than in the third series of "Rondels."

Among the collected songs there were very few that seemed to me to have anything to be desired, and even those few were songs of much merit, among the "Rondels" it is the majority that are in this case—all save half-a-dozen numbers in the entire series. If I thus group them with the less satisfactory of the later songs, I must not be misunderstood as crediting them with the same qualities and the same defects. If they are on the whole as far from greatness and as far from failure, it yet must be said that as a rule they fall where the others succeed, succeed where the others fail. If some of the composer's latest songs fall below the high level he has set, it is, in the main, because he has made the voice-part merely an accessory and has abandoned melody, and for these things not even the high sincerity informing all of the songs and the marvellous technique displayed run altogether true, whereas these earlier songs

are instinct with melody and distinctness. What most of them lack is significance and that reverence for the form of the poem that is so marked in the composer's later work.

Of the few songs of outstanding merit in the first and third series, "La guerre" is tremendous and must be very effective with orchestra. Its great discords are most suitable to the subjects and the only flaw in the song is that it retains the roudel form of de Beauville's verse. But for that, it would be one of Koechlin's very greatest. The other three have nothing to rival their glorious perfection, but the grandeur of "Les étoiles" may well be held to give that song pre-eminence over the lyrical rapture of "Le jour" and the playful grace of "Le tel," a number which suffers of itself to fit the first series into *dissonances*. In this delightful song the pronunciation of the name "Eileen" may seem a fault to one of English ears, but it is to be remembered that the poet was French, and doubtless pronounced it French-fashion, as Koechlin does. An English singer might do well to substitute "Eliane." Very dainty also are "L'air" and "Le Matin" in volume two.

Castling a retrospective glance over the songs dealt with, in order to see how Koechlin is suited by the various poets he has set, it is to be noted that the many songs that warrant one in giving him a very high place among the song-composers of the day are not confined to the works of one or two poets, but include his single settings of Hérold, Sully-Prudhomme, Bouilhet, and Gregh, and his two of Chénier. With Kipling, too, he has scored a great success with "Chant de Kala Nag." Of the poets he has set more frequently, I have no hesitation in saying that he has been most successful with Leconte, since all his nine settings of poems by that writer are masterpieces. The Beauville settings are mostly early, but number half-a-dozen fine things; while the work of Edmund Haraucourt he has used to excellent purpose in "Le sémaphor" and in the four songs of op. 7. In his later years his best results have been obtained in Verlaine's "Mun rêve d'enfance" and "Il pleure dans mon cœur." All of the songs indicated are masterly; and, if Koechlin is met at home with Leconte, it is because his genius is better suited by a vision of the stillness of death and a sense of tragic mystery brooding upon the waters than by idyllic fancies and a regretful reconstruction of faded glories, and that his soul craves the vast spaces and the glowing, if somewhat stark, color of Leconte rather than the enclosed gardens and the secluded towers of Verlaine and Sully. And I say again, as I have said before, that in this estimate of the true best of his genius the composer will, I feel sure, most heartily disagree with me.



There is an aspect of his art to which I must not fail to refer that is, the extraordinarily high level at which his work is maintained. Most composers of even the highest class have their absolute failures; a few of them occasionally sink still lower—to the deepest deep—when they descend to the banal, and even those who do neither are apt to produce work that is uninteresting. Koetzlin, it may safely be said, is never uninteresting, and if there is a degree of demerit less marked than that—*et*, that is to say, there are songs that are not uninteresting, but that leave one cold—Koetzlin may be credited with inevitable superiority to it, too, for he never leaves one cold—at least, he has no such effect on me, and one can, of course, speak only of one's own experience.

And, besides the high level he maintains, there is in his work an extraordinary range. Lyrical rapture, dainty grace, playful humor, tragic gloom, tender pathos, barbaric grandeur, haunting dread, and poignant grief all have their place in these wonderful volumes of song. I know no other composer with both so much individuality and such variety.

The task of comparing his work with that of other great French composers is one I do not particularly care to undertake, but I suppose it must be done. Debussy is subtler, but more fragile, Koetzlin denser than Debussy suggests; or perhaps it would be more correct to say that Koetzlin sometimes describes, whereas Debussy is invariably content with suggestion. Koetzlin has neither Debussy's exquisite sensibility, nor his tendency to degenerate into prosaicity. The diabolical impudence of "Fantasies" is not in Koetzlin, but neither is it in anyone else. Debussy's delicacy of touch may seem often to be beyond Koetzlin, yet one or two of the latter's songs display a dainty grace that is well nigh unsurpassable. Debussy was certainly the more original, but the technical qualities displayed by both are remarkable, and each has bestowed upon his work the most scrupulous care. In each there is a combination of the material with the imaginative, the ethereal with the real, but in Koetzlin it is the material that predominates, in Debussy, the ethereal. The latter has far less variety than Koetzlin, but far more subtlety. He is a weaver in manner, while the other is a great and a bold colorist who in his later songs is deliberately avoiding the glowing color he knows so well how to use. Like the other great French song-composers, Duparc, Fauré, Ravel, both of them know how to get at the very heart of the poems they set.

In Fauré there is a more delicate perfume, a sensibility that Koetzlin seldom attains. His mastery of rhythm is even greater, and his wealth of harmonic interest is not inferior, but, for all his

poems, the gigantic conceptions of the younger men are beyond him. Duparc's songs are few in number, but of the highest artistry. They are not of the complexity of the songs of the other men dealt with here; but they are of a rare beauty of texture. No touch can be surer than his, no melodic line more perfect; but he is the least original of the five. Finally there is Ravel, most original of all (or at least closing the honor with Debussy), supple, keenly observant, dry, yet tenderly, humorous, fantastic, yet realistic, bizarre, yet with the utmost clarity of vision, incisive, more robust than Debussy, more various than any of them, save only Koechlin. In power of suggestion not even Debussy can surpass him. In his best songs he is not descriptive, as he is so often stated to be, but, instead of expressing his ideas, gives hints to stimulate the imagination. By the title of each song most of Koechlin's music of necessity seems somewhat inferred; but it is to be said that Ravel's methods would be untried to the bulk of the poems that Koechlin has set. Into songs of the number, the weird, the tragic, Ravel has not (so far as I am aware) ventured.

That the publication of Koechlin's fourth recital will not be long delayed must be the hope of everyone who knows the three existing collections and has an appreciation of and affection for what is best in modern song.

## MUSIC, MONARCHS, AND "THE SAVAGE BREAST"

By FREDERICK H. MARTENS

"Music hath chosen to soothe the savage breast . . ."—*Shakespeare*.

SHAKESPEARE'S dictum is so well-known, so widely quoted, that it is generally accepted as a statement of fact rather than a poetical hypothesis. Yet, if we look into a varied assortment of "savage breasts" of all races and ages, selecting for the purpose those of the rulers of men, hedged by a divinity which by now seems somewhat discredited, we find that, contrary to the assertion of the Bard of Avon, music has no purgative virtues where they are concerned. On the contrary, the majority of royal monsters, deposed ones, tyrants, madmen and scoundrels, seem to have cherished music without their "savage breasts" ever reacting to the soothing effect of its charm.

### THE STRONG KING

The strong kings, the able rulers, the conquerors and statesmen among crowned heads, seem to owe their preeminence in a measure to their immunity from the vitiating influence of delectable tone. For Henry IV of France, the strong man of the Bourbon, the tender lover of Gabrielle d'Estrie, no doubt, made music-responding music than any of Marie's Huguenot gals. And Henry, as kings go, is accounted a great king to this day. It was left for the unattractively vicious and deposed Henry III, last of the Valois, to hand down to posterity an "Air de Roi Henri III," which, even if apocryphal, testifies to his musical leanings. For one Frederick the Great of Prussia, trotting away on his size, entreating Johann Sebastian Bach with reverence, and writing sonatas for his chosen instrument, we have conqueror Alexander, whom no dithyrambic poem at the Olympian Games ever pleased half so well as the measured tramp of the Macedonian phalanx; Julius Cæsar, that renowned bald-head who, though he directed his martial Gallic bullets with splendid levity, used only the tubæ and buccinæ in his military orchestras, and probably looked on them as no more than a necessary evil; and Napoleon regarding music as a means to political ends, and at best knowing only such

persuades us drums and rattles when they were pounding out the rhythms of victory. It is sad for the music-lover to reflect that whenever we may look to the history of the ancients, the virtuous, the noble, the wisely among the leaders are those who are free from any musical talent. The good and great kings are usually those who are quite devoid of musical taste or inclination. It is not easy to find a musical monarch to whom the word "respectable" may be fittingly applied. On the other hand, how numerous are the instances of "savage hearts" of music-loving warriors of the diadem unsoftened by the music they cherished.

Of course, one may cite the case of David. Here we have a great, wise and, generally speaking, just monarch, who was passionately addicted to the best music known to his age, and who wrote his own psalms. Yet there is a rift in the life of his perfection, according to Rabbinic tradition, King David used to hang his lance or lyre at the head of his bed at night "when it sounded in the midnight breeze." This Arabian harp, stirring according to the voluptuous Oriental sighs, must have induced a train of thought entirely opposite to that developed by those devout psalm-settings of which the King of Israel was so fond, and may have been responsible, in a degree, for the impetuous tactical disposition which resulted in General Uriah's going West. The charms which soothed the "savage heart" of the father of Solomon were not always those of music. And if so great a monarch as David could so easily fall from grace when subjected to the direct influence of profane melody, though steeped in the certainties of devotional psalms, what of those whose music was altogether worldly?

#### DIOSYRUS THE TYRANT

There were the tyrants of Syracuse, Dionysius the Elder, and Dionysius the Younger, his son. The elder Dionysius had poetic aspirations, though his poems were hissed by the audience at the Olympian Games; while the younger Dionysius was a musician. And what sort of a monarch was this exponent of vocal culture? Plutarch tells us: "It is reported of him that having begun a drunken debauch, he continued it nearly days without intermission, in all which time no person in business was allowed to appear, nor was any serious conversation heard at court; but drinking, singing, dancing and buffonery reigned there without control." Dionysius's tyranny and misgovernment led to his being driven from his magnificent Syracuse palace, with its ample wine-cellar and splendid banquet-halls, and having to take refuge in Corinth.

Here "the very same man, that was not long before supreme monarch of Sicily," spent his time turning a more or less honest penny—Plutarch does not disclose to us whether his vocal methods were reliable—"pretending to instruct the singing women of the theatre, and seriously disputing with them about the measure and harmony of pieces of music that were performed there." We suspect that Dionysius's system of voice playing was not all that it might have been. On the other hand, vocal teachers in those times did not receive the splendid financial rewards a higher civilization accords them to-day. But Dionysius is a striking example of the weak and tyrannous ruler who at the same time was a musician.

#### THE PTOLEMIES

There were only two Dionysii; with the second the dynasty ends. But if we take that of the Ptolemies, the post-Alexandrian rulers of Egypt, we find that the worth-while Ptolemies were those who had no music in their hearts. Old Ptolemy I (Soter), Alexander's general, who founded this dynasty of Macedonian kings, was a shrewd, able and eminently successful monarch with a taste for literature, not music. His son, Ptolemy II, Philadelphus, was also able, and took an ardent interest in Hellenic culture. He was a kind of Macedonian Louis XIV, and his court was liberally furnished with de la Vallées, de Fontanges, and de Montespan, but—he does not seem to have had any Lailla or Blanes! Ptolemy III (Euergetes I), was a successful conqueror, another able king with no musical sense. But when we come to Ptolemy IV (Philopator), the musical son of the preceding, we find that he is a wretched debauchee, indulging in all the vices, and leaving the serious affairs of government to unworthy favorites. He paid great attention to the aquatic forms of religion, as to one Plutarch's words: ". . . the king was so besotted with his women and his wine, that the employment of his most busy and serious hours consisted at the utmost in celebrating religious feasts in his palace, carrying a tambour and taking part in the show." It was this wretched tambour-player who did away with that noble Spartan, King Cleomenes, who had taken refuge in Egypt. Nicagoras, the Maccabian, an old acquaintance of Cleomenes, met him in Alexandria, and told him that he had brought along some excellent war-horses for the king in his ship. Cleomenes smiled and answered: "I wish you had rather brought some music-girls, for these now are the king's chief necessities." Nicagoras reported Cleomenes's fate, and Ptolemy promptly had him murdered. For,

in the old days when a musical monarch's artistic temperament got the better of him, things really and actually happened to his critics.

Ptolemy V (Epiphanes) was an athlete and sportsman, and an energetic ruler, but no musician. Ptolemy VI (Philometor) was one of the best of the Ptolemies, brave, kindly, reasonable. Was it because music played no part in his life? His younger brother, and joint-king of Egypt with him, Ptolemy VII, known as Ptolemy or "The Blasted," was an evil lot, one without natural affection, "delighting in deeds of blood, his body as lighthouse in its blown copulience as his soul," and very, very musical. He both sang and played the flute.

The dynasty of the Ptolemies is already well along in its decline, the successive reigns have become a more kaleidoscopic chronicle of strife, intrigue and assassination. Ptolemy XI, nicknamed *Aulites*, or "The Flute-player," spent most of his reign in Rome, trying to buy his way back into power in Egypt, whence he had been driven by popular hatred—he was, perhaps, a poor musician!—and in the person of his daughter Cleopatra, "the serpent of the Nile," and the prototype of the modern "vamp," we have a fine musical consciousness, possessed of great taste and skill, in whom the hardly come to an end. Cleopatra was fond of having music at her meals—Syrian kithara players, Sycamone harpists, Athenian girls plucking the five-stringed lyre, rendered instrumental selections or accompanied the singers who sang at her banquets, where Massimo and Grecian wines and palm-brandy flowed uncheck'd by Nileic blue hairs. Music seems always to have remained one of Cleopatra's continuing interests, and her propensity to let herself go, to react subconsciously to the insidious suggestion of lascivious music, may have been responsible for many of her crimes and misfortunes. Even in her day there were in existence Egyptian popular songs, whose performance she encouraged. And we have only to examine the texts and music of some of our own popular songs to-day, to get an inkling of the lengths to which their like may have led an emotional and temperamental royal musician like Egypt's queen to go. Marc Anthony might have triumphed over Octavian Caesar, had it not been for his addiction to music. For, rude soldier though he was, Marc Anthony also was musically inclined. In Rome, while Caesar was away hunting down the unfortunate Pompey, he "had his singing girls quartered upon the houses of various fathers and mothers of families." And when he passed over into Asia, "a set of harpers and pipes . . . and a whole Bacchic rout of the like Asiatic establishment . . . came in and possessed the court. When he made his entry into Ephesus . . . throughout the town nothing was to be

seen but spears wreathed with ivy, harps, flutes and psalteries, while Anthony in their songs was Bacchus, the Giver of Joy, and the Graces." Of course, when Cleopatra came sailing up the river Cydnus to meet him, in her barge with purple sails and oars of silver, the latter "best time to the music of flutes and lily and harps." In the final analysis they paid the pipes, for both these musical rulers, the disheveled queen and the uncorrupted procurator, were involved in the same tragic fate.

#### NERO, THE FIRST IMPERIAL TENOR

Among the earlier Roman emperors the greatest of musicians is the musical Nero. He began as a boy by murdering his brother Britannicus for a song's sake. It was during the festivities of the Saturnalia, in the palace, and the young Prince Nero had been chosen king on a game of king's forfeits, by the cast of the dice. After various ones among the company had paid their forfeits in various ways, Nero called on Britannicus to sing them a song. The younger lad sang well and bravely, and he sang a song that described his own ill fortune and spoiled life. The patios of the song and the singer moved his patrician listeners, and Nero made note of the fact. As a result Britannicus was poisoned not long after. Nero might have overlooked the political danger involved in his brother's becoming the head of a faction, but he would not and could not imagine him for singing better than he himself did. As the emperor grew older in sin, his love for music increased, though the average Roman had the greatest contempt for the musical performances which Nero so much enjoyed. The American multi-millionaire builds him an expensive pipe-organ in his home; Nero had out a species of "Golden Glades" in his private garden, A. D. 69, and to top-off the work he collected there, himself "appeared on the rustic stage of the garden theater, surrounded by his musicians and, tuning his guitar carefully, sang to the noble company, to their great delight." This "great delight" must, however, be taken with a pinch of salt. It was dangerous for anyone in the audience to be anything less than delighted when Nero appeared as a solo artist. His poetry, music and acting have been, it is true, accorded the dubious merit of being "at least respectable" by one Metastasio; but "respectable" in the critical terminology of art is, unfortunately, on a level with the evasive "pleasing," and neither means very much. One of the main accusations urged by the enemies of Seneca, when they endeavored to prejudice Nero against his former tutor, was that "he accused at his singing." When Poppaea conspired against

Nero's wife Octavia, in being about her divorce from the emperor, she lately changed her with an intrigue, not with some patrician of high descent, but—with an Almostrician flute-player! For had so it might have been to have preferred another man to the emperor, a still more heinous crime would have been to have preferred another artist to the artist-prince. When Thracian came to Rome to be crowned King of Pontus by his over-lord, the Emperor Nero sent the banquets, exhibitions and games in his honor, did not spare him displays of his own playing upon the harp. And the untutored savage had a sufficiently intelligent mind to hear his god in the strings, if not in the wind. For a long time Nero sang only in private. But like many who have a "drawing-room voice," he leaped for the recital-stage and a larger audience. "His voice was, in fact, thin and inclined to be hoarse", though he himself was so proud of it, and leaped impatiently to try it out in public. "There is no respect for hidden music," he was wont to say, quoting a Greek proverb. Yet he did not dare choose a Roman city for his vocal debut, such was the prejudice against an emperor's appearing as a public singer. We have no echo of this prejudice in connection with Piso's conspiracy to murder Nero, and because emperor in his stead, Suetonius Furnus, the tribune, one of the conspirators, was reported to have said that he would kill Piso as soon as Nero were dead. "The soldiers were not going to replace a harpist (Nero) by a vocalist (Piso). That would not heal the disease!" Nero chose the Greek city of Naples for his "coming-out," in A. D. 64, and so soon as was his recital over, and the theatre emptied, than an earthquake destroyed it. This seems more than a coincidence: Nature herself appears to voice a protest. His first performance in Rome was on the occasion of the burning of the city, and though for various reasons, it is too much to say that "Nero faded while Rome burned," it is highly probable that he did sing, from a safe elevation, while his capital went up in flames, for to the imperial artist the burning city was no more than an effective stage-setting for his glorious singing.

In the reaction from the fear induced by Piso's conspiracy, Nero—quantitatively, at any rate—sang as never before. The Roman Senate, when he announced his intention of singing at the Quinquennial Games, A. D. 68, in a vain effort, perhaps, to stave off hearing the recital which they foresaw they would be forced to attend, offered him the prizes of song and eloquence before the performances began. But this pleased Nero, and he said he would meet all comers in the contest for song superiority. The result was, of course, the same. It was disloyal not to applaud. An unbiased opinion as to



Nero's singing was as dangerous then, as one regarding governmental methods might be now. The equivalent of a modern strong-governor had his spears liberally distributed about the theatre, and the Roman Department of Justice acted with the intelligent zeal which makes any business of its kind under incompetent and tyrannical rule. It was forbidden to leave the building while Nero was on the stage. Keen-witted Greeks in the audience begged death in order to be carried out, and Vespasian, who fell asleep during one of the emperor's rhapsies, nearly lost his life in consequence. It was spared only at the intercession of friends. During Nero's great song-tour of Greece, the concluding event of artistic magnitude of his life, he won—as was to be expected—the chief prizes at all the four festivals, the Olympian, Pythian, Nemean and Isthmian. He returned to Rome with 1,500,000 aurei of victory, which had been awarded him, riding in a magnificent triumphal procession to celebrate his vocal victories, along the same streets where the great generals and jurists had their more patriotic triumphs. And with him in his chariot was—*Dionysos the harpist!* Nero's crown was hung on the walls of his bed-chamber, and his image as the harpist-god adorned the streets of the city, and was stamped upon his coins. And then he took up the study of music with renewed energy. The Emperor, as *Seneca* declared, "was yet unable to sing in earnest or with without his Phoenicians by, a Moderator of his voice, to put him to work for to spare his pipes and hold his handkerchief to his mouth and to many a man he either offered friendship or denounced enmity according as he praised him more or less." But the Romans by now had had their fill of Nero. *Vindex* in Gaul and *Galba* in Spain rose against him. The news filled him with terror, but his cruelty was equalled by his incapacity. The musician-emperor makes a few half-hearted efforts to gather troops, but is far more interested in examining some new hydraulic organs, sending late at night for leading knights and senators to rejoice with him in the discovery that "I have found out how the organ can be made to sound a lower note, and more tensely." Or, after a feast, he decides to present himself unarmed to the armies' sight, with an argument save tears only, whereby the rebels would be recalled to their fealty. Then on the following day he would start the *Ode to Victory* among his rejecting legions. "Which *Ode*," he continues, "I must compose at once!" And before he cuts his throat at the will of his freedom Phoen, when the hoof-beats of his pursuer's horses sound on his ear, he murmurs, "How great an artist dies with me!"

As might be expected, the vicious and incapable Vitellius, who followed Galba and Otho as emperor, admired Nero. "Being no one of the Master's songs" he was wont to tell a harpist who played him. But when the accession of Vespasian once more gives the Roman world a strong ruler, a man of character and high resolve, we know almost without saying, that music plays no part in his life.

#### HELIOGABALUS

Helio-gabalus (A. D. 218-219) is another unusual emperor, and what is he like? As Gibbon so neatly puts it: "To confound the order of seasons and climates, to sport with the passions and prejudices of his subjects, and to subvert every law of nature and decency, were among the number of his most delicious amusements." We cannot quote all that Aelius Lampridius, who lived in the fourth century under Diocletian and Constantine, and is the only writer who has written a biography of the monster, has to say, for he says much that is unquotable. Yet there is no doubt but that he was an uncommonly northern and depraved degenerate, gifted with a vicious imagination, fertile in bizarre and disgusting fancies. Some of the artistic touches of this male-loving prince are quite modern. He gave festivals of different colors in summer: one day the table service would be olive-green, another pea-green; the day after it would be blue, and so on through the summer months. He was the first to have wine with mint and music, as indeed his whole life was devoted to a search for the novelties of voluptuery. He took particular pleasure in studying male psychology—after his own fashion. When great crowds were gathered together for a solemn festival, he had a large number of serpents loosed on them, and uttered cries of delight to see those bitten and those trampled under foot in the ensuing panic, writhing in their agony. Wine of roses and rosebuds filled the baths in which he bathed with his favorites, and one of his pleasant fancies at banquets was to have his guests recline on cushions inflated with wind. These were suddenly emptied, and the diners found themselves eating under the table. At night he attended to the business of the day, arising in the evening to receive the homage of his courtiers, and going to bed in the morning. In place of an auto he had a little one-wheeled chariot, gilded and inlaid with jewels, to which he harnessed three or four beautiful girls, and thus drove about the courts of the palace. Since his Syrian priests had predicted he would die a violent death, he kept on hand a stock of nooses, of scarlet and purple silk, with which to strangle himself; he had crowns of gold upon which to fall in case of

used, and in hollowed hyacinths and amethysts he carried mortal poisons. He even had a high tower built, from which, if the necessity arose, he meant to fling himself on a boat incased with gold and precious stones. Thus his death would be embalmed with all the trappings of luxury, while at the same time it could be said that no one had ever yet perished in such wise. Yet he was, to the end, slain by the steel broadsword of a rebellious soldier, and his dishonored body flung into the Tiber. How do we know—aside from his general depravity—that Heliothalus was a music-lover, that he out-Neroed even Nero as a performer? Because Aulus Lampridius expressly says: "He sang, he danced, he play'd the flute, he blew the trumpet, he pluck'd the lute and play'd the organ." And the Byzantine historian Romanus adds: "He sang barbaric songs to his strange (Syrian) god."

Though among the Roman emperors Nero and Heliothalus are outstanding examples of the degeneracy which seems part and parcel of the make-up of the crowned music-lover, there are numerous other examples to be found among their successors.

#### SOME ORIENTAL MEDICAL DYNASTS

But passing from the empire of the Romans, let us glance at the Oriental dynasts of the caliphate. The earlier and greater caliphs of the Omayyad house, Omar, Muawiyah, Abdalmalik, Saffwan Walid (during whose reign Spain was conquered by the Arabs), had no time for music. But the weaker Yazid II held music, condemned by his predecessors Sulaiman and Omar II, in high honor. Two of his court singers, Sakhaw and Habiba, exercised a great influence over him, and the death of the latter affected him so greatly that he perished of grief soon after she herself had died. Hisham followed Yazid II, and after Hisham came his son Walid II, "a headstrong man," who cultivated music so much so, in fact, that the governor of Irak, on being confined in his office when Walid ascended the throne, included a number of musical instruments among the gifts of horses, falcons, golden and silver vessels which he sent the caliph as a sign of his gratitude. Walid had no real opportunity of proving the correctness of our hypothesis respecting musical monarchs, for he was murdered before the gift of musical instruments sent by his governor ever reached him.

Like the Omayyids, the earlier Abbasids were also men of might, not men of music. Even Haroun-al-Rasid enjoyed it only incidentally. But among his successors we see mismanagement and music, incapacity and social instability ever going hand in hand.

There was *Amir*, for instance (d. 815), who was wholly incompetent. He occupied himself principally with the affairs of his harem, with polo, fishing, wine and music. Naturally, "the five years of his reign were disastrous to the empire." His successor, *Mansur*, was a ruler of rare qualities. His interests were scientific and literary, and his reign was a glorious one. During the reigns of *Metawakkil*, a cruel and perfidious voluptuary, *Montair*, a weakling, *Muhammad* and *Mutawir*, the magnificent palace of *Jelairiya*, which *Metawakkil* had built at *Samarra*, resounded to the pleadings of instruments and the voice. But one of the first measures of the able and energetic *Mohammad*, when he ascended the throne, was to banish from court all musicians and singers. A ruler of this type was too good for the times, and *Mohammad* was overruled in the year 870. With *Metawakkil*, his successor, the banished song-birds and lute-players probably returned to the palace, but they just as probably had in more or less one way or another, when his grandson *Mutawakkil* inherited the crown, far after *Mansur*, this palace was one of the oldest and most energetic of the *Abassid* rulers. But thereafter the *Abassid* dynasty died out miserably in shame and degradation through a succession of unworthy rulers, until the last collapse of the line, *Mutawakkil*, was slain by the Mongol Khan *Hulaku* in his own plundered capital. *Hulaku*, incidentally, a monster of cruelty, had the head of *Kamal*, a *Mansurid* prince whom he captured, and whom he killed by forcing bits of fresh turf from his body down his throat, carried through the streets of *Bamascus* "with tambourines and singers moving before it," his "savage broom" quite unmoved by this ghastly musical procession.

#### SOME EARLIEST MUSICAL NOTES

Reverting from East to West once more, and considering some of the medieval dynasties of European rulers, we still find Shakespeare's contention not borne out by historic fact, in so far as it may be applied to kings. Alfred the Great, it is true, played the harp, and so did many a Norse, Swedish and Danish king of the time, the latter all having their trunks of swords and spears; but the music these harp-like instruments made, served mainly as an incitement to deeds of blood and battle. *Tilluluf*, who rode into the battle of *Hastings* singing the "Song of Roland," did so to animate the hearts of the Normans and Duke *William*. In the case of these rulers the harp-like songs and harpings largely answered the same purpose that the roll of drum and brass blare of military bands do to-day. They were more martial sound stimulants, all harping on the same-old tune

of "Up, boys and at 'em!" They stood for us "charm to soothe!" A little later on we come to Richard the Lion-Heart, King of England, Richard the troubadour, the chivalric, the gallant, the Crusader, passionately devoted to ministry—and, perhaps, quite unconsciously one of the worst of English kings, because of his senseless prodigality, his love for expensive adventure far from home, his sacrifice of all the real interests of his kingdom for the rainbow bubbles of romantic enterprise. The story of how Blincoe sang his out of his Austria prison is well known. And his cruel and debauched brother, King John Lackland, who died of a surfeit of peaches and new cider, was also a lover of wickily furnished ballads. Speaking of other English monarchs, Mary Bateson, in her "Medieval England," remarks with truth: "It is noticeable that of England's artistic kings, Henry III, Richard II and Charles I, not one was in harmony with his subjects." All of these sovereigns were prodigal, weak and devoid of executive ability. Henry III, "Harry of Winchester," also known as "the beggar-king," because of the extravagance which left him continually without resources, had unique methods of raising money when it was needed to pay his painters, artificers and musicians. When his son Edward was born, in 1272, the streets of London were illuminated, "whilst bands of dancers made the night joyful with drums and tambourine." But the king, fond as he was of a "joyful noise," quite aside from mere tinnyal rejoicing also had an eye to more substantial expressions of pleasure on the part of his subjects. He sent messengers into the city and country to ask for presents. When they came back well loaded, the king smiled with satisfaction, but if the gift were small it was rejected with contempt. "God gave us the child," said one Norman, "but the king asks him to us!" It is no wonder the money flow, if we consider Henry's luxurious tastes. He must have his mattresses of velvet, his cushions and bolsters of silk, his damask napery, his goblet of mounted precious set, his glass cup set in crystal. And when his sister Isabella marries the Emperor, he gives her rich examples of goldsmiths' work, silver pans and cooking vessels, a chess-table and chessmen in an ivory cabinet, beds of Gossome cloth of gold, robes of Arras, and of scarlet, blue and green sambric, and much else by way of table-linen. And he pays a single harper at his court the very double attend, very amble indeed for that time, of forty shillings, and allows the musician a pipe of wine for himself and another pipe for his wife. The money to pay for his artistic and musical extravagances the king obtained by begging, borrowing and stealing—for in 1212, parliament remonstrated because the king "mixed by force on whatever was used in the way of meat and drink

—especially wine and even clothes—against the will of those who sold these things?"

The tyrannical Richard II was another heavily extravagant and incapable ruler, one who indulged his luxurious tastes by the most arbitrary methods of taxation. In his love for music he was the first English sovereign to have recourse to the "proving-pung" to secure singing boys for the Royal Chapel. An official was authorized "to take and send for the king all such singing-men expert in the science of music as he could find and think able to do the king service, within all places of the realm, as well as in cathedral churches, colleges, chapels, houses of religious, and all other franchised or exempt places, or elsewhere." Thus a tyrant for music's sake, he also levied the most disproportionate rewards and annuities on his musicians out of the taxes wrung from his impoverished people—a truly marvellous monarch. He came to a bad end.

In fine contrast, King Henry V, the conqueror of France, though at his coronation at Westminster, "the number of harpers in the hall was innumerable," was himself "no encouragement of the popular minstrelsy" which flourished in such perfection during his reign. When he returned in triumph from Agincourt, and made his entry into London, he came out freely against the community song—a stand which, according as one does or does not believe in community singing, may be held to argue that he was either quite unamused or very musical indeed. Children had been placed in artificial tarrets to sing verses in honor of the occasion. But King Henry would by no means countenance their music, which he not only forbade, but commanded that in the future "no ditties should be made by and sung by ministers and others" in praise of the battle. King Henry V, who did not care for minstrelsy or children's choruses, died universally lamented by his subjects; while the taking off of Richard II, that magnificent music-lover, was felt by them as a distinct relief.

Henry VIII came honestly enough by his love for music. His father King Henry VII was republican and aristocratic, and cultivated music. He was always attended by waits and minstrels, and had a fine collection of musical instruments. Henry VIII, another grand-master, delighted above all other things in "singing, dancing, wrestling, casting of the bar, playing at the records, fute, viols, in setting of songs and making of ballads." Music remained a life-long passion with him, but it did not make him more humane or less floridous. The title of his best-known ballad, "The harte is up," when we view it in the light of his activities as a ruler and a husband, seems almost to suggest the never-ending chase which drove so many victims to the axe and block on Tower Hill.

Queen Elizabeth shared one proclivity with the Emperor Nero. It was dangerous not to please whatever she did. There is no doubt that she was fond of music, and encouraged it at her court. But with regard to her own virginal playing, we suspect that the chroniclers are that her unfortunate contemporary and cousin, Mary, Queen of Scots, being by far—despite the romantic glamor surrounding her—the worse sovereign, must have been the better musician. The whole trend of historic fact lends support to the supposition.

The weak and worthless Stuarts who followed the Plantagenets and Tudors were all, as stands to reason, encouragers and patrons of music. James I, close and mean as he was about money matters, increased the stipend of the Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal as one of the first acts of his reign. His son, the Prince of Wales, afterward King Charles I, learned to play the *viola da gamba* as a boy, and he became so accomplished a musician as he made a poor king. Cromwell, a strong man, knew no music save such pieces as were set to pious psalms, and their words meant more than their tunes to him; but with the Restoration profane music again becomes the delight of the English court. That merry monarch Charles II was especially fond of his band of twenty-four fiddlers, and paid them well—when he paid them at all. On the other hand the members of the Royal Chapel, though their salaries were raised, never saw the color of their money, for Mr. Wington, the organist, talking to Pepys (1660) says: "many of the musiques are ready to starve, they being five years behind with their wages." There was always plenty of music, both instrumental and vocal, at Whitehall, favored by the king who sold his country to the French, and who, as a ruler, was probably the worst of all the Stuarts.

#### MUSICAL MONARCHS OF FRANCE

What holds good for English kings applies as well to the sovereigns of other European nations. Clovis, King of the Franks, a murderous monster, whose latter years in particular were stained by numerous crimes, sang: As has been read of him "King Clovis sang out of tune, no doubt, but still he sang." He was another "swamp breast" monarch. King Dagobert, the Merovingian, an oppressive and licentious monarch, did have "music in his soul," hence should not have been "fit for treason, stratagem and spoils." He played the organ, and loved singing to such an extent, that hearing the nun Nanthilde writing motets behind the cloister bars, he fell head over heels in love with her. As a result, again displeasing Shakespeare, he betrayed his queen, divorcing her, used stratagem

to draw Nantelle from her refuge, and married her to the spells of his magical position. When we come to the Capetians, we find that Hugh Capet, the able and energetic founder of the dynasty, was not what might be called musical. His son, however, Robert the Pious, was a weak and unstable music-lover, who composed hymns for the church service. Is it strange that he had a disturbed and stormy reign? Some of his hymns still survive, among them one beginning "O Constantis mysticum." His wife Constantia had asked him to write a composition in her honor, and seeing her name beginning the first line of the text, was satisfied that he had done so, without investigating further. Philip Augustus, who was not musical, consolidated his kingdom and built hospitals, market-places, churches and other public buildings in Paris, whose principal streets he was the first to pave. His successor, Louis IX, though a man of noble character and extremely pious, included church music in the circle of his most vital interests. When he set sail for his Crusade against the Egyptian sultan his marriage song the "Veni Creator" is chosen. There is, of course, no connection between this circumstance and the fact that his Egyptian Crusade was a total failure, he himself being taken prisoner, and only released upon payment of an enormous ransom, and that he died on a second crusade against Tunis, years afterward. And yet

At the gorgeous court of King Philip VI of France, at which resided the Kings of Bohemia, Navarre and Mallorca, with their retinues—for their dull homes were never like Philip's Paris—all was banquets, balls, pageantry and mysteries, in which music played a leading part. But Philip had his Cooey. His son, King John, proud, presumptuous and cruel, and addicted to minstrels and magnificence like his father, found, in turn, Agincourt. The reign of Charles VI was also a musical one; the orchestra of the "Prince of Foix" sounded the royal court with music, and the king's wife, Isabella of Bavaria, a musician in female form, was an accomplished harpist, though she did not use her art to calm her poor, mad husband's accessions of dementia. It was a reign of blood, murder and rapine, and one that well-nigh ruined the country. Charles VII is the king of "The Maid of Arc," but he is also the king of Agnes Sorel, to whose vice he loves to listen, and upon whom he lavishes the treasures of his realm. A king with a love for music, especially vocal music rendered by some fair and beloved singer, invariably increased the high cost of living for his subjects in the good old medieval days in France.

King Raim of Jerusalem and Sicily, Count of Provence, a contemporary of Charles the Bold of Burgundy, is fitfully music-mad.



He plays the violin himself, and spends his time with music-makers and minstrels, and his money on them. And so it goes Louis XII, with whom the sixteenth century begins, and who bestowed France with many curly wars, insists on being a singer. He has no voice; a single falsetto note constitutes his entire range. So Josquin Duperré writes this note for the King, in which the royal vocalist may take part while singing no more than the one tone nature has placed at his disposal. Francis I, ruled by shallow-minded and insupportable favorites, plays the lute; Charles IX, has given a gift for the violin—and carries out the bloody Massacre of St. Bartholomew! The fact that he preferred the violin to the flute or clavichord—then the instruments reserved for the quality, while the violin was held to be fit only for lackeys—shows that his musical tastes, from the standpoint of his own day, were low and vulgar. Henry III, the last of the Valois kings, was a sixteenth century Melopomachus, and a lavish patron of music and pagantry. His excessive expenses ruined France, and the example set by himself and his infamous court, brought the mouths of the land to their lowest ebb. Louis XIV, the most conspicuous of the Bourbons, though he has been called "the Great," cannot in reality be so considered. He did not care for music in the genuine and intrinsic way that the Valois monarchs did, and he regarded those musical geniuses Lully and Racine more as added embellishments of the festival pomp of his court, than as the owners of an independent artistic enjoyment dear to his heart. Louis XV had a fondness, especially in his rebel later years, for the charming grisettes, whose low popular tunes and falsetto voices he enjoyed in equal measure with *Monsieur de la Harpe*, a musician entirely at home in them. Poor, dull Louis XVI did not react sensibly to music, though Marie Antoinette, the pupil of Gluck, had a great gift for the clavichord and could sing. When not hunting, or indulging the tedious court ceremonial to which he was a slave, his dearest pleasure was his iron-work in his private smithy. Was he kind-hearted, virtuous and well-meaning because he was uneducated?

#### DUKE HANNOVERIAN, HORNEDOLLERIAN, WITTELBERGERIAN

We may turn to almost any other royal dynasty and find a similar showing of love for music coupled with weakness, lack of character, crafty, duplicity and every other vice while the great and good monarchs are those who keep more or less aloof from the collection of sound. In the case of the Moorish Chazaryads of Spain, Abderrahman I and Abderrahman the III were great princes, skilled in war and adept administrators, but the reign of Abderrahman II, a

weak palate with a taste for music and literature, is described as a "man of confusion." Let us glance at the Hapsburgs. Rudolph of Hapsburg, the founder of the dynasty, was a man who had no time for music—he was too busy creating an empire—but a weakness for music crept into the family long before the marriage of Francis, Duke of Lorraine, to the Empress Maria Theresa. The Emperor Ferdinand III, under whom the disintegration of the Holy Roman Empire was practically accomplished, was a musical connoisseur of considerable taste, and composed himself, notably an "Aria with 56 Variations," edited by his Court Organist Eberhard Leopold I, an intolerant bigot, was musically very well educated. He played several instruments, notably the clavichord, and "bored out" the singers and instrumentalists who applied for positions in the Imperial orchestra himself. He always followed the score at opera performances, and would close his eyes habitually when the most entrancing passages occurred. He left the war of the Spanish Succession as an evil legacy to his sons.

The eldest of these sons, who succeeded him as the Emperor Charles VI, was especially fond of composing dances, and accompanying at the piano. His daughter, the Empress Maria Theresia, was anything but a musician but she was an out-and-out musical. Both she and her husband—during whose reign Austria lost the bitterly contested Seven Years' War to Prussia—did much for the musical education of their children. In the midst of war, his country falling into ruins, his court receiving the bribes of his enemies, Charles VI composed an opera. He led the orchestra, the roles were taken by privately and noble amateurs, and in the ballet which followed, his daughter danced in flesh-colored tights. His grandson, the gifted and artistic Joseph II, not only sang, but also played the pianoforte, the violin and the viola. He played a great deal for his own amusement, but was satisfied with the works of a Haendel and Salieri, not being able to rise to the heights of Mozart's genius. He told the latter, a proper of a performance of "The Abduction from the Seraglio": "Too fine for our ears, and what a tremendous number of notes, my dear Mozart!" Haydn's music, too, was beyond the emperor's limited musical taste to grasp. Joseph II did not escape the tragic fate which seems to be reserved for the few musical monarchs of good personal repute. Disgusted with the failure of his liberal and idealistic plans, he died of a broken heart.

As to the Hohenzollerns, Frederick the Great, a benevolent autocrat, plays the flute, yet is an empire builder in spite of this visible weakness. But Frederick William II, who succeeded his

weak Frederick, was easy-going, indolent and sensual. He played the violin, patronized Beethoven and Mozart, and instead of building up his country—when he died the state was bankrupt, the army demoralized, and the monarchy discredited—built up the finest private orchestra to be found in Europe at that time. Among the lesser German princes of the eighteenth century were but few men of energy or character—and the majority of them were musical.

In the nineteenth century we have the mad King of Bavaria, Louis II, who, though he taxed his peasants to the bone in order to build the luxurious medieval castles (Linderhof, Herrenchiemsee, Hohenaschwangau, Neuschwanstein) which attract visitors from all over the world, spared no money to launch the Wagner opera. He paid the composer's debts, granted him a large yearly pension, gave brilliant model performances of the Wagner dramas in Munich, gradually became insensibly insane and met a tragic and mysterious death in the *Starnberger See*, together with his physicians in 1886. His is one of the saddest cases among the royal cerebral madmen, for he had lovable traits, and, though wildly extravagant, was no Nero or Alphonse of Portugal.

#### MUSICAL MONARCHS OF THE NORTH

Yet fate is seldom kind to the monarchs living mad. They engage either our horror, or our compassion. Mad madral kings are to be found in the cold North as well as in the sunny southern Russian land. King Eric XIV of Sweden, son of the great Gustavus Vasa, is crowned at Upsala, and rides gayly through Stockholm on July 13, 1593, in the coat of crimson, the paul of bells, and the cheers of his people. He loves music, and even writes a number of four-part choruses to Latin texts. But there is a pronounced strain of madness in him. He antagonizes his ambitious brother, affronts his nobles by marrying a young girl of obscure family, and is finally deposed by the States of the Kingdom. Thrown into a dungeon and loaded with chains, he appeals to his brother John in the name of their father, and the latter orders books and musical instruments be given him. Yet they are taken from him again after a few days, and he is confined with even greater rigour. Removed to another prison he is tortured by being allowed to see his wife and child through the window, for a moment only. He endeavours to find consolation in singing the Psalms of David, and finally, poor man, is murdered in his prison. Christian IV of Denmark, splendour-loving, passionate, sensual, whose reign was an unfortunate one, and who descended to his grave weary and broken-hearted, was another

Scandinavian monarch who cultivated music with zest, and had the German composer Heinrich Schütz come to Copenhagen to reorganise his court orchestra.

It is not surprising to note, perhaps, that the most wretched of all the Romanoffs, the Emperor Peter Fedorovitch, son of a daughter of Peter the Great, "physically something less than a man and mentally little more than a child," did much to encourage the cultivation of music in Petragrad, and that, humble though he was, he is said to have played the violin "moderately well."

### TWO KINGS OF SPAIN

Among the Spanish Bourbons King Philip V, a rather melancholic, who was only kept from abdicating through his wife's holding him a virtual prisoner, was controlled in his sombre madness by the music of Farinelli, the celebrated castrato. Farinelli came to Madrid in 1736, intending to stay a few months. He remained for twenty-five years. Night after night, ten years in succession, he had to sing to his royal master the same six songs, never any other. Ferdinand VI, the son of Philip, was also of a shy and melancholy disposition, and since music, with the exception of the hunt, was almost his sole pleasure and interest, Farinelli went right on with his nightly concerts. King Charles IV of Spain was a poor king and only a fair musician, yet very fond of music. Like so many string players who like to play quartet, yet are unhappy if they cannot play the first fiddle, whether they are qualified to do so or not, King Charles, until dethroned by Napoleon, always reserved this part for his royal self.

### A PORTUGUESE MUSICAL MADMAN

King Charles was merely a poor fool, but what are we to think of the unutterably vile and cruel Alphonse VI, King of Portugal (1656-1683), a semi-madman with strong homicidal tendencies. His life was an agreeable illustration of murder, waste and licentious excess. He played the bagpipe. He had married, in 1680, Marie Françoise Elizabeth, grand-daughter of Henry IV of France. Quite naturally, it did not take Queen Marie long to discover that she detested her amiable husband. Following this first discovery came a second one: she had fallen in love with his brother Don Pedro. There were various intrigues, plots and counterplots to force the abdication of Alphonse, and keep him on the throne. The King, his brother Pedro, Queen Marie, and some of the Portuguese nobles, appeared on the balcony of the palace to receive the plaintiffs of the

crowd. As an act of royal condescension, King Alfonso took a fagotlet, poked a tune on it in the most abominable manner and, when he had finished, handed the instrument to a grove and respected nobleman and started on his playing it alone. "The lowest of the populace were so disgusted that they had almost laid hands on the royal fagotlet player, and dethroned him then and there." This notable proceeding was not long deferred, in fact, and the famous musical king was kept in a confinement far too honorable for him until his death, passing his time in hunting, feasting, sleeping and—preeminently—playing his beloved fagotlet.

### CONCLUSION

The preceding presentation of monarchs whose more or less "average brains"—or if not average, then brilliant, departed, imbecile, or insane—refute the Euboeanish assertion about music's power to charm, is by no means categorical. It merely breaks the surface, so to speak, in a general survey, which cannot pretend to be comprehensive. At the same time it bears sufficient witness to the truth of the contention that—in monarchs, at any rate—there is often a subtle interconnection between musical tastes and preferences, and a lack of kingly and even human virtues. History seems determined to prove that a love for music is a species of immortality in the case of the crowned head, that it often lays a curse on its activities. Perhaps it would be going too far to try to fix the exact degree to which the musical leaning of the ex-emperor William II of Germany, his entourage of Louisvilles opera, and his own "Sung an Angle," were responsible for his overthrow and the loss of the late war by the Central Powers. Yet one might be tempted to believe, in the light of historic evidence, that the cult of music by royalty is distinctly of ill omen for its cultivators. Napoleon III was fond of Offenbach and Waldteufel waltzes. This indulgence alone would not have brought him to Sedan and Wilhelmshöhe. But with a liking for Waldteufel went the other characteristics often found in a musical temperament: a tendency to visionary speculation, a weak and easy yielding to the influence of others, an abdication of the duties of reason in favor of sentimental affection. That unfortunate Mexican Emperor Maximilian, one of the most sympathetic of the Hapsburgs, was not shot by his rebellious subjects because he was musical, nor because he had had sent to the Tyrolean Alps for a shipment of two thousand canary-birds, to teach the gorgeously plumaged feathered tribes of the Mexican forests a truly musical bird-note, and increase, multiply, and subdue

the wilderness of Anahone with their song. No, not because he had the musical temperament, but because it made itself felt in momentous practical decisions, and carried with it the artistic weaknesses and insensations which are fatal when rapid and decided action are demanded.

Are the uncomplimentary theories regarding music and "the savage brest," which history seems to justify with such an abundance of proof, applicable only to the unmythic heads of royalty? Ordinary mortals, the rank and file, who are able to enjoy music and compose and execute it without suffering mentally, will be inclined to answer in the affirmative. Had they not been emperors and kings, Nero, Heliogabalus, Henry III of France, Richard II of England, and many another might have made better musicians—they could not have been worse rulers. Still, perhaps, some day Shakespeare's poetic hypothesis may become universally true and an actual fact.

## THE ENJOYMENT OF MUSIC

By IRANS SCHEIDER

*Clap'tem d'ies gold!*

**T**HE enjoyment of music is an absolutely individual matter. Perhaps not two people enjoy the same composition in the same way and to the same degree.

The trained musician whose enjoyment of music is the result of knowledge, reasoning, and of experienced and trained listening, might well be wondering how others enjoy music, who do not possess all these attributes or possess them in a more or less confused degree.

In using the word "music" one is badly handicapped, as we have no distinct terms for bad and good music or for real serious music and the kind which might charitably be called "sacred noise." To classify music according to its true merit and find special terms for it would be an endless and hopeless task, and so the term covers the most trivial and the most sublime.

Yet everyone of the distinctions that could be made and that really exists has its followers who love, and stoutly defend their kind and demonstrate their dislike of the "wrong" kind in unmistakable manner.

The answer to this question is then to be found in individuality, or personality, which, according to Goethe, is the greatest gift to man. Dean Browne of the Yale Divinity School recently coined the phrase, "Man is incurably religious," and we might also say: "Man is incurably musical." Shakespeare's man, who "has no music in his soul," does not exist except as a physical abnormality.

According to poets and sentimentalists, music is the language of the soul, the voice of the emotions, the wireless between souls. But it is plain that, starting with such uncertain premises, as the word "soul," we can never come to clear conclusions, and while such expressions lead us into closer science and chaplainsy as the 21<sup>st</sup> discussion, they will never answer our question definitely. This can be done only by investigating it from a strictly physical point of view.

The principal and most natural quality of music is rhythm. It engenders with and lives by music and the absence of it means the loss of music. All musical works that are immortal, are so by the grace of their rhythmic superiority. All other music (and the music publishers know what a graveyard they support) owes its demise to rhythmic anæmia.

All the emotions may be explained in terms of physical activity, and pleasure, in one way or another, motor energy. All pleasure and pain is either enhancement or arrest of functional activity, either increase or decrease of a primitive feeling-state. Closely connected with this is acceleration or retardation of the blood circulation, which plays a most important part in the general physical condition, and thus again governs and influences matters of personality.

The change in the blood circulation is possible through the decrease or increase of the heart's amplitude, through the ability to beat faster or slower, and, as the heart beats continuously, it acts almost like a metronome, which marks time to our march through life, from the cradle to the grave, and decides upon the intimate tempo—slow or fast—to which our symphony of life is to be played.

From the beginning of life we have been accustomed to the heart and pulse beats, which occur periodically, and divide "time" into equal fragments. But that is what rhythm does with music; and if body and music make use of the same important force, it is not to be wondered at, that music appeals first to the body (*physis*) and only secondarily and through associated processes to the soul (*psyche*).

When we see, for instance, a primitive specimen of humanity "enjoying" music, we are sure that this is neither a soul-beat nor an æsthetic affair, for upon examination the music he "enjoys" will be found to be of an essentially primitive rhythmic character, which appeals exclusively to the body, whose most movable parts, head, arms and legs, involuntarily move in time with it.

But this accompanying of music with bodily motion is a great deal more than a mere response to rhythm, it is also the unconscious desire to recreate the music, which desire Yrjö Hirn (*The Origin of Art*) proclaims as one of the strongest features of the enjoyment of any art. This theory also explains most satisfactorily many other peculiarities connected with the enjoyment of music. It also explains why, in art alone, the association of other scenes with the principal one does not decrease, but increases the enjoyment through the principal scene.



It is a well-known psychological fact that simultaneous stimulation of several senses enhances enjoyment as perceived, but diminishes the intensity of response of each individual sense. To be forced to listen to music during dinner—a most barbaric custom, from a gastroscopic point of view—may increase the general feeling tone, but the strain upon the auditory center surely must detract from the proper enjoyment of the food. Yet in acquiring music, the sense of seeing, for instance, is one of the greatest helps to the majority of concert-goers; in fact many of them would be utterly helpless if they were deprived of its use.

Whenever people watch the conductor closely, or ask for seats "where they can watch the hands of the pianist" they follow instinctively the impulse of employing another sense—that of the eye—to increase their enjoyment. This is also the psychological reason for the popularity with the great majority of such men as Cremona and de Pichmann, and their equal failure to attract the more sensitive listener, because in both cases their performance appeals as much to the eye as to the ear.

However, one cannot deny that the sympathetic and impulsive gestures, the bodily expressions in the conducting of such men as Nikisch and the late Mahler, the most impulsive and expressive conductor of all, does materially assist in conveying the symbolic meaning of a musical phrase that would otherwise be too deep for such listeners to appreciate. It was Nietzsche who said that the majority of people were always deficient in the ability to understand the symbolism of music, and therefore had to cling to the formal part of it.

Rhythm of course, is not the only quality of music, for although there must be rhythm, there is plenty of music in which this quality makes itself very little felt, as for instance in "slow" music. So-called slow music is essentially *walzte*. The organic source of melody is harmony and the tendency of tones for certain progressions is due to the feeling of key. But as we have in the heart a physical organ closely associated with rhythm, as we have in the ear one that is sympathetically responsive to most tone combinations.

This organ of the ear is supposed to be located in the cochlea, and its actively vibrating parts are the basilar membrane and organ of Corti. These are stimulated in exact ratio by sound waves, which vibrate via the auditory nerve and auditory center, and finally become tones and harmony.

In their crude state they recognize only certain intervals which make up nature's chord, but through training, these organs are capable of response to the most intricate harmonic combinations.

Whenever the primitive ear is approached by too complex or unusual harmonies, it will regard them as "sweet" or "wrong," because the ear cannot assimilate them quickly, and cannot vibrate in sympathy with them. This is an experience that every music teacher has daily with children, when they meet speedily dismissed chords in their music.

Therefore, folk-music, hymns and popular music, constructed according to this simple acoustic scheme of the ear—swinging pendulum-like between tone and dominant—are enjoyed most by primitive listeners. Such music appeals to their natural qualifications. They put no particular stress upon the ear, they do not require any increased labor of this organ, and there is a perfect balance between incoming sensation, and outgoing energy, and the primitive feelings-state of pleasure and enjoyment. There was a time when, according to J. J. Rousseau, music was supposed to be "the art of combining sounds so as to please the ear."

In speaking of music in a very general way, and also of its "enjoyment" by the untrained listener, we may divide it into two great classes, fast and slow, rhythmic and melodic, although this distinction is very loose and inaccurate, when applied to music of a higher class. Man, with that inflexible instinct for his feelings-state, unerringly and accurately connects with them the proper physical states. To him, fast music is adequate with increase of action, and an increase of joy; slow music is arrest of activity and ultimately, as we shall see later, will become the expression of sorrow.

The leaning toward and enjoying of one or the other depends entirely upon the predominance of either the rhythmic or melodic quality, and is dictated entirely by the personality of the listener. A man of strong vitality, forceful personality, possessing plenty of energy, will enjoy music of equivalent qualities, that is, lively music of strong rhythmic character. For rhythm is accent, accent is will, will is expression of personal strength, or work, which is the expression of joy in living.

If such a person lacks imagination, and he usually does, he will be fond of ragtime, which is nothing but rhythm and accent. But when imaginative, he might like good classical music, of strong rhythmic quality, and Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, for instance, with its strong and all pervading two-time rhythm in glances and medium variety, would strongly appeal to him. But even in this case, the principal "enjoyment" will come from the rhythmic element, while the harmonic and melodic benefits of the work may pass through his mind without leaving any perceptible trace in his consciousness.

Should the rhythm of a composition, on the other hand, change often and suddenly, as it does in many modern works, the primitive rhythmic sense of an untrained listener is not able to adjust itself to the quick changes, his rhythmical equilibrium is disturbed too often and he cannot follow, and consequently his enjoyment is impaired. The appeal of the complex music is "too much" for him, and therefore it does not give him the physical satisfaction, which is the only one he can get out of music.

By persons of much vitality and energetic temperament, and also by children, who always have a surplus of physical energy, "slow" music is but little "enjoyed." In such music the rhythmical quality is less apparent, often it is purposely veiled by the composer, through the use of compound meters, such as 6-8, 8-8, 12-8, which are again divided into smaller fractions (4-beats, Ninth Symphony, Beethoven, second part) until all trace of rhythm is obliterated and dissolved into endless streams of flowing melody.

In such meters the strongest accent, the "energy of the beginning," becomes too "far apart." It occupies the attention, and therefore ceases to stimulate physical motor action. Consequently, such music appeals to persons of little energy and low vitality. But as the emotional state it creates moves for a motor outlet just the same, and as the absence of rhythm prevents stimulation of any physical display, the outlet is directed into thought. People of low energetic temperament are generally imaginative and sentimental. With them such thoughts will easily develop into worry and dreaming, and as they aimlessly wander through the mind, they are apt to leave the main road and lose themselves in the many by-ways which they cross, and which lead into the far-away "long, long ago."

Following these paths of least resistance, and remaining unchecked, life's experiences of former days are awakened, and still more complete emotional states are created, which may assume such strength that the balance between stimulus and response (incoming and outgoing energy) is disturbed. All emotional states crave motor expression, and this so far retarded physical expressions seek, after all, relief, which it finds in sobbing and crying, and thus such music may impress itself upon the listener as being sad music.

However, it is not a case of crying because the music is sad, but the act of crying creates in the listener this illusion and this association will forever cling to that particular music and to all of the same kind.

Much itself is neither sad nor joyful. Music consists of rationally connected tones, vibrations of air, and all these may spread

from the auditory centre by way of sympathetic ganglia to other nerve centres and create associations. Music cannot interpret abstract ideas, nor illustrate concrete subjects, like poetry and painting. There is no definiteness in it, and that is its chief charm. But like that of all the other arts, its purpose is the creation of illusion. If music could produce a distinct and/or joyful effect, it would have to affect all people alike. This is not the case, as it may stir up one kind of response in one, and an entirely different one in somebody else. The same music may affect the same person differently at different times, according to the dated or depressed state of his feeling.

Neither is music directly the language of feeling. The inner life is mostly made up of experiences stored up in the emotional memory, and from this source may answer, echo-like, the appeal of music. But that is merely indirectly, and the "power of music" exists only in and through the imagination.

The question is often asked: Who enjoys music more, the trained musician or the untrained layman? The answer is always in favor of the latter. The pleasure derived from music, is, first, physical, next emotional, and finally intellectual. But as the enjoyment is raised from the first two states to the highest plane, it loses in grandeur and intensity, for the application of the intellect means control, and curbing of feeling.

We often refer to the "musical sense" in man, which consists of appreciating rhythm and harmony and, in its highest development with the serious composer, of the ability to think in tones. This sense is not an innate one, but one of the acquired facilities of the human race. Music itself is a matter of invention, and, like all other acquired facilities, has experienced constant improvement from generation to generation.

As it rose slowly from the simple to the complex, the sense of hearing kept pace with it, and rose from a state of purely isolated physical reaction to tone waves to the ability to connect this reaction with other centres, and finally to the state of pure intellectualism in the hyper-modern music. This process, which has taken centuries to be perfected in the human race, is daily reproduced in much shorter time in the musical education of the individual.

With the musician, aside from the always present danger of satiation, the enjoyment soon becomes a matter of intellectual labor, which of course is also a pleasure, but one of less intensity. He also, and perhaps more so, recreates while listening, but not with that absorbing pleasure of the primitive listener.

There also enters an entirely new factor into his enjoyment: his thematic memory. Joubert says rightly: "La musique s'est la fois de mémoire," for the ultimate and highest enjoyment of serious music depends entirely upon an alert and correct memory. Unless one can retain the different musical motives out of which, for instance, a symphonic movement is built up, recognize them when they reappear, follow them through the different instruments of the orchestra, face-*à*-face unconsciously comparing, recognizing their rhythmic, harmonic and melodic changes, the full appreciation of such a composition is impossible.

But this very memory which gives the musician such a complete insight into the work is very apt to develop into purely intellectual and analytical labor, causing interference with his enjoyment; or, to use a popular phrase, "the heart remains empty." In such a case, the musician does not stand before the great memory in its total, as the layman does, but he sees the work built up piecemeal, and thus loses the superior total effect. Perhaps the whole question here is that of "blissful ignorance."

If we ask who enjoys music more, the man who listens to a symphony or the man who listens to trivial music, the answer is, that he enjoys music most who listens to music best fitted to his personality—the word personality, taken in the widest possible sense, the sum total of his physical, mental and moral qualities. It does not make any difference whether this best-fitted music be a Brahms symphony, a trivial rhythmic tune or a sentimental ditty.

The man who enjoys music most intensely is the man who has lived a rich life, who has stored away in his mind's treasure-house vast experiences of sorrow and joy, and whose sympathetic attitude to the world around him keeps his mind open to receive the many stimuli that come from everywhere, who lets them penetrate into the transitional stages of his sub-consciousness and bring forth the old joys again to gladden his heart, the old sorrows to dim again his eyes, and indulge in the luxury of past grief.

In this sense we may then speak, but indirectly only, of music as "the language of the soul" and as "communication from soul to soul." The works of our great composers are the mirrors of their lives; what they proclaim in their works are the joys and sorrows they have experienced, not as composers, but as human beings, who feel and suffer as you and I.

And when, in the overwhelming stress of inspiration, their emotions used impulsively for utterance, they wrote down what lived in them, and thus invited the whole world to participate and

share in their joys and troubles. But what they wrote was there before it was expressed, and it can appeal only to that which is in man when this message reaches him.

Taste and enjoyment are relative, personal, individual; *obsequium a non "impersonal"*. The recipe for the greatest enjoyment of music is to live, to work, to suffer and to enjoy; for a rich, full life is the best resonance board for music.

## BEETHOVEN'S "LEONORE" AND 'FIDELIO'

By EDGAR STEL

WHILE Mozart, the most universal genius in Music, entering between Gluck and Beethoven, was permitted to aspire to the heights of both the Dramatist and the Symphonist, Beethoven's fame is quite as peculiarly based on his—in the widest sense of the term—symphonic works as that of Gluck on his dramatic compositions. Everything else that Beethoven wrote rightly occupies the background in contrast with his sonatas, quartets, and symphonies, with the sole exceptions of his solemn mass and the opera "Fidelio," which of right should be entitled "Leonore." Only once did Beethoven write an opera, but this one essay placed him in the ranks of the very greatest in the realm of stage-composers, beside Gluck and Mozart, and before Weber and Wagner.

But slightly impressed by Gluck, and repelled—in accordance with his lofty ethical conception of love—by what he considered to be Da Ponte's too frivolous libretto for Mozart, Beethoven sought for an art-work of a tone similar to that of the latter portions of "The Magic Flute." Besides, he exceedingly admired Cherubini, whose opera "Les deux journaux" had such striking success from 1800 onward that even Goethe (in "Dichtung und Wahrheit") observed that, in this opera, "perhaps the most felicitous subject is treated, that we have ever seen on the stage," and lauded this same opera in Eckermann's especially good "because it could be heard with pleasure even without music." "The important matter of a good ground-work (just as Goethe, according to Eckermann) is either not realized by composers, or they find no expert poets to second them with good subjects skilfully presented. Certain it is, that I can really enjoy an opera only when its subject is as well wrought as the music, so that the one keeps pace with the other."

It was a most remarkable conjunction that no other than the clever theatre manager and judge of human nature, Schikaneder, inspired Beethoven with the idea of writing an opera, and thereby to enter into direct rivalry with Cherubini's opera, then in high favor in Vienna. Whether Schikaneder also called for

attention to the Leonore subject, is uncertain, but quite probable. In any event, it can not have been mere chance that prompted Beethoven, to whom that subject was evidently confined by a man in close touch with the stage, to choose a libretto which not only bears a strong resemblance to Cherubini's most celebrated opera, but actually derives from the author of the Cherubini libretto.

Jean-Nicolas Bouilly (1765-1848), for a time a favorite French dramatist, who was popularly termed "the tearful poet" (*poète lachrymal*), filled the post of "Administrateur" of a Department during the Terror of the French Revolution, and in his Memoirs relates how he frequently aided the wretches of imprisoned nobles to free their husbands through heroic efforts. Thereafter he wrote, from personal experience, the two librettos for "Les deux journées" (for Chambon) and (somewhat in point of time) "Leonore, ou l'Amour conjugal," to which a now forgotten composer, Pierre Gavener (1765-1802), wrote the first music. In this shape the work was produced at Paris on Feb. 28, 1798. Beethoven was doubtless acquainted with this music, for Gavener's score was found in his library remains. Formerly it was often asserted that Beethoven was influenced by Friedrich Paër's successful opera, produced at Dresden on Oct. 4, 1804, written in the Italian language and likewise adapted from Bouilly's libretto. But we now know positively that Beethoven had already begun with his composition before Paër's opera came out, and that his German librettist utilized the original French book exclusively. In this connection Berlin was fond of telling a pretty anecdote which Friedrich Hiller is said to have heard from Paër himself, and according to which Beethoven exclaimed to Paër, who was seated beside him at the production of the latter's "Leonore," "Oh, how beautiful, how interesting! I must compose that!" If this story is really true, and not invented by the facetious Paër himself, it is likely that Beethoven did not so express himself to Paër at the production of "Leonore" (which was not given in Vienna until 1808), but at the performance of a general march of Paër's, and to have caused Beethoven to write the Dead March in the "Erasus." At all events, Berlin was right in observing, "What has become of Gavener's and Paër's Leonores?" They came, and went; for, of the three Leonores, the score of the first is weak, that of the second barely a work of talent, the third a composition of genius.

Bouilly relates that the subject of his "Leonore" is drawn from the life, a lady of Tournai set free her imprisoned husband by "a deed of the highest heroism" (in which Bouilly was



fortunately able to assist her), similar to Leonore's frothing of her Florence. It was only to avoid arousing hostility that Beatty shifted the scene of action to Spain; and at the first production of the piece (with Gounod's music), which took place during the revolutionary period, the subject was designated, with intent to offend, as "an historical Spanish incident." That which breathes the breath of immortal life into the work, and inspired Beethoven to his noblest harmonies, is the *libretto's* presentation of the drama, which made of an otherwise not precisely relevant past a soul-stirrer. Beatty's poem, of moderate effect in a mediocre musical setting, revealed its meaning only in the moment when Beethoven proclaimed in tones what words fail to convey.

The groundwork of the action is extremely simple. A nobleman, Florestan, had been privily thrown into prison by his powerful rival, Pizarro, because he proposed to disclose the latter's crimes to the Minister. Pizarro, desiring the Minister by a tale of Florestan's demise, had himself appointed Governor of the prison in which Florestan languished. But the keen instinct of Florestan's wife succeeds in discovering the hidden danger. Clad as a youth, she wins the confidence of the honest, faithful turkney, Rocco, and thus finally succeeds in penetrating, as his helper, to the lowermost of the secret cells, where Florestan is held captive. But the Governor, warned by a friend of a sudden visit of inspection by the Minister, who has grown suspicious, designs to kill Florestan with Rocco's aid before the Minister's arrival, and, when Rocco refuses to be his tool, decides to stab the weakened, helpless prisoner himself. But Leonore, who, as Rocco's assistant, had been forced to dig the grave destined for Florestan in the cell, rushes at the tyrant with the cry, "First kill his wife!" and when he makes to stab her also, points a pistol at him. At this instant of interest suspense the watchman posted on the tower by the Governor heralds the Minister's approach by a fanfare on his trumpet. Now Florestan and Leonore are saved, for the honest turkney Rocco, whose heart had long before been won by the supposed youth, is moved by Leonore's self-sacrifice to take her part. The Minister burns the truth, sets at liberty his friend Florestan and his spouse, and gives orders for the punishment of Pizarro, who is thrown into Florestan's dungeon until the King shall pass judgment on him. With this principal action, a brief secondary plot is interwoven: Leonore, under her masculine name of Fidelio, had awakened the love of the turkney's daughter Marzelline; but she is satisfied,

after all, to marry the doorkeeper Jaquino, her admirer for a long while.

In its quite direct development this action, just because of its simplicity, is an uncommonly happy subject for an opera, whose effect is not nullified by the intervention—more or less as a *deus ex machina*—of the Minister. His coming is well motivated and is not felt as unexpected, though of course at the moment when the fanfare sounds the unsuspecting onlooker is not thinking of him. But through this very fact the intense dramatic effect is obtained, and the instant when Leonore, pistol in hand, rushes towards the Governor, while the famous fanfare resounds without, is one of the most powerful scenes that music-dramatic literature has ever produced. Contrasted with Gluck's *Alceste* (who, to rescue her spouse, leaves the bosom of Ormus), Leonore's deed is truer to life and of far greater effect. "more modern," so to say, because the frightfulness of *Alceste* does not affect us, whereas Flavian's sombre subterranean dungeon moves us to deepest sympathy.

Beethoven—as he said even on his deathbed—cared to compare only such operas-trills as that of Cherubini's "Water-carriers" or Spontini's "Vestala," that is, subjects of an elevated and morally wholesome type; and so this drama, akin to the "Water-carriers," but far surpassing it in loftiness of motive, was bound to impress him powerfully. And Beethoven was not so unfamiliar with the theatre as is generally believed. In Bonn he already held the post of theatre-accompanist on the "orbichals," and even assisted at the rehearsal of two works by Gluck; later, in Vienna (1785-1800), he was a pupil in vocal composition of Antonio Salieri (1750-1825), of whom Gluck had said that he was the only one who had learned from him; therefore it is not improbable that Beethoven was also influenced—at least indirectly—by Gluck, more especially as the Cherubini-Salieri school deriving from Gluck was so congenial to him. Besides, Beethoven frequently attended the operatic performances at Vienna.

Beethoven's ballet "Prometheus" (*Die Geschichte des Prometheus*; Vienna, 1801) was probably the immediate cause that led the theatrical expert Schikaneder to make Beethoven the proposition that he should compose an opera; and there is no doubt, that the composition of that work was a good preliminary study for Beethoven the dramatist.

Fortunately, the literary adaptation of the subject-matter was not the work of Schikaneder, but of his successor, Joseph Sauerbühner (1768-1824), from 1804 Court Theatre Secretary

in Vienna, a man well versed in letters and music. Schneiderher substantially only translated the Beaully libretto into very acceptable, singable verse, without on the whole making too many changes. To be sure, his division into three acts was unfavorable, Beaully's version having but two (and Beethoven's opera finally conforming to this latter). The first act ended with the title "Gut, Schmecken, gut"; the second act began with the march and closed with the scene in which Pizarro admonishes his soldiers to be watchful; the third act corresponded with the definitive second act, beginning in the prison, but ending without a change of scene, the disencumberment being brought about in the prison itself. It is apparent that the later conclusion with three scenes—courtyard, prison-cell, and terrace of the castle—is preferable, if only for the reason that the bright colors of the jubilant castle-music are out of place in the gloomy dungeons. The exposition, too, in its cheery, ballad-songs style, is at present (as in 1844) transferred from the sunny prisonyard in which Beaully lays the scene into a homelike middle-class interior.

Beethoven eagerly set to work on the composition; his sketches for the opera, though only half of them are extant, fill 245 folio music-theatre; by the Spring of 1805 he had outlined the greater part of the work. How carefully the Master proceeded is shown by the circumstance, that he sketched Leonore's aria "Küssen, Hoffen" no fewer than eighteen times, and similarly the beginning of the Florestan aria "In der Lebera Frühlingstagen," and that he was continually rewriting the choral finale. Any one who would make a study of Beethoven's way of working—as different from Mozart's!—must have recourse to this sketch-book, which affords invaluable insight into Beethoven's workshop, and compare it with Dr. Koch Prieger's edition of the opera "Leonore" after the original text (Breitkopf & Härtel, 1903)—as a supplement to the latter the same firm has published separately the original version (in C major) of Mozart's aria "O wie ich schon mit dir vertrat."

Beethoven in the role great composer to leave sketches as antennas in scope to posterity. In contrast with Mozart, he worked slowly and painfully. His thoughts, thrown out like volcanic eruptions, had to be turned again and again before taking on their definitive shape. These first forms is sometimes such, that one can hardly conceive how a master of Beethoven's rank could invent anything so primitive. As the admirable editor of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. G. Schneiderher's publication, "Zweite Beethoveniana" (1907), a sketch-book dating from 1804.

Beethoven's sketch-books, G. Nottbohm, observes, the ways of Beethoven the creator are a mystery to us. This mystery, however we approach it, lies in the wrestling of the Master with his demon, in his struggle with his genius. The demon, indeed, once dealt in the sketch-books, but he has vanished. The mind that dictated the work does not appear in the sketches; they do not reveal the law to which Beethoven yielded himself in his creative mood. They can afford no conception of the idea, which is made manifest only in the art-work itself. We perceive only disconnected details, not the entire process of creation. The organic development of the art-work is not to be learned from the sketches. Hence, these sketches can contribute neither to our understanding of our in our delight in the art-work, and yet they are surpassingly eloquent, would we comprehend Beethoven the artist. For the sketches tell us something that the finished art-work withhold—must withhold, in fact, to present itself as a perfect work of art. We shall, therefore, be obliged to bring forward the sketches when the turning-point of the drama is reached.

In its original form the opera "Leonore" (or—as it was called by the theatre management, contrary to Beethoven's wishes, in order to avoid confounding it with Patti's opera—"Fidelio, oder die schlaube Liebe") was brought out in the Schauspielhaus an der Wien on Nov. 18, 1805. In consequence of unfavorable political and artistic conditions, its success was slight, only two repetitions followed. The French had just occupied Vienna, so that the audience was composed in its majority of French officers, and Beethoven, who conducted the performance (he was not a good conductor), was sadly compensated by the orchestra. Even a Leonore as eminent vocally—though histrionically crippled—as Anna Milder-Hauptmann could not save the work, which disappeared after a few performances. Mozart's brother-in-law, the basso Sebastian Meyer, a remarkably fine Sarsaire, sang the rôle of Ferruccio, and complained—not without reason—that Beethoven had treated the voice-parts with no little consideration, and had learned nothing from Mozart in this particular. According to Schindler's report, Beethoven, in order to throw Meyer out, had intentionally written a passage in Ferruccio's aria—to be found only in the original version—in such a manner that it was almost impossible for the vocalist to sing it correctly because of the chromatic suspensions in the accompaniment. However, Beethoven had this passage, ostensibly altered for one particular singer, printed as altered, as it is likely—and this is characteristic of him

as a *dramma*—that he considered the passage essential for the characterization of the inflexible Pizarro. It was struck out only when the act-close was changed.

At all events it is certain that "Leonore" was received with little enthusiasm by contemporaries. Apart from many an unskillful criticism, due to the astonishing brevity of inspired flights, the reproach of excessive length and superfluous temptations, besides the awkward leading of the vocal parts, was evidently well founded, for Beethoven, heeding the counsel of well-intentioned friends, was soon forced to decide on making far-reaching alterations in these particulars. After Dr. Prager had rediscovered the long lost original version, the Berlin Opera House brought out "Leonore" on Nov. 25, 1844, in the form and on the centenary of its first production. The work was given in three acts. The first begins with Marceline's aria, "O war' ich schon mit dir verlobt," which occupies second place in "Fidelio"; then comes the obnoxious duet, "Jetzt, Schatzchen, jetzt sind wir allein," with which the later "Fidelio" begins. The third number, an ineffectual trio between Marceline, Jacopo and Rocco, was expanded by Beethoven himself. The hilarious quartet, "Mir ist so wunderbar," Rocco's aria, "Hat man nicht auch Gold daheim," and the trio, "Gut, Schatzchen, gut," are the remaining constituent parts of the first act, which—and most opportunely—does not yet lead into the dramatic conflict proper, but forms a sort of introduction in comedy-opera style, with nearly exclusive bearing on the secondary plot. The principal action opens only with the second act; it commences with the march of the prisoners, brings in Pizarro's aria with chorus (in a different version), the duet in which Pizarro persuades Rocco, and thereafter a dramatically and psychologically impossible duet between Marceline and Leonore (Marceline disposes of her future wedded bliss with Fidelio), later revised by Beethoven. Leonore's great aria, that now begins with the recitative "Abscheuliches, wo stehst du hier!" had a different beginning, and ended with excessively difficult coloratura passages. Entirely dissimilar is the arrangement of the finale, in which the above-mentioned unusable passage for Pizarro was found. A grand aria for Pizarro, with chorus, forms the act-close. The third act, which plays throughout in the dungeon, introduces Florestan's aria in a decidedly different form; after the *A*-major *Adagio* there follows, instead of the *Allegro* close of such extreme difficulty for the singer, a tranquil Pizarro lyric, "Ach, es waren solche Tage." Of importance, too, is the recitative preceding the duet "O namenlose Freude," with its expressive

sole show. Finally, in this revival (as emphasized in the reports) the solemn ensemble, "Gott, welche ein Augenblick," was regarded as a conception of highest artistic inspiration (the melody, originally set to the words "Da steigen die Mönche aus Licht," was transferred by Beethoven from a youthful work composed in Bonn, the funeral cantata for Joseph II, written in 1798). Generally speaking, the impressions persisting after the revival of "Leonore" in the original form may be summarized as follows: The earlier version can not, of course, supersede the definitive one, but may well maintain itself beside the latter. In the majority of details we must award the preference to Beethoven's latest revision; on the other hand, the Master unobtrusively relinquished certain beauties found in "Leonore," which we regretfully miss in "Fidelio." Among these we note, above all, the close of the Florestan aria, the moving recitative before the chest of the spouses, and the slow movement in the closing chorus—wonderful hearings which arouse more than an historical interest. In style, "Leonore" is indubitably more homogeneous than the latest version, which bears the impress of Beethoven's several stylistic periods.

The ill account of the first production caused some of Beethoven's friends familiar with matters theatrical to induce him to make sweeping revisions. A memorable conference, lasting from 7 o'clock in the evening till 2 the next morning, was held at the palace of Prince Liebowitzky, whose lady took charge of the piano-part, and now began a mighty struggle with the Master, concerning which the tenor singer Rockel (the father of Richard Wagner's friend) gives a detailed account. The poet Collins (author of "Cackelanz," to which Beethoven wrote the celebrated overture) and Brumby represented the dramatic side, and Röckel and the basso Meyer the vocal. Beethoven defended every measure with heroic integrity, the apoth being that whole numbers had to be cut. But when Meyer launched a special attack upon the Florestan aria (as preserved in the original version), saying that no one could sing it with effect, Beethoven lost his temper. Finally he promised to compose a new aria for Pierre (this is the one now marked No. 7 in "Fidelio"), and the Prince at last succeeded in persuading Beethoven to consent to the "tentative" omission of the discarded numbers at the new performance of the opera. On this occasion the role of Florestan was assigned to Rockel. All that Rockel, who was then still in possession of the new unreviseable manuscript (in Beethoven's own handwriting) of the voice-part, otherwise relates about

alterations, does not agree with the other accounts handed down to us, as Otto Jahn has pointed out. These desires of studying "Leonore" in its second form are referred to Jahn's arrangement published by Breitkopf in 1838, with which, however, they should compare Frigor's arrangement of the first version, published half a century later.

One point is beyond dispute: However excellent, dramatically, the advice given Beethoven at Liszkowsky's may have been, violence was done him severely in some cases, and the cuts were of such a nature that another, more careful reconstruction of the work was needed. In the second version, concerning whose abbreviations, as compared with the first, we need not go into further details (for this second version is a mere phase in the transition to the definitive form), the work reappeared as "Fidelio," but in two acts, on March 29, 1806, and experienced four repetitions. This time the production—a very mediocre one, still— took place with great success before a select audience, and criticism applied well of it, besides. Only the overture—this time it was the celebrated Third—proved to be a stumbling-block; there were complaints of "increased dissonances," "overmultiplied haunting of the violins"; and it was called a work of artifice rather than of true art.

In this connection a word must be said with regard to the complicated relations of the several versions. Nowadays we name the work, in its first and second versions, "Leonore"; for us, "Fidelio" is the title of the definitive form (of 1814). We call the E-major overture (the one written last) the "Fidelio" overture; the "Leonore" overtures are the three that Beethoven wrote for the two earlier versions. How these came to be those of them, we shall now explain.

The overture played at the premiere in 1805 is the one known at present as "Leonore Overture No. 3." It was characterized as too diffuse, and too difficult for the wind-instruments, and Beethoven therefore replaced it by the so-called "Third Leonore Overture," which was played at the revival of the work in the year 1806. In reality this overture is only a working-over of the earlier one; themes and arrangements are identical, but the working-out and modulatory designs are different. It is remarkable, merely as a matter of construction, that in the "second" overture Beethoven required no fewer than 513 measures for developing his musical train of thought as far as the famous trumpet fanfare, but only 474 in the "third." None the less, the "second," as heard occasionally in concert-halls, possesses certain advantages;

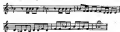
It is, perhaps, more directly emphatic, whereas the later overture is more masterfully "elaborated." Of peculiar interest is the transformation which the trumpet signal, representing the turning-point of the drama, underwent. In the "second" Leonore overture it reads:



But in the prison-scene in the first version of the opera it appears in the following form:



It is most familiar as given in the "third" Leonore overture:



where its construction conforms to that of the prison-scene in the score of the second version of the opera. The beginning of the fanfare in the prison-scene of the last "Fidelio" version (without slurs in the second measure) reads differently:



In the "second" overture Beethoven inserted a reminiscence of the *Allegro* theme between the two trumpet-calls. Then, after the second fanfare, came a suggestion of the *Fuorista* aria, followed quite abruptly by the famous passage for the violins, which later entered in the *Finale*.

In the "great" (third) overture all this is changed. Here Beethoven reaches directly into the drama itself, taking therefrom

<sup>1</sup>Originally it was not written with bars, but there was a trapezoid in use by Beethoven. It is a military signal, and therefore not to be played "technically."



the orchestral theme that sounds to the theme "Ach, du bist gerettet" (Ah, thou art saved!), thus taking over what might be called the "theme of salvation" into the orchestra. It is just this intensely emotional episode which wins such high favor for the Leonore Overture No. 3. Richard Wagner, in particular, held this "marvelous" overture in high regard: "Far from furnishing a mere musical introduction to the drama, in itself it presents the drama more completely and more strongly than we find it in the ensuing disjointed stage action. This work is not simply an overture, but in itself a most powerful drama."

The fundamental idea of the overture may well be symbolized by the sentence "through dark to dawn" (*per aspera ad astra*). In the introduction we distinctly hear the sighing of the imprisoned Florentine in the strains of the theme of his aria. But Love, mounting strong and full of hope, looks at his dangers and rushes valiantly (*Allargato*) into action. It is Leonore herself, the noble woman (scored theme in E major), who comes to the rescue. Despite all hindrances she penetrates into the prison, often battle to the monster himself—then, at the moment when need is highest, God is mightiest, the signal of deliverance heralds the advent of the rescuer. Profoundly affected, all harkens to the call, that resounds once again. A repetition of the principal theme—in a purely symphonic sense—finally leads into exultant rejoicing: the victory of Goodness over Evil is complete, and an imposing page of Herndon shows the mighty composition.

Contrasted with this "third" overture and its no less distinguished sister, the "second," the other two overtures are in a difficult position. The so-called "first"—generally Op. 136, but this number was arbitrarily chosen after Beethoven's death—was not written until 1807, especially for the Prague theatre, for which the two preceding overtures were impracticable. This overture, not generally known before the composer's decease, and misnamed the "First," has nothing in common with the two other Leonore overtures but the theme of the Florentine aria. This rather insignificant overture is never played before the opera, and only occasionally in the concert-hall, and possesses no features calling for special observations. Of greater importance is the so-called "Fidelio" overture (in E major), which Beethoven, without thematic borrowing from the opera, wrote in 1804 for the definitive version of the work. Historically considered, this overture is a step backward, for it retreats from the advanced positions won by Gluck's "Iphigénie" overture and Mozart's "Don Giovanni" overture, which the two great overtures (Nos. 2 and 3) maintain.

However, in its light-hearted innocence it is in so far a better introduction to the opera than the imposing "third" Leonore overture, as it does not anticipate—and thus weaken—the most telling stage-effects, but simply prepares the hearer for the impressive comedy-opera scenes of the first act. Only as from afar off does it intimate, in a lovely adagio theme, sight of stern or tragic import. So nowadays we are accustomed to playing this overture regularly on beginning the opera, and have given up substituting the third Leonore overture for it. But even in the theater the public does not like to forego the hearing of this masterwork, and therefore strange expedients have been sought. Otto Nicolai, the composer of "The Merry Wives of Windsor," first employed the third Leonore overture as an interlude between the two acts of "Fidelio"—which is even more ruinous to the effect. Furthermore, when this is done, the jubilant close of the overture stands in impossible contrast to the following gloomy prison-scene. Hans von Bülow later played the overture as an epilogue after the opera, advancing as his reason for so doing Wagner's declaration that this overture is no "overture" at all, but an ideal running-up of the opera—a somewhat doctrinaire justification. Finally, beginning as early as the '50's, and again more recently under Meier and Möll in Vienna and Munich, the overture has been played to accompany the change of scene between the two divisions of the second act—the change from the dungeon to the castle-terrace. The solution—unless we prefer to limit the Leonore overture exclusively to the concert-hall—is evidently by far the best. In this way neither the effect of the drama is anticipated nor, after the action is finished, is the entire drama symbolically presented for the second time. Thus, before the drama itself reaches the dénouement, our attention is concentrated on its principal features, and through the jubilant close we are adequately prepared for the final outcome. From the side of stage-mechanics, too, the playing of the overture is worth to be recommended on account of the shifting of the scenes.

Beethoven's opera in its second—hardly acceptable—version would have been done for and forgotten, had it not been resurrected in 1814 by an exceptional event. There "governess" of the Court Opera were to have a benefit-performance, for which the selection of this work was left to them, but with the proviso that no extra expense should be incurred. Beethoven's opera again came to mind, and the Master declared himself willing to furnish the material if he were permitted to make a thorough-going revision. As collaborator he secured his friend Friedrich

Tretschke, who, as an opera-part and stage-manager, was the right man to remodel Sonnenstern's book, with the author's permission. Tretschke was the first to conceive the happy idea of transferring the prison-scene into the open air. Farther, according to his own account, Tretschke made the following changes: The scene of the entire first act was set in the courtyard (this for the second time, for such was finally's original direction); the duct, which has a livelier effect as opening number, was placed at the beginning; and Marschner's aria in second place; Lessner's grand aria was reconstructed; and, finally, Tretschke agreed with Beethoven upon another act-close—the return of the prisoners at Pierre's command and their plaint on reconsecration.

The second act (in Tretschke's sense) presented a great difficulty at the very outset. Beethoven, for his part, desired to represent poor Florestan by an aria, while I raised the objection that a man who was almost starved to death could not possibly sing further. We tried our thing after another, at last, in his opinion, I left the ball on the ground. I wrote some lines descriptive of the final splashing of life before suffocation: "Und spür' ich nicht mehr, noch stünde Luft," etc. No sooner was the aria written than I handed it to Beethoven. He read it, pined up and down the room, hummed and hummed as was his wont, instead of singing, and then tore the festoons open. He laid the text before him and began wonderful phantasies which, also, no organist could hold fast. Out of them he appeared to conjure up the melody of the aria. Howe slipped up, but Beethoven went on impressing. The evening meal, which he was to enjoy with us, was put on table—he paid no attention to it. It was late when he embraced us, left his supper in the lurch, and hastened home. Next day the admirable piece was finished.

Nearly all the other changes in the second act were confined to observations and reversals. The quartet "Er stirbt!" was interrupted at Tretschke's instance by a brief pause during which Jacopo together with others announces the arrival of the Minister and prevents the consummation of the murder by calling Pierre away. After the succeeding duct Becco conducted Florestan and Lessner to an audience with the Minister. (The original stage-directions, just before the duct, read thus: Pierre rushes off. Becco after him. Lessner tries to hold him back, he wrenches the pistol from her, with a cry she falls in a faint.) Lessner then gradually enters in a recitative preceding the duct, and Becco explains and justifies his behavior at the very end of the work. Beethoven wrote to Tretschke that he had read his amendments with great pleasure, and had been influenced thereby "to restore the ruins of an old castle." But he speedily found "this whole affair of the opera the most laborious imaginable." I am dissatisfied

with the greater part of it, and there is hardly a single number in which I should not have to patch up my present dissatisfaction with some little satisfaction. But there is a vast difference between a man like this and the ability to abandon oneself to free meditation or inspiration."

On the third of May, 1814, the premiere of the definitive "Fidelio" (Beethoven himself had now accepted this appellation) took place with great applause, the Master conducting in person. As the new E-major overture was not ready in time, the Prometheus overture was played. The E-major overture did not assume its place until after the second performance.

From this date onward, "Fidelio" found its way not only into the German opera-repertoire, but soon into that of foreign theatres also, more especially after the gifted Wilhelmine Schroeder-Devrient (1804-1858, daughter of Friedrich Schroeder, the creator of Don Giovanni in German) had, in the first scene of the first, created the rôle of Leonore (November, 1819), which up to that time had merely been sung, but not convincingly impersonated. Among the audience sat Beethoven, whose sparkling eyes, shining from out the cloak wherein he had wrapped himself, followed the singer unswervingly from his seat just behind the conductor, his gaze fairly fascinating her.

Although unable to hear a single note, his enthusiasm was so aroused by her acting that he promised to write a new opera especially for her. Beethoven did not keep his promise, but an Other name and words opera especially for the wonderful actress—Richard Wagner. What an important influence the impersonation of Leonore by the Schroeder-Devrient had upon Wagner and his creations, could already be gathered from the enthusiastic description of her performance found in Wagner's famous tale, "A Pilgrimage to Beethoven": "This singer seemed to have wedded herself in early youth to the genius of Beethoven. How gloriously, how poetically, with what profound effect, did she present this extraordinary woman! She has won the glory of revealing Beethoven's work to the German public. . . . For my own part, heaven was opened wide; I was transfixed, and worshipped the genius who had led me—the Florentine—out of darkness and letters into daylight and freedom." Even more significant is the description in Wagner's great autobiography, "Mein Leben."

A miracle suddenly gave my artistic existence a new impulse, desire for my entire life. This was a short 'staring' scene of Wilhelmine Schroeder-Devrient, then! at the zenith of her artistic career—

*(He is speaking of the period shortly after Beethoven's death.)*

youthful, beautiful and sedate as another woman I have since seen on the stage. She appeared in "Fidelio." When I look back on my whole life, I find scarcely any event which, as regards its effect on myself, can be compared with this. Whoever bears a memory of this wonderful woman at this period of her life, must be able to testify to the well-nigh dramatic glow wherewith the essential traits of this incomparable artist infelicitly illuminated him, so full of human misery were they. After the performance I wrote a laud letter informing the great artist in so many words that to-day my life had taken on its true meaning, and that should she sometime bear my name mentioned with applause in the world of art, she should remember that she had made me so this evening, what I herewith owe to become. . . . When I came to Dresden in the year 1842, to make my debut with Spina, and was a frequent visitor at the house of the kindly-disposed artist, she surprised me one day by an exact recitation of my letter, which seemed to have made an impression on her, as she had actually preserved it.

Thus were woven the threads connecting Beethoven's "Fidelio" with the art of Richard Wagner. These are, in particular, two factors whose impulses, above and beyond Mozart into the future of the romantic opera, were manifested with peculiar force in the interpretations of the Schroeder-Deermann; one of these factors concerns the singers, the other the orchestra. Beethoven was, above all, an instrumental composer and pianist, and, when carried away by the lofty flight of his imagination, could never rightly comprehend—as is proved by all his vocal works—that the human voice is no instrument, but a frail, tender organ, which ought to be treated with more consideration and constant attention, as Mozart did. Beethoven's friend Schindler confirms this fact: "The habit of abandoning himself wholly to the impulse of his inspiration, limited solely by the laws of harmony and rhythm, and his knowledge of the nature of instruments—this habit, combined with his inability to produce a good tone himself, allows us to conjecture what struggles Beethoven must perform here had with himself while composing this opera-score."

From conversations of Schindler with Cherubini we know that the latter, after hearing "Fidelio," lamented the fact that Beethoven had till then paid far too little attention to the study of vocal art, this being no fault of Beethoven's teachers, Salieri, for he himself had told Cherubini how he had lived with the self-willed Beethoven. For this reason Cherubini, who was ten years older than Beethoven, kindly presented him with a copy of the Singing Method of the Paris Conservatory, advising him to study it. So it had a place in Beethoven's library, but—according to Schindler's testimony—the Master never used it. "What could it have been (observes Schindler) that caused the singers

to complain and brought about vexatious conflicts? Beethoven's obstinate conviction that what he had written was good and simple—that was the stumbling-block which neither diffident representations nor diplomatic negotiations had power to remove. Miss Mibler-Hauptmann related, among other matters, that she too had been hard put to it to maintain her ground against the Master, chiefly with regard to the awkward, unmanageable passages in the Adagio of the aria in E major, as translated in her voice—and all without avail until in 1814 she declared positively that she would never again sing the aria in that form on the stage. That helped."

We of to-day may be grateful to the Mibler-Hauptmann for having set the part of Leonore of those wholly unnecessary, partly instrumental passages which Beethoven originally wrote, and against which Mibler-Hauptmann protested. Even in the Adagio of the aria "Komm, Hoffnung" there were difficult passages. But in "Fidelio" the main requisite was not, as formerly, "charming song," but ecstatically intensified expression, and here the Schroeder-Devrient was doubtless in her element. However, her style—especially under the influence of the unskilfully designed Wagner roles, which likewise did violence to the voice in some cases—was unapproachable, and thus it came that Alfred von Mûllingen, biographer of the Schroeder-Devrient, could rightly observe:

The very fact that our present-day prima donna can refer to such spots as the Schroeder-Devrient is support of their much applauded abstinence, is certainly most unfortunate, and the eternally inextinguishable demand of good taste and a wholesome love of art that in the opera one ought, above all else, to hear singing, breaks powerless against the man that has seized on the whole world. . . . The ideal virtue of her singing needed in the feminine, unalloyed interpretation of the composition, the more delicate its texture, the more did one have to admire the resourcefulness wherewith she could set everything in its proper light.

Thus the Schroeder-Devrient stood on the grand divide between Beethoven and Wagner, a product of the old opera, she strove toward new ideals, but, misunderstood in her unworldly exuberance, she became the victim of an exaggerated imitation—precisely like Wagner, who himself in certain respects exaggerated the precedent set by Beethoven for the treatment of the orchestra and the relation between singer and orchestra.

The orchestral resources employed by Beethoven in "Fidelio" do not, in general, very greatly surpass those of Mozart in "Don Giovanni." The manner of bringing on the instruments exhibits

aggressive penetration. Thus, in the first few numbers of the score, Beethoven contents himself with the strings, the usual woodwind, and two horns. The trumpets, kettle-drums and double-bassoon are not introduced until No. 4, the March of the Guards, infused with the somber shades of the prison. On the other hand, in Leonore's grand aria (No. 11, Beethoven uses only three horns. Kettle-drums and bass do not re-emerge before the Finale. Beethoven subjected himself to special restrictions with regard to the trombones, of which he employed but two—tenor and bass, he calls upon them solely for peculiarly blood-curdling effects, not for reinforcing the noise of a Tuffi. All the more pertinent is their occasional entrance during the duet between Rosina and Figaro, and also in the Finale. For the rest, while Beethoven's orchestra is very similar to Mozart's in combination, it is entirely distinctive in its employment. Beethoven's mastery in thematic work, most fully developed in his symphonies, is shown here too in an interweaving of motives unknown in the earlier opera. He was the first to bring forward the orchestra as a coordinate factor, not merely as a subordinate accompaniment to the predominant singers. While this was a distinct advance at that time, it was fraught with peril for the future of the opera, for one step further, and the orchestra had proclaimed itself an actor.

The difference between Mozart's and Beethoven's treatment of the orchestra is exceptionally evident in the opening number, the seemingly so artless duet sung by the turkey's daughter Marcelline and her hapless lover Jacques, discarded for Figaro. Outwardly quite in the Mozart style, it is yet more strongly influenced by Schubert, whom Beethoven admired exceedingly as a domestic composer, and from whom "Water-carriers" he even copied passages for his own study. (These passages, in a sketch-book owned by Joachim, are to be found side by side with excerpts from "The Magic Flute" and sketches for "Fidelio.") Even the vocal melody is no longer supreme, but the unpretentious orchestral motive with which the number begins develops into leading control. This theme, representative in a way of Marcelline's feeble evasion of her lover's clammy wooing, bobs up like a kobold in every corner—now among the woodwind and now among the strings, continually illustrating the action of the duet in delightful fashion. And as this number, otherwise quite in the traditional form, is turned into a comedy scene, in which, however, a most individual character is lent by the lightly amusing interruptions (when the gate-keeper has to answer the repeated

knockings at the door). Whereas this first number is devoted in the main to a portrayal of the unfortunate lover Jaquino, the succeeding sentimental aria, something after the style of Mozart, is given up to a characterization of Marcelline who, at first so vivacious, is now grown sentimental. With these may be associated Rossini's aria in praise of "Gold," so aptly illustrating his ever-going, plebeian temperament. None of these numbers forebode us, in its musical-comedy vein, the depth of the swiftly approaching tragedy. Not until the Quartet-Canon interpolated as No. 5, in which Leonore's voice is first heard in song, does the real tone-drama "Fidelio" begin. In this quartet four totally dissimilar emotions are expressed, through the Master's genius, by a single melody and its contrapuntal apposite. The way in which Beethoven unified this set form for the expression of so various human feelings, is one of the greatest marvels of dramatic vocal art. Imagine the situation—first of all Leonore: "Wie gross ist die Gefahr, wie schwach der Hoffnung Schein!" and to aggravate her difficulties the distressful misadventure of Marcelline is superadded. But the latter, who fancies that Fidelio returns her affection, is lost in her love-dreams ("Sie ist so wunderbar"). There is Flores, besides, the good-natured papa, who sees nothing but his daughter's future happiness, and wishes to have her wed Fidelio ("Sie liebt ihn, das ist klar"). And last of all, the discomfited master Jaquino, who continually expresses his exasperation: "Mir straubt sich schon das Haar, der Vater willigt ein." When the four singers know how to fit the expression of their various emotions to the plastic melody of the canon, this number becomes one of the most thrilling and beautiful of the whole opera—indeed, it furnishes a key to all that follows, for in it Leonore's soul-life is discovered for the first time. The succeeding "Gold" aria of Rossini is the last cheerful gleam in the work, whose interpretation, moreover, may easily be too tragic. For it belongs to the class of semi-serious opera (termed by the Italians *opera semiseria*), and Beethoven, the great humanist, well knew what he was about when, like Shakespeare, he set the sublime and tragic in dramatic contrast over against the banalness evidence of the comically. Lilli Lehmann, one of the best interpreters of Leonore, rightly observes, in her admirable "Stadien zu Fidelio" (1904):

In any event, humor must nowhere be wanting in "Fidelio," excepting in fully dramatic or tragic scenes. But humor is only too readily confounded, by those who are uneducated, artistic, or prone to exaggeration, with comedy, and even not infrequently with low comedy, as an endeavor to win over the laughers. This is nothing to most of the



character is 'Fidelio.' By *humor* in 'Fidelio' I mean a relaxed cheeriness, a nonchalance in mood and tone, a broadly, light-hearted gaiety such as one may, with all respect, allow oneself with others. All this can be suggested by Rocco with authority, by Leonore with lessening lust, by Marcelline with youthful naivete, and by Jago with very specially delicate nuances at every opportunity that offers, and thereby, with the most natural means, a variety will be created whose favorable influence is felt throughout the opera.

The Tercet No. 8, a symphonically treated scene, carries the external and internal action rapidly forward. The same energetic viola-phrase that, at the beginning, characterized Leonore's stout-hearted resolution to descend into the dungeon with Rocco, is thematically repeated at Leonore's exclamation, powerfully supported by the wind-instruments: "Ich habe Mut!" A glowing melody by Marcelline and a second theme by Rocco follow after, and the first part of the drama ends, quite conventionally, with an expression of general happiness. Now there suddenly enters an unexpected modulation with Rocco's words, "Der Gouverneur", a new difficulty starts up, for without Pizarro's permission Rocco may not even take his future son-in-law into the dungeon with him. Then Leonore, within sight of the goal, is again at the mercy of her husband's deadly enemy. Her despairful voice now takes the lead in the midst of the number, which ends—more's the pity!—quite conventionally with an Allegro ("Nur auf der Eut, denn geht es gut").

Here, where the first act ended in the original version, a dividing-line is distinctly apparent. The exposition of the drama (outline of the character of Pizarro and Florestan) is finished, the introductory comedy of every-day life is done, the really tragic action begins. If a change of scene now takes place, this is shown still more convincingly. Henceforward Leonore, Pizarro and Florestan are the principals, Rocco sinks in importance, and both Marcelline and Jago recede into the background as subordinate characters. However, even for these last rôles, Lilli Lehmann properly demands first-class interpreters! "One does not act and sing any opera alone; all the performers share in the work, and it is their duty to do their parts and the work full justice, down to the least detail." Hence it is also of high importance that the spoken dialogues, in which the most significant matters are conveyed, should be managed with peculiar care. The abuse of half-learning the dialogues and repeating it after the prompter as best one may, most necessarily exercises a disturbing effect on the general presentation of such a masterpiece as "Fidelio." The interpreters of the lesser rôles must resolve to

the full what their words, accents, attitudes and gestures signify for their co-actors. Leonore, as Lily Lehmann remarks, has to lay strong emphasis on her prose. "But how absurd such emphasis seems when nothing at all has gone before to justify these bursts of emotion, or when Leonore is obliged to subdue her outbursts to such a degree that they pass over quite without effect." To carry oneself at the right time as a principal, or, as the case may be, a subordinate character, is the great, or rather the greatest art on the stage, and scarcely in real life as well.

After a peculiar processional march of the guards, apparently beginning with a weak hint on the dominant, the Governor, Pizarro, makes his appearance. A letter from a friend warns him of the Minister's visit of inspection, and in an aria (No. 7), which admittedly is quite in the style of the theatre-villains of early Italian opera, he announces his determination to make away with Florestan without delay. The subdued Chorus of Guards ("Er spricht von Tod und Wunder"), however textually unemotional, can make a most wondrously thrilling effect if properly handled. Pizarro makes his arrangements (in the dialogue), laying stress on his order—in general terms—that a "signal" is to be given instantly when the Minister's equipage is sighted. This is in preparation for the celebrated trumpet fanfare in the next act. Of equal importance with these external measures for Pizarro is his activity within. Therefore, in a duet (No. 8), a superb scene, he seeks to win over Rocco by means of gold and persuasive words. What sinister effect characterizes the word "Morden" and the dagger-thrust, supported by the tremolos, "Ein Stein, und er verstaumt?"

Rocco, wholly the subaltern employee, while protesting his assistance in doing away with the "evil-disposed subject," protests that it is not his duty to do the killing himself. So Rocco is only to dig the grave, Pizarro will carry out the murder. Rocco quits his conscience with the reflection that death will bring release to the half-starved prisoner.

The next following scene of Leonore, the recitative and aria No. 9 ("Abschiedslied, wo sich da hin?"), is a powerful solo number revealing Leonore's masterful character. Originally an aria *de bravura*, in its present form it is a complete emotional exposition of the drama. Indeed (as Kalfreuth expresses himself in his excellent French study of "Fidelio"), it contains "the entire drama in epitome" (tout le drame en raccourci). This is the more astonishing, because the piece follows, in its form, the model of the classic aria throughout, Beethoven's genius

employing this form here for the expression of a mighty spiritual conflict. This number makes enormous demands on breath-control, connected musical phrasing, and a wise apportionment of energy. One is inclined to agree with Lilli Lehmann that Beethoven instrumented the close of the aria too thickly, but whether or how this should be reinforced, with due respect, is a question.

The remarkably dramatic finale consists of four chief divisions; first, a prisoners' chorus, joyously welcoming the midnight, then the scene between Rocco and Leonore, who learns that she will be permitted to descend into the dungeon that very day. Most admirable is the contrast here between Leonore's momentary outbreak of joy in her hope of seeing Florestan again, and her reception of the terrible tale of his fate. How portentous the thrill of the solemnly harmonized trebles—their first entrance!—at the words "Wir heute graben uns uns Grab." There follows an affecting *Andante con moto* in E major, whose tonal color is determined by clarinets and bassoons, with flutes and oboes sighing above; here the meeting of Leonore and Rocco, confronted with this fearful task, find expression. The next two scenes, preparing and bringing about Pizarro's reappearance, lead into the Finale proper, as Pizarro's command the prisoners are again driven into their cells, Rocco and Leonore prepare to go down to the dungeon, Pizarro admonishes Rocco to make haste, and Marceline and Jacquin participate (for musical reasons) by a demonstration of their feelings in the ensemble, which, after the prisoners have retired, dies away softly to an extreme pianissimo—an impressive preparation for the next act.

The instrumental number which opens the second act and suggests the despairful gloom of the dungeon, is one of Beethoven's most marvelous masterpieces, the "dread silence," broken only by sighing and trembling, is a vision of genius realized. The true Beethoven (imitated later by Wagner in the "Brag" for characterizing the "Niederkühe") is shown in the employment of the kettle-drum with the interval of a diminished fifth (A-Eb), which lends a weird tinge to the harmonic color. Now, introduced by a recitative, follows immediately the aria of Florestan, "In des Lebens Frühlingstagen," an especial favorite of Beethoven's, who uttered the theme in all three Leonore overtures. This aria, of extreme difficulty both vocally and histrionically, found an ideal interpreter in Albert Niemann, natural and noble, high-souled and patient. In Florestan, even in letters, was a hero rather to be deluded by imprisonment not to be broken by affliction. In the *Allegro*, above which looms the "Angel Luccare," an abso-part freely led

(the slow serves Beethoven throughout for characterizing this poor-little woman). Niemann rose gigantic to visionary heights (according to Beethoven's directions, "in a transport bordering on delirium, yet not madly calm"); his tempo grew more and more rapid, until at the close, overcome by his ecstasy, he fell swooning before his pallet.

The succeeding melodrama (No. 12), a conversation between Leonore and Rocco, is one of the most affecting scenes of the opera. Here Beethoven's blending of word and tone—which elsewhere in melodrama are often imperceptibly postponed—is masterly. Precisely the spoken word has, in this case, a singularly naturalistic, stunner effect, while the low-toned commentary of the orchestra bears the scene on its murmurous undercurrent into the sphere of the Ideal. Attention may be called especially to two scenes of rare dramatic association. The sleeping Florestan makes, in his dream, (*passado adopto*) a gesture. Of what is he dreaming? That is told in the orchestra by the figure which, in the foregoing aria, corresponds to "Leonore, die Gattin."

Some measures farther on, at Rocco's words "Bist du die Zerstörte, von der ich dir gesagt habe" (namely, that it was declared to be the prisoner's grave), there sounds a motive that corresponds, in the finale of the first act, to the shuddering of Leonore (shortly after her words "Vielleicht das Grab des Gatten graben, was kein furchtvolles war?"); only the instrumentation—in the former instance woodwind, now strings—is changed. The following duet while Rocco and Leonore are digging the grave, acquires its sympathetic character from a motive, scarcely borne by the double-bassoon and double-basses, that runs through the entire number.

The orchestral coloring is further heightened by the sustained tones of the human-voiced trombones, symbolizing in a sort Rocco's stern duty. He, with his monotonous, prosy declamation, is characterized as the sober, businesslike partner in contrast with the soulful melody of the profoundly afflicted Leonore. The latter forms the great-hearted resolution to free the captive, whoever he may be (all this time she has not been able to recognize Florestan). Only during the following dialogue does Leonore succeed in catching sight of Florestan's face, and surely recognizing him. Her four brief words, "Grosser Gott! Er ist's" fraught with suppressed anguish, are to be numbered among the most deeply affecting, as well as the most difficult, problems of stage-expression.

The noble Trio (No. 13), in which Florestan gives thanks for the drought, and Leonore persuades Rocco to concede the prisoner

a piece of brass besides, unfortunately has a stroke close taken over from the first version, which is not perfectly adapted to the dramatic situation and the expression of the words. Now the Governor arrives, and the action rises (in the Quartet, No. 14) to the height of extreme tragic tension, whereupon the "catastrophe" follows. Pizarro discloses himself to Florestan, who, conscious of his innocence, confronts him with manly dignity. At the instant when Pizarro threatens to fall upon Florestan, dagger in hand, the supposititious Falcke rushes at the Governor. First degree of the dramatic intensification—a youth, the turkey's future co-adjutor, apparently moved by a generous impulse, seeks to prevent the murder, for the moment neither Pizarro nor Florestan nor Rocco sees anything more. Only after Pizarro, with the exclamation "Wahnwitziger!", has thrust aside the assumed Falcke, and makes to attack Florestan for the second time, does Leonore throw herself before the latter with the far-famed cry "Tut erst sein Welt!"



These few words, which Leonore ejaculates during a sudden orchestral pause, are to-day regarded by us as a matter of course, in their apt simplicity. But Beethoven's sketch-books, and his earlier versions of the opera, show that the definitive solution was the result of prolonged experimentation. The very first version was this:



Then Beethoven tried the transition from a mild dissonance on the chord "Welt!"



to the sharp dissonance



which resolves, by an enharmonic change, into B minor. Now

be evidently experimented further, trying other resolutions of the chord, at first into G-sharp minor (really A-flat minor), then again into B minor, and also into D minor. In the first and second working-out we read:



and should note the fact that in 1803 and 1806 the note B appears in all parts at the word "Walk", whereas in the vocal score published in 1810 a B $\flat$  is written.

The quartet grows more and more agitated. Pizarro decides to kill Leonore too, if necessary. Climax of the dramatic tension. Now Leonore draws a pistol from her blouse and sings it at Pizarro: "Nach einem Laut, und du bist tot!" According to Wagner, this "tot" was spoken rather than sung by the Schwaner-Devrient: "This tremendous effect resulted from the singular fright that seized upon me at being suddenly holed, as it were, by the anastrophe of the headman out of the ideal sphere into which the music lifts the most dismal situations, down on the bare ground of the ghastliest reality. Hence there was given an immediate revelation of the supreme domain of the sublime, which, in my recollection of the sensation, I designate as the moment—swift as a lightning-flash—that divides two wholly disparate worlds, at the point where they touch and yet are entirely separate, in such wise that for just this moment we can cast a glance into both worlds at once."

Here too Beethoven experimented with the word "tot." In the first sketch he treated it as follows:



Nottebohm was mistaken in regarding this downward step of a second as the "indifferent" treatment of an "important word." This "indifference" is only apparent, for—as the Schwaner-Devrient has proved—this colorless, almost unemphatic delivery of the word can have a far more horrifying dramatic effect than

<sup>1</sup>The Schwaner-Devrient, according to her own account, happened on this manner in consequence of a sudden attack of hysteria by which she was captured on the stage. *Op. von Wagner, "Fidelio" Schwaner-Devrient, p. 38 of seq.*

the more musically significant entry which Beethoven, after trying the downward step of a third, finally wrote out in the last sketch:



In both the first and second versions of the opera we find the following reading:



But the defective form reads thus:



This gives Leonore time to draw the pistol during the brief pause. Between the first and second failures Beethoven introduced that impressive short movement that has already been mentioned in the discussion of the "Leonore" overtures. After the second failure, Jacopo comes down with officers and soldiers, Florestan and Leonore are saved, Pizarro must go to meet the Minister.

A bit of heart-to-heart dialogue, and the restless duet of the reunited pair, "O nameless Fiend," brings the overpopulated scene to a wonderful close. What follows is merely an epilogue, the short spoken interlude of Barco, who returns bearing good tidings, is quite justifiably cut.

The Finale (No. 35), with its mighty mass-jubilation, also contains some passages of more intimate individual charm,—as when the Minister, quite in the spirit of "The Magic Flute" and the Ninth Symphony, sings: "Es sucht der Bruder seine Brüder, und kann er helfen, hilft er gern"; and then that exquisite movement (Faschende mass) during which Leonore frees her husband from his chains. The textual correspondence with Schiller's lines, "Wir ein heiltes Weib errangen, stramm' in unsern Jubel ein," is not accidental; it breathes the same spirit in which "Fidelio" and the last symphony were created.

With what high approval Beethoven regarded his own opera is shown by a remark reported by Schindler to Reubitz: "The child of his brain had caused him greater anguish in travail than any of the others, therefore he loved it the most, and thought it peculiarly worthy of preservation and utilization for the science of art."

(Quoted by Fiedler *ibid.*)



## PRACTICAL MUSIC AND THE COLLEGE CURRICULUM

By ARTHUR L. MANCHESTER

SUCH consideration as has been given to music as a part of college curricula has been directed chiefly to its theoretical branches. Harmony, counterpoint, the history of music and, forming the apex of collegiate music study, composition have been given a minor place in college courses with a sobriety of credit toward the baccalaureate degree. Practical music, that is to say, performance by means of voice or instrument, has been greatly depopulated or entirely ignored. Yet it is practical music that conforms more closely to true educational ideals. The theoretical study of music supplies a fund of facts about music and, to those who are exceptionally endowed, opens the way for specialization as composers and theorists, but these subjects, as taught in our colleges, do not touch the daily life of the majority of students nor do they prepare the mass of the student body for living. They are practically vocational in trend. On the other hand, practical music, being actual participation of the student in musical re-creation induces activity of those faculties through which the fullest measure of education is secured and preparation for future living is attained. The proper cultivation of practical music develops a quickness of perception, an acuteness of visual and auditory analysis, a rapidity of coordinated action and a keen power of observing and comprehending beauty and symmetry which are educational factors of undeniable value.

The recent remarkable progress of music as a factor in social and cultural life, particularly during the past few years, is too significant to escape notice. Uniting a harmonious activity of mental, spiritual, aesthetic and physical attributes music has advanced from the position of a luxurious enjoyment of the few to become the across-the-board pursuit of a multitude. Myriads of people, whose intelligence cannot be denied and for whose interest in it no purely selfish motive can be found, have accepted music as an important adjunct of complete living and testify to its vivifying influence and its power to arouse aspirations cultural, social and religious. Leaders of industrial life have recognized its potentialities and are using it in store and factory as a solvent for discontent and social unrest. These men of business, whose minds view things from the utilitarian

standpoint, have seen its music intensive value that can arouse the worker by experience hitherto undreamed of. Its rich resources as a form of literature, its power as a mode of human expression and the hold it takes on human nature have impressed those who are working for social uplift with a definite realization of its worth as a means of social development. The significance of this testimony as to the power of music is enhanced by the fact that these witnesses are not professional musicians interested in its development through hope of personal gain but are musically unskilled folk who have been impelled to this belief, in many instances, in spite of early indifference if not decided prejudice. The Great War added to the weight of this testimony. During the vital business of preparing our men for the battle field music was early assigned an important place in their training and, later, at the front.

Not is this popular manifestation of intense musical activity the only one which should attract attention. It may be said that no subject is so universally taught. In public school, college and university, in hundreds of independent music schools and by hundreds thousands of private teachers instruction in music is being given continually. Nor has this instruction failed to strive for improvement of methods. Teachers of music are not content to use methods that even a few years ago were deemed satisfactory. Principles of instruction and interpretation have been subjected to keen analysis and changes of pedagogic emphasis have been so marked in recent years that the musical pedagogy of a few decades ago would be bewildered by them. While standards still exhibit too great variation, emphasis of effort is being made to unify the work of music teaching and the methods in use to-day are far in advance of those of a few years ago. Pedagogic ideals are higher, educational aims are becoming more definite and better articulated.

Despite these manifestations of the vital association of music with the intimate life of the people, the frank acceptance of it by social and industrial leaders and the universality and steadily improved character of its instruction, practical music is denied inclusion in college curricula on a plane with other subjects which do not touch the masses of the people to a fraction of the extent and power of music. Were Latin and Greek to receive a tithe of the popular attention now given to music their prominence in college curricula would increase many fold. Surely herein is a paradox. That a subject of such universal cultivation, whose inspirational power is being increasingly demonstrated, whose influence upon life is undeniable should be given so little consideration in the preparing of higher educational curricula by those whose hands should be

quick to sense just such values as music is displaying, is surprising. The small measure of recognition given to theoretical music but serves to draw attention to the paradox. If, as Herbert Spencer has said, "the essential question for us is to live completely, and to prepare us for complete living is the function of education," certainly a subject which has so definitely and lucrally proved its worth as an element of the complete life as has practical music, should not be treated so indifferently in the making of educational curricula in our colleges. The situation is anomalous and the question naturally arises as to why it exists. Have educators, through indifference or prejudice, failed to perceive the educational qualities which practical music undoubtedly possesses, or is there a possibility that musicians, themselves, are more or less largely responsible for the anomalous position in which practical music finds itself? The modifications that have been made in college courses of study to meet changes of opinion concerning the purpose of college training, indicate the willingness of those who dictate these courses to include subjects which affect the future of students. The decrease of classical requirements with a corresponding increase in scientific and vocational courses and the admission of courses in the fine arts are indicative of the attitude of college authorities. In view of these facts an inquiry into the character of music study as it is generally pursued in college music departments may clear up the situation.

The practice of music, rapidly developing into well defined specialties, each possessing its own peculiar technique and requirements of instruction, attracted a constantly increasing body of students whose entire attention became more and more absorbed by the form in which they were especially interested. This absorption in some particular manifestation of music produced deeply drawn lines of separation and caused formulators of methods of musical instruction to lose sight of two truths which underlie music education equally with other forms, and which must be taken into account by those who would place music where it rightfully belongs in the scheme of public education. First, that to be educationally valuable music must speak a message to the people at large, who must be prepared to understand and appreciate its utterances, and, second, that while there are various forms of musical manifestation they are all branches of the parent trunk, their fruitfulness depending upon the proper cultivation of the stem from which they derive their life, and whether music be viewed from the standpoint of the creator, discerner, performer or pedagogue, whether it be taught in the public school, the college, the university, the conservatory or by private teacher, underlying all instruction are basic educational principles

requiring recognition and logical development, and however divergent the activities of the different exponents of music eventually may become there is a point where their specializations emerge from the parent art.

The failure of musicians to apprehend these truths has contributed the weakness of their educational activities for the past fifty years and still remains a hindrance to the acceptance of music as a factor in higher education. It is the excessive emphasis placed on the vocational aspect of music study, making it unduly, which relegates to the background, and obscures, that view which sees in music a close connection with social and national life and opens up a vast field of cultural education in which the people can participate as music. This restriction of the office of music has come to pass despite the fact that history is replete with illustrations of the intimacy existing between it and personal, social and national life in the expression of the deeper feelings of human nature. And this restriction persists even now in spite of the remarkable manifestations of recent times. Dominated by this narrow view, the aim of music teaching has been, and still too generally continues to be, the making of pianos and singers or the development of composers, and back of the activities of those who determine methods of instruction there, it remains the restriction that peculiar and pronounced talent must settle the suitability of music instruction, those only who are so fortunate as to possess this God-given ability being worthy of serious attention, while for the less fortunate majority, which includes the great body of the people, music must continue to be a school book.

This narrowness of outlook and the absence of definite standards of instruction not only have made themselves felt in music teaching. Specialized forms of study have been thrust upon students almost with the first lesson. Technique has become the *raison d'être* of all effort. The necessity for breadth of culture has been ignored. That courses of study having for their purpose the education of intelligent lovers of music could be formulated and successfully carried out, has scarcely been dreamed of. Music departments of colleges, imitating independent schools of music, have become technical training schools, vocational centers, building specialization on a foundation of sand and giving little, or no, thought to the possibility that a nation of appreciative music lovers in whose lives music is a potent force gradually can be developed through their agency, if they will but open their minds to a comprehension of the true mission of music in the world and the vital part they should play in the establishment of that mission. The result of this lack of vision

upon the part of musicians is seen in the almost complete separation of music from general educational thought. Educators were quick to perceive the false base on which the temple of music education was founded. The undue emphasis placed by exponents of music upon the personal equation, the constantly reiterated statement that temperament and exceptional natural endowment are indispensable in music education, automatically shut the doors of the students' educational world on music.

Quite different is the purpose of those who shape the baccalaureate courses in these same colleges. The underlying principle which has exerted influence here is that in preparing the college student for complete living he should be grounded as thoroughly as possible in certain subjects which in later years will touch his life continually. These subjects are historical, political, economic, scientific, literary and religious in character. The extent to which each shall be pursued is determined by an estimate of its disciplinary importance and its bearing on the future of the student. The courses in these subjects are not planned to exploit the gifts of the enthusiastic college author, scientist, political economist or theologian. They are so shaped that all students, the crude and intellectually dull as well as the gifted and brilliant, shall derive benefit from them. These subjects are selected because of a belief in their general utility and their power to develop the faculties of the student along lines of future receptivity and initiative. A foundation of perceptive powers, controlled mental activity and breadth of view prepared, the future author, scientist, political economist and theologian may proceed to specialized forms of study according as his predilections may be revealed. Not so is the scheme of present-day music education as followed in the college music department generally. Specialization begins immediately. Some degree of broader cultural training may be attempted if the director of the department happen to be a person of large educational vision, but the paralyzing doctrine of temperament and special endowment dominates the shaping of music courses as a whole. A narrower kind of education is substituted for a broader and in the general welter of competition to graduate a large number of players and singers, the needs of the masses of the people are forgotten. Under the domination of its present idols the college music department is failing to take advantage of the opportunity offered it by close contact with thousands of students who spend a considerable length of time within the college environment and then go out to touch the thousands in their various communities. The humanitarian service that music can so well render is overlooked and the merry face of attempting to turn out virtuosos who are never

board of its later years continues to the lasting injury of music as an educational force and to the denial of music's wonderful resources as an element of the complete life to those who need it and would derive great good from it.

That practical music may claim the right to inclusion in the academic educational scheme on a plane of equality with other subjects of the baccalaureate curriculum is apparent if the noteworthy manifestations of its power to engage the attention and influence the lives of the people be considered. With such testimony in evidence, it seems unnecessary to argue that a force which is emphatically demonstrating its social utility and its mental and spiritual efficacy can be made a useful agency in our system of education. If, however, our analysis of current methods of college instruction in practical music be correct, it is necessary to show that these educational possibilities can be made to conform to college standards. The responsibility for this demonstration rests upon musicians. It is they who must subject the educational formula of practical music to a scrutiny that will lay bare misdirection of aim and wrong methods of instruction. Aims and methods which reveal inadequacy must be discarded even though it work a revolution in the program of college music courses. There must be a distinct cleavage between courses which have for their purpose specialization in professional training and those intended to result in the real musical education of the greatest possible number of the college student body. Courses must deal with those phases of music which make the strongest harmonious appeal. They must touch intimately the thousands of college students who, having no pronounced aptitude for intensive technical development, either as executants or composers, nevertheless do possess the intellectual and emotional capacity needed for an appreciation of music and are capable of mastering its instrumental and vocal technique sufficiently to enable them to express themselves creatively. The outstanding purpose of these courses should be the inspiration of college students to become lovers of good music and enthusiastic propagandists of a nation-wide musical knowledge and appreciation.

Music offers a wealth of material from which to formulate such courses, material which can be made to conform to academic standards. In itself, in its bearing on the future life of the student, in the training of mind and body to harmonious and thoroughly coordinated action and in the development of initiative, this material can be made to equal any subject now admitted to the college curriculum. Its subject matter can be presented in conformity to college methods. Tested by college standards, courses which properly

present it will measure up to college requirements. In certain institutions where practical music has been included in the baccalaureate course and fairly tested, the similarity of methods and the nature of the work to those in English and science has been marked. As in English and the sciences the material used in courses in practical music is adapted to, and requires, a combination of class room and laboratory work. The fundamentals of the science and art of music and facts about its scientific and artistic development supply the material for work in the class room. The practical application of these fundamentals and accessory facts, as made with instrument or voice, constitute laboratory experimentation and demonstration. This attitude toward practical music, which makes performance an expression of knowledge previously gained in the class room, relieves technical training to its proper place. Technique becomes a vehicle for the expression of the music one has learned to listen and feel, a means to an end and not the end itself. Virtuosity, professionalism, the vocational aspect of music study are no longer the goal on which attention is focused. The aim is to know music as to derive the largest measure of intellectual and spiritual benefit and enjoyment from it and to be able to express one's knowledge satisfactorily.

The subjects from which the material relating to the fundamentals of music as a science and an art should be assembled in courses based on this view of music education are harmony, with such treatment of counterpoint and composition as will give the student an insight into their processes, the architecture of music as displayed in its formal structure and the physical, or scientific, basis of music. Subjects dealing with facts about music, a knowledge of which is essential to supplement that of fundamentals and aid in their practical application and musical expression, should include the evolution of notation, the orchestra, its instruments and music, the history of music and a study of the personalities of those who have created it and influenced its development. In these subjects will be found all that is needed for an education in music that will parallel a knowledge of the literature on which English courses are based. The study of them can be made as comprehensive and thorough as conditions demand. Harmony, the grammar and rhetoric of music discloses to the student the harmonic and melodic basis of the art. He will eventually recognize it as the source from which is derived the subtle intellectual and emotional stimulus so strongly felt by those who know music and listen to it understandingly. From his study of the physical basis of music he learns the part nature has taken in determining the chord and scale

relationships of which harmony treats. Structural symmetry, the balance of unity and variety of melodic and harmonic sequences and of tonality are revealed during his investigation of the laws of musical form. Here we have a trilogy of subjects relating to science and art which initiates the student into the mysteries of music and so clarifies his understanding of the vital elements of music that he is able to express his own musical feeling and listen to the performance of others with an intelligence and a sympathetic appreciation of deeper meanings that elude the uneducated participant or hearer.

Supplementing the knowledge acquired from these fundamental subjects is that derived from correlated courses dealing with facts about music. The symbols by means of which the thoughts of great composers have been preserved, making possible their re-creation centuries after their creators first gave them to the world, passed through centuries of evolution before reaching their present degree of perfection. The study of notation tells the story of this development and throws interesting sidelights on the mentality, the mental processes, of those who contributed to this development and of the difficulties which attended the growth of music as an art. Allied to notation and running parallel with the story notation tells, is the history of music and the study of personalities connected with musical development. Here the student becomes aware of the connections of music with the political, social, literary and religious conditions of the time. Third in this group is the most comprehensive and potential of the instruments of musical expression—the orchestra. The wonderful range of artistic and descriptive expression and the intricate richness of tone color possible in orchestral performances stimulate imagination and awaken undreamed-of experiences. The study of the characterization of orchestral instruments is an important part of the education of the music lover.

A literature of unexcelled richness has accumulated during the centuries since music attained its early perfection of technique and form. Epic, dramatic, pastoral, humorous and narrative compositions for instruments and voice, solo and in many combinations of ensemble, offer material of great variety and interest by means of which familiarity with a wide range of musical thought can be attained. What subject of the college curriculum has more to offer?

Safeguards for the maintenance of standards can be thrown about college courses in practical music as easily and effectively as in the case of any other subject. Examinations of the work done in the class room can be made as definite and searching and tests of proficiency and thoroughness of work done at the instrument are as easily provided. Standards of attainment in performance can be



determined with definiteness, semester hours can be calculated with accuracy and it will be found that the student of practical music who obtains credit in music toward the baccalaureate degree has actually done more hours of work than the academic student who does not include music in his course.

Here is an art conspicuously exerting an undeniable and continuous influence for physical, social, mental and spiritual uplift on individual and community life. It combines scientific and artistic qualities and in wealth of suitable material, in its adaptation to educational purposes and appeal it ranks with any subject in the college curriculum touching with even greater power the future life of the college student than many of those now accepted. If it be the duty of the musician to develop the educational possibilities of practical music, demonstrating them beyond question, a responsibility equally important rests upon those college authorities in whose hands is the determination of the baccalaureate curriculum. If they are sincerely desirous of making college training a complete preparation for future living, and we have no reason to think otherwise, they will not treat lightly, or ignore, the manifestations of practical music and will give its claims to a place in the college curriculum as a factor in complete education just consideration and ample opportunities for a full and fair test.

## THE CUCKOO AND NIGHTINGALE IN MUSIC

By ORLANDO A. MANSFIELD

**T**WO musician, philosopher and poet alike, the subject of *Bird Music* has always been one of more than ordinary attraction. The musician has been interested in its artistic expression, the philosopher in its scientific investigation, the poet in its emotional appeal. Thus, more than fifty years "before the Common Account called *Anna Dorothea*," we have the Latin poet and philosopher, Lucretius, attributing the origin of music to human imitation of the harmony of the feathered tribe. By his English translator, Creech (1714), he is represented as asserting concerning primitive humanity that

Through all the woods they heard the charming noise  
Of clapping birds, and tried to frame their voice  
And imitate. Thus birds instructed man,  
And taught them songs before their art began.

Some eighteen centuries later the same idea was echoed by that great musical historian, Sir John Hawkins, who, in the first volume of his *History of Music*, opines that

The voices of insects, the whistling of the winds, the fall of water, the consciousness of bodies of various kinds, not to mention the melody of birds, as they all contain in them the rudiments of harmony, may easily be supposed to have furnished the minds of intelligent creatures with such ideas of sound, as time, and the unassisted observation of succeeding ages, could not fail to improve into a system.

For an English lawyer, accustomed by training and environment to "admit nothing," to "question everything," and to "pull for proof," this is a fairly complete commitment, if one may be allowed to use the word in a literary rather than in a legal sense. But whether the theories of poet and philosopher and of musical amateur are consonant with fact, is not so much a matter for concern in the present connection. To us the significant thing is that thoughtful men, living in widely remote periods, and engaged in totally different pursuits, should share similar views with reference to the importance of the music of "the birds of the air."

From birds in general two or three particular classes of songsters have been especially selected for notice by practical musicians as

well as by writers on musical topics. These classes comprise the birds known as the cuckoo, the nightingale, and the lark. Of the latter it is not convenient to speak in this essay; but it is only fair to say that while the first class has obtained notoriety on account of the characteristic interval of its vocal figure, the two latter classes have achieved undying fame through the variety and beauty of their songs. Concerning the cuckoo as a bird, all that can be said here is that the singing cuckoo is a habitant of the Eastern hemisphere, visiting Europe—in early spring,—from the wooded parts of Northern Africa, and departing before the end of summer. Thus the old English saying:

In May he sings both night and day,  
In June he strength his tone,  
In July he'll fly away

The cuckoo's objectionable habit of depositing its eggs in the nest of another bird,—generally that of the hedge-sparrow,—and the still more objectionable habit of the young cuckoo of throwing out of the nest every occupant except himself, are facts known to every tyro in natural history. The cuckoo of the Eastern world is mostly of a bluish ash colour, and only the male sings. The American yellow-billed cuckoo, although possessing the redeeming feature of rearing its own young, is songless and, therefore, has no musical interest.

This latter, of course, contrasts entirely in the cuckoo's song—if such it may be called. This "song" has several remarkable characteristics, one of which is interesting on scientific grounds, the other for aesthetic or purely musical reasons. The former peculiarity has never received the attention it deserves. Probably the first to direct attention to it was that poet of nature, William Wordsworth, who, in his poem "To the Cuckoo," says:

When I am lying on the grass  
Thy two-fold shout I hear,  
That seems to fill the whole air's space  
As loud far off as near.

For a man who has never been credited with any definite musical knowledge, these lines exhibit considerable acumen, since the poet has not only drawn attention to the well-known fact that the cuckoo's song consists of two notes, but has earned our gratitude by reminding us that this "two-fold shout" seems "as loud far off as near." Indeed the cuckoo's song is distinctly audible at distances much greater than a mile and, under favourable circumstances, has been often so heard by the present writer. We can understand the

extensive usability of the song of the nightingale or the lark, on account of their remarkable timbre; but the tones of the cuckoo have no particularly unusual quality to assist them in this respect. The whole subject would be, in our opinion, an interesting one for further acoustical investigation and for much fuller discussion.

Of the more musical characteristics of the cuckoo's tones, Wordsworth, as we have already noticed, in his expression "two-fold shout," has left us to infer that the cuckoo's call consists of only two tones. These tones are generally of uniform length, or with the first tone slightly shorter than the second, while both are somewhat staccato, each "call" being followed by a slight period of silence. But the most interesting point is the interval separating the two tones. This, as contradicted in popular ideas which here, as well as almost everywhere else, are nearly always incorrect, is usually a perfect 6th at the first appearance of the bird in England and adjacent countries. The writer has never heard this interval exceeded except on one occasion. This was on May 30, 1902, when walking on Stanner Ridge, near Kingston, Herefordshire, England, on the borderland between England and Central Wales. Here he noted a cuckoo distinctly and repeatedly singing an augmented 6th. But as the season advanced the compass of the interval decreases, first to a major 6th, and then to that interval by which the cuckoo's call is conventionally represented, a minor 6th. Eventually the cuckoo's voice breaks, the "two-fold shout" disappears, and gives place to a more unusual croak of approximately a seventh.

The absolute pitch of the lower of the two tones forming the cuckoo's call is near *tr*, or about, middle C or D.<sup>1</sup> Sir John Hawkins writes it thus, using the Soprano Clef:



Here the conventional interval of a minor 6th, the period of silence after each call, and the old English orthography, are all points of interest.

<sup>1</sup>On a recent collection of some extracts from her father's note books, a daughter of the late Sir Robert Fergus writes a page in the records of cuckoo calls, on behalf of his distinguished musician and cousin during the latter part of May and the earlier days of June. These calls, nearly all as usual, have either middle C, D, E, F, G, or A, for their first tone, usually a full range or compass from a major 6th to a major 2nd. The first note of each call being of most frequency sharper than the second. Sir Robert has also added some interesting remarks on the old cuckoo and the manner of recording of the various calls. In one place he speaks of "two cuckoos singing the same call, with very different shades, one like a stopped diapason, and the other like a guitar."

About half a century after the appearance of Hawkins' history,—in 1838, to be exact,—William Gardner, a stocking manufacturer of Leicester, England, a noted musical amateur, literateur, composer, and compiler, and a personal acquaintance and correspondent of Haydn and Beethoven, produced his "Music of Nature, or an attempt to prove that what is passionate and pleasing in the art of singing, speaking, and performing upon musical instruments, is derived from the sounds of the Animated World." In this quaint, interesting, and anything but useless work, Gardner says, concerning the cuckoo, that children mark his well-known song, crying



Here we have, as our selected pitch, the G flat instead of the Sopranos, the interval of a major rather than that of a minor third, and a more random notation. Also the silence after each call is graphically represented, as well as the lengthening of the second tone and the accentuation of the first, both these latter points being occasional features of the cuckoo's song. This song, says Gardner, "I have invariably found in Leicestershire to be in the key of D. If the cuckoo in other counties should be found to accord with this curious fact, as nature is pretty much the same, we may take these notes as a standard of pitch." With our absolutely accurate and scientifically constructed instruments for the denoting of absolute pitch, the idea of being dependent for the latter upon such a variable thing as the tone of a cuckoo is now as preposterous as it is absurd. Gardner then goes on to quote the celebrated naturalist, Gilbert White (1769-1813), of Selborne, Hampshire, as saying that he had tested all the owls in his neighbourhood with a pitch pipe, and found them to hunt in B flat, and the cuckoo to sing in the key of D<sup>♭</sup>.

Whatever one may think concerning Sir John Hawkins' opinion that the reproduction of these tones constitutes "the most ancient species of musical notation," and that the tones themselves "appear to be a natural and very obvious subject for it," it is a mere matter of fact that these "reproductions," in number at least, have been known. Perhaps the earliest example of them is to be found in the old English Rota, or Round, attributed to John of Fornaco, a monk of Reading, about 1085. Here we have the phrase:



<sup>1</sup>The standard pitch at the end of the 14th Century was nearly a tone lower than at present. This would lower the pitch of White and Gardner to approximately C.

waves in as an integral and essential part of the composition. Then in the Elizabethan age, John Bennet (who flourished between 1579 and 1613, but of whose life little is known save that he was one of the contributors to the *Triumph of Oriana*), published in 1609, "Madrigals to four voices being his best works." In one of these, "Thyria, sleepest thou?" he has a vocal imitation of the cuckoo's song; while Thomas Weelkes, another contributor to the *Triumph of Oriana*, and sometime organist of Chichester Cathedral, a great writer of English church music and madrigals, published in 1606, two books of madrigals in which one composition, "The Nightingale the Organ of Delight," again introduces the cuckoo's song vocally.

Leaving England for Italy, and vocal for instrumental music, our next example is found in the "Capriccio sopra il Cucko" of Giuliano Frescobaldi (1600-1641), the most distinguished organist of his age, sometime organist of St. Peter's, Rome. This work was one of a collection of Capricci published in Rome in 1634, and at Venice in 1680. The opening measures run thus:



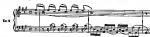
Here we have the more popular interval of a minor 3rd used as the initial tones of a "point of imitation" and (as a reference to the whole composition would show) continuously in the melody, which latter consists of nothing but the two sounds, D and E, repeated after diverse rests during which the imitative treatment continues in the other parts. This work has been transcribed for the piano-forte by Harold Bauer, and for the modern organ by John E. West.

About half a century later comes Johann Kasper Kerl, the noted organist of Munich and Vienna, probably a pupil of Frescobaldi, but certainly a student under Carissimi. On the 17th of July, 1679, he wrote a "Capriccio Kuka," in G, which has been edited by the late Mr. J. S. Shedlock. Here the style is less vocal and better suited to keyboard execution than that of Frescobaldi. We quote the opening measures from which it will be seen that the minor 3rd is again employed, a proceeding which obtains throughout the movement:



It was upon a motif of Kerf's that Handel was supposed to have founded the chorus, "Egypt was glad when they departed," from his *Israel in Egypt*; and, as we shall see later, he appears to have known and to have been under considerable obligations to the Cuckoo Capriccio.

Returning again to Italy we find Bernardo Pasquini (1637-1700), the celebrated Roman organist and harpsichordist, writing in 1698 his "Toccata con lo Scherzo del Cuckoo." Here the style and general expression show a still further advance. The key chosen is A, but the cuckoo call occasionally expresses itself as a major triad, the rhythm being an alternation of two equal notes or a shorter followed by a longer. Both these points are illustrated in the closing measures:



Passing—geographically—to France, and—chronologically—to the 18th century, we meet with Louis Claude Desnos, the Parisian organist, who, in 1753, published his first book of harpsichord pieces, a volume in which was found his celebrated "Le Cuckoo," "so quaintly fresh that it will never grow old." And so popular did the cuckoo call become that not only was it made the germ or motive for isolated harpsichord movements, but upon it were actually founded so-called Cuckoo Concertos. Amongst these was one by Antonio Vivaldi, the Italian violinist, the work being contained in his series of concertos attempting to illustrate the four seasons. Then there was also the cuckoo concerto of the Sassenheim English resident, John Frederick Lampe (1718-51), the friend of Handel and also of Charles Wesley, the hymn-writer. Lampe was a brother-in-law of Thomas Arne, and this reminds us that in 1770, the great English melodist, whose memory is perpetuated in the immortal strains of "Rule Britannia" and "When the Bree begins," produced in London, under the direction of Garrick,

a representation of Dryden's *King Arthur*, with Purcell's original music supplemented by some additional numbers from Arne's pen. Amongst the latter was a new overture which is stated to have contained amongst other features, "an imitation on the flute of the call of the 'Cuckoo.'" Both Arne and Lampe represented the cuckoo's call by the interval of a major 3rd. But nearly a century earlier Purcell himself had employed the same device, and at the same interval, in the concluding symphony of a song in the *Fairie Queen*, a series of pieces of incidental music written, in 1696, to illustrate an anonymous adaptation of Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

But the greater genius than Lampe,—the giant genius,—George Frederick Handel, with all his mastery over the somewhat restricted methods of musical expression characteristic of his age, only includes the cuckoo call in one of his compositions for his favourite instrument, the organ. This particular work was that known as the *Cuckoo and Nightingale Concerto*, a composition or compilation planned for the orchestra and the English organ of Handel's day,—an orchestra of string, oboe, and bassoon, and an organ of limited compass and destitute of a pedal board. The interest of the *Concerto* is centered in its first movement in which occurs the characteristic passage from which its name is derived. The great organ virtuoso, the late Mr. W. T. Best, of St. George's Hall, Liverpool, perhaps the greatest performer upon his instrument that the world has ever seen,—certainly the greatest of the 19th century,—has included a concerto under this name in a set of movements, selected from Handel, arranged for the organ in concerto form, and published as examples of the latter by Boosey & Co., of London. But Best's introduction differs from that preceding the detached concerto known as the *Cuckoo and Nightingale Concerto*, because taken from various other sources. The same applies to the two movements which follow the *Allegro*, and even the latter—which is the only movement possessing any interest for us in this connection—is taken in part from the 9th Grand *Concerto* for Strings. Further, Best's work although masterly in construction and effect, is, really, a very free transcription, the fairly developed *Cadenza* being entirely the work of "W. T. B." In this Best version the cuckoo call introduces the second subject, e.g.,





and is used throughout the letter, sometimes in conjunction with the rhythmic notation, *e. g.*,



The manner in which this call is expressed is, however, more a la Best than Handelian in style. Nevertheless, a comparison of Exs. 4 and 5 would seem to show, as we have already remarked, that Handel in the cultivation of this Concerto must have been ploughing with the oxen of Johann Kasper Kerl.

Amongst the classical writers the cuckoo call was relegated for the most part to the realm of children's music. Thus Haydn employs the toy cuckoo in his celebrated Toy Symphony of 1788, writing for it—on the tones G and E—artistically and effectively. In these latter respects he differs from Andreas Romberg (1767–1840), the violinist, who with his cousin, Bernhard Romberg, the violoncellist, and with Anton Reicha, the theorist, played with Beethoven, at Bonn, as the band of the Elector of Cologne. Romberg writes at the same pitch as Haydn, but frequently employs rapid repetitions of the tones instead of the two call-sounds. As both Mendelssohn's Toy Symphonies, composed in 1813, are lost, we are only able to surmise that as the instruments were known to be identical with those used by Haydn, the effects produced, and the notation employed, were probably more or less similar to those of the older master.

As may reasonably be expected, Beethoven introduces the cuckoo call into his Pastoral Symphony. Here, in the Coda to



the slow movement,—the score by the book,—we have the tones forming a major triad assigned to the chorists in unison,—the part being marked "Kuckuk,"—in company with the Birds,—marked "Nachtigall,"—and the alone,—marked "Wachtel" (quod). Some enthusiasts have tried to read a cuckoo call into the broken tonic chords which usher in the second subject of the Pastoral Sonata, Op. 28 and the upper part of the harmony over the dominant pedal preceding the Cuck (Ex. 10). But this is too much like



belonging the head of Charles the First into everything, especially as the name Pastoral was not given to the Sonata in D by Beethoven himself but, in all probability, by the publisher, Cranz, of Hamburg.

And although the romantic school has treated the cuckoo call with great courtesy, the progression still survives in some modern music. Thus Rimsky has included it as a very essential part of his Toy Symphony in C, while a much more important treatment is to be found in Edwin H. Lemare's organ solo, "Cuckoo," No. 1 of his five Summer Sketches, Op. 25. Perhaps this work of a modern English organ virtuoso is the most artistic we have yet noticed. We give a few measures from the initial and concluding phrases by way of quotation:





but the music will certainly repay very careful study not only in this connection but on account of its own merits. Also the employment of the minor 3rd should not pass unnoticed. There is, we think, an undoubted resemblance or reference to the cuckoo call in Purcell's *Spring Song* Op. 43, No. 4 (Ex. 10). Our quotation is from the organ arrangement by Mr. Percell J. Mansfield, of Paisley Abbey, Scotland, the son of the present writer, but as the first tone is longer than the second, and as the quality of the interval varies, we leave our readers to decide for themselves whether the passage is an intentional imitation or an "unhelped coincidence."



There are doubtless many other examples of the cuckoo's call still to be found in music both ancient and modern,<sup>1</sup> but our space is exhausted and we can only notice here that a device for producing the tones of the cuckoo was often attached to medieval organs. Indeed, as late as 1550, an organ in the monastery of Wimpfen, built by Gabeler, and containing the mystical number of 9999 pipes, was said to have been furnished with one of these accessories. All we can say in favour of such a device is that it was at any rate more sensible than some of those extremely and childishly stupid effects operated by stop knobs in some earlier organs. These consisted of such things as a representation of Time striking the rhythm by "beating time", while in one case a certain stop, if drawn, would cause a contrivance something like a fox's tail to flap into the unfortunate performer's face. Such effects were on a par with the rest of the horrid

<sup>1</sup>For instance Leopold Gleditsch's piece "Der Cuckoo" in his set of 30 pieces called "Waldeslust" (St. Petersburg, 1846) — 25.

honour of the Dark Ages, which was generally weak when it was not actually weak.

Any attempt to write about the nightingale in plain degenerate into a mere task of selection rather than research, the material being so common and, as a rule, so easily accessible. The bird itself, as everybody is probably aware, is another habitant of the Eastern Hemisphere, arriving in England about the middle of April, and leaving in August or September for southern climes. It is found during the summer in France, Germany, and Poland, and is not unknown in Italy or even in Palestine. One remarkable fact concerning this songster is its preference for certain strictly defined localities. Thus, in the West of England, a noted district for singing birds, the nightingale is extremely partial to the native district of the writer of this paper,—the district included in the western portion of the county of Wiltshire and the eastern portion of the county of Somerset,—the country once occupied by Belwood Forest, and at one time the scene of King Alfred's most brilliant exploits. But in the adjoining and more south-westerly counties of Devon and Cornwall the bird is seldom seen or heard. Its name is supposed to be derived from the Anglo-Saxon *niht* and *gaban*, *to sing*. Its appearance is decidedly plain, and its habits so unobtrusive as to render observations somewhat difficult. Only the males sing. These arrive in England some seven or eight days before the females, singing before and after midnight in order to attract their companions and guide them on their way. The song ceases when the young are hatched. Berthelin states that the notes of the laying, in the case of the male bird, are proportionately more powerful than those of any other songster. The melody of the nightingale's song changes according to its conditions. More than a score of variations of its song have been recorded, the latter being so articulate as to render the task of a musical representation comparatively easy. Mr. Daines Barrington, a noted English investigator, has made "an attempt to appraise the songs of English birds and let the world know how they stand from the standpoint of tone, quality, &c." On a basis of 100, Mr. Barrington finds the nightingale as easy first, his scale as being—singings 30 points to each heading—then reflowness of tone, 19, quantity tones, 14, plurative tones, 10, compass, 10, and execution, 10; total, 83%. The only birds in the running with the nightingale are, according to our authority, the skylark, with 69%; the linnet with 70%; the woodcock with 50%; and the English robin with 48%.

Like the making of books, references to the song of the nightingale, both in poetry and in prose, are practically without end in

their making. But we are only interested here in those utterances which testify to the musical character of the nightingale's song, and of these references can only be made to a very few characteristic specimens. For instance, the musical character of nightingale music is much emphasized by the older writers. Thus Sir Philip Sydney, in "O Phœbe's fair," says,

The nightingale . . .  
Sings out her voice . . .  
And sweetly breathing,  
Her throat in tones expresseth  
What grief her breast oppresseth.

Milton, in his *N. Pinax*, speaks of the bird as "most musical, most melancholy?" a statement which, two centuries later, Coleridge indignantly repudiated, declaring in his poem, "The Nightingale," that

In nature there is nothing melancholy.

Thomson in his *Seasons* insists on the saddest element of the song; and, alluding to the bird, as do all the poets, in the feminine gender, instead of the masculine, asserts that

. . . she sings  
Her notes through the night . . .  
. . . fill, wide around, the woods  
Soft to her song, and with her voice descend.

Milton, however, in his sonnet, "To the Nightingale," takes a more optimistic view of the effect of this song, and apostrophizes the bird thus:

O nightingale, that art so blessedly sweet  
Warbled at eve, when all the woods are still,  
Thou with fresh hope the lover's breast dost fill.

Last of all we have Matthew Arnold, the apostle of "light and sweetness," crediting the song with at least one new element, in the lines:

Earth! how that music's color what a hue!  
What triumph! hark!—what pain!

From this we can see that while the poets agree as to the beauty of the nightingale's song, they differ considerably as to its character. In Coleridge's poem the charm of nightingale music is greatly but beautifully emphasized by old Isaac Walton, who writes:

He that at midnight . . . shall hear, as I have heard, the sweetest dream, the saddest song and falling, the doleful and rejoicing of her voice, might well be lifted above the earth, and say, Lord! what

more than those provided for Thy voice on Heaven, when Thou afforest had men such mans on earth?

The numerous variations in the nightingale's song—in which reference has already been made—produce no many differences in its notation as poets and philosophers have discovered in its character. These notational differences are often due to the fact that the bird has different songs in different localities, so that one auditor would hear one strain in one place and, from another bird, another strain elsewhere. Thomas Gardner, in his "Music of Nature," already referred to, says: "These varieties may be compared to the dialects of different provinces." Gardner then goes on to attempt to account for the "soft and plaintive note" of the bird, and its "beautiful and solemn melody," by the fact that it "sings in a lower voice than other birds." This statement, speaking comparatively, is fairly correct, the song of many birds being so high as to render absolutely exact musical transcriptions a somewhat difficult task. Gardner writes the nightingale's song thus:



and declares that Handel has closely imitated it in his *L'Allegro*, *op. 2*:



But Gardner's notation, although doubtless proportionately accurate, is not absolutely correct, being much lower than the notation which would be needed to represent the song as often heard by the writer during the summer months near his birthplace in the heart of what was once Newwood Forest. The pitch and melody in this case were almost in exact accordance with the notation assigned to the bird by Beethoven in his *Pastoral Symphony*, as quoted in Ex. 8, viz: a prepared shake on the upper tones, generally treble G or upper C. Often we have heard these birds utter to and constantly repeat a perfect *mezzo di voce* (—) on upper G of the treble staff, and pipe repetitions on C and D above that as shown in Exs. 14, 15, and 16.

But more than a century and a half before the appearance of Gardner's "Music of Nature," there flourished one Athanasius

Karsten, a Jesuit who, fleeing to France when Gustavus Adolphus entered Germany in 1633, became a professor at the Jesuit's College at Avignon, and afterwards professor of mathematics and rhetoric in Rome where he died in 1680. Thirty years before his death he issued his chief work "Musurgia Universalis," in the first book of which, according to Sir John Hawkins, "he is very cautious in his disquisitions touching the voice and the song of the nightingale which he has endeavored to render in notes borrowed from the musical scale." Concerning these notes, Hawkins opines that they were more correct rhythmically than tonally, thus confirming our previous statement concerning the numerous varieties of the nightingale's song, and the consequent impossibility of securing notational representation thereof which should be identical as regards melodic outline.

As early as the Elizabethan age the song of the nightingale had commenced to secure the attention of composers, as we have already observed in the case of Thomas Weelkes. But the song of the nightingale being more varied than that of the cuckoo, the former did not lend itself so easily to musical reproduction, especially to such reproduction or representation as would be immediately recognized by an auditor. Indeed, it was not until Handel, in his *L'Allegro*, in 1740, introduced one example or specimen of the nightingale's song, that we have a definite musical passage for quotation. As noted by the great master, the song runs as above. Here the employment of the broken fifth should be carefully noted, as this is Handel's favorite figure for representing the song of the nightingale. He makes extensive use of this motive here and elsewhere, and here so much so that the whole song, "Sweet bird, that don'tst the noise of folly," from which our quotation is taken, will repay careful study in this respect. Eight years later, in 1748, Handel introduced the same feature in his oratorio, *Solomon*, in the celebrated chorus, "May no rash intruder," a chorus, from this circumstance, called the Nightingale Chorus. This time, in addition to the broken fifth, considerable use is made of the reiterated upper D, these repeated tones, as we have already observed, being a characteristic feature in the song of the nightingale. We quote just a few measures of symphony:



Of course no nightingale ever sings, or ever did sing, precisely as represented in this typical Handelian strain; but the point we wish

to emphasize is that this phrase embodies two of the essential features of the song now under discussion. Hence the reason for its quotation. Further examples show that Handel must have been a closer student of the music of nature than has ever been admitted or imagined. And this conclusion is confirmed upon reference to the quotation from the Cuckoo and Nightingale Concerto contained in *Ex. 8*. Here the broken *trills* and *flts* and the reiterated notes are especially prominent.

Again returning to the classics we note that in the soprano solo, "On mighty pine," from his oratorio, *The Creation*, Haydn, at the words, "From every bush and grove resound the nightingale's delightful notes," suggests the song of the bird by means of a series of springing figures and inverted turns assigned to the solo *trill*, *c. p.*



Here the effect intended and conveyed is not one of actual imitation, but of purely mental suggestion. There are other and perhaps better methods of conveying a musical impression or sensation besides the employment of mere *trills*. Here, as elsewhere, whether the letter "trill" or otherwise, it is the spirit that "gives life."

Concerning Beethoven's treatment of the nightingale's song in the Pastoral Symphony, as quoted in *Ex. 9*, it may interest our readers to know that this notation corresponds almost exactly with the song as heard by the writer almost every early summer night for many years in the old English home of his boyhood. Especially should be noticed the prepared *trill* which is exquisitely performed by some of the birds on brilliant moonlight nights. Another fairly exact representation of the song is to be found in a Beethoven fragment, "Der Gesang des Nachtigall," composed in 1813, and numbered 277 in *Scenes 25* of the Brechtel and Haertel edition of Beethoven's works. Here, a short symphony,—*Allgro ma non troppo*,—reads as follows:

*Allgro ma non troppo*



In the few vocal measures which follow there is nothing to suggest



bled music in general or the song of the nightingale in particular. In the Toy Symphonies of Haydn and Beethoven the parts assigned to the toy called "nightingale" consist of shakes and repeated tones on treble G, and as such call for no comment here.

But in Leibnitz Wily's well-known and somewhat well-worn *Fantaisie Pastorale* in G, for the organ, the nightingale effect is happily produced by temporarily descending melody for more rhythmic and writing a series of repeated tones, increasing in rapidity as they progress, and ending with a prolonged shake, e. g.:



This notation is again in exact agreement with the song as heard by the writer of this paper in *lygase* years. Wily's contemporary and compatriot, Edward Bellet (1850-70), sometime organist of St. Etienne, Paris, although indising, in his *Storm Fantasia* in C minor, in a good many thunder effects of "the hoarse owl," and a good deal of bird melody of the more tawdry type, gives us nothing which can be construed into a representation of the song we have been discussing. Indeed, in general terms, it may be said that modern composers are not careful in exact imitations of natural sounds. As already, they prefer to suggest rather than to depict, to shake rather than to portray, at times, perhaps, forgetting that the two operations may be combined in one action, they being by no means antagonistic. But the nightingale's song is neither imitable nor drawable, but purely (diatonic) and as such it is well-excluded from the chromatic environment of so much of our modern music.

And although further passages for quotation could doubtless be culled from the pages of music past or present, ancient or modern, enough has been "set down" here to convey a fair idea of the importance assigned by musicians to the songs of at least two representatives of the feathered tribe, to show the readiness of composers to utilize the "singing of birds" for purposes of local colour, and to their desire in nearly all cases to represent these songs accurately or, at least, suggestively. At the same time the claim of worthy William Gardner, that everything "pastoral and pleasing" in music is "derived from the sounds of the Animated World" can scarcely be said to be proven. The debt of music to nature is considerable but by no means inexhaustible, for music consists of something far more exalted than the mere imitation of natural

notes. Thus, while it is true, as old Thomas Fuller puts it, that "Music is nothing else but wild sounds civilized into time and tune," it is equally true, as Sir John Hawkins quietly remarks, that

There are few things in nature which music is capable of imitating, and these powers of imitation constitute but a very small part of the excellence of music. . . . We may venture to pronounce that as its principles are founded in geometric truth, and seem to result from some general and universal law of nature, so its excellence is intrinsic, absolute, and coherent, and, in short, reducible only into the will, Who has ordered all things in number, weight, and measure.

## LETTERS OF ROBERT FRANZ

By WILLIAM BARCLAY SQUIRE

THE five letters here printed were written by Robert Franz to Carl Amshreuter (1840-1917), who for the last years of his life lived in England. Amshreuter was intimately connected with the Wagner circle, and Friedrich Conner, who is frequently mentioned in the letters, will be remembered by early frequenters of Bayreuth as one of the four Youngs who carry the Grail in the first and third acts. Franz was a voluminous correspondent, largely owing to the deafness which came upon him in his later years. A collection of his letters, addressed from 1881 to 1888 to Baron Arnold Seufft von Pilsch was published at Berlin in 1907. They are characterized by many bitter judgments of contemporary music and do not altogether give a pleasing idea of his disposition. But it must be remembered in connection that throughout his life he was a disappointed man. He suffered from poverty, from deafness, and from an affection by which his right hand became almost entirely crippled. Moreover, the period in which he lived was one in which musical polemics were carried on in Germany with a bitterness that now it is hardly possible to realize. The followers of Schumann, of Wagner, of Liszt, and of Brahms fought and abused one another with extreme violence and incredible want of reference. Mainly, it might have been thought that Franz would have belonged to the Schumann-Brahms following, but as this party was more or less allied with Chopinists, whose editions of Handel were bitterly criticised by Franz, who had his own definite ideas of editing Bach and Handel, the Halle song-writer was generally to be found in the opposite camp of Wagner and Liszt. That Franz was, and still is, never appreciated at his full worth, is quite true, but the reason is not far to seek, and various passages in his letters show that he realized it himself. His songs are too intimate to produce their full effect on the general public, and moreover they require a perfection of performance in which the shares of both singer and accompanist shall be based with a degree of sympathy that is rarely attainable. The admirable article by E. Dannenberg in Grove's Dictionary sets the last words on Franz's songs, and is as true now as when it was written. They will probably always remain outside to the redoubt, but, in the history of music, they will keep for Franz's name a place by the side of those of Schumann, Schubert and



Robert Frost

Well. It only remains to be said that the originals of the following letters are preserved in the Library of the Royal College of Music, by the permission of the Director of which institution they are now printed. I am also indebted to Mrs. Knight for having kindly transcribed Franz's rather difficult handwriting. The translation only claims to be a paraphrase.

## I.

Hannover 1841.

What you write to me about the success of my songs in Scotland sounds to my ears like a fairy tale. For I had not believed that such an immediate effect on the public was possible. Here in North Germany three or four of my songs are continually given in concerts, mostly in surroundings where they make no impression, much less create any interest. Therefore, when in my last letter I asked you to send me some programmes, I was not thinking of any detailed description, but only of a report of the bare titles, in order to show my concert-managers what notice is taken of me abroad. In all the larger towns of the dear Fatherland there live musicians who also have their own goals on sale and are very much occupied in keeping away from their own neighbourhood products which are not yet accepted everywhere. Besides this, most of our singing-masters cannot play the accompaniments of my songs without giving themselves away. These two reasons explain everything! But trust it with observation, for I do not want to bring more pain on my head than I have already.

No audience in this country has yet heard a note of the songs by me which Miss Crosser introduced to the London public. I wonder what our concert-goers would say about "Frischlingstag," Op. 28, "Wie es Adagio?" And then the lone notes in the concluding symphony, in which one hears the songs wild horse growl in the distance! Approve of Op. 28, I wish you would especially cherish No. 2, "After Land," with its cock-crowings. It is a great favourite of mine. But you must give a long pause for the moon-speech, and then it will make most effect! The trumpet-sounds and the clang of bells in the last verse are also important. But more than anything it interests me that my Burns songs were received so favourably in Scotland; there must be something in them pointing to national sympathy. I have been for years convinced of the fact that in every genuinely lyric poem the corresponding melody has hidden. Given the necessary talent, it will then appear inevitably as an addition to the right material. Without having a clear understanding of Old German, Russian, Bohemian, Campese, Scandinavian and French national music, I have succeeded in expressing by words their strongly differentiated characteristics, a thing that I could do only with the help of the poetical contents of the words before me. This is not mere luck, but is based on sure grounds, for I have never made music for words, but have always drawn the former from the latter. My songs consequently require the most intense understanding of their people's heart; where there is this, the right conception of the flow of melody cannot possibly be wanting. If people in Scotland were not ultimately acquainted with

Bass' songs, my little ones could not have made such a lively impression on things that cannot be doubted!

You speak in your letter of your intention of drawing up for Scotland some day a programme consisting entirely of my Bass songs. There are, I see, fifteen of them which (what is especially important) bring in full force the meaning of the noble poet's lyrics. In 'The Lovely Lass of Inverness' it might seem as if my conception of the song, my "Now was to thee, thou cruel land, a bloody man I took thee be" contradicted the principles above-stated. But it is a woman who, in a moment of the highest passion, in conscious of her helplessness and breaks out to herself in such language. The passage also admirably illustrates the claim, "For many a heart had thou made one," which would not be the case with a wild man. Without knowing the original English, I have here and there hit the mark better than the translation. Thus, for example, in "Go fetch to me a pint o' wine," at the beginning of the second verse I make the trumpet sound at the right place, and in "While locks with little wags" my piano accompaniment reproduces the fluttering flight of the noisy bird, of which the original speaks, but not the translation. One may call such things "accidents," but is it absolutely impossible that my feeling as composer irradiated and understood the original?

You need not be angry with me that I let myself go so valdely about my own stuff. Perhaps such dissertations here and there contribute to the elucidation of my conception.

I am very glad that you have become acquainted at Dr. Hans Richter's in Vienna with the Twenty Sacred Songs of Sebastian Bach's arranged by me. In them one gains into the depths of the heart, as that one becomes dumb! It is hard to understand how these marvellous works for nearly two hundred years should be thought unaltered problems, when one looks at the natural form in which I have filled out the harmonies. Hitherto our schoolbooks managed the text as previous to deciphering figured bass, in which plenty of nonsense can be brought to light. The pedants had no idea that an alternate class in the expression of the whole could be taken by the middle parts, the notes between the Bass and the Tenor were stuffed in according to the figures—and so forth! If I were in your place, I should try energetically to make these programs practical here, for you will be the first to introduce them in England, where there is certainly a future for them.

I am most highly indebted to Dr. Hans Richter for his assiduous participation in efforts at reconstructing the vocal composition of our old masters. He is a true artist, who with true unselfishness depends only on things, not on people—a rarity of which in these days one cannot speak well enough. You evidently belong to the same class!

With warmest greetings to you and Frouin Cassan,

Halle, Feb. 1, 1868.

Yours truly,  
Rob. Franz.

## II.

Honored Sir:

You have prepared a great pleasure for me by the publication in the "Musikalisches Wochenblatt" of your Concert Programmes, it only proved to me that my artistic efforts are judged more impartially abroad

than they are in this country. If, for more than forty years, one has had to suffer from all kinds of malicious belittling, it can console only to satisfaction when, unsoftened, contrary tendencies assert themselves, which cannot possibly be restrained by one's enemies. As I believe I know you, it is hardly necessary to ask that you should get my compositions still further accepted, for, in truth, he only honours himself who strives to establish what he knows to good. As for myself, I do not wish for homage, but only for that justice which is my due. Here I shall not further pursue the inquiry, whether songs may justly claim acceptance in the Realm of Art, but to have you for them a place of honour in association with masters to whom I owe more than words can express—this I do account as my highest distinction!

Many greetings to you and Franklin Chamberlain.

Halle, Feb. 17, 1866.

Yours truly

Rob. Franz.

### III.

Honoured Sir:

I am gratefully indebted to you for your obliging communications and for the accompanying programmes, of peculiar interest to me. The *Bayern* in Cork contains the opinion that I had formed of the susceptibility of the Irish, a man so highly gifted in poetry. One only needs to have read the descriptions in the "*Heide über Verstorbenen*" to have a lively sympathy for these people.

Vienna is now following your suit. Dr. H. M. Schuster, who for years has successfully advanced along the lines laid down by me, intends to give a lecture on my little tunes some evening in the Wagner-Verein, to be illustrated with musical examples by a young lady, Fräulein Wagner. You see that your efforts find a response in this country. The laughing of single songs in concerts has done me more harm than good, the overrating of "Er ist gekommen" and "Dank' nicht für dein Lied" and "Die Maide im Braut" made me look like a recipient of charity! When one has devoted a whole lifetime to the elevation of a particular form of art, such experiences are not pleasant.

If you have not yet decided on your share for the performance in March, I should like to propose to you No. 2 in Op. 48, "*Die Verlassene*," There is something to be made out of that song! Perhaps you could combine it with "*Norwegische Frühlingsschmelze*," for both numbers show that I have not been altogether unsuccessful in striking the popular note—in the latter Scandinavian, in the former Old Bohemian—without following conscious imitations in either case. The fact of the mysterious tallness of the words on the magical expression, which is the most characteristic feature of my conceptions, is here clearly apparent.

The *Sacred Songs* of Sebastian Bach edited by me are shortly to be published by Novello in an English edition. I am anxious as to how the translator will succeed with the German words. It is difficult to reproduce their *subtilty*, and the translator had better confer himself with the general meaning of the verses. With the warmest greetings, which I beg you to pass on to Franklin Chamberlain,

Halle, Dec. 8, 1865.

Yours

Rob. Franz.

## IV

Honored Sir:

Many thanks for your friendly communication. I am still unable to conceal my astonishment that you and Frankenstein can achieve such success with the songs that you perform. It is a fresh proof that concert-going still can appreciate music which is not superficial, provided that it is accompanied by intelligent explanations and given in the very best manner. I cannot imagine what the public in this country would say—in spite of the advantage of the German words—to the song "Mein König in der Luft"! Even if people generally do not pay special attention to the text, it nevertheless sometimes acts as a puzzle, and is of the greatest importance for an understanding of my compositions in particular, for they pretend to be nothing more than the robe wherein the poetry clothes itself.

A short time ago one of my songs—No. 4 of Op. 3, "König vom Garten, im den Waldkanten"—was after many years honored by performance in the Halle Concerts. The singer was no less a person than the orientated Frau Amalie Joachim. In a first man, could of course not go to the concert, but I heard strange things about the performance from people who know in earlier years how to judge my little tunes. The lady showed not a trace of understanding for the tender reference which is absolutely necessary in the case, and as for the accompaniment—The diatonic melody in the lower was not heard of at all—only the chatter of the dress-worn-quavers. Who can be surprised that the audience simply ignored such a noise? And then people say that Frank's following is never satisfied with a performance! Not even in their denser days if ever occur to these foolish folk that my songs must be studied. Hygiene I have held that one only improved ones self by acute devotion to one's subject, this mistake—as far as songwriting in Germany is concerned—I shall have to cancel for the present.

I could tell you of strange experiences, did I not fear to tire you. So I surely do not need to enlarge on the pleasure which, by contrast, your attitude affords me, what satisfaction your success give me, and how grateful to you I am for all this. When I was told that my songs were sung and transcribed at the Leipzig Gewandhaus—for instance, in "So hat die Frau sich behagt," the conductor cut out the indispensable concluding symphony—I felt that the concert-hall was no place for them, that they should occupy only a modest place in the home-circle. To you both I now thank that you have renewed my belief in their power to produce a wider impression.

With warmest greetings to you and Frankenstein,

Your truly,

Rich. Wagner

Halle, Dec. 15, 1855

P.S.—I beg you will be discreet about Frau Joachim's concert-performances, so I did not bear them myself, but rely only on hearing.

## V

Honored Sir:

I am most grateful for your amiable letter and for the concert-programmes sent in a wrapper. It is like a dream when I read about your performances and the step the public reserves them. I should



only have to repeat what I have already written to you on this point, but I shall not deny that I usually shake my head when, in reading the unimpeachable concert-programmes in the *Musikalisches Wochenblatt*,<sup>1</sup> not one of my songs is to be found. If they had had their fair chance, it would be more vanity now for me to complain of their neglect. But notice has been taken of only three or four numbers, and these have become so hackneyed that nobody cares to hear them again. The round begins with "Ker ist gekommen" and reaches its apex in "Die Haide ist braun," finishing up again with "Ker ist gekommen." This is an old fancy, but you can convince yourself of the fact on any newspaper. One of your analytical muskies says that these songs are common to the vulgar and require musically educated audiences, with you, such are actually still to be found, while with us they are growing fewer and fewer.

In the year 1877 the celebrated astronomer Edward S. Holden, of Washington, wrote me a highly interesting letter which, inter alia, contained the following: "At Lawrence last year, in the Druid circle there, with the lovely landscape all around, everything appeared so familiar to me, and it seemed as though I heard a whispering as of silver sounds like those in your noble song 'Es klingt so der Luft,' and your ballad 'The Lovely Lane of Lawrence.' I am not sure but that the songs are the real experiences, [not] of the actual scenes, but the shadows or simulacra of them." How strange! This occult influence lies in the words, which bear their melody latent within them and whose realization accords with similar conditions, whether one has or has not met with them in life. Holden continues: "Over my writing-table there hangs a picture of Hawthorne's 'Pine-tree'—your song expresses exactly the scene." It is No. 5 in Op. 38, and would prove a grateful venture for you and Ed. Cooney—the first verse begins and ends in this way, from line 17 to 19 warm blood greatly pulses through the veins of the longest lover, overflowing him in the second verse as with a glowing fluid. See for yourself if I am not right. The tempo is about M. M. — 78.

One of the enclosed notices gives the number of my songs as 327, another as 337. Both are wrong; so far as I know there are 340, and if one includes the six Volkslieder I have arranged, there are 346. E-in De Kollchorn seems not to be clear on this head.

To the warmest greetings I add best wishes for the New Year for you and Fritziens Gräuer.

Yours truly

Rob. Frost

Hale, Dec. 30, 1888.

## AMERICA IN THE FRENCH MUSIC OF THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES

By LIONEL DE LA LAURENCIE

**I**T is a matter of common knowledge that the ties connecting France and America are of long standing, and it is pleasant to revert to the fact now that these ties have been strengthened in consequence of the world catastrophe which has definitely sealed the unity of two great nations meant to understand and esteem each other.

We would like, in this article, to trace in the midst of the various developments of seventeenth and eighteenth century French music, the manner in which this music has taken advantage of American elements. At times choreographic and dramatic motifs borrow dances and subject-matter for compositions from America, or others vocal and instrumental music employ American airs, or airs said to be American. For one is obliged to admit that the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in general, paid but little attention to folk-lore of which, by-the-by, they were almost altogether ignorant, and in which they showed but little interest, though extremely fond of exotic effects and characteristic melodies. Hence, while it occurs that French drama, on staging scenes from America, endeavors to secure a kind of local color; and while it surrounds the foreign characters whom it presents with music intended to be representative of the characters in question, this does not preclude but little exactitude being displayed in the matter of transcription. For instance, the Indian savages are not pictured as they are, by the aid of their individual music, but rather as they are supposed to be, by means of a vague melodic and rhythmic documentation inspired by the tales of voyagers and missionaries. "In fact," M. Tiersot justly says, "how were the Europeans of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to discover the meaning of music that differed so greatly from their own, when they themselves found it so difficult to put up with the slightest alterations of their own musical habits; regarding with astonishment the difference between Italian and

French music, the style of Rameau succeeding that of Lully, etc."<sup>17</sup>

The developments of American custom in older French music are lacking neither in objectivity nor in realism, and we only wish to draw attention to the reservations to which we have already alluded before proceeding to a study of their principles.



America appears for the first time in the French music of the seventeenth century under the auspices of the dance, and in the frame-work of the court ballet, the *ballet de cour*. As is known, this form of diversion looked on costume as one of its most powerful means of action, and it was one of the best liked. There were ethnographic and geographic ballets which introduced representatives of the various nations on the stage, and in this manner aroused the curiosity of the spectators by the colorful play of their costumes, and the picturesque singularity of their attitudes.

In the manner of costume the theorists of the ballet show themselves decidedly exacting. "The costumes for the ballet cannot be too handsome," declares Saint-Hubert, but he insists in particular, on the correctness of the costumes, on their being entirely appropriate to the persons represented. "Therefore, one should not so much dwell on the splendor of the dress as on its fitness, and its resemblance to whatever is being represented."<sup>18</sup>

This regard for exactitude naturally showed itself when romance was had to local color. Hence Father Menestrier designates the costumes which the exotic personages introduced in the ballets should wear, "the various nations who have their own individual costumes, which distinguish them. The Turk has his vest and turban, the Moor, his black color, the American, a dress of feathers."<sup>19</sup>

Hence, too, it is attested in the multicolored plumage of the Indians of the North and of the South, that the American makes their appearance in the chorographic diversions of the seventeenth century.

Here a preliminary observation seems called for: the term Indian does not always convey a precise ethnographic significa-

<sup>17</sup> Jules Tiersot, *Notes d'Ethnographie Musicale. Le Musique chez les peuples civilisés et sauvages de l'Asie, l'Europe et le Nord. L'enseignement de la Musique. Paris, 1922, p. 124.*

<sup>18</sup> St. Hubert, *Le manuscrit de composition et de mise en scène des ballets*, Paris, P. Tanguy, 1861. In *ibid.*, pp. 21, 12.

<sup>19</sup> Menestrier, *Des Ballets anciens et modernes*, 1683, p. 144.

tion stage, in the literature of the court ballet, it is applied at one time to *Asiatique* and at another to *Americains*. Therefore, in order to avoid any misunderstanding, we will call Americans only such personages as are thus expressly qualified as being inhabitants of the New World.

The first seventeenth century ballet which alludes to Americans is the *Ballet de la Reine*, danced on Jan. 16, 1638, and whose first "entry," represented by the *Rois* and some company, was entitled "The Americans." Then, in 1639, in the *Ballet de l'Amour de la Jeune* given that year, also by the *Rois* and some company, a certain "Topinambou," addresses the following verses to the ladies:

Belle, je suis Topinambou,  
 Vous d'avez tant couronné;  
 J'en quitte avec vous pour vous,  
 Mes biens et ma famille entière  
 Et, comme de coutume,  
 Je pars en votre honneur.

Besides my name is Topinambou,  
 I've come from a troupe far away,  
 I've left my natal land for you,  
 My goods and all my family,  
 And, with my soul now quite at rest,  
 I come to this town at your wish.

Strangely brought up, in the fashion of the time, Topinambou continues in a gallant strain, declares he is ready "to play the Citheriac game," and relies on his almost entire lack of costume as a means of overcoming the resistance of his charmers.<sup>1</sup>

With the *Grand Bal de la Douzette de Stickschou* (The Grand Ball of the Douzette of Stickschou), whose costuming and get-up were the work of René Bardié and l'Étoile, the part played by the Americans has become more important. This ballet was danced before the king, in the Louvre, during the month of February, 1678, and the court took part in the "American ballets," in which "Atabalpa, followed by people and costumes of America," figured.<sup>2</sup>

The personage in question is Atabalpa, King of Cayo, in Peru, whom a troupe of Americans bear into the hall at the beginning of the first "entry." This individual, destined to achieve a long career in French lyric literature, is purely a figment of the imagination. The history of Peru knows only a certain

<sup>1</sup>Paul Lacroix, *Bulletin de l'Association de ceux de Paris (IV & Louis XIV) (1876-1878)*, Geneva, 1881, t. II, p. 421.

<sup>2</sup>René Bardié, *Grand Bal de la Douzette de Stickschou*, Paris, 1878, p. 1.

Atabalipa, a natural son of Huanca Capac who, after a struggle of four years against his brother Huascar, ended by getting the better of him and having himself proclaimed Inca in his place, shortly before the arrival of the Spaniards.

The origin of Atabalipa is in all likelihood to be found in the singular treatise of Adriano Bacchiari, published in Venice, in 1699, *La Notitia dell' Ataca di Atabalippa del Peru* of which a French translation was printed in Paris, in 1699: *Le Noblesse, croissances et antiquité de l'Ataca. Traicté de Pétilien du Seigneur Atabalippa* (Adriano Bacchiari). Bacchiari was evidently acquainted with these works, hence the Atabalipa of the *Descriptive de l'Éthiopie*:

And how do these "Americans" act? Let us see what Boucher says: "Somehow said," he tells us, "that these pleasant Americans go clad only in feathers, yet as to that, do not regret it overmuch for, since they go about in a frivolous dress, they easily forgive the levity of others."<sup>12</sup>

Incidentally, they defend themselves against the accusation of inconsistency. One among their number, M. Le Comte, writes the following lines:

Ensemble, qui me voyez peindre à cœur ouvert,  
Le rang des Indesiens et des plus habillés,  
Ensemble que sans cesse soit de plumes couvert,  
Mon amour n'a point d'indes.

Familiar who see me here with heart laid bare,  
What the most feathered and ornamented know,  
Though feathers covering my body I wear,  
My constant love no wings has gone.

The entry of the Americans soon gives rise to the appearance of a "Ballet of parakeets." "The former," says Boucher, "have no sooner turned the sole of their feet to the audience, before a troop of parakeets show their beaks at the gate of the theatre. Covered with a plumage of green, these parakeets thus display their hopes of a more favorable reception." But, alas, they are playing with fire, for the indigenous hunters of their country enter on the scene, armed with the instruments they habitually use. And then Boucher goes on to describe to us this "species of music, whose sound amuses and whose noise astorishes them." The unfortunate parakeets know not whether to listen or to fly. Some are caught in ticklish nets which entangle them, the rest

<sup>12</sup> *Œuvres complètes, Le Ballet de l'Ataca ou Pérou*, 1699, p. 103.  
<sup>13</sup> *Grand Œil de la Description de l'Éthiopie*, p. 6.

cast themselves on the mirrors owned by their enemies, without a suspicion "that the cruel hand of the huckster will seize them." This ballet of hucksters and parakeets is followed by one of androgyns, individuals among whom the *Compt d'Haricourt* plays a part, and who as women, carry spinning; and as men, clubs, in order to show that they are able to spin on the one hand, and break heads on the other.

The music of the ballet of the *Bonivive de Villebalet* has, unfortunately, not been preserved. However, a curious design, at the Louvre, published by M. Henry Franzen, in his fine work on the *Ballet de la Cour en France*, gives us an idea of the cost of music which accompanied the entrance of the Americans. Behind a solemn flame, adorned with trappings, advanced a native beating gong, and surrounded by a troop of bagpipe players. A certain number of American airs were already known in France at this time, since Father Mercurie, in his *Musique universelle* of 1656, offers us four specimens.<sup>1</sup>

Of these four airs the first, a *Chanson Canadienne* (Canada Song), whose title calls up memories of the first French explorers in Canada, Deays and Jacques Cartier, as well as of Roberval and Samuel Champlain, is certainly anything but a faithful transcription. The remaining three, on the contrary, which we give here, and which have already been reproduced by M. Tineat in the article above cited, seem to be more valid.

They follow herewith:

I  
G4 - A4 - B4 C5 | D5 E5 F5 G5  
A5 B5 C6 D6 | E6 F6 G6 A6 | B6 C7

II  
G4 A4 B4 C5 | D5 E5 F5 G5  
A5 B5 C6 D6 | E6 F6 G6 A6 | B6 C7

III  
G4 A4 B4 C5 | D5 E5 F5 G5  
A5 B5 C6 D6 | E6 F6 G6 A6 | B6 C7

Alluding to Jean Léri's voyage, Mercurie assures us that these are songs of the Tupinambans, and that the words of the first have reference to a yellow bird, whose feathers "are used by them in making their bonnets, their robes and several other things." The words of the second song, extremely vehement, carry them away into a sort of "epilepsy." As to the third song, it is used as a lament for the dead, a funeral dirge. One cannot deny that these

<sup>1</sup>M. Mercurie, *Musique universelle*, Paris, 1656, Pl. 5. See *Compt de la Voyages II*, p. 128.

three songs have a primitive and savage character, which testified in favor of an exactness of notation at least relative. Yet it is quite evident that the musicians of the court ballets gave themselves but slight concern with regard to making use of melodies of the kind in presenting the Americans in their diversions. No doubt they preferred to support Menestee's singular opinion, according to which "the diatonic being the most natural of all styles (modes), these peoples or races who have no musicians among them, sang diatonically."

Hence we may see, in the Ballet de M. le Cardinal de Noailles, danced in 1664, the name of whose entries has been preserved in the valuable Philidor Collection at the Paris Conservatory, that the Americans take part in the dances (Entry 56), to the following theme:



which, evidently, has nothing whatsoever American about it.<sup>1</sup> With the masquerade of *Les Fleurs tendres*, danced before the king by the Duke of Guise, in the great hall of the Louvre, and in which Lully collaborated (February 18, 1637), we find again the Atahualpa whose strength and unconquerable sense was destined to a long exploitation. In fact, Atahualpa, "king of Peru and of the Indians," figures in the eighth entry of the second part of this masquerade.<sup>2</sup>

A few years later Lully was to bethink himself of the Americans of *Les Fleurs tendres*, since with the aid of Beaucroix, he introduced them once more in his ballet *Fleur*, danced before the king, February 12, 1668, under the caption of "Homage of the Four Parts of the World to Madame"<sup>3</sup> the four parts of the world represented by four ladies who arrive to call on all the nations whom they invited to attend Fleur's fête. Accordingly, four quadrilles make their entrance: the Europeans, the Africans, the Asiatics and the Americans (fifteenth and final entry), preceded by trumpets. When the four quadrilles are united on the stage, they dance together to the music of the Cornets, and "form the most pleasing figure which art has thus far invented."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Philidor, *Op. 8*, pp. 128-29.

<sup>2</sup>Victor Boucher, *Les Comédiens de Molière*, p. 416. See Beaumont-Lacépède, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

<sup>3</sup>From *Notes*: Molière, the actor of Charles II, of England, was the wife of Molière. I e., Grotius, Duke of Orleans, brother of Louis XIV.

<sup>4</sup>Beaucroix, *Ballet de Fleur*, 1668, pp. 76, 77.

Incidentally, brass takes part in these gambols, and several among them rattle tambourines, which provide a new battery of percussives. The ceremony is accompanied with recitations by Europe and Asia, to which Africa and America reply, and, of course, the four continents proclaim that "the realm of the Moon is the first in the universe."

The names of the dancers who took the parts of the Americans in the fourth quadrille have come down to us; they are a M. L'Enfant, the Sieurs Chiconema, Bonard and Arnold. Among the musicians who played the Canaries, were five "American" men and five "American" women, represented by the older Blouzaert, his younger brother, the older La Course and his younger brother, Brouart, Marchand, le Fontaine, Charlot, and the Marchais, father and son. Flutes and oboes mingled in the symphony of sound, in the hands of some of the most skilled instrumentalists of the king's household, such as Pierre Dessevaux, Pillibert and Hotteterre. All of the music brought into play during the dances of the soiree is, incidentally, Lully's own beyond any manner of doubt.

The same absence of local color shows itself again in the *Temple de la Paix* danced with the greatest success at Fontainebleau during the autumn of 1685, and one of whose six entries is dedicated to "the savages of America." Now these savages make their appearance in the rondo in G/A here which follows:



There is nothing specifically American about the incessant rhythm of this number, and as to the chorus: "We have crossed the vast bosom of the waves," it is Lully pure and simple. The

[From *Paris*.] The year 1684, which witnessed the production of the *Temple de la Paix* probably witnessed, many great things with Marie de Mazarin, which undoubtedly the recitation of dances for diversions of the French court. In "The Art of Ballet," Perrault may well refer to *Le Temple de la Paix* that "represented the most beautiful of our games by the order of ballet of the most beautiful dances, *Menuet, Danse des Vans* and some of the greatest of ballet, high steps or the pantomime." The names dancers from the *France*, who mingled with the pageants and ideas of the Court, were named as some gentlemen in order to distinguish them from the hired soldiers. Among the dancers was *Salle* the young noble *Placide de Coull*, *Agathe de Rochefort*, *Madame de la Cour* as *Mlle de la Cour*, *D'Armenonville*, *de Merville*, *D'Esperey*, on the occasion of the court soiree on the occasion of the court and the small as *Mlle de Merville* (brother of a hundred children of a considerable reputation) were among the most delicate of the court, while *Salon*, whom we have already named, was especially for the energy and strength of his dances, and *Mlle de la Cour* was equally admired for the grace and dignity of hers.

See *Temple de la Paix*. Ed. 1685. de Coull, p. 140.

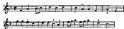


second "air of the Americans," sung by the ballet, to instrumental accompaniment:



is neither more nor less than a farlane, a dance of Friesland, which Jean Baptiste Duval had described as far back as the month of May, 1689, and which the *Merveilles galantes* of April, 1693, proved to the skies.<sup>1</sup>

It seeks to depict those effects of majestic pomp and congratulation with regard to the sovereign which were so dear to the heart of Lully, the superintendent of his royal music. Lully makes an appeal to the Americans of New France to glorify Louis XIV, nothing less; these Frenchmen of the trans-Atlantic are to celebrate the pacific virtues of a monarch who, nevertheless, loved war only too well, and they are to abandon themselves to the idyllic joys which peace regained holds forth, "a peace so charming," as the American choirs sing, while a coryphée declares firmly that the great king is lauded "from end to end of the earth."<sup>2</sup> In addition, among the dances which were performed at the balls of Louis XIV, and which were collected in 1718 by the elder Pléhon, ordinary of the king's music, there is one *La Française* (*Danzette*), whose title had an American suggestion. The theme follows:<sup>3</sup>



Following Lully's example, Rameau did not neglect to introduce the Americans on the stage. Only, it is no longer the Canadians whom he bids dance, but the Americans of the South. *Les Indes galantes*, of 1735,<sup>4</sup> whose book was by Flanchois, composer,

<sup>1</sup>See J. Banchette, *La Flandre*, p. 7, ff., April 2, 1614.

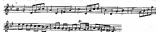
<sup>2</sup>For the title, *Les Indes galantes*, see the *Plan de la Comédie*, p. 121, 122.

<sup>3</sup>For the theme, see Pléhon, *Les Indes galantes*, p. 171 ff., 185, 186. See Vol. 100, p. 99.

<sup>4</sup>For the title, *Comédie*, see the *Plan de la Comédie*, p. 121, 122, and a preceding one of the type of Louis XVII already mentioned. It is one scene with *Les Indes galantes*. *Comédie*, *Les Indes galantes*, a dance of France in France (ff., *Plan de la Comédie*, p. 121).

beginning with its third performance, an entry, the second, of the "Inca of Peru." The scene disclosed "a Peruvian desert, ending in an arid mountain, whose peak was crowned by the crater of a volcano, formed of caldered rocks, and covered with ashes." And, as they innocently said at that time, in order to justify this deployment of local color, and the momentary abandonment of the scriptural mythological and fairy landscape, the Peruvian volcano seemed "even more fear to life than a fairy scene, and quite as well fitted to give rise to chromatic means of the symphonic order." Hence the auditors might be at rest, since the chromatic factor would not be deprived of its rights. The entrance of the Inca introduced Peruvians in picturesque costume on the stage; but the costumes are picturesque along the somewhat arbitrary line of eighteenth century taste. Among those making up the group we might mention: Puma, Palla, Huascar, there may also a French officer, Drouin, and a Spanish officer, Alvar, both of them very much taken with the lovely Zima. We will not dwell upon the elaborated scenes of the adoration of the sun, with its famed chorus "Brilliant orb"; nor will we go into detail as regards "the earthquake," to the approach of the volcano, which is adduced as a "sensational" example of Racine's art as a landscape.<sup>1</sup>

We will call attention here, above all, to the famous "Air of the Savages" introduced by Racine in his opera-ballet in March, 1732. This air has quite a history. In 1723, at the time that he was working at the spectacle of the Foire St Germain, the musician had composed a song and a dance intended for the exhibition of the Carib savages who had been brought to Paris. It is this very "Air of the Savages" which appears in the collection of chamber pieces published between 1727 and 1732 (*Recueil des Sautes de pieces de chambre*), and which Racine replaced in the *Inca péruvien*. Its energy, divided theme, as Racine sees it, takes on a character of the most concise stylization, and is compactly developed in odd rhythmic gestures and beats. Yet it



was in no wise inspired by folk-lore, and its well-defined tonality

<sup>1</sup> *Œuvres des Inca péruvien—Œuvres de Racine*, 2<sup>e</sup> Édition.

<sup>2</sup> *Œuvres complètes* (Ed. Durand), p. 207. Cf. *Œuvres complètes* (Ed. Kailashnik), p. 71.

and rhythmic Frenchness lead us to regard it without question as the own natural child of the composer of *Ballets*. Nevertheless, Harnois took an interest in exotic music; in 1707, in the introduction of his *Nouvelles réflexions sur le principe sonore*, he assures us that he has seen all that Father Amiot of the Company of Jesus, for the space of sixteen years a missionary at Peking, had found it possible to collect regarding Chinese music; and his *Levee ballet de la Polonois*, composed not long after, and first performed on Feb. 28, 1700, includes a "Chinese Air." At the same time, it was impossible that he should have known, in 1703, the particulars set down by the Jesuit Father de Charlevoix, in his histories of Santo Domingo and Paraguay, nor the more recent Father's *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, all of these works, in the last analysis, decidedly deficient in information of a musical nature. On the other hand, he would have been able to read the *Histoire de la Conquête du Mexique*, by Don Antonio de Solis, of which a French translation appeared in 1691. Yet aside from some casual details regarding the dances of the Aztecs, and which describe a somewhat clumsy and elementary choreography which would admit itself easily enough to the "Air of the Savages," Solis' work contains no more than a few lines devoted to Mexican music. He mentions "the five players, and those who played certain conch-shells which produced a species of concerted music."

It therefore follows that it must, in all likelihood, be conceded that the "Air of the Savages" sprung fully armed and quivering with barbaric energy from the head of Harnois. An anecdote ascribes a most amusing origin to this air. The dancing girl, taking a pin, perforated a number of holes in a sheet of music-paper which Harnois had given her, after which the latter gave each hole, representing a note, its rhythmic value, and thus the "Air of the Savages" came into being.<sup>1</sup> However, the famous melody,

<sup>1</sup>See vol. iv, pp. 499, 500. Solis speaks of another species varying in duration usually, and not without "some sort of measure." With regard to the dances of the Indians, with their changes of position and carrying feathers across in their hands, see the author's work, "The Great Conquest of Mexico," p. 272.

<sup>2</sup>From the "Lectures de l'Académie des Sciences, Their History, Measurement and Contents" (taken from the French by J. L. Garçon, Chicago, 1881), describing the Aztecs, "a wooden cylinder, three feet high, carved and ornamented with paintings, on its top covered with the skin of a deer which could be stretched or loosened at will, according as the players wished to produce deep or ranging sounds. The drum was played by striking the head with the fingers, which produced a certain amount of rattle." The Aztecs use their drum, which is varying deep, still in use in some parts . . . The Aztecs assemble voluntarily in the towns and neighbourhoods great numbers . . . A celebration for the European monarch was the strongest, "a sort of grand festival with balls, which was held with great state." It consisted in numerous balls, and was shaken in time with the playing of the Aztec instruments.

<sup>3</sup>Quoted originally by M. Arthur Fuchs, in the introduction to the Latin edition in the *Michoud edition*.

which in the *Indes galantes* accompanies the two *Foxtrot* dances, achieved a decided success, in spite of the satires which the *Almanach de Mable* (The Devil's Almanack) directed against Rousseau in 1767. Though Dufourcraies raged against the music of the *Indes galantes*, and though he declared that "Nature had no part at all in it", though he said of the song: "Nothing could be more rough and uneven, nothing less polished, it is a road which one cannot walk without stumbling," other critics allowed themselves to be seduced by its exotic character, and the *Peur et Contre* (Fear and Against), came to the conclusion that the music "was genuinely Indian." Rousseau himself showed that he was well satisfied with his "Air of the Savages," of 1768, in his letter of October 22, 1767 to Houdou de la Motte. It proves how much he thought of this dance, when he says: "It suits entirely with you to come and hear how I have characterized the song and dance of the savages who appeared at the *Théâtre de la Nation* a year or so ago."

"The Air of the Savages" had a long life and many imitations. Not alone did Buffumio transfer it to the organ, at the Concert spirituel, in 1766, but one also finds an arrangement of it for two unaccompanied flutes, violins or violas in the second *Recueil de pièces, pour six, ou, de flûtes*, by Michel Blavet. On the other hand, the violinists, the younger Abbé and Tardie, applied it with variations, and Goussier employs it in his first ballet *Le Premier caractère ou le pouvoir de l'homme* (July 22, 1768). Finally, Delagrave made use of the "Air of the Savages" in the prologue to his comic opera *André ou les Sauvages*, words by Luchembourgeois, given our *Archives* on May 8, 1767.<sup>4</sup> The *Mémoires* of the day regards this interpolation in the music and descriptive symphony with which the work opens, as an act of homage to Rousseau's greatness.

In the meantime, instrumental music furnished some specimens of American air. The literature of the bass viol supplies us with the following example, which we borrow from an ms. collection which bears largely on pieces by Marin Marais, Roland Muret, Prosperus, de Colin and others. This piece is entitled *L'Amérigotier*<sup>5</sup>



<sup>4</sup> *Mémoires sur les Arts modernes*, II, p. 226.

<sup>5</sup> *Le Peur et le Contre*, VII, p. 26.

<sup>6</sup> The *Air des Sauvages* appears in the text of the Abbé's *André ou les Sauvages*.

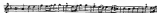
<sup>7</sup> *Recueil de pièces de violon avec le Basson et les Violons autres*, fol. 222. See P. 1120, pp. 144, 145.

A little further on we find the succeeding passage, whose repeated figures with a rhythm of  $\text{♪♪} \text{♪} = \text{♪♪} \text{♪}$  are not without a certain analogy to those frequently encountered in Indian melodies:

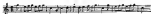


We might mention in particular, the "Fourth Harvest Song of the Iroquois" (Baker), various numbers of the *Wa-Wan Press* (Miss Fletcher), etc.<sup>1</sup>

The famous violinist J. P. Guignea, published about 1748, his *Nouvelles Variations de divers airs et de l'Air d'Exopos*, in which we meet with an "American Air,"



which is carried out in several variations, of which the second is in double-steps, and the third secures a species of bag-pipe effect, with a pedal-point on the tonic D, so that we have an American tone disguised in gallant shepherd style. Among other *airs* we find other American reminiscences, for instance one which appears in two collections<sup>2</sup> is called *Le Miamont*



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\*

It is at this point that we should call attention to *Le Huron*, comic opera in two acts by Grétry, with text by Marmontel. *Le Huron* was performed for the first time at the Théâtre Italien, on August 30, 1765. To speak the truth, the music of this score does not bear witness of any particularly American tendency; it conforms itself to prevailing and supporting the moral of the libretto inspired by Voltaire's little romance known as *Flageolet* which appeared in 1767.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Baker, *loc. cit.* p. 161 and 162.

<sup>2</sup> *Musical de république française pour la ville*. 1765, vol. II, 1615 p. 47 and *Recueil de musique* No. 2127. *Mé. de L'Académie* p. 411.

<sup>3</sup> *Page 100*. According to the *Œuvres complètes* ("Folios" L'opéra, 1870), *Flageolet* "the spirit of nature" is the text of Voltaire's romance, there, among 147 more selected tales. It is only a page which character and incidents render possible to be proved by word and deed. *Œuvres complètes*, vol. 1, 1767, p. 100 and 101, and *Œuvres complètes* of Voltaire, 1767, p. 100 and 101. *Œuvres complètes* of Voltaire, 1767, p. 100 and 101.

In the shape of a young Baron, induced by his curiosity to visit Europe, Voltaire and, following him, Marquardt, have devoted themselves to a study of the ingenious mind of the savage suddenly brought into contact with our pretended civilization, which gives rise to a number of adventures which, in the opinion of Grimm, throw into relief the good sense of the "child of nature," a good sense most alarming to his devoted friend de Kerkaban.<sup>1</sup>

Le Baron scored a great success, thanks to Grétry's music. The latter tells in his *Essais* how, with the aid of Marquardt, he composed his comic opera in six months' time. He describes the fear he suffered with regard to the subject-matter of his score, a fear which vanished with its first performance, dispipated by the success achieved by the charming Baron Caillot, who "in savage dress," sang the air: "In which contest is Baron-land?" most delightfully, and by Mme. Laetitia, entrusted with the part of Mile. St. Yves. Still, we repeat, *Le Baron* is no more than a score with a psychological trend, and which we only cite because its leading figure is an American.

We have now reached the moment when American history is about to write one of its most glorious pages, that of the Independence of the United States. It is a matter of knowledge that the revolutionary movement, though general in character, had its focus in the province of Massachusetts, and above all, in the city of Boston, which ever since the December of 1773 had resisted against the ill-considered fiscal policy of Great Britain. The proclamation of the Independence of the United States of America, on July 4, 1776, was destined to find its repercussion in French music. The *Revue* of January, 1896, announced some *Strenuements* for clavichord or forte-piano, containing the "Echoes of Boston," and the victory gained in a naval combat by a frigate over a group of privateers. These *Strenuements* were dedicated to the Duke of Angoulême, Grand Prior of France, by Michel Comte, who was the organist of the prince in quarters.<sup>2</sup>

The title "Echoes of Boston" is characteristic. The *Dissonnement* is our written in three parts, of which the slow movement in G major, an *Andante* in 3/8 time, is written in the dominant tonality, and is called "The Harbors of Wales." The beginning of the initial *Allège* follows:



<sup>1</sup> *Manuscrits des Archives*, vol. III, p. 408.  
<sup>2</sup> *Revue*, Jan. 1896, p. 126.

The "Ecluse de Boston" ends with a rapid movement in 6/8 time, which has been baptised—"The Flight of the English."

As to the naval battle which accompanies the *Débarquement*, it has been developed in accordance with the ethetic laws of the picturesque and descriptive which govern its type, and is inspired by events transpiring along the American coast-line. Cocteau even invents a sign to indicate how the "mannon-shots" are to be executed on the keyboard. We quote his description, though it is rather naive: "Strike all the bass keys with the palm of the hand, to imitate the Sling of the cannon—twenty-four pounds."

And while our instrumental music draws inspiration from the events taking place on the other side of the ocean, our dramatic music, for its part, celebrates the nation which is about to gain its liberty.

On November 18, 1778, Gaudel presented at the Opéra a three-act ballet, *Mifra*, whose action takes place in America. *Mifra* scored a brilliant success, and Castil-Blanc, followed by Choquet<sup>1</sup> sees in this number an occasioned piece: "they were fighting in America," writes Castil-Blanc, "we were the allies of the insurgents commanded by Washington; and the English were being defeated in every battle." Théodore de Laizer has had no trouble in proving that the interpretation of *Mifra* given by Castil-Blanc, does not in any way correspond with the facts. The long description of the ballet given in the *Mémoires* of November, 1778, and a study of the text-book of *Mifra* prove that nowhere is there any question of battles, "in which the English succumb." The ballet develops, however, a most sympathetic Franco-American atmosphere. It is a little pantomime drama, whose plot does not lack variety, despite its simple nature, nor even emotion. *Mifra* is the daughter of Monsieur, governor of an American island. She loves the handsome French colonel, Lander; but their loves are troubled by the rivalry of a pirate. In the first act, so the *Mémoires* reports, one laughs; in the second, one experiences deep emotion; in the third, "one is torn divided between admiration and joy."

The third act is filled with the festivities celebrating the union of *Mifra* and Lander. These festivities take place on a vast esplanade lying in front of one of the terraces of Monsieur's garden, and in the presence of the entire family, "surrounded by a crowd of Americans, Corsica and Negroes."

<sup>1</sup>Castil-Blanc, *Œuvres complètes de Paris*, I, pp. 302-303. © Choquet, *Revue de la musique dramatique en France*, p. 222.

First of all we have a brilliant military parade. Lindor's regiment maneuvers and defiles beneath the colonel's eyes, and a corps of Americans soon arrives to draw up facing the French regiment. The governor then has both detachments go through a sham battle, and drums beat the assembly, to the colors, and a "Boston March" as well, whose first measure we quote herewith.<sup>1</sup>



After these military exercises, Mendoc proceeds to the marriage of his daughter and Lindor, a warrior captured, celebrated to the sound of brass instruments. American officers and American ladies begin to dance, and to borrow the expression of the *Mémoires*, "celebrate the festivities with the dances in vogue in their country."<sup>2</sup>

The military parade was well conducted by M. Fayden, sergeant in the regiment of the Guards. Two airs which above all seem to be connected with America, and in particular with the part played by the *Chevalier d'Estagny* in the War of Independence (October, 1782), are preserved in a collection of airs in the National Library, and bear the titles: *Le Dévouement* and *Le Retour Dévoué* ("d'Estagny's Return").<sup>3</sup>

In the lyric tragedy *Pizarro*, or the Conquest of Peru, performed for the first time at the Royal Academy of Music on May 8, 1785, we see reappear Atabalipa, king of Peru, already had under contribution on various occasions by French music. The scene is laid in Peru. Candeille had written the music of this opera, whose text was by Duplessis, and which had but a mediocre success, in spite of a brilliant cast: Lais taking the part of Pizarro, and the Queen Atabalipa, now Atabaliba, being played by Chéron. Mlle Guvraudin the younger sang the rôle of Aïssa, while La Guillard and Tertus danced.

In Act one we once more meet with the scene of the admission of the sun which Rameau had already treated musically. The stage represents the frontal of the temple of the sun, whose rites still exist in Cuzco, and without delay cosmic effects are exploited. A march for the entry of Atabaliba, and his suite responds: "this march," the book explains, "begins very softly, and increases gradually in power, there are Negroes with bottles of incense and others with small drums after the fashion of the country."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Mémoires*, Art III, No. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. *ibid.*, See I, 1782, See II and IV.



This march is dominated by a commonplace melody played by the plectra, local color being supplied only by the instrumentation. Then the temple doors open and the high priest issues forth, followed by the young virgins dedicated to the worship of the sun. Now comes a new march of a more pronouncedly exotic character than its predecessor, with abrupt cuts:



The high priest then sings the air: "Beauregard divinity," which is taken up by a five-part chorus, then follows an entry, *Allegro molto*, whose indistinct character is adorned with a languorous theme, embellished by ornamental connecting links, and supported by the orchestral percussion.

Following this, the Prouvian dance, heavily, in a movement in 4/8 time, where the repeated oscillation on a strong accent does not fail to recall the insistence of accent shown in the first part of the "Dance for the Invocation of the Spirit," collected by Doctor Boas.<sup>1</sup> Yet here the rhythmic stress repeats a fourth seven times in succession, while in the dance of the Peruvians, the recurring stress goes on while broadening out from a fourth to a sixth. At the same time this far away resemblance is lessened by the fact that the "Dance for the Invocation of the Spirit" is a dance of Northern America.

According to the *Mémoires*, the action of the piece gave rise to criticisms which were softened and equalized by its spectacular pomp and the variety of its tableaux. "In accordance with the habits and the customs of the peoples represented on the stage."<sup>2</sup> The march of the Incas gave pleasure, and it was admitted that his character had been "well expressed"; also, the dance was accorded to be good of their kind; but in general—and we cannot help but agree with this opinion—the music was accused of lacking originality.<sup>3</sup>

Atahualpa makes a fresh appearance in Métil's *Coma*, unsuccessfully given at the Opéra on February 11, 1791. Only, on this occasion the name of the Prouvian sovereign was shortened by eliding the syllable, and he became quite simply *Atahpa*.<sup>4</sup> Once more we meet with him in the temple of the sun and the Prouvian buildings which form the stage-setting for the first

<sup>1</sup> *Boas*, *Loc. cit.*, p. 122.

<sup>2</sup> *Mémoires*, May 14, 1788, p. 30.

<sup>3</sup> *Mémoires*, May 21, 1788, p. 126.

<sup>4</sup> *Idem* played the part of *Atahpa*, and *Quiza* was the name of actress.

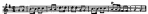
art; and again we witness the festival of the god of light, and Core, the heroine of the poem, is proclaimed the chosen of the godhead. She must take an oath of fidelity to the sun, but the unfortunate girl loves the Spaniard *Alonso*, which fact permits the development of tragic permutations, in the course of which appears a certain *Masque*, who recalls the *Wassail* of the *Judas* polonaise.

Of Méhul's music we will cite the invocation of the priests of the sun (Act III):



in which the composer has evidently tried only to secure dramatic effect, without giving a single thought to local color, while Rameau confides his invocation to the Sun, "Brilliant art," to an ascending theme written in sixths, and seems to conform to the account given by the Jesuit Father de las Casas, in the sixteenth century, of the ceremonial of the sun worship, in which the Inca king leading the chant in honor of the sun with sovereign authority—a song which continues to ascend in degree and measure, just as the planet itself rises above the horizon.<sup>1</sup> And this ascensional character is exactly that given by Rameau to his invocation.

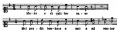
Not are we done, as yet, with the Incas and the ceremonials of their cult. The publication, in 1788, of Bernardo de Saint-Pierre's immortal eulogic *Paul et Virginie*, as a natural consequence focuses the attention of dramatic composers on another aspect of American music, on American negro music. All authors agree in recognizing that the negro has remarkable musical aptitudes. The negroes of Louisiana speak a kind of French jargon at once childish and touching, a dialect associated with melodies whose tenderness and emotional depth cannot be denied. Between the years 1780 and 1790 negro airs begin to make their appearance in musical compositions, and we see Marco Clementi interpolate in Sonata II of his Op. 33 a charming and careering *Air des nègres*, designating it *Airs des nègres*, a descriptive phrase which underlines its childish ingenuousness of character.<sup>2</sup>



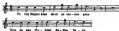
<sup>1</sup>On les voit chanter ainsi les Vers (Concerning the Ancient Peoples of Peru, par le père F. B. de las Casas. Reprinted, Madrid, 1884, pp. 48-51).

<sup>2</sup>This theme is here developed in the form of a waltz.

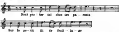
In writing his *Foal of Virginia*, whose first performance took place at the *Comédie italienne* on January 10, 1793, and whose libretto follows—at some distance—Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's romance, Rodolphe Kreutzer has not failed to introduce negro airs in his score. There is in Scene 1, Act I, a little song sung by *Virginius* to *Foal*, a son: which the negro *Dominique* has taught her.



And in Scene 8 of the same Act, there is a chorus: *Petit blanc bien dour, mûcher-neux* ("Little whites so kind, wait for us").



The negroes construct a litter of boughs on which they carry *Virginius* while they sing:



When three years later, the subject of *Foal of Virginia* was again taken up, this time by Lemaire, aided by Dalmeida with regard to the text, Lemaire does not seem to have made the effort displayed by his predecessor to give his tunes a folk-like impress.<sup>1</sup>

Once again we behold the admission of the son, which is now introduced, however, in the guise of a *l'ère d'or*. And this point did not escape the attention of the contemporary press. "The composer of *Foal of Virginia*," says the *Journal de Paris* on Jan. 13, 1794, "has had recourse to an episode foreign to his story in order to extend the latter, one which in our opinion is

<sup>1</sup> *Foal of Virginia*, *Comédie* by Théate de la Nation, was presented at the Théâtre de la rue Feytaud, the 16th Nivôse of the Year II.

harsh to the principle and in view." The "Indian Savages" sing a hymn, noble in character, to the rising sun, with great cries of appeal carried along on a single note. In the second act there is also a chorus: "To the god of light," encompassed with an atmosphere of serenity, where the gemmings of the strings sparkle while flutes sing:



As they do in the first act, so they do in the second.

Lescœur's *Fantasia of Virginia* is the last lyric work of the eighteenth century whose scene of action is laid in America. Thus, as we have said at the beginning of our article, the older music of France has borrowed actually but little from American folk-lore, and it has hardly brought local color into play except through the medium of the spectacular. Notwithstanding, it seems of interest to recall that four of the greatest of French musicians, Lully, Rameau, Händel and Lescœur, have treated American subjects, and have taken pains to characterize the Indians of America by means of typical themes or an appropriate instrumentation.

(Translated by Frederick H. Krumpholtz)

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8 East 42nd Street New York City

# THE MUSICAL QUARTERLY



G. SCHIRMER, Inc. NEW YORK

**THE MUSICAL QUARTERLY**



# THE MUSICAL QUARTERLY

Vol. 3, No. 3

O. G. BONNECK, Editor

June, 1911

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### PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

Single Copies 4 Cents

4 Cents per Copy

Annual Price, Seven Dollars

Entered as second-class matter June 15, 1906, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y.,  
under No. 253, Post Office No. 343.

G. SCHIRMER, Inc. NEW YORK

Statement of the Director, Management, Circulation, etc., required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912, of "The National Geographic," published quarterly at New York, N. Y., the April 1, 1916, issue of New York, County of New York. Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared O. G. Sennock, who, having been duly sworn according to law, depose and say that he is the owner of "The National Geographic," and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the circulation, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the said issue in the above manner, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as herein in copies and, Postal Labels and Receipts, thus, to wit: 1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publisher, G. S. Heller, Inc., 2 East 43rd St., New York City; Editor, O. G. Sennock, 2 East 43rd St., New York City; Managing Editor, O. G. Sennock, 2 East 43rd St., New York City; Business Manager, G. Schuman, Inc., 4 East 43rd St., N. Y. City. 2. That the names are: C. DeLancey, Inc., 2 East 43rd St., New York City; Northampton State of America, 2 Jefferson, 2 East 43rd St., New York City; Society of Congress, 2 East 43rd Street, New York City. 3. That the names, qualifications, and other details follow, ending on listing 1, are read, or some of the full amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: State of Kansas, 2 East 43rd St., New York City; State of California, 112 East 43rd St., New York City. 4. That the above paragraphs and others, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or persons for whom such trustee is acting, to give the fact that the said two paragraphs contain statements concerning affidavits of knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and qualifications upon which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, joint stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner and their effect has no reason to believe that any other person, association or corporation has any interest therein, or interest in the said stock, bonds, or other securities there in as stated by the signatories of either O. G. Sennock, DeLancey, Inc. and authorized below on this 24th day of March, 1916. (Read) M. CAROL DANIELS: (My commission expires March 20th, 1916.)



# THE MUSICAL QUARTERLY

VOL. VII

JULY, 1921

NO. 3

## AMERICA IN THE ARTS

By BARBETTE DEUTSCH

**A**N American poet declares that poetry is in advance of music in this country, thereby opening up a controversy fascinating to poets and composers alike. The substance of this condemnation, if so harsh a word is here permissible, is that the composer has failed to develop a national school, a genuinely American music. German classicism, French impressionism, Italian lyricism have a stamp of their own, which, whether one like it or not, one recognizes as peculiar to itself. But while there are American composers who speak with an individual accent, no group they have failed to cultivate or to define a national idiom.

The poets, on the other hand, as many competent musicians agree, have triumphed over the diversity of a huge and complex group. They have hearkened to the voice of Whitman, the great keynote,

*Prose to come! meters, images, musicians to come!*  
Not to-day is to justify me and answer what I see for,  
But you, a new breed, actors, athletes, craftsmen,  
greater than before, buyers,  
Answer! for you must justify me.

*I myself but write now or two indicative words for the future,  
I but advance a moment only to what and hurry back  
in the darkness.*

*I see a man who, continuing along without fully stopping,  
turns a casual look upon you and thenceforth his face,  
Leaving to you to prove and define it,  
Expecting the main things from you.*

In the Chicago Poems of Carl Sandburg, in the Spenser River Anthology these few indicative words are proven and defined

with a vigor and a vividness not matched by the musicians, whom, it will be noted, Whitman calls upon equally with the poets.

The fundamental question, however, is not which of the arts leads, but rather what is "our hundred per cent. American," artistically speaking. What spirit informs Whitman and Hartman and Sandberg that distinguishes them from their English neighbors, as well as from the best of minor American poets? Contrast Pound and T. S. Eliot with Alfred Huxley, and discover what curious streak of native wit sets them off from the smooth numbers of the author of "Leda." Louis Untermeyer claims that the essential character of American poetry as such is easy youth and energy. But these terms are inadequate to describe as definitely an American poet as Emily Dickinson, whose lyrics, Mr. Untermeyer regretfully notes, have not been set by any American composer. The musician themselves have been at some pains to define this elusively element. Daniel Gregory Mason, whose friendship with William Vaughn Moody would entitle him to speak if he had never made any of his own interesting contributions to the world of arts and letters, translates energy into high nervous tension, and youth into constant restless motion. This definition, which is also a criticism, may be true of the cities, but it fails to account for a Robert Frost, whose London could not divert from his view of north of Boston, or for the serene and sharp penetration of an Edward Arlington Robinson. Mason, seeking a spiritual strength which he does not find in the post-boiling host of potential bursters of ovens, confesses that it is easier to describe what Americanism is not is not than what it is.

This confession of its negative character is faintly an implication that American culture is polyglot. It is obvious that an artist expressing the Oriental color and golden bloom of California would not be expending at the same moment the overhauling anti-balls, the steel strength of Eastern cities. The poet—using the word generically to include the composer—who treats of the heartiest Savannah does not sing as well of the Great Lakes.

One of the reasons why it is hard to talk about American culture is that we have no American capital from which it naturally flows. Abroad, in France or Germany, in Italy or Austria or even Russia, the capital has long been the cultural center. Paris or Petrograd, London or Vienna were for years almost solitary bastions, flanking their rays into the furthest corners of the dark provinces. The United States, on the contrary, because it boasts more these capitals, has actually none. The nervous streak of New York clashes strictly against the Anglified Boston accent;

the polite voice of the Black Bay is drowned by the raucous shout of Chicago. There is no cultural *modus vivendi*. One is apt to despair with Mr. Mason, to say simply that American music is not French or German or Italian, on the one hand, and that it is not Indian or Negro, on the other.

This view of a polyglot people is not the least difficulty in the way of establishing a coherent individual art-form. The composer, as Leo Sowerby affirms, is thereby driven back to mere imitation. He instances many who are composing very fine music which, because it is largely influenced by French, Russian, or German models, is neither individual nor national in character. As examples of distinctively American music, he brings forward the first movement of John Alden Carpenter's *Symphony*, parts of his *Concertos*, and the last movement of Dr. Lamarter's *Sonata* for the violin. These things Sowerby describes as one even by virtue of their big sweep, their vigor, their lack of sentimentality, affectation and diffuseness. As a matter of fact, sentimentality is one of the great American vices, or virtues, as one chooses to see it. Even Whitman is sentimental, and no one would ever clear him of the charge of diffuseness. One is brought up sharply by the question as to whether Edin Wheeler Wilcox and Carrig Jacobs Bond or John Gould Fletcher and John Powell are more representative of these States. But putting this aside for the moment, as not immediately relevant, we are brought back to Leo Sowerby's declaration that while Carpenter, Dr. Lamarter, Powell and Henry F. Gilbert equal in power and exceed in technique parts of the work of Poulton, Minster, Sandberg and Lindsay, he finds that in such cases the composers' idiom, as distinguished from the poets', is more a purely personal than a national one. Sowerby's disposition of the use of Indian or Negro tune-stuff as misdirected energy or sheer laziness opens up fresh fields for argument.

For Indian and Negro melodies are our closest approach to the folk-song. And it is the lack of this basic foundation of a national art, declare many critics, that invalidates any discussion of American music. Sowerby's stress upon our Anglo-Saxon tradition should point at the same time to another source of folk-music. The Creole songs of Louisiana, the tradition of English balladry, even more, which still abides on the rocky trails of Kentucky and Virginia, are too often neglected.

But it is interesting to note that the folk-song itself is being brought into question. As too many cooks spoil the broth, so the number of cooks confined in our national melting-pot preclude the dominance of any particular strain. Nor can any profusely

popular art develop within three hundred years. So the lovers of folk-song lament. Against such argument there is at least one American composer who lifts a protestant voice. According to Emerson Whitthorne we are crying for the moon, nay, we are bowing for a void. Properly speaking, there is no such thing as a folk-song. Any artist who has worked in collaboration should be quick to grasp Mr. Whitthorne's point. The conception of a group creating an art-work is actually as reasonable a notion as that of Rousseau's leafless orange. This does not mean that there can be no personal contribution to art. There is no question but that any genuinely popular melody or ballad or dance-step or the very vulgar metaphor which we despise as slang may change in the process of acceptance. But all of these are the invention of an individual. So too a folk-song, if one examines its elements, is nothing more nor less than a popular catch. It is a song not created widely and spontaneously by a group—but almost surely re-created by the group. It is like the street-ballad which the organ-grinder whistles out before your window, like any bit of rag-time cheered by an approving audience. In its pristine state there is small difference between the production of a trouvère of Provence or of an Irving Berlin.

It is curious that of all the composers who rush to their own defense none of them mentions the significant potentialities in jazz and syncopation. These are the folk-music of America, whether the musician likes it or not. Lindsey knows it.

The banjo rattled, and the tin-can-chorus  
 Beg-beg-jiggle-jiggle for the hands of Queens!

and

Fat black books in a wire-haired corset,  
 Bowed loose rings, with feet unstable,  
 Sagged and redolent and pounded on the table,  
 Frothed on the table,  
 Beat an empty barrel with the handle of a broom,  
 Bled as they were able,  
 Boom, boom, BOOM,—  
 With a silk umbrella and the handle of a broom,  
 Broomer, broomier, broomier, BOOM,  
 THEN I had religion, then I had a vision,  
 I could not see from their road in delusion,  
 THEN I SAW THE CAN-DO-CREEPING THROUGH  
 THE BLACK,  
 Cutting through the Jungle with a palm-branch

It may easily be discredited, as having its roots in that negro tune-stuff, these African rhythms from which we strive to

entertain themselves. But it has something else, something that is essential to folk-music all over the world: the stamp of popular approval. It is a fact worth noting that the national anthem never is sung with the same hearty joy and strong emotion with which an audience, even of Northerners, greets the tune of "Dixie."

Admitting all this, one cannot help admitting at the same time that parts of the culture of Masters and Sandberg, poetry like "Mountain Interval" or "The Golden Whales of California," have a quality which is not to be found even in the music of Charles T. Griffes or Henry F. Gilbert. The poets are apt to overlook one of the chief reasons for their own relatively rapid progress. Certainly many of them go the primrose path of popularity, rather than toil to create either a national or a distinctly individual art. But the musicians, giving themselves to an ideal, have a yet harder row to hoe. Mason cites Cesar Franck, working in obscurity forty years, teaching piano to Parisian schoolgirls for a few francs, despised by the academic and the fashionable musical world, as an example of what the composer's struggle must too often be. Mason recommends this arduous ungrateful labor to the talented musician. Mason Basser explains the slow development of music in America as due to the posing of so strenuous an ideal. And Emerson Whitborne sets the "Y" and crosses the "N" by writing musical comedies to Governor Moore's libretto:

He who only looks for fame  
 Expresses a silly folly,  
 I can't show you any more  
 Or look down in a hip  
 And—oh shameful truth to utter!  
 I can't live on bread and butter.

The path of Paganini is difficult enough, even mounted upon Pegasus, when the editorial complex regarding public taste clings to the bridle. But if the poet finds recognition slow to come, the composer has more reason to complain. For the musician's lot, like the policeman's in the famous ballad, is not a happy one. In the first place, the medium employed by the composer is far more stubborn than that which the poet uses. The latter is using the oldest and most familiar stuff in his world. It is a common joke that words are a means to cerebral thought, and it may be a corollary that they are a means to express emotion. By the same token, music may say more simply and more fully what the algebraic symbols of literature fail to convey. Nevertheless, the poet has the advantage of the composer because while

he has to learn technique, he does not have to learn the very medium in which he works. Edmund Spellingham Hill describes the situation very nicely when he declares that music, unlike poetry, is "a language . . . painfully acquired . . . with few of the instinctive qualities of a mother-tongue."

Furthermore, as Mr. Hill eloquently points out, the student is apt to learn it with a strong German accent or a French turn of phrase. The very process of learning, influences his ultimate appreciation of the thing learned, and the future manner in which he uses it. "Madly," writes Mr. Hill, "we are still nervous riders, striving to speak grammatically . . . still perplexed as to how to use our musical knives and forks . . . and much inclined to answer 'yes, ma'am' and 'yes, sir' in artistic scruffity."

But the difference between the poet's read and the composer's is far greater than this. One can master a typewriter in a few weeks, while the task of writing out laborious scores must inevitably and continuously take precious time from the business of composition. An editor, particularly during a crisis in the paper market, may be hard to reach. But a conductor who will give a hearing to one's scores, much less undertake to give it orchestral presentation, or a music publisher who will risk the enormous expense of engraving plates for a book of sonatas, are creatures altogether exceptional. Putting aside for the moment the question of his personal gift and his mastery of technique, the sheer mechanical difficulties which the composer must face are as vital as they are insuperable. And there is no end, not merely to making books, but to making solos and symphonies.

The hope of American musicians, like that of American poets, seems to lie not so much in striving to establish a school, nor even to express an Americanism which is overlaid with older traditions. It lies rather in a frank acknowledgment of their problems, in a sincere effort to express a personality colored by environment but not created by it. The artist is eccentric rather than eclectic, but not for the sake of eccentricity. He is conservative in his appreciation of the foreign tradition from Palestrina to Stravinsky. He is radical in his effort to get at the roots of an art that reflects the oldest emotions in the world, in the terms of his contemporary apprehensions of them.



## THE THINGS WE SET TO MUSIC

By A. WALTER KRAMER

WHO is not familiar with the novelists' proverbial ignorance of music? how they, in all seriousness, picture their characters listening to "a symphony by Palestrina" or "an opera by Brahms?" Less familiar is the world with the composer's ignorance of poetry. In, knowing that a Schubert set to music poems of Goethe, that a Schumann made his "Dichterlieder" cycle of Heine's immortal verses, we are oblivious of the many songs that the masters composed to poems by men of the fourth or fifth rank. Take Schubert and his "Der Tod und das Mädchen," the poem by Matthias Claudius. Who was Matthias Claudius? Unremembered outside of Germany for his verses, had not Schubert elevated him to a partnership in a master-song. Too many composers in days gone by, as well as in our own time, seem to have proceeded on the notion that their music was the thing, that any kind of a poem was usable. Needless to enumerate the many posturers, who have been honored by association in the order of the great composers, the Schubert song cited above will serve to make my point.

Before the name of Hugo Wolf I must pause. His are the greatest of all songs, as Ernest Newman has told us and as those of us who have studied them and pondered them have found out. Here was a composer who valued poetry, who understood it, who penetrated deep into its very marrow before he began to think of writing music for it. His declamation of the poems of his songs, we are told, was thrilling, and in the recitals of his songs in which he took part in the early days, he always precluded the singing of his songs with the reciting of the poems. Wolf realized that music came to him, and I am sure that it came to all serious song-composers, through the poem; that the quality of the music is dependent on the quality of the poem. Therefore, it is the duty of the musician, so Wolf held, to sacrifice a melodic line, when the verse demanded it, rather than to bend the poet's thought to fit the musical phrase. He knew that when the latter is done, the poet's words are rendered unintelligible. If you wish to write songs, in which the words are not understandable, why use words at all? Wolf, quite early in his career, after composing songs to poems by Rückert, Hebel, Reinick, Morike, Schell, Goethe, Körner, Heine, Byron, Gottfried Keller, came to the

thought and conviction that a composer devote himself to setting to music the many poems of a few poets who were dear to his heart, instead of poems of many poets. I do not say that this could be the procedure for every composer; in the case of some men whose taste is less concentrated it would not be done with any success. But let none think that it deprives a composer of variety! Wolf composed the bulk of his songs to poems of the poets whom he loved most, Eduard Mörike, his best loved, Goethe, whom he prized as does every artist, Paul Heyse and Eichendorff. Variety? Is there anything more varied than "So lang man wüßten wir" and "Hoch beglückt in deiner Liebe," both by Goethe, or the "Nun bin ich dein" and "Schon strich' ich aus im Bett" both by Heyse, or the superb "Gebot" and "Mausfällensprecherin," both by Mörike? There is enough variety in the great poetry; it requires a composer of literary discrimination and poetic appreciation to choose. That is all.

My attention was recently called to a statement made in the *Christian Science Monitor* by Louis Untermeyer. More than ordinary value attaches to a consideration of this, because Mr. Untermeyer is one of the exceptions that prove the rule. He is a poet and literary critic, who, I am informed, has a very definite appreciation and understanding of music. In an interview Mr. Untermeyer said that he felt that our contemporary composers in America were very far behind our poets, that we have no creative musicians, except those whose productions were imitative of composers of other countries. He complained that he had not found "adequate musical settings" of Emily Dickinson, Bliss Carman, Carl Sandburg. He complained, too, that he had found no acceptable songs on Walt Whitman's poems by America's composers. I do not agree with Mr. Untermeyer when he says that we have no really creative composers. I know we have, my reason for knowing it is simply that I have followed the output of young American creative musicians far more closely than he has. I know Sandburg, I know Vachel Lindsay—but I am ready to admit that there are probably a hundred names of very individual young American men and women poets, with whose work Mr. Untermeyer is familiar and of whom I have not even heard. I have not mentioned and I do not intend to mention, though I easily could, composers' names to match the doughty names Mr. Untermeyer has put down as leaders in our poetry. But I must cite a great Whitman song for Mr. Untermeyer. Let him turn to "Out of the Helling Gears" by Marshall Kernachan of New York. That song is twelve years old, it was published in

1908: Mr. Kernohan is a composer with a literary sense; his songs are settings of Browning, Kipling, Hooley, William Morris. I know of one other Whitman song by him, the buoyant "We Two Together," full of the blaze of the sun, a song that really pulses with the poem.

It is true that I cannot speak of composers who have specialized in Whitman, or in Sandburg. I agree with Mr. Untermyer that too little of our best poetry is set to music by our composers. But that our composers are far behind our poets I will not concede. Our modern movement in American poetry with its freedom of form is surely not an American innovation. Mr. Untermyer would not care to have me indicate from which European nation's poetry this impulse was received by our younger poets. It is an open secret.

I believe, as a matter of fact, that we are writing too much in America to-day, both verse and music. And with the profits, comes, hand in hand, the mediocrity. Persons are writing songs, who have neither the talent to conceive, nor the ability to execute a conception. Many of these have a taste of some kind, to which they either "fit" a poem, or, worse still, engage someone to write a text. When the product appears from the publisher, the public naturally wonders why such trash has been set to music. Little do they know that the bad music had preceded the creation of the wretched verse. Result: a wretched song. Again, too many composers of real talent write their songs to poems by their friends. A delightful and notable gold mine, to be sure, but in the pursuing of it these composers do not set some poems of significant worth that they otherwise would. I make this statement after an investigation of several cases; it is not an utterance based on speculation. Then, there is the lack of real culture in many a singer, which the composer, anxious to have his songs sung—and most composers are—takes into account. A composer told me that he had done a song, in which the word "anecdote" occurred; he had shown the song to some ten singers and all ten stopped at the word and asked what it meant and how to pronounce it. Dear Mr. Untermyer still wonder why he cannot find a living American composer who has devoted himself in his songs to the poems of Walt, as Wolf did to those of M<sup>ö</sup>rike, for example?

And now a word about the so-called "lyric," which composer after composer seems to think is what he ought to set to music. A song is published with the information on it: "Lyric by So-and-So." I can understand this in popular sense, for that is probably where the misuse of the word "lyric" was inaugurated. But it

take me the wrong way when it is carried over into music of the better type. These "lyrics" are the productions of tenth-rate rhymesters who flourish both here and in England. I do not know if the practice still prevails as it did five years or more ago, when these authors of pretty, little nothings (which they dubbed "lyrics") used to have small brochures of their trash printed, and send them to composers everywhere, offering them their verses "for sale." When these awful bagatelles arrived in the home of a musician whose poetic instinct was questionable, three or four of them were chosen and three or four songs in terms of no literary or any other value resulted.

My desire is to avoid personalities in this article. Otherwise I would gladly mention some of these "lyric-writers" and give them a little of the publicity they deserve. Everything is a "lyric" to these postasters; and in order that their output will fit its title, they write about roses, yew, love, heart, sunshines, eyes, smiles, etc. And the songs that are made of them are, of course, limited in character by these extraordinarily varied subjects! That is why a person looking over fifty new American songs so often finds that they are all about the same thing—sometimes as many as two or three of the list of things I have just enumerated. For ten years I have reviewed new music as it comes from the publishers. And in support of what I have said about the big amount of bad verse that is being set, I can in all sincerity and truth record here that I always get a shock, when on opening a package of new music, I find a group or two of songs that are settings of fine poems. Of course we have composers who set Flaubert, Poe, Browning, Arthur Symonds, Ernest Dowson, Oscar Wilde, Shelley. But they are in the minority. Let me make clear once more that the quality of the music is heightened by fine poetry, that not even a Hugo Wolf or a Henri Duparc could make a beautiful song of the trash, on which so many of our good composers spend their time. I know what will be answered in regard to the matter of setting great poems by men who have passed away. I shall be told that they have been done before, and that a new setting of a poem that has already served for a song is not desired; that publishers will not wish to print it; that singers will not wish to sing it.

This brings me to the crux of the whole discussion. I doubt if there is anyone who has a deeper respect and warmer sympathy for the music publisher than myself, for I am aware of his having to sink thousands of dollars each year in totally uncommensurate music. He is in a business which has in it elements both of art and commerce. Therefore, what I am about to say, is in all kindness

Composers are thinking too much about singers and publishers, publishers are worrying too much about singers and how many of their publications they will place on their programs. There is a blur of business over the whole concert-world, which is an influence quite as pernicious as militarism in an empire. Sidney Homer, a composer, I am glad to say, who never pret to make anything that is not verse of a respectable order, told me last winter in a conversation on general musical conditions that the idea of recitals, public performances, etc., was one of real detriment to the serious-minded composer. Did Sebastian write his "Nachtweim" with any thought in mind of how often it would be sung, how quickly it would be published or how many copies would be sold? or Brahms his "Mahnacht"? And yet these are the things that our song-composers, full seventy per cent. of them, are cogitating. (I am throughout speaking only of our song-composers, as the title of my article indicates.) Let the men who have songs to write forget that there is such a thing as a publisher when they do they will not accept as subjects to be set to music the dried that the dynasties after them, calculated by these dynasties to please a public. The composer will then find in real poetry a true and genuine source for composition. Then an art-song of our day will grow in beauty in America as it has elsewhere, in France in the songs of Duparc, Chausson, Debussy, Ravel, in Germany and Austria in the *Lieder* of Strauss, Hugo, Pfitzner, Erich Wolf, Josef Marx, Mahler; in England in the songs of Eugène Goossens, Cyril Scott, Roger Quilter, Arnold Bax and in Italy in the songs of Zandonai, Respighi, Turchisiani, Pizzetti and Malipiero.

At a concert in Chicago some few years ago a prima donna sang an American song, composed to a "lyric" so exquisite that Felix Boronick was moved to quote it in his review of the concert the next day and to berate the composer for wasting his time on such doggerel. I quote it here: it belongs to a class my feelings on this subject, one that is so important for the future of the American art-song. Here it is:

Just one thought of me, Jean,  
 One sweet thought of mine,  
 It will drive all sadness  
 From this heart of mine.

Drive away all grief, Jean,  
 Life's crowding care,  
 Just one thought of me, Jean,  
 Holy, pure and fair.

This is just one of the things we set to music!

## IMPRESSIONS OF OPERA IN FRANCE

By GEORGE CECIL.

ALL things considered, opera is given in France under favourable conditions. True, it flourishes elsewhere in Europe, often yielding the entrepreneur a handsome profit on his outlay, and mostly pleasing the audience. Yet, odious though comparisons may be, according to the copy-book, the cold fact remains that the average performance in Italy, Germany, Hungary, Austria, Switzerland, Scandinavia, and in those countries which border on the nearer East, is less satisfying than the average performance in France. It may please the easily satisfied person, in whom an evening's outing merely is a means towards an end, a method of passing the hours between dinner and bed time. But the true connoisseur, who understands music and its interpretation, would award the palm to France.

### PELLAGI OF OPERA.

Ever since I can remember, it has been the custom amongst old habits of opera houses the world over to compare the present performers with their predecessors, and to the detriment of the former. A hundred and fifty years ago, an English patron of opera published a little book in which he complained that the singers of his time could not vie with those introduced by Handel. Paris is no exception. According to capricious critics, the brightest stars of to-day are but the pale shadows of the stars which scintillated ten, twenty, thirty—any number of years ago. And they generally are right. The voices frequently are of excellent quality, but the manner in which they are used, occasionally leaves something to be desired. Whether these artists have been in too great a hurry to make their debut, and, consequently, have not devoted sufficient time to the plating of the voice, or whether they have fallen into the hands of advertising quacks, this depends knoweth not. It is, however, beyond dispute that the material is not always employed to the best advantage.

Fortunately, the French lyric stage is graced by Renaud the incomparable, and Lakmé, that most admirable basso-chestnut, whose mere use in "El tal, Paris" helps to redeem "Sigurd"

from its atmosphere of abysmal dullness. *Misandria*, too, contributes to the prestige of French opera, for is not her charming and flexible voice especially heard to advantage in works of the "Bigoletto" and "Lakmé" type? Demougeot is another really fine artist, her *Tosca* being a thing to remember with genuine pleasure, and Vanni Marcoux is one of the several clever singers to whom the negroes of art indebted. Frazer, who heads the tenors at the Paris Opera, like Chirubin, goes "from success to success," the penetrating volume of his chest notes (which he emits with such reliable ease) invariably enrapturing his hearers; and Renaud, the baritone, another pillar of the establishment, is the laggard possessor of one of those "yours", even voices which recall Gounod, who flourished about the year 'one.

The beautiful Valandri also upholds the best traditions of opera in France. Her voice, which is of such good quality, is used in a manner which satisfies the severe critic, and her singing has a charm all its own. Indeed, the *Opéra Comique* revival of "*Les Noces de Figaro*" owes much of its continuous success to her fascinating *Suzanne*, and to her interpretation of the delicious air in the last act—which rings in one's ears long after the performance is over. Scauzat's exceptionally fine organ is another valuable asset, its sonority awakening the echoes of the Opera.

From time to time *Buffalini*, in whom survives the almost lost art of *il bel canto*, is heard in Paris. The beauty of his ever fresh voice, the penetrating quality of his famous upper notes, the smoothness of his singing, and the perfection of his coloratura, come as a revelation to the very appreciative audience. He is the only Italian singer who is engaged "en représentation" at the Opera.

#### ONE-TIME OPERAS.

Although the changes often have been rung on the Opera and the Opera Comique, the same of the *Théâtre Lyrique* and the *Opéra Lyrique* apparently have not travelled far beyond Paris. Yet both are admirably managed institutions, with an invariably interesting repertoire, while the singing frequently is satisfactory and the acting most admirable. The prices of admission, too, are more or less moderate, for an orchestra stall, or a seat in the first balcony, costs comparatively little, and if you prefer the discomfort of an already small chair in a cramped box, you pay but a few francs for the privilege of being uncomfortable. The stalls, by the way, rejoice in a "rider"; and selfishly inclined

ladies are not allowed to obstruct the view of the stage with monstrous head-gears—thank Heaven! Therefore, as the singing is usually more than adequate, and the programme often a particularly well-chosen one, it must be admitted that the entertainment yields value for money.

The repertoire at the Théâtre Lyrique is a boon to those who hunger after the little-known and forgotten. Here are performed Grétry's old-time "Richard, Cœur de Lion," with the famous air "Richard, O mon Roi", the same composer's amazing "Les Deux Avares", "Mendigo's "Le Disserteur", in which there is a wealth of fine music, and Paër's "Le Maître de Chapelle". The last-named often is given, and if the Théâtre Lyrique has times do not quite altogether memorable of Pons-Carré, buffo and singer of the first order, who sang the rôle in Italy, their intentions at least are excellent, while they sometimes are fulfilled. As is the custom in *opéra comique*, a vast amount of talking goes on, and spoken lines take the place of sung recitative. This is to be regretted, as, in addition to boring the listener who wishes to hear singing, and not chattering, conversation is extremely bad for the voice. Besides, it reduces an *opéra* to the level of that most unexciting entertainment, musical comedy.

Other works which are performed include "Le Barbier de Séville", which, despite the French origin of its "book", is infinitely preferable in Italian, "La Traviata", "Madame Butterfly", "La Vie de Bohème", "Le Postillon de Longjumeau" (no soldier heard outside France), "Véronique", "Les Noces de Jeanette", "Paul et Virginie", "Le Trouvère", and "Le Châlet" (chiefly remembered by "Vallons d'Héroïsme"). Novelties apparently are not encouraged, and that perhaps is as well, for the music of latter-day French composers of *opéra* is more remarkable for mediocrity than for unusual feeling.

The Gaîté Lyrique is the home of *opéra bouffe*, *opéra foper* and *opérette*. Several of the pieces performed there, such as "La Cocarde de Mimi Pinson", "Les Vingt Huit Jours de Clémence" and "L'Archange Tukul-Bukol" contain some pretty and melodious music, which generally is well sung, while the acting invariably is good. Offenbach and Lecocq also "fill the bill", drawing off Paris—as in the days of the famous Hortense Schneider, who sang in so many of these jocular comedettes. Occasionally reforms is sought by engaging some well known artist from the Opéra Comique. Last year, for example, Faugé and Carré appeared in "La Belle Héloïse" of Offenbach, and, lured by the unusual combination, Parisians flocked to the theatre night



after night. Jean Prier also was transferred—temporarily—from the Opéra Comique to the light opera stage, having sung in "Véronique". The versatile artist's critics are divided into two camps; those who, while deploring his limited vocal means, go into raptures over his acting, and those who declare that opera demands a voice and that the performer who has a good one should not seek fame on the lyric stage. Yet the intrepid Prier has appeared in many parts, including Don Juan, Lutharis and Merval, thus securing a baritone, basso-obtuse and tenor rôle. "*Il dit et il ne s'il est si les comédien*", gives an admirer in whose perfect diction, distinct enunciation and clever acting mean everything. "*A quel bon pain ça'd s'a pas de voir*", snaps the critic. Luckily for French performers whose voice is not their most prized possession, singers of the Prier type enjoy a success which they would scarcely meet with elsewhere. In Italy, for instance, voice, and plenty of it, is insisted upon, and in England the reputed critics are so hopelessly ignorant, and the taste of the public is so appealingly bad, that mediocrity, even untrained belting, is appreciated to an alarming extent.

Meanwhile, in Paris, art conceals art, and with a vengeance! Tenors (especially tenors) come and go; but the old brigade, like the brook, goes on for ever. Their reputation in some cases has been founded on diction, and, long after the voice has lost its prime freshness, the performer continues to enjoy the favour of the management, and of the public. . . . "My dear, to-morrow is our silver wedding, say, let's go and hear ——— in ———. We last heard him on it the day we were married; and they say his diction is better than ever." Thus Darcy and Jean. . . .

#### PROVINCIAL OPERA.

In the provinces a different order of things prevails. The grossness of singing certainly meet with due appreciation, for, go where you will, French amateurs are excellent judges of the details which make up the perfect singer. A neatly executed run, a smoothly rounded turn, an effective crescendo, mastery over the difficult descenders, and so forth, are immensely appreciated by them. At the same time, they generally demand a more or less good voice, though a good voice badly used leaves them absolutely cold, and very properly, too. The French provincial public is by the way of being a critical one; and if attempts are made to faint on it second-rate singers, the local opera house quickly loses its patron. Perhaps that is why one gets such satisfactory

performers at the *Bonnes Théâtre des Arts*, the famous theatre where "Samson et Dalila" had its premiere in France. Alice Ravana, whose Charlotte intensifies the fascinations of "Werther", has appeared there, as also have Chénal (the handsome and stately Chénal), Demougeot, Darnet, and many other artists of note. The *Lillois* themselves also pride themselves on their critical faculty. Catholic as to taste, the *Lillois* listen as readily to "Les Cloches de Corneville" as they do to "La Traviata", but they refuse to put up with bad singing. However great the baritone's reputation, let him take liberties with the time, and he will not be invited to pay a return visit. The *Cantors* of the occasion may look the part to perfection, but, if, like Patti and Nordica, she has failed to give expression to the music, *Lille* will have none of her. *Lille*, in short, is proud of its reputation, and loses no opportunity of letting the unwary visitor know it. A really patriotic *Lillois* will tell you that his native town is even more exacting than Barcelona, where Caruso, it is said, could not live up to the reforms which was made for him in advance of his arrival. However, Caruso is not likely to sing in *Lille*: he probably is too expensive a luxury. . . . .

Criticism is less acute in *Calais* and *Beaugre*. And that is only right, for, the chorus being recruited from the local fishing element, one feels that neither the *Calaisiens* nor the *Beaugreais* would be justified in demanding too much of the principals. Stalwart and well built, these nautical choristers certainly cut a fine figure, and if they are not born singers—well. Like the accompanist at the mining camp concert, they do their best. There is also possessed its *Opéra House*, the leading *Française* artists appearing there, while the large towns of the *Midi* and elsewhere are strongholds of opera. *Nantes*, *Bordeaux*, *Lyon*, *Toulouse* and *Marseille* being amongst them. The public, while not hypercritical, demands adequate artists, and none beside the *impresario*, who, trusting to luck, or to the indulgence of the audience, endeavours to pick off on his patrons a spacious article. Hedged by the subscribers, and attacked by the local papers, he will run the day that he tried to make money at the expense of his clients (in France anybody who pays for anything is a "client"). He may even lose the subscription without which costs cannot be expected to meet.

#### Riviera Opera.

Opera on the *Riviera* is a thing apart. At Monte Carlo, where the spring season is run to render the place additionally

attractive, rather than as a money-making proposition, an expense is spared upon this laudable endeavour. The reviews of the most renowned singers from all parts of the world are secured, and Raoul Gunsbourg, for so many years director of operatic affairs, makes a special feature of the scenery and costumes. A certain number of new works are produced, some of which find their way to other theatres, "Chirubin", "Thaïs", "Le Jongleur de Notre Dame", "Don Quichotte" and many another Massenet opera having been amongst them. Some, less fortunate, are seldom heard of again, while others, at the end of the season, are consigned to the dust of oblivion. This, however, is not to be wondered at; one can only marvel that they should ever have been produced. Nice, Monte Carlo's next door neighbour, enjoys in two theatres where opera is given, one of which forms part and parcel of the Casino. Here, as also at Monte Carlo, during the waits the audience looks in at the tables, the intervals being arranged so that the punters have plenty of time in which to lose more than they can afford. Cannes also enters for opera-lovers, and very well, too. Last year, for instance, with a view to contrast, "Don Giovanni" was given in Italian with Battistini, and shortly afterwards in French with Renaud. As both artists are famous in the rôle, and as each has his own ideas as to how the part should be sung, played and dressed, upon these two important occasions the house was crowded with experienced judges anxious to compare the two renderings. Indeed, the inscription was a flash of genius; the Legion of Honour has been bestowed for less. . .

From time to time, French operas undergo their first baptism of criticism at Nice. A few come through the ordeal with flying colours; others wear afterwards languish in obscurity, and it is to be feared that they deserve their fate. Though well performed and adequately mounted, they lack that very essential thing, sustained interest. Really, some composers positively have flown in the face of Providence. Their work shows manuscript galore; constructional skill is lavished on each page of the score; and there is no lack of originality. But these abortive attempts to win fame and fortune are doomed to failure at the very outset, for they are nothing, more or less, than a tone-poem set to words, or words set to a tone-poem, whichever way you like to look at it. Melody apparently is the last consideration of these well-meaning geniuses. In France, as in other countries, it is considered by those who pay for the privilege of listening, that music without melody defeats its purpose. This possibly is the reason that

Massenet is so popular throughout France. The "high brows" jibe at him as a feminist composer of sagely ditties intended for the debilitation of sentimental men and women incapable of appreciating really well thought-out music; music with a purpose. They will tell you, was beyond Massenet, and that he severely is less trivial than Bellini. In justice to the dead composer, it may be pointed out that if his "purpose" was to provide managers with operas which draw large audiences, he, at least, did not descend to writing rubbish, and that in nearly all his scores, original and distinctive melody, page upon page of it, is to be found. He certainly never claimed to be a master of orchestration, but his accompaniments invariably fit in with the words and with the situation, while the simple harmonies which he employs always are appropriate. In a word, respect for Massenet is not lessened by the popularity of his successful works.

It may be noted that singers of eminence have associated themselves with several of the operas which of late years have been produced at Riviera theatres. Calva, for example, headed the cast at the premiere of Reynaldo Hahn's "Le Carrotte; Chabriere (Bazzano) declare that he still is in the land of the living) appeared in "Don Quichotte" and Mary Garden in "Cervantes," and Renaud created the part of Rinaldo in "Le Jongleur"—as "Le Jongleur de Notre Dame" is affectionately known in operatic circles. Saint-Saëns' "Hélène" also had its first performance under happy auspices, Melis singing the title rôle.

#### UNSUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCES.

Opera is so well established in Paris, and there is so much of it, that fresh enterprises seldom meet with success, even when success is merited. Recently, for example, the Vaudeville Theatre was renamed the Théâtre Lyrique, newly decorated, swept and garnished, and opened as an opera house, in opposition, perhaps to the Opéra-Comique. A start was made with Massenet's "Cléopâtre," a work in which, alas, the composer does not show to his customary advantage. An almost interminable string of Cléopâtres, including Mary Garden and Kraussirsdorf, were amongst the attractions, and Renaud, as Marc Antoine, invested the music with all the distinction of which he is so complete a master. "Il Barbiere" with an Italian cast, and "Tannhauser," a new, and, it must be confessed, disappointing work, were included in the repertoire. So, too, was the unequal "Méphistofele,"

with Fauci Maccoeur's artistic reading of the same part. The novelty, however, did not fulfil the hopes of its promoters. Good houses owed their appearance largely to *Mlle de France*, and the expenses were heavy. "Will anyone make money out of it?" asked the gossips. "Yes" was the reply, "the artists will." For the management has money to burn. Presumably they burned it, since, after a few weeks, the undertaking proved to be but an ephemeral affair, and the *Théâtre Lyrique* once more became, as of old, the *Vaudeville*. Comedy is now played there. *Sic French*. The *Théâtre des Champs Elysées*, which consists of a large and a small theatre, also has again been turned to operatic account, with a revival of "Que Vadis," in which *Buffarini* made a few welcome appearances. The season, however, did not endure very long. Perhaps the poster, which gave the impression that "Que Vadis" is a circus, rather than an opera, failed to impress the public. A season of Italian opera also was tried, the diverting and melodious "Don Pasquale" of Donizetti being the opening attraction. Owing to the difficulties in obtaining a license to keep the theatre open later than eleven o'clock, and to the appalling impunctuality which obtains in French social circles, the final act, with the alarming direction, "Tornano a die," had to be cut. With this insignificant opening the venture came to an end. Its untimely demise is to be regretted, for in a music-loving and cosmopolitan town like Paris, Italian operas performed in the vernacular, and by competent Italian singers, might prove a "draw." Such works, especially those of a semi-buffe type, when sung in French leave something to be desired, while the Italian language is in itself a delight and an education to those who possess a musical ear. Southern artists certainly do not always rely for their effects upon the graces of singing, as do the French; their habit of showing off the voice by holding on to a note with all the breath in their bodies does not commend itself to an audience whose taste has been cultivated in a more refined school. But, as practice is said to make perfect, just as a succession of errors may lead to ultimate success, there is no reason why intelligent Italian singers should not learn to sing according to the dictates of Paris taste.

It may be added that Italian opera always was, still is, and probably always will be popular in Paris. With its lingua *Toscana* as an added endowment, a well managed season should add to the gaiety of the town, and, incidentally, put money into the pocket of its impresario. Stranger things have happened in the operatic world. . .

## VARIOUS MATTERS

Certain opera seldom are heard outside Paris, while others, except for an occasional revival, are relegated to the provincial provinces. "Guguzeta," "La Légende de St. Christophe," "La Rotisserie de La Rue Pénelapue (the plot of which is taken from Anatole France's book of the same name) and several others, do not travel, but "Guillaume Tell" and "Les Huguenots" apparently have been made over to the provinces. Not is it surprising that the two last-named seldom are heard in Paris, for it rarely must be admitted that they have many dull moments. It is difficult, too, to find a competent tenor for the rôle of Arnold, Boccaï having written specifically for Madsén's not particularly interesting lover. As to "Les Huguenots," almost every dramatic soprano, mezzo-soprano, contralto, tenor, baritone, bass-chorus and bass throughout the realm of opera knows this abominably long work. Consequently, it can be put on at short notice. "Huguenots to-morrow night," were the provincial manager to his Paris agent, "can you send me a Raoul, a St. Ives and a Valentine?" "Can send you three of each" is the reassuring answer. The same-part in "Guillaume Tell" also is more or less easily filled for there are several baritones possessing the quality of voice, and the dramatic capabilities which the arduous rôle demands, amongst them being Bouchage, a singer of exceptional merit. Indeed, the last-named is so fine an artist that his presence in the cast infuses new life into the somewhat antiquated opera.

Several once popular works, such as Cherubini's "Les deux Journées (Cherubini, according to George Moore, is the last of classical composers), "Le Bal Masqué," "La Favorite," "Le Fils Enchanté," "Lucie de Lamermoor," "Le Père," Meyerbeer's "L'Africaine" and "Le Prophète," and many another, have more or less disappeared from the repertoire. So also has Mûssel's "Joseph et ses Frères," which is so delightfully reminiscent of Mozart. Indeed, it is years since it has been heard in Paris, though, sometime ago, it was given in the Château chapel at Versailles in aid of charity. Recently, "Coeur à l'épreuve" was revived at the Opéra Comique, where this interesting example of Mozart's genius had been in rehearsal for some months past. A propos, the Opéra Comique company being a stock one, there is time for leisurely rehearsing, and the brothers Lada (who so successfully manage the concern) see to it that no work is presented to the public till it has been adequately prepared

shows in the minutest detail. Indeed, quite a respectable number of recitals and revivals figure in the list during the year, for the company being a large one, its resources, so far as repetitions go, are almost limitless. Whether some of the productions which are rehearsed so occasionally are, from the artistic standpoint, worth the trouble bestowed upon them, is another matter. . . . Still, whatever the value of the music, the theatre invariably is crowned in its very walls, by the opera "Mignon," or "Mignon," or "Carson," all of which have been performed there several times a month for very many years past, or "La Bohème de la Rue Fédérale," which had its premiere a few months ago. The success of this theatre is, in fact, extraordinary. The Opera, according to the papers, does little more than pay its way, and can only afford to open its doors a limited number of nights a week. The Opera Comique, on the other hand, in addition to giving seven evening performances a week all the year round, announces unnumberable matinees. It is indeed a paying proposition. . . .

In happy pre-war days, Paris welcomed Richard Wagner's "Hannoverballer," and Wagner was appreciated throughout France. Parisians, forgetting that they had greeted the production of "Tannhäuser" with toy balloons, which, upon bursting, emitted a most pestiferous odor, and that at the conclusion of the bunting scene, with which the first act closes, the dogs alone were applauded, have learned to look upon the opera as a master-piece. The most noted artists have pined to appear in the once hated work, as the pious Wehman, as the dignified Landgraf, and as the forgiving Elizabeth; and each member of the orchestra has taken a personal interest in the music. "Les Maîtres Chanteurs" and "Lohengrin" were acclaimed in every important opera-house in France; and even the somewhat tedious "Ring" was listened to in respectful silence, though eventually the irresponsible wife of Journalism laughed at its impasses. But the moment war was declared, scores and orchestras parts were put away, and, until recently, no manager has dared to propose reviving the works of a German who died many years before hostilities were contemplated, and who was, into the bargain, "agin' the government." All one heard of Wagner was an occasional excerpt at a concert, and it was only after considerable opposition that the public has been brought to tolerate a less trifling return to pre-war conditions.

#### Once An Opera.

Although the French have a horror of draughts, a horror which has been handed down from generation to generation, they

show their practical appreciation of the fresh air by supporting all *franco* performances of opera. These are given during the summer, the best known being those which take place in the gardens of the Tuileries, where abridged versions of popular works, such as "Mireille," "Lohengrin" (in which Mignon Nevada lately made a very successful "guest" appearance at the Opéra Comique), "Figaro," "Le Trouvère," and the eternal "Noces de Jeannette," are performed. There positively is no getting away from the rather tiresome "Noces de Jeannette," with its bacchic humor and impudic music. If "Cavalleria Rusticana" (which does not do well in any language but Italian) cannot be performed, Victor Maas's artists strain till the theatre, the unaptured audience drinking to "Coeur, mon amour" as though they had never heard it before, and applauding the horrid husband's drunken frolics as being the scene of high comedy. "Mignon," too, is given, as also "Maze" and "La Fille du Régiment," the famous "Bat-t-plin" duet (in which the warlike soprano reminds the metamorphosed Marie of her younger days when she was born on the strength of the regiment) invariably gaining the honours of a hit. Upon these occasions the performance is worth far more than the few francs which one's seat costs, for, thanks to the good use which the artists make of the "franco seats", their voices carry admirably, while the acting often is all that could be desired. "Faust" also is heard under these conditions, and the chorus invariably meets with approval. At the Opéra, however, the audience views Gounod's music in quite a different light. Upon "Faust" nights subscribers lend their boxes to their friends and pose relations, and the pen and ink artists of the comic papers make merry jests at the expense of the immortal work, those who are present in the boxes being depicted playing bridge, or discussing politics and affairs—according to their sex. So nothing, you see, is sacred to the scoffer, not even the gorgeous final trio. . . .

Open-air representations of "Carmen" occasionally have taken place, and with *folat*, particularly if the arena at Yvicy has been used for the purpose. Principals of repute have figured in the cast. Escamillo has addressed his song to the genuine article, a real bullfighting personnel having been imported from Spain and the towns itself and the neighbouring villages have furnished a stage crowd of huge proportions. Up till now no manager has succeeded in finding a breeder who combines with the slaughtering of bulls the gentler art of staging about it. Yet there is hope, for the song in question demands a strong pair of lungs rather than an accomplished singer. Bluet, in fact, wrote it for that purpose.



When "Carmen" was produced (with Galla-Maria in the main part) it failed, the ill-informed critics declaring that the music was devoid of local colour. "And this," tearfully wailed the poor composer, "after I have spent weeks in Spain promoting my music with local colour!" So, in a pet, he composed the "Complets de Turfades," dedicating the noisy ditty to "Ya, canaille." "It is all," quoth he, "that they are fit to understand." The absurdity of a bull-fighter describing a bull-fight to his brother bull-fighters and to a stage audience which patronises a bull-fight regularly every Sunday afternoon doubtless suggested itself to him. Today "Carmen" is as much liked as any work on the list. It probably is played many times a week throughout the length and breadth of the country.

Fired by the example of the Cairo Khedivial theatre authorities, who celebrated a certain anniversary of the opening of the theatre by having "Aida" performed in the open air with the Pyramids for a back-ground, one or two enterprising theatrical magnates have gone into the question of giving the opera in France under much the same conditions, with card-board Pyramids and imported sand to represent the desert. The late Count Beaumont-Stanis is said to have thought the idea feasible, and to have called for Pyramidal designs. His unfortunate London Opera House speculations, however, interfered with a somewhat motu loco fancy. . . .

#### WAR ACTIVITIES.

— Upon the declaration of war, operatic activities ceased immediately. Male singers below a certain age were at once mobilised, and many a patriotic Elia, Swetosa, Macchia, Labone and Basso took lessons in "first aid," and tended the wounded, just as Marie Elise did during the Franco-Prussian war. By degrees, the older men were "called to the colours," while numerous artists who were prevented by imperfect health, and for various other reasons, from doing as their younger comrades had done, took up "war work" at home. Thus, a percentage of opera singers, though deprived of their incomes, at least were able to earn a living. Many, however, were not so lucky. The Government sternly forbade any sort of repetition and until permission was obtained to re-open the theatres for an occasional performance, their state was pitiable. For, in many cases, the small savings which they had laboriously acquired were exhausted. In Paris parties of them might be heard singing concerted pieces from the different operas in the courtyards of the

big apartment houses, the inhabitants of which willingly contributed their ribs, often a substantial one. Numbers of these before whom they sang made a point of inviting them to lunch, or dinner, on certain days, doing so with that charming tact and grace which are so essentially French. Later on, the position improved, and by the beginning of 1917 representations had again become general, artists even being released from semi-active service for the purpose of taking up their old careers. The tenor donned the steel helmet and blue kepi of his marabout regiment for Des Jours's lustrous cap and gaudy yellow tunic, and the baritone returned his rifle and bayonet to stores, and grasped the property sword with which Valentine keeps Meltophobus at bay. Fourny, freed from his duties as *maréchal des logis* (the non-commissioned officer who makes the billeting arrangements) once again was heard at the Paris Opera in "Le Cid." Renaud, wounded, his breast breast bearing with decorations, and covered with glory, also reappeared. One of his first performances was at Rouen, where he sang Athanor in "Thaïs," a rôle in which, it may be remembered, he achieved much success at the Manhattan Opera House, New York.

Upon the re-opening of those theatres which were closed during the earlier stages of hostilities, artists who hitherto had been kept in the background at last were afforded the opportunities for which they had so long waited, and they certainly made the most of their chances, both in Paris and in the provinces. In fact, during this period the staging was generally more satisfactory than it had been prior to the war, for it must be confessed that some of the older generation of performers were simply leading on their reputation. Really competent singers found themselves promoted to positions to which they might otherwise have aspired *in vita*. A small touring troupe, for instance, which visited the Northern towns shortly before the Armistice, and which was mainly composed of little-known artists, sometimes gave really admirable performances.

There was a distinct element of uncertainty and excitement about these haphazardly organized affairs. The train accommodation being mostly required for the transport of troops, the singers could not always depend upon reaching their destination in time for the performance, many owed their arrival at the theatre to the friendly offer of a lift in a passing army motor-lorry. Make-shift scenery and hastily extemporized costumes had to be used: mechanical Faust wooed Marguerite in the same modern village square in which the villain Turbido spurned the estranged Beatrice,

and the Indian house in which Lakmé sang "Où va le jeune Hindou?" did duty for the first act of "Werther." Orchestra rehearsals were made impossible by lack of funds, according to the managers, and, according to the instrumentalists, by managerial greed. Consequently, all sorts of unobscured effects occurred, such as the curtain *drog* before the scene was completely set and falling upon the hero at the psychological moment when he was about to bring down the house with a chest note in *ut*. At a Calais matinee of "Rigoletto," for instance, it rose no lower than three times upon the first act; once before the overture was finished, and the third time, despite the frantic exhortations of the frenzied conductor, it did not move an inch till several pages of the act had been played.

Upon another occasion an air attack interfered with the proceedings at the Calais Opera House. The night was so unky-blokk that the military authorities considered a mad unlikely, the ether being averse to darkness because of the risk which they ran of being "jacked up" by starlight. Eight o'clock arrived, and the curtain rose on the first act of "Mignon." At first all went serenely as the proverbial marriage-bell. The fishermen-chorists showed to advantage in the opening drinking chorus, which, *drog*ing, as it does, with their favorite tripple, was sung *en partie*. Lothario's philistine air moved the packed house to motion, and the much-persecuted heroine's sorry plight speedily enlisted the sympathies of every man, woman and child in the audience. Then came the catastrophe. The "Duo des Hirondelles" was in progress; Lothario had declared that Mignon's voice rejuvenated his ancient pipes, and Mignon had addressed herself to the "célèbre hôtel de Dieu," when the typhoon in the harbour gave the usual warning: "Tenez, je n'aime pas un mauvais-temps" observed a local jester: "Ah ne sont pas hôtel de Dieu; par dieu tout! Je me souviens!" The conductor bravely laid down his pipes, the members of the orchestra nobly bent a retreat, and Mignon and Lothario, raving for the wings, sought shelter in a cellar, where they were joined by the stage hands, the other principals already having left the building. The audience, being thoroughly accustomed to air attacks, took matters coolly; in the accompaniment of increased *brag* they sought the various subterranean shelters in the neighbourhood of the theatre, and there awaited the welcome "all clear" signal. Nor had the typhoon given the warning any too soon, for scarcely had the house emptied itself than the first bomb, a two hundred pound one, fell—and only a few hundred yards from the theatre. Bang went another, and another, bringing

down tons of bombs and mortar, the "barage" put up by the French and British batteries failing to deter the adventurous Boche spirit.

An hour passed without any firing, and people began to ask why they should continue to remain in a state of discomfort, when a listening post, many kilometers away, "phoned" the approach of the enemy. The sky speedily became ablaze with search-lights, and the batteries again opened fire, and with deafening roar, too, when several guns were fired simultaneously. Finally, at midnight, the anxiously awaited signal was given, and the audience went to bed, glad to have escaped with their skins, though their pockets, owing to the interrupted performance, had suffered.

### THE INDISPENSABLE FOP

The French, taking a pride in their public buildings, see to it that the theatre is worthy of its surroundings. (The Lill Opera House, for example, is a particularly imposing one. Commenced before the war, the Germans, upon occupying the town, completed it; and the English, having ousted the unwelcome visitors, inadvertently produced the original committee of their native land.) With scarcely any exceptions worth mentioning, the acoustics throughout France generally are all that can be desired, while the decorations often are tasteful, the foyer, in particular, coming in for a large share of the architect's and decorator's attention. The foyer, in short, is looked upon as a meeting-place, a club, where friends and acquaintances meet together in the free of day, to discuss the singers, and—most important thing—to be seen. Indeed, to many people the out-of-door is as precious as the performance, and the management, recognizing this, caters for popular taste by allowing as much as half an hour for a rest. As the proceedings often are late in beginning, the opera may finish at an hour which seriously curtails the sleep of those who have to be up early the next day. Fortunately, the scarcity of coal occasionally acts as a bar to lengthy intervals, for the municipal authorities, strictly setting their faces against the wasteful expenditure of electric light, do not allow the performance to continue after eleven o'clock. An excellent rule!

France being pre-eminently a land of trade unions, managers sometimes are confronted with strikes. The singers do not strike, but the musicians and the stage hands spare no expense in this direction. Upon the occasion of a strike, there is nothing for the harassed impresario to do but to close the theatre and to

await developments, unless he finds it to his interest to accede to the demands of the strikers. The artists, without expressing an opinion one way or the other, willingly take part in performances arranged by management, the proceeds being devoted to the funds required for carrying on operations. They thus display tact, for, until the dispute is settled, their means of earning a living are at an end, unless they have the good fortune to be paid by the month instead of "par représentation." Last year the Paris Opera suffered severely from a series of strikes.

Evening dress, by the way, is not insisted upon in the more expensive parts of the theatre. The women certainly make the most of the opportunity to deck themselves out in the height of the mode (when does a woman neglect a chance of wasting money an *éblouit*?) The men, however, content themselves with a morning coat, many wearing the same suit in which they set about their business first thing in the morning. Dinner parties are not uncommon; but the less-honoured "week-end" is rarely seen, even in Paris. Many suitcases are dotted about, and very attractive they are, too, with their varied colour-schemes and rank distinctions in gold or silver lace, or both. Khaki also is in vogue, for British officers from the Rhine Army of occupation have the good taste to spend their leave in Paris and in other towns where opera is given.

### THE CRITIC.

The standard of criticism is above the average, both in Paris and in the provinces. But newspaper space is valuable, the daily papers being comparatively small; consequently, detailed criticism of the singing sometimes has to be omitted. Though unavoidable, this is none the less tiresome, for when a distinguished artist undertakes a rôle in which other human beings have appeared, and which he takes with difficulties, one naturally wishes to know what a competent critic has to say about the artist's singing and about his, or her, conception of the part. To be laudably informed that "So-and-so, as Scarpia, was wholly effective" conveys nothing. A Scarpia who sings through the strenuous second act sitting on the sofa might be effective, but the intelligent amateur wishes to be told if the music is in the necessary's voice, and if his reading of the character differs from that of other basses. Novellists certainly merit with more attention, but even then so much is said about the score and the plot that a criticism of the actual performance has to be crowded into a few lines.

Some of the critics, by the way, have a pretty wit, amongst them being Georges Boyer of "Le Petit Journal." Upon one occasion Boyer was asked by a soprano to differentiate between the several feminine voices. "There is," quoth the critic, "the voice of the soprano, the voice of the contralto, and the voice of la Patti!" When "Cléopâtre" was produced at the Théâtre Lyrique, the frankly Anglo-Saxon accent of an English member of the cast drew from him the remark: "I did not know till now that even in the days of Cleopatra the English had got as far as Egypt." Boyer also had a ready answer when he found himself in opposition to the Lyrique direction. "So I am not welcome? Never mind, the next management will perhaps be glad to see me—in two or three days". The following week the operatic venture was at an end. . . . .

It is the aim of every French singer to be engaged by the year, at the Paris Opera, and to receive a monthly salary. With regular work and regular pay, their future is more or less assured, for the appointment (which may last a life-time) carries with it a certain cachet, and the duties do not interfere with the pleasures of existence. The evening performance, however, sometimes prevents an artist dining out. "Will you come to dinner to-night?" demanded a hospitable host of a popular baritone, who has been engaged at the Opera for countless years. "A thousand regrets," replied Amansens, who was taking part in the performance of "Aida" that evening, "I have to go to my baritone."

## BUSONI

By JEAN CHANTAVOINE

**I**F Ferruccio Busoni were in every sense of the word merely an incomparable pianist he would more than merit being spoken of as enthusiastically as I propose to do. What has not been written of the pianistic prowess of Chopin, Liszt, Rubinstein, or Paganini? Then how much more may be said in praise of Busoni's marvellous virtuosity, of the dazzling effect of his playing, un-equaled because it resembles nothing we have ever heard before, of the infinite subtlety of touch, of the inscrutable nuances, of the lightning force, grace, daring, and above all, of the poetry which emanates and radiates from the piano! It is supreme mastery; but how is it possible to express the magic of this equation of matter by the spirit? He brings voices out of the instrument which no one else has ever brought out—heavy thunder, wondrously soft, the coughing notes of the organ, the blare of trumpet, pearly flute-like notes, the curving tones of a violin! At first his prodigious technique seems to overwhelm everything else, as he overcomes the greatest difficulties with consummate ease and apparently without realizing that they are there; however, one quickly loses all thought of technique. I repeat that Busoni is incomparable. If a comparison were possible, I would say he has surpassed Beethoven. For example, the "Etudes d'opéra Paganini" or the "Etudes d'Exécution Transcendante" of Liszt become more brilliant, more exhilarating, under his fingers. One is unable to imagine, they seem easy, because their soaring flight cannot be measured. As to the manifold relief which Busoni gives to the polyphony of Bach, particularly remarkable in his magnificent transcriptions of the organ works for the piano, he holds the key to a secret unknown to his predecessors. A good judge who heard him for the first time at the Salle Erard in 1876 said: "Even Liszt did not play so well."

Such a degree, even more, such quality of virtuosity, wholly without trace of effort, or of mechanism, suppose and reveal in themselves the necessary gifts for such a magician. In listening to Ferruccio Busoni, one is inevitably drawn to the conclusion—no matter what tenacity he may have shown in the acquisition of his art—that he was born with what so many others strive to obtain by right of conquest. The phenomenal agility

of his fingers, his supple wrists of steel, would be nothing, if they were not inspired by a brain of extraordinary power and delicacy. If we follow the interpreter's flight, this certainly is soon confirmed and, while forgetting our astonishment and freed from the dominating idea of technique, amazing revelations follow in which the intuitive planes plunge to the depths of genius, re-awakening Bach—Boccherini, as it were, his "double"—Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, Liszt. Many more surprises are in store, which while combating them, and even if they do not quite convince, compel attention. This contact of Basson with the great masters is often "une rencontre parfaite," as perfect as the quietude just, satisfying as the solution of a riddle, or the cypher of a cryptogram. Sometimes it is a dialogue, which is apparently in perfect accord; but it is infallibly the encounter of genius with genius. It would also be impossible for a physiognomist to be deceived. It is sufficient to shake his head—the most beautiful that a sculptor ever imagined, a head so robust and of appearance so frail—to discover in it an instrument rarer than the most perfect Stradivarius. It is enough to look at the noble and mobile face, the lofty brow, the decided eyes, the fine and sensitive nose, and the delicately chiselled lips, to grasp the fact that an exceptional being stands before us.

I shall try to justify these impressions which the least initiated listener will feel in regard to his playing as well as in regard to his personality, which is not only that of a pianist without an equal, but of an artist of rare permanence and powerful originality, and who is as well one of the most representative artists of his time.



Francois Basson was born at Empoli, in Tuscany, April 1st, 1848, of an Italian father and of a mother whose origin on the paternal side was German; both were musicians. The father was a clarinet virtuoso and the mother an excellent pianist, and it was she who gave him his first musical instruction.

At four years of age, he could already play on the piano any melodies which had been played for him. When eight years

The reference to Mr. Rosen, through Dr. Leichtenhan, "F. Basson" (*Harvard & Musical Letters*, Toronto), "Le Musical" (Paris), "Musical Notes" (Toronto), "Musical Notes" (Toronto), "The Musical" (Paris), and Mr. Rosen's own work, "A New History of Music" and many others. The magazine articles are his accounts to mention. (Continued in all: Stud. by Dr. Leichtenhan in the *Medical Quarterly* in one of the best and most comprehensive. I am under the impression that it coincides with the same author's German pamphlet mentioned above—22.)



old, he began to compose. His public debut as a pianist also dates from this period, when the severe Viennese critic Eduard Hanslick wrote a long and eulogistic article about him. Two years later, while at Goss, where he was studying, he directed a "Student Master" of his own. When fifteen, on returning to Italy, the Royal Academy of Bologna opened its doors to him—as formerly to Mozart—with a charming speech, a fragment of which, as given to us by Mr. Fennell, follows:

Remember, young artist, that in the hall in which you have celebrated a distinguished episode . . . at a tender age the immortal Mozart presented his thesis and took the same degree in this Academy which you have now taken; may that nerve to stimulate and strengthen you to persevere in a career which will lead you to fame.

As a reply to this encouragement, he wrote a sonata, "Il Sabbato del Villaggio," developed after Leopardi. But these youthful honours could not persuade a young artist of his starry, uncertain for the highest attainment, to remain in Italy. He went first to Vienna, then to Leipzig, working equally hard at composition and virtuosity. His first concerts took place in Berlin in 1835, when he appeared both as pianist and composer, his "Variations sur un Prélude de Chopin" being on the programme: at first, however, he attracted little notice. Brazzi only conquered the German capital little by little. I can also remember the empty places in the Salle Knaut before the triumphal concert of 1848 took place, when the notice read long in advance "All seats sold." A slow conquest, wherein lies the symbol of the artist's destiny, the artist who has a horror of violence and in whom progress is law.

During his stay in Leipzig, he came in contact with such artists as Schumann, Mendel, Tschakowsky, and Grieg. He wrote his first string quartet and began with the Fugue in D major, the astonishing series of transcriptions of the organ works of J. S. Bach for the piano, which opened out a horizon until then unknown for this instrument, even in Italy. As is well known, Leipzig at that time furnished music masters to the greater part of the world, and Brazzi was called as professor to the Conservatory of Helsinki. His sojourn in these northern countries, his marriage to a young Swedish lady in 1890, at Moscow, took him from his own country, but enriched his mind and feeling by adding new elements. Faintly these great countries, sparsely peopled, influenced him in proportion to their necessity.

It was at this period (1888), when the Rubinstein prize was awarded him, that his name first became universally known. In

Russia, he was brought in contact with Rimsky-Korsakov, Saalonov, and Glasunov. After a short exercise of his duties at the conservatory at Moscow, he was called to the New Guild, to be professor at the New England Conservatory at Boston 1891-1899, a position he soon relinquished in order to make a tour of the United States. He then went into voluntary retirement, in order to change completely his manner of playing. "It was at this period of my life," he writes, "that I became aware of such lacunae and of such faults in my playing that by an energetic resolve, I again took up the study of the piano from the beginning and upon an entirely new basis. Liszt's works were my guide." It was the retreat of Zarathustra, and the pianist was not the only one to gain.

It was in Berlin, in 1861, that Liszt next established himself. Without wishing to be unjust, the situation Berlin offered to such a pianist cannot be compared with that which he would have had in London, or in Paris. The alarm sounded by Euphrasie-Melchior de Vogüé, in 1868, in the preface of his "Romain Rolland" should be born in mind, in order to acknowledge that the anxiety felt by this noble spirit at the fading influence of French thought on the thought of the world, would not have been less justified in 1860 in regard to music, any more than in regard to literature or philosophy. Paris in 1850 made a home for Chopin. Would Paris of 1860 have done so? In Berlin, Liszt did not confine himself to the piano and composition; he directed symphonic concerts of modern tendencies, where—it may be said—French art had a large share.\* He always maintained complete independence and never made even the slightest concession to the highest official circles.† He varied his sojourn by tours and by seasons at Weimar, Biele, and Vienna, where he endeavored to create centers of artistic instruction analogous to those which had been formed around Liszt at Weimar. In 1872, his first opera "Die Brautwahl" was played at Hamburg; it was but little understood by the public.

In reality Liszt cared so little about Germany, that, in 1875, he accepted with joy the direction of the Liceo Musicale of Bologna, which Academy, it will be remembered, received him as it had the young Mozart. This position was not of long duration.

\*His Symphonies "Fidélité d'Islande," "L'Éclaircie," "Overture des Balthazar," *à l'été*, groups of the second set of "L'Éclaircie" and "Les Éclaircies," "Balthazar," "Fidélité d'Islande" and "L'Éclaircie," and "L'Éclaircie." *Magnifique* by Liszt, *Chœur Français*, "Les Éclaircies," "L'Éclaircie" and "L'Éclaircie." *Chœur de France* (orchestrated by G. Fauré).

†Mr. Liszt's only decorative appointment in the Empire of Russia.

however; a secondary Italian city did not offer a large or rich enough field for the talents and mind of Bizet. Then followed the great war, for which the artist felt an indescribable horror, even before his own country had entered into the struggle. He did not place himself "en classe de la mort"; he merely submitted to it and lived in Zurich, where circumstances imposed upon him a certain quietude like that in which, twenty years before, he had taken up the study of the piano again from the beginning—a quietude studiosa, profound—and even though the terms may seem contradictory—an active quietude. He assumed direction of the "Concerts d'abonnement," which he made eminently artistic and educational. He turned the "musique de salon" for the "Turandot" of Gounod into a lyric drama, wrote "L'Arlecchino," a theatrical caprice in one act, and continued with with the composition of "Docteur Faustus," as well as a "Sonatine" for Christmas 1917, etc.<sup>1</sup> His recent return to Paris was preceded by a triumphal tour in England, where not only the virtuoso was acclaimed, but where his compositions, though they met here and there with strong opposition, excited the attention of the most noteworthy critics, among them Edward J. Dent.<sup>2</sup>

From now on it is plainly to be seen that Ferruccio Bizet is not merely a marvelous virtuoso, in his art he is both philosopher and composer. Thus his career and his destiny offer more than one analogy with those of Liszt—both both of them the reverse of the possible preceded that of the composer, and far from being favorable to it, more or less obscured it. Equally bound to the works of the past and seeking to discover in them the roots of modern progress, for art a new harmony and unknown formulas, both are cerebral on its account to plant some new sign-posts upon the road of the future, both possessed of the curiosity of a world-wide intelligence, and armed for the conquest of ideas by the mastery of several languages, much world travel, and by long visits in nearly every civilized country. It is very probable that Bizet's temporary retirement from the concert-stage in his twenty-seventh year, when he sought to find the secrets of the pianoforte in the works of Liszt, has made this relationship more remarkable. But the resemblance, as will be seen, remains entirely extraneous, and I have brought it forward only to dissipate in advance any misunderstanding which might arise here from the superficial examination of entirely outward circumstances.

<sup>1</sup>See E. S. Seligson, "Ferruccio Bizet" (in French) in the "Musik-Welt-Jahr-buch."

<sup>2</sup>"Bizet and the Pianoforte" and "Bizet as Composer" by E. J. Dent in the "The Athenaeum" of October 24th and November 6th, 1918.

In studying Husserl's extremely rich and complex personality, the connection, so to speak, between the composer and the pianist is to be found in the little book he published under the title of "Einführung eines neuen Aesthetik der Tonkunst."<sup>1</sup> It may be said that in this little book he has shown what are his theories, if no mind were not so free of theories as his, and no mind a greater stranger to all dialectic propensities. This tiny book is a collection of aphorisms, where the want of a constructive dialectic does not exclude unity and grandeur of thought. I know nothing richer in literature for those who care to reflect upon the nature and meaning of music and upon the extent of its domain than this species of intellectual chop-logy. From the beginning Husserl does not disguise that the musical problem, such as he presents it, is not solvable, and in any case, the span of human life does not suffice in which to find the solution of the problem. Because, if music, more than any of the other arts, is of an immaterial essence, even more so than poetry, for words are rooted in reality, is it not on that account all the more impossible to grasp? Representation or description are not his affair, and Husserl keeps programme music apart from his ideal—here he separates himself from Liszt—to uphold absolute music. But here he meets with a contradiction and denounces it. Unge gives the name of pure or absolute music to formal music, whose forms are in reality an alteration of this purity, a negation of the absolute, a restriction of liberty. For Husserl it is a contradiction to exact from a composer liberty in all things except in form. These forms are at bottom a prejudice of taste, and taste is, according to Husserl, a limitation of feeling by the intelligence, a restraint upon the senses, and it is taste which from music (Musik) has made the art of music (Tonkunst).<sup>2</sup>

In short, absolute, or pure music must be free. Far from its being necessary for no matter what musical motive to enter, not what it may, into a predetermined form, every motive, as does the seed, contains within itself the principle and the rhythm of its development:

From the different plant-seeds grow different facilities of plants, dissimilar in form, foliage, blossom, fruit, growth, and colour. Each individual plant belonging to one and the same species accords in size, form, and strength a growth peculiar to itself. In its seed motive there lies the embryo of its fully developed form.

<sup>1</sup>English version, under the title of "A New Aesthetic of Music, published by G. Schirmer, Inc.

<sup>2</sup>For what reason, however, see "Einführung der Tonkunst, page 77."

Thus Bousofi wishes to liberate music from all material as well as intellectual ties, even at the theatre (since it is superfluous and contradictory to exist from among the descriptions of what one sees upon the stage). Musical writing itself is servitude, and in this his views touch those of Vincent d'Indy. Notation should be considered merely as a symbol.

Every notation is in itself the transcription of an abstract idea. The instant the pen ceases it, the idea loses its original form.

He goes almost so far as to say that there is no fixed text, that the sense varies from age to age, and that each generation has the right to adapt the sense to its own thought (rather than be subservient to this or that era. "The letter kills, the spirit revives.") The application of this principle to musical art is very daring, perhaps dangerous; but it explains on Bousofi's part, the freedom of his transcriptions, as well as that which at times he does not hesitate to give to his interpretations.

The instruments, no less than the writing and notation, are an impediment to the free development of music.

The instruments are limited by their range, their timbre, the possibilities of execution, while their hundred chains bind the will of the creative artist.

Not is it on all these material conditions that our tonal system depends, and after that our traditions of harmony?

There are still "signs" and nothing else than what we to-day call the tonal system, an ingenious device to group somewhat of the eternal harmony, a message pocket within the ray diaphane world, artificial light instead of the sun. Have you ever noticed how people gaze open-mouthed at the brilliant lighting of a hall? They never do so at the million-fold brighter sunshine of noonday.

According to him, all our tonalities come back to the two modes, major and minor, still further, he only sees in the second a "corruption" of the former (in which he is in accord with Maurice Ravel). Oh! Four and neither "temperament" which has the restricted range of twenty-four scales! In the space of an octave, Bousofi counts one hundred and thirteen possible scales. According to him, everything announces a near revolution in harmony. Tones and half tones do not suffice. Third of tones are wholly independent intervals of a pronounced character and not to be confounded with ill-timed simultaneities. As one sees, it is not only musical form which is of concern to Bousofi, but the matter itself. One is forced to think of the change which

<sup>1</sup> "Extrait," etc., p. 11. The greatest freedom of music lies for him in the power of the human voice. (p. 12)

the discovery of radioactivity, for example, has made in the conception of physical matter, which did not seem less firmly implanted in our minds than the temperament of the scales.

Busoni claims this hymn to the total and essential liberty of music by the appeal of Nietzsche for music liberated from all northern influences, German, European, for a music of the "East." He finds the description of his ideal in a passage where Tolstai, depicting a landscape on the borders of Lake Lucerne, refuses to find "Neither in the lake, nor on the mountains, nor in the sky, a single straight line, a single unixed color, a single point of repose; everywhere movement, irregularity, caprice, variety, an incessant interplay of shades and lines, and in it all the repousiveness, softness, harmony, and ineffableness of Beauty."

Must I say that these aphorisms of Ferruccio Busoni do not appear to me to be quite free from objectism? I do not wish to traduce him by seeming to wish to hold him to the letter in his condemnation of programmatic music as well as of formal music. The living force which he makes of a creative tradition, reserving the works of the past from epoch to epoch, suffices to assure us that he does not disclaim any connection in the history of the arts. Programmatic music is, however, not wholly possible, nor in all forms is music pictorial. The first takes into account and makes use of all obscure connections, uncertain, slender, but existent that nature has established between our different senses; she counts upon music to multiply or to determine these connections—is it to subdirect or to change them? Form in music, without doing violence to music, or to musical susceptibility, endeavours to find a certain organic relation with the different qualities of the mind. I see there neither restriction nor limitation, but an effort to have music penetrate further into the intellectual life. From one end to the other, however, musical art is trying to find, in order to communicate the impression of which it is the interpreter, a common ground to be compared to that which gives to the poet the use of language, to the sculptor the materialization of form, to the painter the reality of lines and colours. As this ground is by its nature very unstable, is it not more advantageous to consolidate it rather than to change it? I do not dare decide. Even the comparison which Busoni forms from the example of vegetable nature to claim in favour of the musical genus, which is the "soilive" or "lithic," a specific and individual liberty of development, equal to that of the seed, is perhaps more seductive than convincing. First, because science restricts these forms of development to a fairly restricted number of types where the

characteristics of family or of the individual have little place, lastly, because nature does not always bear fruit or multiply the different kinds, except through artificial cutting, grafting, and calculated selection.

One easily understands that this cult for the exuberance of nature and the faith in its spontaneity, stimulates an artist like Buzoni; the difficulties, the materiality of the piano do not exist for him. He destroys them, suppresses them, volatilizes them. So quite naturally, he imagines music to be as obedient to the inspiration of the musician as the piano is to his fingers, and saturated as he is with science and civilization, he fears that this science and this civilization will throw us into a complete forgetfulness of life. This overthrow of "antusiasms" is not unexampled, either in music or the other arts. It was after the lavish employment of romantic gardens *à la française* that we are taken by the beauty of the English parks, and we now see that the Americans, the people most given over to inventing, domesticating, and analyzing scientifically and industrially the forces of nature, imagine that Paradise has been found again in the fantastic Yellowstone Park.



I have said that the "New Ethos of Music" would serve as a connecting link between pianist and composer. The works of the latter are considerable and extend in all directions. It would require a special study and a technical one to understand these transcriptions, notably those of the organ works of Bach, which are marvellous of richness and invention. Let us, therefore, consider only his original compositions. Buzoni has written for the theatre: "Die Bekehrung," "Aeschylus," and "Turandot;" for orchestra, "Poème Symphonique," "Sinfonia," "Berceuse Kliggung," "Nocturne Symphonique," etc; for piano and orchestra, a Concerto with chorus and the "Fantasia Indienne;" for violin with orchestra or piano, one concerto and two sonatas, two string quartets; and lastly, a number of piano works. Recently, the programmes of these works gave to the Parisian public merely an idea of their scope into which I shall not undertake to go definitely as I must confine myself to indications of a more vague and summary nature.

It is something of the secretist to be found in the works of the composer. It does not seem doubtful to me. Not that Buzoni's music is in the slightest degree the music of a "pianist."

\*The catalogue of his works can be seen on p. 418, *Le Conservateur*.

Those who have heard or read the Concerto, Op. 59 will realize that there is little resemblance between it and a concerto by Rubinstein. In Busoni's original works for the piano, or those in which the piano takes part, the boldness and ingenuity of the arrangements, as well as the many discoveries in sonority, reveal and explain the author's mastery of the instrument. But far from supplementing or overweighing the music, they serve merely as a means. However, this is a small matter, in his compositions, as in his "Esthetic," Busoni is only a pianist in the measure that his virtuosity has obtained complete independence for him.

It is more especially in the aphorisms of his essay that the key is to be found to his musical works, which at first seem either strange or mysterious. Busoni is too sincere an artist, too great and too disinterested of immediate success, still more of an easy victory, for the character of his musical work not to correspond with his ideas upon art, and of which they are the outcome. These works are most daring and very moving, a statement which it is rather difficult to define. In his enthusiasm for research and invention, Busoni the composer is aided, as in Busoni the virtuoso, by a prodigious facility, by an exceptional gift of assimilation, and by a no less remarkable technique. In this respect his "Fantasia Contrapuntistica" for the piano, on the themes of Bach, and notably upon the unfinished "Kanon der Fuge," is for breadth of construction and richness of detail, a monument second to none in musical literature. In certain youthful works, such as the "Variations sur un Prélude de Chopin," academic influences are felt, which owe something to those of Brahms on a theme by Handel. This only means that in music Busoni knows all and can do all. He is able to dispense with new proofs at every turn and is free to obey his own fancy.

This last is many-sided, changing, capricious, if you will. With him, artistic creation is a perpetual quest; none of his works are cast in the same mold, nor have they any resemblance to one another; presumably, he has a horror of being imitated in order to exploit it afterwards. No sooner had he finished the "caprice theatrical" of the musical and fantastic "Arioso" than he turned to work on "Doctor Faustus," changing from Italian "melod" to the profundity, the "Gestaltlichkeit," of Germany. The somewhat unusual extreme character of the language of "Die Bräutigam" seems to have confused the public; "Tanzdole" follows next and seeks for effects through an exotic atmosphere rather than through colour. Grandeur, intelligence, verve, reflection, vigor, nonchalance, wit, gravity, action, and meditation



follow each other according to a fancy in which the critics of the future will have some difficulty in finding a line to follow, in order to show a predetermined evolution.

It often happens that these diverse tendencies, not content with appearing here and there, meet in one and the same work. For example, nothing is more dissimilar than the "Fantastic Impromptu" for piano and orchestra from the Concerto, op. 30. But even in the latter concerto, where the total development attains a majestic breadth, how many different phases, how many different nuances, from the most thoughtful melancholy to the most overflowing exuberance! A sort of tarantella goes through it, and it is brought to its conclusion sustained by a chorus singing of Nirvana from the verses of Gellertschlager. It cannot be doubted that a man who forms and who profits and who wishes to subsist for the twenty-four scales of our temperament, our hundred and thirteen notes, accidentals and tripartite tones, would not dare back from any boldness in writing, provided that, above all, his harmonics should be rich and sonorous.

It goes without saying, also, that this mobility of ideas attempts an always variable realization, which makes these works hardly accessible to the public and little fitted for an immediate success. Experience opposes them, in a certain way, with the same objections that can be brought against his "New Kalliope of Mainz." The public wants to know what it is listening to; and to be understood an artist must repeat himself. I do not believe, however, that Buzoni would ever make this concession. If I may be permitted to refer to private letters, I find that he pictures artistic activity as a flea. But this ephemeral fluidity of forms, disappearing as soon as outlined, makes them rather difficult to grasp. The public, even the most enlightened, is wrong in withholding recognition from an artist, until he has made a specialty and created a formula which they will be certain to find again later on; perhaps genius implies, in a certain measure, that sort of fixity which is desired by those to whom it appeals. Does Buzoni always submit to what the conditions of artistic life ask of him? I am unable to answer, for there is too great mobility in his order and in his independence to attach blame to him for a fault as though it were a weakness.

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The other day, as pencil in hand, I was reading Buzoni's essay, I reflectively wrote down the name of Euphrosion,

imaginary son of Faust and Helen, in regard to a phrase where the author, citing the youthfulness of music, compares it with a child who cannot walk, but floats: "It touches not the earth with its feet. It knows no law of gravitation. It is well-nigh incorporeal, its material is transparent. It is sensuous air. It is almost nature herself. It is—free." Two pages farther on, I saw without surprise that Busoni himself quoted some verses from "Faust," taken from the episode of Euphorion, whose heavy and useless clothing was found upon the earth after the ascension from which he never returned. There is something of Euphorion in Busoni's art; does he not recall the son of Faust and Helen, himself the product of a southern land and germanic thought?

As long as Busoni applies his art to the interpretation of known works by means of such a familiar instrument as the piano, the contact in which these works and this instrument keep us in touch with reality, reassures us and prevents a fall from vertiginous heights. He even gives us a point of departure to measure these heights whether he leads us, so that, instead of going astray, we are exalted; we follow him in an ecstasy which nothing can disturb, into ethereal regions, yet where we do not altogether lose sight of our earthly dwelling. But when he cuts the rope attached to the balloon, when he leads us without map or itinerary, expecting us to follow the daring flights of his imagination, we are encountered and embarrassed by our loss of clay, or, on the contrary, perhaps annoyed by being made aware of their weight. For a Maurice Baudot, the true beauty of a landscape is to be found in the pure quality of the Italian light rather than in the irregular profiles of the Swiss mountains, which bring the romantic barriers too near our eyes. I believe that Busoni would prefer the immense pile of the Rigi or the Wettshorn to the landscape of line and fugitive shading formed by clouds on a blue sky. Paradoxical to-day—true tomorrow—who knows? Perhaps in the future, by substituting serial for fanciful communication with inaccessible heights to which an organ point might possibly bear the same relation to the summit, as the Terminal to the Palace, we may modify our cathedra as well as our ideas of touring. Man never becomes used to the inaccessible; he wants it, but is afraid of it; he does not like it until it has ceased to be inaccessible. When the aerial cars appear on the skyline according to schedule time, these unknown countries of the sun and of the sky will always appeal to our taste or capture our emotions. Music, such as Busoni conceives it, as he realizes it in his playing, as he wishes

to create it in his works, will correspond to the rapturous flight of those beating wings which we have followed for ten years, gaining each day in breadth and audacity, so it is not without justice that Brazoni has observed an analogous process in music, of which he, since 1906,<sup>1</sup> has taken cognizance and in which he may well say he has participated.

In everything, in art as in the rest, the certainties of the future are made from the certainties of the present. The peculiar quality of genius is to show us new things while we are still struggling with the old problems. Would it not seem as if this uncertainty which expresses itself in musical sounds to-day, should ring of certainties tomorrow? Will the "techniques" of which Victor Hugo speaks, no longer sound only in the poet's soul, but in the musician's? Are we not at the beginning of an epoch when the very sciences, the tired mind of humanity, weary of searching the principles of action in systems, for hope in sciences, mystery in philosophy, or symbols in poetry will try to free itself even as in dreams? Detached from all materialism and, as Brazoni would like, from all form, music, through its spontaneity and its unlimited possibilities, will produce that fusion between expression and expression, music, which puts no limit upon emotion or upon expression, would then be the eloquent and universal voice to express the weariness and these aspirations. Free and varied work, always interesting, though sometimes uncertain like that of Ferruccio Brazoni's, a sort of cosmic interpretation following his colossal fantasy at will, has perhaps already done more than realize this prophecy. So I have wished not only to point out a virtuoso without equal, not only a composer of highest originality, but a leader of thought, and, as I have said in the beginning, by the quality of his playing, of his genius, and of his mind, one of the most significant men of a time which has seen a peasant become a prime minister. Then why should we be astonished to find in another peasant a shapodist who brings out in turn every daring thought often uncertain combinations, now verging towards the light, now walking in obscurity, and whose work is forced into being through the suffering of his own epoch, even as the varied notes of a perhaps prophetic melopoeist?

(Translated by David Lodge from the "Revue Belles-lettres," April, 1911.)

<sup>1</sup>"Kultur," etc., p. 114-115.

# PLAIN CHANT, THE HANDMAID OF THE LITURGY: A CHALLENGE AND A PROPHECY

By F. JOSEPH KELLY

CHRISTIANITY has sanctified the arts and made them serve the purpose for which her Divine Founder intended her here upon earth, namely the salvation of souls. Chief among the arts which she has used for this noble purpose, are painting, sculpture, architecture and music. These are really and truly religious arts, for they enter into the very life of the Church. Some among these arts appeal to the eye, and thereby influence the soul of man for good. They are necessary for the proper observance of the Liturgy, yet they do not form an integral part of it. There is but one art that can be said to form an essential part of liturgical service, an art which constitutes the solemnity of that service, and that art is none other than the divine art of music.

Music as a religious art finds its sublimest expression in what is known as Plain Chant. The position of Plain Chant, historically and liturgically considered, is a unique one. In fact, it has a place among the different styles of music, which is entirely its own. Its style is so different from all other styles of music, that it may not be compared with them, and therefore has no competitor. On the other hand, Plain Chant is the basis of all other forms of church music, polyphonic, choral, as well as the more ornate forms. It breathes a never failing life in every note, so that its vitality remains ever strong, and in this sense, it can never become archaic or antiquated. Like the Liturgy of the Church, the oftener we hear and witness it, the more indeed of beauty and sublimity we discover in it. It is happily called the "Handmaid of the Liturgy," for together with the Liturgy, they are the vehicle by which the sublime truths of Christianity are impressed upon us.

When Pope Pius X issued his new sacred *Missa Propris* on Church Music on that memorable St. Cecilia's Day, 1903, he made the Catholic world forever his debtor, by restoring to Catholic worship Plain Chant, otherwise known as Gregorian Chant, in its purity and its supreme importance for liturgical worship. No longer would any one who calls himself a Catholic church

organist or choir-master does to judge himself on his ignorance of the Chant and its governing principles. On the contrary, to-day his musical scholarship is measured by his knowledge and appreciation of the Chant of his Church.

As a rule, not only the layman, but also organists and singers have little or no conception of Plain Chant, its spirit or its beauty. Is it any wonder then, that it is often considered by them barbaric, antiquated music, unworthy of any consideration or study? To appreciate Plain Chant as it deserves, time and study are required for its mastery. The educated church musician, then, will not fail to give the Chant the honored place it deserves in the domain of music. The spirit, the rhythm, and the beauty of the Chant are so far removed from that of modern music, that it forms a department in the art of music entirely distinct. The true student of the Chant becomes an ardent lover of it. He sees and hears in it, music breathing real smoothness and purity. He does not make the egregious blunder of comparing the Chant with modern music. There is no standard of comparison, since they differ as to rhythm and beauty, and as to the end for which they have their being.

Let us examine some of the reasons for the attitude of mind of those who prefer figured music to the liturgical chant. Is it true that Plain Chant is not artistic, that it requires no study, that the simplicity of its melodies requires nothing more than a slight reading knowledge of intervals? To one who has made a deep study of the Chant, and has thereby learned to love it, these qualifications seem to assert themselves for its proper rendition, namely, art, genius, and a mind sanctified by prayer and meditation. The absence of any one of these three qualifications militates against the proper rendition of the Chant. A musician may make a study of the Chant, he may have the art and genius to render it as it is written, but if the third qualification is not present, that rendition will be cold and worldly. We often hear such renditions of the Chant, renditions that make worshippers despise it.

Plain Chant is inspired music from heaven. Therefore, only when it is rendered by those whose hearts and minds are indwelt with religious feelings, can its full meaning and beauty be reflected. Of the three qualifications considered, the third, namely a sanctified mind and heart, may least be dispensed with. Some choirs render the Chant very artistically, but lacking the third qualification, it is a body without a spirit. Plain Chant is a prayer, and therefore must possess that which makes prayer a communing with God. Right here we have the secret of the failure of so many choirs in attempting to sing Plain Chant. To repeat, the evident result of

this failure is to disgust, not only the singers, but the hearers as well.

The very simplicity of Plain Chant is its rarest quality. It is not one that simply excludes the artistic. The object of Plain Chant is not that of modern music, namely to delight the ear, but to provide a vehicle for the words of the Liturgy, transporting the mind and heart to God. Both in rhythm and in melody it conforms to the natural speaking voice, so that it becomes the medium of the greatest expressive power. It is the prose of music. Figured music with its regular time base is no more expressive and no more natural than the use of poetry would be in our every-day conversation. In spite of all the opposition to Plain Chant melody, with its free rhythm, it is the only natural music that we possess to-day. What prose is to literature, the Chant is to music, and figured music bears the same relation to the art of music, as poetry does to literature. So in the last analysis, the Chant expresses our ideas in a natural way, as prose composition, while figured music expresses them in an artificial way, as poetry.

It has been argued, that since modern music can be reduced to time measures, it is an improvement on the Chant. Quite the contrary is true. Modern music is the slave of a regular rhythm, following certain artificial laws, and never deviating from that rhythm. The Chant, on the contrary, expresses the meaning of the words in a free rhythm, conforming itself to the words, instead of compelling the words to conform themselves to it. Because the Chant has no time measures, it cannot be said that it has no rhythm. Plain Chant, it is true, has no "bars" or measures, but these do not constitute that chaotic something that we call rhythm. Chant melody has a very decided rhythm, and it is only with the proper understanding of this rhythm, that it can be rendered correctly. Indeed, the subject of Plain Chant rhythm is almost inexhaustible, but the main attribute is that Plain Chant melody has the rhythm of prose composition, as modern music has the rhythm of poetry. It is this free rhythm of the Chant, that distinguishes that music repetition of the words of the Liturgy, which becomes necessary when these words are set to modern music.

In the rendition of Plain Chant, this one principle must always be kept in mind: the Chant was written to bring out and to express the meaning of the words exactly, and therefore must be sung accordingly. It is the very voice of the Liturgy, a voice that speaks as eloquently to men, as it did centuries before the advent of modern figured music. It is inseparably wedded to the words of the Liturgy, unfolding the full meaning of the texts, and expressing

that which the mere spoken word is unable to express, aspiration, tenderness, grief for the sorrows of this world, hope for the life of the world to come. Its entire spirit is elevating and holy, drawing the mind and heart to God. These rare qualities make the Chant wonderfully adapted to liturgical service, and, on the other hand, these same qualities make it entirely out of place everywhere but in the sacred precincts of the Church.

The deeply truth is, that Plain Chant and modern figured music are widely separated. Each has its own characteristics and its own particular aim. To compare them, is like comparing two entirely different arts, as for example, architecture and painting. They have hardly any point in common. They are absolutely distinct and cannot be judged by the same standards. Plain Chant has no place where modern figured music is at home, and vice versa. How incongruous, then, is the practice indulged in by certain prominent organists and solo-singers, of singing part of a liturgical service in Plain Chant and part in the most florid modern figured music. This practice places both kinds of music at a very great disadvantage. It is like trying to mix oil and water. Is it any wonder that the Chant is in disrepute among people? Modern music appeals to the emotions, whereas the object of the Chant is to produce that indescribable something called *unction*, to raise the heart and mind to that which is elevating and purifying. The result intended to be produced by each is as wide apart as the poles. All attempts then, to compare or to associate modern music with Plain Chant melody, should be abandoned. They are two different arts in every particular, having nothing in common except pitch and tone. In rhythm, timidity, spirit and aim, they differ as night from day.

Though the Church's insistence on the singing of the Chant at her services is a reasonable one, still there are some who question her right to demand it. Some maintain regard the insistence as a narrow policy on the part of the Church, and therefore spare no efforts to discourage the reform in church music, a reform so earnestly desired by the authorities of liturgical churches. They argue that the singing is something distinct from the liturgical services. Until they realize that singing forms an integral part of liturgical services, they will continue in the state of mind. Because of its ready adaptation to liturgical use, the Church is most desirous that the Chant be revived in its original, undiluted purity. The Church appropriates to herself all that assists her in her work for the salvation of souls, and eliminates anything that would in the least hinder that work. The qualities of sanctity and

goodness of form which are characteristic of the Liturgy demand that the music that accompanies that Liturgy possess the same qualities. We deny that our modern church music possesses these qualities. Plain Chant alone possesses these qualities in the very highest degree. Its form, its character, its graces, its effect on the hearer, all breathe heavenly calm and angelic purity. Therefore, whosoever the Church by no means eliminates all other music from her services, she holds that the Chant is the best suited for her purpose and her work, as "Handmaid of the Liturgy," written expressly for the Liturgy and as entirely out of place unless accompanied by the Liturgy.

Hence the restoration of the Chant is not a step backward. On the contrary, this restoration means progress. If for no other reason, the Chant should be restored to demonstrate the unity of the teaching of Christianity, and her survival through the centuries. It was through the monks of the Middle Ages that music became an independent art. As architecture, painting and the other arts reached the zenith of their glory during those ages of faith, so music, in its highest and most glorious form, namely the Chant, was at the very zenith of its glory. The beautiful sacred melodies of the Chant were the result of the zeal and enthusiasm of the monks, coupled with their great holiness of life. Modern figured music on the other hand has progressed under secular influences and came into being as a result of secular needs. There can be no just comparison between music nurtured under ecclesiastical influences, as the Chant, and our modern music which is secular in character, spirit and genius.

Plain Chant in its early history was transmitted from age to age by oral tradition only, until the conversion of Constantine to Christianity, when the first schools of singing were established. Boys were admitted to these schools and the primitive melodies were taught them without manuscripts. That oral tradition, at best, is uncertain, and as a result we have many different opinions to-day, as to the proper rendition of the Chant. St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, was the first to attempt to reduce the melodies to a definite system, and we are no doubt indebted to him for the four "authentic modes," and the practice of antiphonal singing. Two hundred years afterwards, Gregory the Great, collected and revised the Ambrosian melodies and added his own compositions in what is known as the celebrated "Antiphonarium." To this great work of Gregory, we must attribute more than to any other circumstance, the preservation of Plain Chant melodies from corruption. Gregory the Great also introduced the four "plegal



models," which perfect the whole system of Plain Chant. His "Antiphonarium" became the authority to which all other liturgical books must of necessity be conformed. From that time on until the present, corruptions of one kind or another have crept into the Chant, and at the beginning of this century a movement was inaugurated to bring the Chant back to its pristine purity and glory.

The foundation of all art-music of the Middle Ages was Plain Chant, and the science of music borrowed from the Chant, included in its development. Music was never considered apart from the Liturgy of the Church to which it was welded. Until the fourteenth century, composers as such, were unknown. Choirs were the training schools for composers and choir-masters, so that almost without exception, composers and choir-masters were graduated from the choir in which they received their training and experience as choristers. We should follow the same mode of procedure in these our days. It is in a well drilled liturgical choir, that the chorister is able to imbibe the spirit of the Chant and to make a thorough study of it. Plain Chant literature is so extensive, that it would require more than a span of one man's life to make even a slight study of it. The authorized collection of Plain Chant works numbers over six hundred and thirty different compositions. Moreover, the "Hours of Divine Service" contain two thousand antiphons, and eight hundred greater responses. Besides, there is the immense collection of Ambrosian music, the contemporary of Gregorian music, the contemporary of Georgian music. The serious student of the Chant has a vast literature that he is privileged to peruse and study.

This treasury of Church music, has lately been restored to us by the famous "Missi Proprie" of Pisa X., after the monks of Solennes Abbey, for almost a century in the quiet of their cells and in extensive travel, had been delving into the treasures of Plain Chant, patiently and indefatigably examining the ancient manuscripts, and comparing them with the most advanced paleographic technique, and incidentally employing the art of photography for their scholarly purposes as a scale so vast as probably to have been unprecedented. In the history of science there is no more fascinating and impressive chapter than this libelistic enterprise of the Benedictines of Solennes, to separate the genuine from the counterfeit and to revive the true interpretation intended by composers of more than a thousand years ago.

Students of Plain Chant will be forever indebted to these good monks to whose energy, scholarship and piety we owe the colossal "Paléographie Musicale," the direct result of which has

been that other monumental work, the Vatican Edition of Gregorian Chant books, thus bringing to public view the sublime treasures of Plain Chant. If at some future date, Plain Chant again becomes the universal music of the Church, the long-sought-for ideal, will be due to the labors of these monks. The priceless treasures uncovered by them are attracting students of church music the world over. As their ranks increase, a true knowledge and an intelligent love of Plain Chant will spread. Prejudice, ignorance and contempt will gradually disappear and the time may yet come, perhaps sooner than the modern realize, when again Plain Chant will be taught and loved in every parish throughout the Christian world, not as music forbiddingly archaic, but as music of everlastingly vital beauty and spiritual appeal.

## THE GENERAL TRENDS IN CONTEMPORARY BELGIAN MUSIC

By CHARLES VAN DEN BOHREN

**A** FIRST premise must be stated in any attempt to develop the characteristic trends or tendencies in contemporary Belgian music: it is that since the death of Guillaume Lekeu (1834), no artist worthy of being placed beside this master has appeared on Belgian soil. The nineteenth century had produced the *Liegeois César* Franck (1822-1890), whose lofty genius is to-day universally recognized; the Flémund, Peter Benoit (1834-1901), the founder of the modern Flemish school, a composer of great merit, whose racial originality cannot be contested, although he may be reproached with a certain lack of depth and refinement; and Guillaume Lekeu, of Yverdon, (1870-1894), whose sonata for violin and piano, *Adagio* for string orchestra, and unfinished Quartet testify to so marked a personality that we are not going too far in supposing he would have been one of the greatest masters of our time, if death had not prematurely carried him off.

That the absence of such masters is the cause of Belgium's musical inferiority in the twentieth century cannot well be denied. And yet the fact has not prevented Belgium from continuing to be, as it has been, a focus for the most intense musical activity. More than this: there can be no doubt that, aside from the question of "genius," the activity shows itself under aspects which, in their entirety, denote a high general level of aesthetic elevation, when compared to that of the preceding period. From 1890 to 1893, approximately, the Belgian artists—with the exception of the painters—were guilty, in general, of that form of provincialism which consists in adopting the fashions of a larger and more important neighboring country, long years after these fashions themselves have given place to others in their land of origin.

Thus, before the time of Charles Desmet, Ecole Vautherin and Maurice Strakosck, Belgium, from the standpoint of letters, was altogether tributary to France. As regards the art of music, Paris and Leipzig were the two light-houses toward which all eyes turned, and one of Peter Benoit's most meritorious acts was precisely his breaking away from this dependence in order to create

a specifically Flemish music, largely based on the folk-song of his natal soil. As to César Franck, we know that while still very young he lost all touch with his homeland, and that, in reality, he owed the bulk of his musical development to French sources. Nor should we forget how this "provincial," little by little, began to taper in the lead of his adoption, and that it was not long before he himself was teaching his erstwhile masters the art of self-examination, and renunciation of the vulgar and superficial attitudes of the time of Louis-Philippe and the Second Empire.

Also long the guest of France, Lohéa profited largely by these lessons. It was because he was able to rise with all the vigor of his admirable artistic temperament against an insidious "provincialism," that he has conquered, in the choir of modern musicians, that eminent place of which his country is so proud to-day.

That the spirit of provincialism has entirely departed from Belgium since the death of Lohéa is something which we will not for an instant claim. The fact is, that this phenomenon is one which is not uniquely observable in any one particular country, but which is common to all—and they are numerous—in which fashion rules. Only, we must remember that there are degrees in this respect, and it cannot be gainsayed that the Belgian provincialism of 1840 no longer is marked by the narrow and trifling character it showed in 1800. The quasi-reflex invitation mechanically extended by the most rapidly and easily gained success in a neighboring land, has made for a more serious and conscientious discipline, by virtue of which an art ideal is followed quite irrespective of any considerations of immediate interest. The models taken are no longer the tawdry successes of the big noise-makers in Paris, but the great art-works of the great masters of all lands, first among them Richard Wagner, César Franck, Guillaume Lohéa, Claude Debussy. On the other hand, instead of confining their admiration exclusively to a certain given period or school, the Belgian composers do not neglect, on occasion, to search for inspiration in the past, and to adapt to the spirit of the times the musical concepts of antiquity, the Middle Ages, and more modern periods. The Belgian musician, formerly ignorant and uncultured by preference, has, little by little, begun to understand that he cannot climb the lofty summits of art unless he enlarges his intellectual and esthetic horizons. Hence, more and more, he has undertaken to educate himself, reading the works which popularize musical history and the questions occurring in connection with it. In this way he is gaining an increasing amount

of perfection, which makes it possible for him to avoid the grosser manifestations of poor taste to which his absolute ignorance of all that did not pertain strictly to the technical side of his art formerly exposed him.

This trend toward progress arises out of two currents in appearance contradictory, but in reality leading to the same end: one of these currents is that of the propaganda carried on in favor of the great art-works of the past, with which he had grown entirely out of touch during the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century; the other is that of the persistent encouragement of new trends and tendencies, and the reaction against the spirit of doubt and denial which, in so far as music is concerned, recognizes only a certain school, narrowly limited to a certain period and to a hard-and-fast æsthetic concept.

The return to the past was, in the main, affected by the personal action of that great musical historian F. A. Gevaert (1818-1898), during his life-time director of the Royal Conservatory of Music in Brussels, and to whom were due the admirable concerts given of the principal works of Gluck, Handel and J. S. Bach, which were incontrovertible revelations to Belgian artists and music-lovers at the close of the nineteenth century, and had a quite incalculable influence from the point of view of the formation of taste and æsthetic education of the younger generation. After the beginning of the twentieth century, this movement was accentuated, on the one hand, by the organization of concerts of the same kind, more and more frequently given; on the other, by the progressive endorsement of classes of musical history in the Belgian universities and conservatories. The liking for the older music was increased until it extended to the precursors of J. S. Bach (Schütz, Carissimi, etc.), to the great Italian monodists (Monteverdi, etc.), and to the composers of the marvellous Franco-Netherlands school of polyphonic music of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It even resurrected the works of the troubadour and trouvères of the Middle Ages. It would be impossible to estimate the extent to which these new perspectives opened the eyes of the Belgian artists, and the degree to which they aided in leading ability to their aims.

The current of modernism made itself felt, in the beginning, by the campaign undertaken on behalf of the works of Wagner, a campaign set in motion by a small group of dilettanti, immediately after the inauguration of the Bayreuth Theatre in 1876. This campaign was entirely successful, and within a short space of time Belgium had become a glowing center of expansion for the

specific conceptions of the great musical revolutionary.<sup>1</sup> Maurice Kufferath was the greatest apostle of Wagnerism in Belgium (1846-1919). He was the author of a whole series of books on the various works of the master of Bayreuth, which have become classics. Under the impulsion given by him, the success of the latter's music grew in increasing measure, and the numerous Wagnerian performances at the Brussels Theatre, from 1866 to 1914, witness to the enthusiasm with which the Belgian public received such scores as the *Ring*, *Telramund*, *Mistralmeyer* and *Faust*.<sup>2</sup>

This preference for Wagner was carried somewhat to excess, however, and it cannot be doubted that the immense and prodigious success accorded his music in Belgium by an important section of the music-loving public contributed not a little to relegating to obscurity dramatic works which—for all they were more modest—nevertheless merited a better fate.

Be this as it may, this predilection had its good as well as its bad side, especially where it was not purely a result of snobbery. From 1860 to 1890, above all, Wagner's lyric dramas struck many a young musician who first made their acquaintance like a genuine thunderbolt, after the spectacular and artificial display of "grand opera" in general. To these it came as the deep and gradual expression of an aesthetic young and freshly vigorous, of a radiant ideal, which had issued from the artist's brain to speak to their own hearts, to embody their most intimate aspirations.

On the other hand a movement had outlined itself, during the last years of the nineteenth century, in favor of innovation and the "young French school." Under the direction of Octave Maus (1850-1918), an enlightened Mercator who, himself, had been one of the earliest worshippers at the Bayreuth shrine, exhibitions of painting and sculpture, concerts, and artistic conferences were organized, in which one could follow out the most recent development of the plastic arts and the esthetics of literature and music. The concerts of the "Twenty-two" and of the *Liber Esthétique*, which succeeded them until 1914, will remain, in the memory of those who were privileged to attend them, artistic

<sup>1</sup>See Edmond Demougeon's excellent work: *Le Wagnerisme chez d'Allemagne* (Geneva: Librairie Slatkine, Paris: Flammarion, 1914).

<sup>2</sup>This enthusiasm did not escape the rebuke of the press. After the production of *Die Meistersinger*, however, one begins to notice, in a spirit which we do not hesitate to qualify as extremely healthy, against the participation of any work by Wagner in concerts or on the stage. A notable society alone raised a public performance (during June, 1900) of portions of Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, without any further revealing whether this or whether they were not a part of the press.

events of the very first order, at which in turn, there were revealed the most striking works of César Franck, Gabriel Fauré, Vincent d'Indy, Chausson, Duparc, de Bériot, Lekeu, Hovet, Debussy, etc. The weekly, *L'Art moderne*, edited by Octave Maus, was the official monitor of this movement, which led the van of artistic progress. It never deviated from its lofty line of policy once laid down, and in it one finds, as a whole, a faithful echo of all the events of the greatest artistic development which took place in Belgium in the course of the last two decades of the nineteenth and the first two of the twentieth century.

It must be said, in praise of the Belgian public, or rather, to be more exact, in praise of that more select body whose interest in art amounted to a passion, that they accepted with great good will and tolerance the "novelties" which more advanced spirits endeavored to impose on them. There was resistance, of course, but the exception of a few blind reactionaries, whose narrow perceptions, in fact, were limited in all esthetic sensibility, had no real influence save on that fraction of the public, but slightly interested, which can see only that which tradition has hallowed, or only enjoys the charms of the commonplace. The finer spirits, on the other hand, were strongly moved by many of these "un-edited" accents, and far from committing themselves stupidly, discreetly admitted what there might be of the human and eternally beautiful to be found in them. This mental attitude explains why, at the Théâtre de la Monnaie, at Brussels, could be given first performances of a number of dramatic works of far-reaching importance, which Paris had refused to introduce: notably Chabrier's *Guendoline* (1888), Vincent d'Indy's *Festival* (1897), Chausson's *Le Roi Arthus* (1905), Pierre de Bériot's *Éros vainqueur* (1910). . . .



It is in the ambient which we have just described that the younger generations of Belgian musicians have been formed. And it is certain that at the present moment these generations are harvesting the fruits of this more liberal system of instruction, are profiting by these broad perspectives opening on distant horizons.

The Flemish school of Peter Benoit, it is true, has not yielded all that might have been expected of it. It died out, to speak more exactly, with Jan Blockx (1881-1918), Benoit's successor as director of the Flemish Conservatory of Antwerp, and the composer

of the popular lyric dramas: *Mythologiques*,<sup>1</sup> 1897; *De Bruid der Zee*,<sup>2</sup> 1901, etc., based on excellent librettos, but usually superficial enough, and making a sort of pattern impression after the noble effusions of the head of the same school. Gustave Hubert (1843-1916) who, though a Walloon, had reared himself in his youth beneath the banner of the Flemish school, retraced his steps toward the end of his career, and began to write songs whose accents were altogether novel, songs directly inspired by the younger French school. As to Edgar Tinot, (1854-1908), Flemish born, he seems to have been but very slightly influenced by the doctrine of Peter Benoit, and his art, impregnated with feeling exceedingly warm and sincere, borrows its language, by preference, from Mendelssohn, from Schumann, from the Wagner of *Lohengrin*, and the Liszt of *St Elizabeth*. His oratorio *St. Franciscus*, his operas *Gedifene* and *Katherine* (1902), breathe forth a purely romantic atmosphere, colored by a tendency toward musical idealism, and at certain moments, by classic touches in the Handelian manner. A pupil of Tinot, the Bragan Joseph Hysbaut (b. 1876), strives to realize a more elaborate ideal, and, though endowed with a lesser measure of inspiration, adheres in oratorio form (*De Koning der Heeren*, Op. 40; *Missa*, Op. 48, etc.), with pure style and more unified inspiration. Heineke, César Franck, Elgar, turn and turn about, captivate and influence him. Seconded by literary collaborators of exceptional merit, he has undoubtedly contributed to raise the level of contemporary oratorio. His chamber-music and his piano-compositions display the same qualities of good taste and lofty property. He is, to sum up, one of those who, though they cannot create a new and original musical idiom, nevertheless manage to give their works the breath of personal sensibility.

The present director of the Brussels Conservatory, M. Léon Du Bois (b. 1856), is theoretically a follower of the Flemish school. But his art—as he himself admits—is impregnated with Wagnerism to such a degree that any practical relation on his part with the tradition of Peter Benoit is out of the question. A sign of the times is the fact that his two principal works, the symphonies *Le Mur* and the lyric drama *Edmée* are both inspired, in the literary sense, by one of those writers who, without having the importance of a Verhaeren or a Maeterlinck, nevertheless played a leading part in the renaissance of Belgian letters toward the

<sup>1</sup>*Théâtre d'Anvers*

<sup>2</sup>*Le Théâtre de la Mer*

<sup>3</sup>*L'Éclaircieur de Belgique*



end of the nineteenth century: Camille Leroymer. The music of De Bus is, as by reason of its composer's perfect technical understanding of his art, a fine continuity of lyric development, and a wealth of instrumental color which may unquestionably be attributed to his Flemish ancestry.

Another Fiamand is M. Paul Gilson (b. 1892), whose output, already considerable, shows him to be an exceptionally gifted musician, with a conscientious scientific knowledge of counterpoint and the orchestra, and an uncommon imaginative faculty.

His first important work, the symphonic poem *Le Nier* (1920), created a sensation at its initial performance. Our present perspective discloses certain points in common with the Russians (Borodin, Glazunov), which attracted attention twenty-five years ago and which, without at all taking away from the intrinsic value of the composition, none the less prove those qualities of fundamental originality which were ascribed to him at the time to have been illusory. The fact remains that about 1890 a young musician, of humble origin, had the audacity to draw inspiration from a strange art, now hardly known in Belgium, and to make use of its characteristics in a musical form—the symphonic poem—which, up to the time mentioned, had not as yet recited the Belgian franchise.

Since then, M. Gilson has produced a goodly number of works which are material evidence that his is an individuality fertile in resources of every kind, by no means without poetic feeling, and supported at one and the same time by lofty culture and a usage craving for independence. There are, for instance, cantatas and symphonies of an official nature, which rise far above the general level of compositions of the kind. There is an oratorio *Frère de Saint*, 1924, and the lyric dramas: *Princes Lancelots*, 1925, and *Enzelli*,<sup>2</sup> somewhat massive in their musical substance, and very Wagnerian, but having sustained interest, and developed in such fashion that the rules of good taste are never broken. There is a whole series of neo-concerts for band, ideally conceived for the brasses, and on a superior esthetic level, etc.

To all practical purposes a contemporary of M. Gilson, M. Auguste de Boeck has not his colleague's endorsement of musical ability and science. His impulsive temperament delivers him up, more or less, to the hazards of his inspirations, which are often happy; yet which, in most cases, would benefit by the application of self-criticism. M. de Boeck is one of those natures

<sup>1</sup> *Princes Lancelots* (Brussels).

<sup>2</sup> *Enzelli* (Brussels).

at once expansive and richly gifted, whom an excessive thirst for independence pushes into a sort of average eclecticism, but little suited to the development of good taste, and to the blossoming forth of perfected works of art.

He relies too much on his facility, and is too easily contented with his first effort. Yet it must be acknowledged as well that he has his happy moments, and that when these occur he, more exuberantly than many another, expresses us with his vitality and spontaneity. It is for this reason that he has composed, before all, for the stage, and his lyric dramas *En Dverg*,<sup>1</sup> *Tiltinget de Miraval*, *En Winterwonderland*,<sup>2</sup> *Reiset de Fov* (1903), undeniably make up the most characteristic part of his output. Hence, the picturesque, color lavishly spread, are outstanding instances of his music, and witness to those racial qualities which are common to him and to the land of Th. Uylenspiegel, Jordens and Treiers.

We must still mention, among the Finnish composers of the present day, M. Louis Morteelmans (b. 1888), who is, without contradiction, one of the most sympathetic among the composers of second rank by reason of his good taste, his distinction, and his noble sincerity. There are melodies of his, notably those which he has set to verses by the great Finnish poet Gaida Gaida, which take rank among the best that have been produced in the Finnish provinces of Belgium during the past twenty or thirty years.

The Fleming is a melodist by inclination. No better proof to the fact may be cited than the periodical publication known as *Det Vlaamsche Lied* (Flemish Song), which for twelve years antedating the war appeared regularly, edited by M. Arthur Wilford; and from whose numbers one may gain a detailed idea of what Flemish song was like at the beginning of the twentieth century. In reality, the study of this repertory discloses nothing so very astounding. These little compositions, to tell the truth, may be divided into three classes which, in themselves, are not so unusual. First of all, we have the folk-song in idealized form, conceived in the tradition of Peter Benoit; then we have the melody modified after the *lied* of Schubert, Schumann and Brahms; and finally, the melody displaying modernist tendencies. And we hasten to add that this last type is not necessarily the best. On the contrary: the Fleming composer often suffers in melody worklock

<sup>1</sup>En Dverg

<sup>2</sup>Reiset de Fov and others

<sup>3</sup>This may be compared up as identical with the *Fittentwiele Lied* of Germany.

contemporary dissonance and a heaviness and awkwardness which destroy all charm, and contrast in anything but a happy way with the frank naïveté which the songs of the first and second categories so often exhibit. Altogether, *Bel Flamande Lied* makes collectively, a well-defined impression of provincialism, or of a localism which lags behind the general musical evolution. Yet the ingenuity with which the Flemish melodists employ their formulas and set patterns has for consequence that their sensibility does not appear old-fashioned, and that they are often able to express themselves with real emotion in a musical idiom which is no longer that of our own day.

There are, in Belgium, a certain number of composers who, having received their musical education in Brussels, and living in that city, can neither be reckoned as belonging to the Flemish or the Walloon group. Brussels, in fact, lies at the extreme limit of the languages,<sup>1</sup> and because of the fact enjoys a species of aesthetic "neutrality," which excludes all possibility of any pronounced racial quality of expression. The more immediate consequence of this state of affairs is a trend toward eclecticism, which, on occasion, is pushed to extremes; as in the case, notably, of M. François Haase, director of an important school of music in metropolitan Brussels. M. Haase is a very prolific composer, who cultivates all the forms: piano and chamber music, the song, cantata, lyric drama, etc. His works are well written, from a technical point of view, yet they are in their means, owing to a certain indolence as regards style and a lack of the personal accent which—save in exceptional cases—will prevent their becoming known in a durable way. M. Henri Thirbaud and M. Paul La Gys (b. 1885), possess very precious gifts of assimilation, and progressive tendencies which lead them to adopt with enthusiasm the innovations of the neo-French school. Yet they also have in common the defect of rarely seeming able to utilize these novelties in a truly homogeneous fashion. In fact, in handling them, they employ the eclecticism which is quite foreign to their every essence, and which makes their use of them appear constrained and artificial. To combine the lofty art of a *d'Indy* or a *Dukas* with melodic effusions à la *Mozart* is not exactly the happiest manner of forming what we know as style. And it is

<sup>1</sup>Speaking generally, Dutch, or its vulgar dialects (*gryse* or *Flamish*), are spoken in the northern and eastern parts of Belgium and French, and the dialects, Walloon, as they are called, in the southern part of the country.

just this, to be exact, which MM. Thibaut and La Gye do. At the same time it must be admitted that with this reservation, their art is by no means uninteresting. Both are seekers after the truth and independents, who, along all else, are preoccupied with avoiding well-trodden paths, and seek to surprise their listeners with new forms and formulas as yet unheard. M. La Gye is the composer of numerous lyric dramas, written on the most varied subjects, and showing the greatest diversity of tendency.<sup>1</sup> M. Thibaut's most noteworthy composition is his monodrama in five acts *Le Just* (The Jurymen), a most curious and questionable application made of the old melodrama principle, a gigantic piece of work, in which the use of the Wagnerian leading motive results in a music combined according to the rules of a logic well-nigh mathematical.

M. Raymond Moncaert very wisely made his debut under the auspices of Edgar Tiel with works carefully constructed as regards their form, but somewhat heavy and scholastic. Yet, having an unbridled mind and lacking all false ambition, he has, in the course of the past years, singularly verified as well as broadened his manner. An enthusiastic admirer of the new French school, he has progressively risen to the level of intellectual culture without which it is impossible thoroughly to understand the refined and subtle art of the *Schola Cantorum*, and the impressionists who write in the manner of Debussy. And owing to this very fact, he has given up all eclecticism and, though his personality is decidedly limited, has conquered that mastery of style whose absence is so often noticeable in Belgian musicists. His last works—a piano sonata and a number of songs, most of them written in poems of the Middle Ages—after a brilliant testimonial of what the Belgian composer has gained in entering the circle of his intellectual and artistic knowledge.

Among the artists belonging to the Brussels group we might cite, in addition, the youngest of all, M. Brasseur, a native rude and instinctive, whose very interesting symphonic poems, *Kermesse Flamande* (after Brouha's) played 1903, at the Concerts Ysaye, show in clearest relief, how possible it is, without shock or contradiction, to adapt the most subtle harmonic and orchestral formulas of contemporary French music to the somewhat rude flavor of the *Belgians*.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Messidor* (1894), *Le Châlier* (1895), *L'Agresseur* (1896), *Le Sublime* (1897), *Le Prince d'Epinal*, *Melodie d'Amour*—the last seven last mentioned belonging to the same school.

<sup>2</sup> Brussels is at once and the same time, the capital of Belgium and the capital of the province of Brabant.

We must still consider the Walloon school, whose centre of gravity is the province of Liège. It was from this province that Guillaume Lebrun came; it is there that M. Joseph Jaeger (Liège, 1873) and M. Victor Vreals<sup>1</sup> (Verviers, 1878), together with M. Albert Dupuis (Verviers, 1877) the most notable members of the group in question, were born. It is a well-known fact that the Liège is musical by nature. During the Middle Ages the bishopric of Liège was celebrated for its excellent chanters, and, in more modern times the names of Henry Du Mont, Jean-Nicoll Humel, Gédry, and César Franck are there to testify to the exceptional musical aptitudes of the race. It is also a matter of common knowledge that ever since Vieuxtemps appeared, Liège has become the most prolific breeding-ground for violinists in the world—Eugène Ysaÿe, César Thomson, Marchal, Crikhoven, Zimmer and Chaminet—we need only recall their names. Such surroundings are naturally favorable to the development of musical sentiment. More: the world-wide importance acquired by the Liège school of violinists has extended the horizons of this small territory; it has prevented its citizens from confining themselves too strictly to their weekly round of routine; it has driven both the young musicians born within its confines to seek their fortunes abroad, and to try to educate themselves in order to rise to the level of the foreign hosts with whom they intended to settle down.

It was thus that MM. V. Vreals and A. Dupuis sailed forth to perfect themselves, musically, at the *École Conservatoire* in Paris, beneath the inspired leadership of Vincent d'Indy.<sup>2</sup> The contact thus established was one most fruitful of result, not only as regards those directly benefited, but with respect to Belgian music in general, whose neophytes were not blind to the advantages incident to breathing another air than that of their natal land, and who were glad to draw inspiration from a salutary course of discipline in taste and intelligence. That their racial quality has not suffered because of this temporary submission to the superiority of another nation is sufficiently proven by the example of Guillaume Lebrun, upon whose contact with the artistic circles of France exerted a marvelously refining influence. It "deprovincialized" him, so to speak, and did so without in any way radically changing his ethnic or individual character. On the contrary, it held out to him the promise of burgeoning forth in all the perfection of a clarified formal development and a unified style.

<sup>1</sup> M. Vreals, at the present moment, director of the *Épiscopale Conservatoire*.

<sup>2</sup> M. Vreals himself taught at the *École Conservatoire*. As to M. Jaeger, though he never visited the institution in question, he collaborated himself with its teachers during a stay he made in Paris, after he had won his first Roman prize, in 1897.

Of these three main champions of the Wallace school, M. Albert Dupuis is most sensitive to picturesque extremes, and the changing play of the human psychosis as it is shown in life and on the stage. Hence he is preeminently a dramatic composer. His lyric dramas (*Jean-Baptiste*, 1904, *Scarife*, 1908, etc.) command themselves by reason of a vivacity and zest largely due to the judicious use of musical elements borrowed from folk-song.

M. Vireux is that Belgian musician who, at the present moment, best represents the traditions of Guillaume Lekeu. He has the latter's warm and wide temperament, his genuine and infantile lyricism, that sensibility which is at the same time both modern and romantic. Nevertheless, he has not his predecessor's sentiment of feeling, nor that penetrating quality of emotion which individualizes in each strong relief the work of the master of Verriens, and in a manner compels the listener to admit that it bears the hallmark of genius. Yet Vireux concentrates his musical thoughts in a way which denotes uncommon mastery, not only as regards the use of form, but also with respect to that quality of synthesis which is the privilege of the strong alone to use.

Whether he composes symphonic music, chamber music or songs, a lofty sense of discipline and impeccable good taste in the invention and disposition of themes is evinced. The *Schola Cantorum*, and its tendency to favor harmonious and well-balanced development is, no doubt, a fundamental factor of his art; yet it cannot be denied that he has succeeded in impressing the forms he has acquired as a result of his studies with the imprint of his own personality. The manner in which, notably, he has treated Verhaeren's verses in the song collection entitled *La Guerdande des Danes*, and those of Ad. Haxley in a similar cycle, *La Guêpe Ardennaise*, show in an unmistakable manner with what tact and resources he has been able to adapt his individual sensitiveness to the mental ideas he has travelled into a foreign land to learn.

M. Jeagen's music bears strong affinity with that of M. Vireux. Like it, it proceeds out of the formulas of the *Schola*, and like it, it employs the same mechanism of adaptation. Yet the two men are very different in character. M. Jeagen shows less vigor, less insight than M. Vireux, yet he also evinces greater deficiency, a deeper refinement. They do not really meet save when both stand dreaming before some landscape of their mental province; then both react to its influence in the same way, it is the same homesickness which grips them at sight of its vast blue horizons, whose sadness is at once so tender and so penetrating. Under all

other circumstances their ways lie apart, and yielding to their differences in temperament, they produce works which, though they belong to the same family, show the less contrast with each other most vividly. M. Jongen is fond of breadth in development; his vigor, which is unaffected, has none of that ruddiness sometimes observable in the case of M. Verhaegh; but shows a preference for simple lines far-flung and elegantly curved, his poetic insight is somewhat weaker, not so romantic but more impressionistic, perhaps; for all that impressionism has hardly affected him save in its secondary aspects, as in the matter of orchestral color. Another point of contact between M. Jongen and M. Verhaegh is their predilection, on the one hand, for the severest forms of abstract music (the sonata, trio, quartet, etc.), on the other for the symphonic poem naturalistic or pictorial in character. Both, in their common desire to avoid giving way to the temptation of writing for the stage, offer characteristic evidence of how seriously these two chiefs of the Walloon school take their artistic mission. And the enthusiastic acceptance of this limitation by the Belgian public is proof positive that the ordinary aesthetic level of the multitude has been raised.

It is impossible for us to cite the whole long roll of the artists who are more or less identified with the Walloon school, and who honor contemporary Belgium by the care they take to write only compositions exempt from vulgarity, and conceived from the standpoint of truly lofty idealism. We should not forgive ourselves, however, were we not to instance, among these artists who have already passed away, Ernest Borrey (1859-1918), who composed, quite some time ago, melodies of a modern trend of expression which attracted attention when they appeared by reason of their originality and distinction of utterance, and Théo Ysaÿe (d. 1918), whose symphonic poems *Les Abélis* (Op. 17) and *Le Fort et L'Osseus* (Op. 18), suffused with the true Gallic spirit, exhalt us by reason of the inspired manner in which they have been written, and a delicate poetic color. We might also mention the venerable director of the Conservatory of Gand, M. Emile Mathieu (b. 1844), were it not for the fact that his esthetic cultivation harks back to a period too far removed from the present. Among the contemporaries of MM. Verhaegh and Jongen, M. Delors (b. 1876), in a cultivated spirit who has been powerfully affected by the French influence, and who expresses himself preferentially in small compositions picturesque in character,

*Note:*—Concerning the M. Verhaegh has composed a lyric drama (*Stève le Simple*), and M. Jongen a ballet, *L'Abélis* (1914).

lensed with amiability and intelligence. M. Léon Delcroix exhibits in his chamber music qualities of elegant lightness, whose pleasing superficiality one accepts without objection, owing to the taste and discretion with which his music is informed.

The younger generations alone remain to be considered. As yet they have not supplied sufficient material for appreciation and interest to allow for a more precise determination of their general trend of development. It may be said, however, without fear of making a mistake, that the most gifted among these newcomers follow in the tracks of De Vries and Jaegen, and pride themselves on a constructive art based on the exploitation of well-selected musical material of genuine worth. This is to say, their preference is for music well-defined in outline, conceived, in the main, in the spirit of tradition, yet enriched by reference to the principal musical means offered by the present day. They voluntarily cultivated such forms as the piano solo sonata, the sonata for violin and piano or 'cello and piano, which allow them to give free rein to their desire for varying and broadly applying the musical ideas they wish to develop.<sup>1</sup>

That trend or tendency known as "amorphous," whose source is the impressionistic art of Debussy, only half contents these composers. They do not accept it as a whole, but voluntarily have recourse to it in detail, as regards those harmonic and orchestral refinements which it was the first to initiate. They do so in order to lend their works that pictorial aspect which appeals to their instinctive fondness for color. This "pictorial" side, which is well-developed in Belgian tradition, shows itself in high relief in their songs. Where a Faure or a Debussy merely evokes with a discreet touch the subject matter suggested by their lyrics, these young Belgian melodists naively think themselves obliged to stress and define with a literal exactness which recalls the madrigalists of the Renaissance. This constitutes a danger which can only be averted by a deeper knowledge of literary history, the only true means of forming the taste without, at the same time, lettering the natural impulses of melody.

Since the end of the war, the musical life of Belgium has recommenced with feverish intensity. It was to have been feared that consequent to the disappearance of an individuality such as Octave Maus, progressive tendencies, lacking the elements of organization, would break against the indifference of a post-war public, more avid for material than for esthetic pleasure. Yet

<sup>1</sup>As for instance, the works of M. H. Streefkerck and Ferdinand Quisen, and especially that of Paul de Walbregnon.



art is stronger than all else, and we may now feel sure that the great made-over's work will not die with him. A band of young men, filled with an enthusiasm devoid of any snobishness, and based on a powerful intellectual culture, has recently grouped itself about the pianist Kestle Bee, in Brussels. Bee has set himself the task of revealing to a small circle of chosen artists the most progressive music which is being produced at the present moment in all the different countries of the world. Igor Stravinsky, the leaders of the Post-Elgarian school in England and the Italian modernists on the one hand, and on the other that galaxy of disciples which, in France, now clusters around Eric Satie; these are the principal composers who figure in the repertoire of this small band. It is not a question of adorning them blindly, still less of imitating them; but merely of keeping alive the thought that new art never retrogrades or remains stationary, that it is ever in the formative process, and that the only really vital tradition is that which, while on occasions it may draw upon the past, always all expresses the present and devises the future.

(Translated by Frederic S. Brown)

## NOTES ON THE NATURE OF HARMONY

By OTTO ORTMANN

THE word "harmony," in its broadest connotation, applies to any combination or succession of simultaneous tones. Such an application of the word includes regions of tone behavior scarcely explored, virgin-fields that but await the touch of the capable and observing composer before unfolding their beauties; besides other than those to which we have been accustomed, but beauties none the less. Strangely enough, the particular field selected for recent exploitation—the whole-tone scale—is by its very nature the least rich in internal variety of tone color. There are many other scales—Schubert has used some—that offer distinctly greater advantages in this respect. I shall forego the pleasure of exploring these inviting regions here. Instead, I shall content myself with an analysis, albeit fragmentary and somewhat belated, of what is really at the bottom of the system of harmony which, founded by Rameau, has given us such works as the *B minor Mass*, the *Beethoven Symphonies*, *Fidelman's*, and *Don Juan*.

This system, as everyone knows, is based upon a relationship of Fifths, numerically represented by 2:3. The octave, it is true, represents a simpler ratio, namely 1:2, but in harmony, octaves are conceived as fibrils, which precludes their being used as basis for the development of a system. Their identity, however, permits an octave transposition which does not involve a change in the nature of the chord thus transposed. Such a transposition I shall make use of later. But the Series of Fifths, in itself, does not constitute the entire basis of our harmonic system. Taken alone, such a scale of fifths embraces a wider range than that which includes all that we call good writing. Here again is an unworked field, waiting for appropriate musical manipulation.

With the physiological basis of harmony I am not here concerned. The promising theories of Sherrington, Kohn, and Hardy may lead to an adequate physiological explanation, impossible in terms of the basilar membrane theory of Helmholtz, notwithstanding certain peculiar advantages of the latter theory.

The concept which gives our system of harmony its individual character, a physiognomy which, though clearly defined, is yet

ignored with amazing frequency, is the concept of Tonality. Tonality or Key, is the selection of one tone as principal tone and of certain other tones as more or less subordinate tones. This subordination involves relationship, and in this relationship is found the key to the nature of harmony built upon such a scheme. They who have read their d'Indy, Gurlitt, Rimann, Strube, and Robinson will understand the importance of the principle of relativity embodied in the tonality concept, and the logic of the harmonic analysis here attempted. The principles advanced, accordingly, are not new, but it is hoped that the following sketch may throw light from a new angle upon the realization that a fundamental shift of viewpoint is necessary for the teaching and appreciation of harmony as an element of artistic music. Among other things the famous "Don't Trespass" sign, long posted on areas reserved for the great composers—although the latter never as much as suggested reservation—must come down. It should never have been put up.



The present chordal basis of harmony is a triad, generally speaking, either major or minor. The basis is not permanent. Twelve centuries have seen its progress from the simplest ratio of 1:2 in primitive octave music, to the 2:3 and the 3:4, the fifth and the fourth relation, respectively, of the Organum; thence through the 3:4:5, the fourth and sixth ratio of the Fourteenth, to the 4:5:6 ratio of our major triad. The *Traité de Picardie* still reflects the reaction to the minor triad as a dissonance, the present time shows signs of accepting other, more complex chords, as complete consonances, and the future will record the passage of subjective consonance to yet higher ratios. The so-called major and minor duality of our harmonic system is not so sharply defined as we are often led to believe, for the differences in consonant or dissonant character of the two chords are too great to permit interchangeable use. Here the attempt at analysis will be made from the basis of the major triad only. The conclusions reached apply, as general, to the minor triad also, allowing for the differences in the scales of the two modes and in the ratios of the two chords.

Let us choose C as the central tone of a tonality or key which we call C major. Since our simplest ratio is the 3rd the next related tone will be G. Not lower F, for C would be related to F as 3:2. We take the fifth in an ascending direction because

whatever be the modifications it has met with, the harmonic basis in nature is the harmonic series of overtones, not undertones, in spite of Riemann's splendid hypothesis. As we continue the selection of tones on the basis of ascending fifths, we get



Another fifth, F<sub>2</sub>, would take us out of the tonality of C major. The tones given, therefore, form the tonality as far as a series of fifths can do so, and since there is no other source from which to draw, these tones must form the entire harmonic basis.

By building a triad on each of the given tones, we get:



The triad on B, since it is a diminished triad, must be excluded from the real harmonic basis, which is limited to major and minor. It is included here merely to bring out more clearly certain relationships described later.

Obviously, at the pitches indicated, the sounds are musically not reversible, or at least less so than in some other relation. Accordingly, we transpose by octaves, a transposition, which, as we have seen, does not alter the nature of the chord. Thus transposed, our series becomes:



This gives us a central chord *G*, to which five other chords are more or less related. As we pass from *G* to *A*, we pass upward in fifths, away from the key-tone or the key-chord. As we pass from *A* to *B*, we pass downward in the series of fifths and toward the key-chord. The chord *B* is nearest related to the key-chord, the chord *A* next and so on. In this relationship is the first harmonic principle: musically a chord is always a part of a tonality, and bears various relations to the other chords of that tonality.

The second principle is that all chords tend to pass into the key-chord. The latter is a point of rest to which the other notes

or less transient chords tend to lead. Consequently, triads differ not only in their structure, but also, and this is the important point, in function. In the key of C major, every triad other than that on C is harmonically, incidentally, or tonally, a dissonance, and demands harmonic resolution as much as a seventh or a suspension demands its non-harmonically resolution. The essential purpose of a succession of chords is the establishment of the key of which they are a part, for tonality is one of the two basic harmonic concepts. Such fixing of key is accomplished by progressing toward the key-chord and not away from it. And it will be found that any succession of chords passing along the series from C to C' is a harmonically acceptable progression. It is this because it adheres strictly to the true harmonic progression, a progression in descending fifths.

Chords stand in true harmonic relation only if their roots are a fifth apart. The basic interval of chord structure, however, is not a fifth, but a third. Accordingly, the third is a harmonic interval. It cannot be primary because it is not present in the original series of fifths. The E in the series, Fig. 1, for example, has a different harmonic function from that of E used as third of a triad on C. But it can be secondary, because the chords which we built upon the single tones of Fig. 1 contain not only a fifth, but also the interval of a third. By placing triads in third-relationship to those already derived, we get as our complete chordal series:



The added chords are N, Q, T. They could not come at any other points in the original series because they would then not stand in harmonic relation to the neighboring chords, the basis of primary harmonic relation being a fifth, that of secondary harmonic relation, a third. The primary harmonies of C major are the chords C, F, B, E, G. And the secondary harmonies are the chords N, Q, T. But is not N the same as E, and T the same as G? Not at all! This point illustrates the most fundamental error in which the usual treatment of harmony has been subject. It results from the mistake of considering chords as separate entities, irrespective of their environment, from placing their structure first and their function second. Harmonically speaking, an isolated chord does not exist.

Since there is but one basic harmonic relation, that of the fifth, all harmonic progressions are primarily felt in this relationship. Thus the secondary relation of the third, is an incomplete relation of the fifth, and tends so to be felt. That is, *N*, in Fig. 4, has the harmonic function of *O*; *Q* has the harmonic function of *R*, and *T* has the harmonic function of *O*. *N* could not have the harmonic function of *M*, nor *Q* of *P*, because that direction is anti-harmonic, away from the key-chord instead of toward it. Now we are back to our original series of fifths:



and we see that it is the environment which makes the chord. The maximal value and nature of the latter changes with each change in the environment. In the series given, *N* is not *S* but an incomplete *O*; *T* is not *O* but an incomplete *R*. *Q*, generally viewed as sub-dominant, demands some further explanation.

There is no self-existing harmonic sub-dominant function in music. For we have seen that our series of chords of primary relationship leaves no room for an *F* as independent tone. It has been explained as a secondary relation. But what is more important, is, that, thus explained, it has a dominant function, because it is related to *R*, the second chord in the dominant series of fifths. The *F-A-C* when used as a sub-dominant, is an entirely different chord in function. The sub-dominant effect, which is not really a progression anti-clockwise around the circle of fifths, depends upon a preceding dominant effect. The progression IV-I is really only felt as IV-I when it has been preceded by some V-I progression. Flung alone, without accent, IV-I is usually felt as I-V. (The numeral used merely designates the chord's structure). Thus the effect of the Flung Cadence depends upon a preceding form of the Authentic Cadence, for the true character of the sub-dominant is a deviation from the dominant, or harmonic progression, and where the latter has not related, the former obviously cannot exist. The charming, often unusually beautiful effect of a sub-dominant ends, depends upon the contrast with the preceding dominant effect. Why, for example is the typical harmonic form of a period I-V-I-IV-I and not I-IV-I-V-I? The chord *Q* therefore (Fig. 3), has not a sub-dominant function at all, it is a dominant chord, that is, it belongs to the dominant series. Its use as a

sub-dominant) falls on the other side of the chord *U* (Fig. 8), and naturally intrudes on other anti-harmonic relationships.

By considering the secondary harmonics as incomplete primary harmonics, the weakness of certain chord progressions, and the strength of others may be explained. Thus the progression *M-N-O* or *S-T-U* is harmonically weak because it is really a harmonic reiteration, *V-I-I*, and reiteration stops harmonic flow. The value of chord reiteration is found in the melodic aspect of music, hence the rule to use chord repetition in places where a marked melodic shift is required or desired. On the other hand, as has been pointed out, any chord progression such as *Q-S-U* is good, because *Q* being harmonically *A*, produces the perfect primary progression *A-S-U*. The succession [*M*]-*Q-P-R-S-U* with its modification [*M*]-*N-P-Q-S-U* or any part thereof, taken in the given direction, is the only fundamental harmonic progression in all music.

All other chord progressions are melodic, not harmonic in function. They have their essence in diatonic or chromatic progressions, as the true harmonic progressions have their essence in the harmonic fifth-relationship. It is true, that even in the harmonic series, some of the upper voices, but never the bass, will move in diatonic steps, that is, melodically, but it is also true that such progressions are determined far less by this factor than by the harmonic relation existing between the chords. Proof of this is found in the greater freedom with which primary harmonic progressions are connected as compared to the non-harmonic progressions. In the latter case, it is the melodic steps which make the progression possible. As a consequence, wherever there is diatonic progression on a bass other than a harmonic bass (fifth-relationship), the true harmonics are not represented by the chords as written.

All connections involving inversions of triads, seventh, ninth, and higher chords, with their inversions, suspensions, and altered chords, are melodic, not harmonic progressions. As such they obey the psycho-physiological laws of melody, which are essentially different from those of harmony as here outlined. As soon as we add a seventh, or a ninth, or any dissonant interval to a triad, this added tone has a melodic function.

This leaves the clock-wise, anti-harmonic fifth-progressions, such as *S-S<sup>b</sup>F* in the Figures, to be explained. These, too, without exception, are melodic in function, for they violate the second principle of harmonic progression, which demands movement toward the key-chord. But what of the progression



which certainly is musically acceptable.<sup>2</sup> This is likewise a melodic progression. Formally the sub-dominant cannot be explained as the under-dominant. This becomes evident when we consider the different treatments which the IV-I and the V-I demand in music, and the difference in their effects, one of which is not the opposite of the other but involves a difference in kind. The sub-dominant stands in no harmonic relation to the tonic; the relationship is melodic. Far from being of almost the same harmonic importance as the dominant, the sub-dominant, through its melodic proximity to the tonic, is merely the most important example of the anti-harmonic 2<sup>nd</sup> progression. The musical satisfaction which IV-I gives, is not the result of the harmonic progression of IV into I, but the result of the IV already being a I. That is,

the  is a discord, whether F is in the bass or not, a

double suspension resolving directly into the key-chord 

As a discord, its function is melodic. When introduced, in the coda, for example, by the seventh chord, (in C major by C, E, G, B $\flat$ ) it is also melodic, for all seventh are melodic tones. The sub-dominant effect, therefore, is not a harmonic effect opposite to the dominant effect; it is a melodic effect of a different kind. There is but one harmonic relation in music, and that is the dominant tonic relation.<sup>3</sup> All else is melodic. The Circle of Fifths can only be explained anti-clockwise. Never in the reverse direction. It is not to be conceived as a figure symmetrical with respect to any

diameter. It is the tonality of C, not an



Circle of Fifths in Harmony





The third harmonic principle, which is but a further application of the two principles described, is that every discord is essentially felt as a part of the tonality of which the next tonic harmony is the key-chord, regardless of the number of chords intervening, and often changing in function with the onset of a new phrase. The key-chord will consist of an unverted triad, tonic function, on some metrically accented beat. (The last statement is but a generalization. It must suffice here, for even a brief treatment of the rhythmic aspect of harmonic progression, would take us too far afield.)

The first result of the application of these principles, is that we may no longer consider such chords as the cadential four-six and the passing four-six, or the dominant IV, represented in the figures by  $\bar{4}$ , and the sub-dominant IV, which represents a melodic relationship, as one and the same chord. Musically, and that, after all, is the point that counts, the forms of chords mentioned are as different as the major and the minor triads. Such a conception necessarily changes our system of figured bass completely. Fortunately, this change involves no great difficulty. The plan which first suggests itself is to number the central or key-tone I, then to number all other tones belonging to that tonality, that is, grouping themselves around this tone, which becomes both their aim and end, in relation to this I by counting the intervals from the key-tone instead of from the bass-tone. Thus





Next, for the sake of simplicity, we may dispense with the repetitions of I, with the understanding that a tonality continues until cancelled by another Roman Numeral. In like manner, I alone may stand for II, and I<sub>1</sub> for I<sub>2</sub>. The figuring for the first

$$\begin{array}{c} \frac{3}{3} \\ \frac{3}{3} \end{array} \quad \frac{6}{6} \quad \frac{3}{3} \\ \frac{3}{3}$$

example given is then I-I<sub>2</sub>-I. It is necessary to include I in all

$$\frac{3}{3}$$

cases except I<sub>1</sub>. Such a plan may probably be modified to ad-

$$\frac{3}{3}$$

vantage, and is given merely as a possible solution of the problem of figuring chords when conceived in relation to their tonality. Figured bass, after all, is but a convenient form of numerical analysis. The musical function of a chord, since it represents a subjective reaction, cannot adequately be represented by any fixed system of figures.



The C in the first chord is a seventh. But since sevenths stand in an harmonic relation to the chord (they are melodic tones), we need not be troubled by the ascent into D, for there is no melodic rule prohibiting ascent. The laws governing melody, even in terms of the Lipps-Meyer theory, involves factors essentially extraneous to pure harmonic progression.

Finally, by taking a more complex example for illustration, the extent to which true musical function differs from the figuring

of chords as generally viewed, will be made clear. Several musical conceptions of the phrase, with the resulting changes in harmonic function, are given, and the unbridled license for one of them is included.

CHORDS. FROM PIANO

2 bars |  
3 bars |

The brevity with which all dissonant tones are disposed of as melodic tones may need a word of explanation in its defense. An analysis of the melodic principles was not attempted since we were concerned with the nature of harmony, and the very definition which we gave to harmony, precludes melody from being treated from any other than an almost opposite viewpoint. It may be said in closing, however, that the melodic conception of dissonances will be found to lead to a rational and normally adequate explanation of their use. One interesting result is the manner in which a melodic analysis explains the "raison d'être," if any, of the rules of harmony governing dissonances, inversions, and chord successions, many of which are inexplicable on the basis of harmonic relative. As long as we conceive seventh and suspension as different in musical nature and function, treat chords and their inversions as harmonic identicals, and speak of harmonic relation, such as the sub-dominant, where no harmonic relation exists, we cannot hope to arrive at any satisfactory conclusions. The plan here outlined, at least places the study of harmony upon a rational, and relatively fixed harmonic basis, namely, tonality and the descending series of fifths.

## RUSSIAN COMPOSERS AS DESCRIBED BY THEMSELVES

By JULIEN TIERSOT

RUSSIAN music to-day is well known throughout the civilized world. The latest arrival among the schools of tonal art, for half a century or more she has given proofs of an activity and a vitality which have brought her to one of music's most elevated levels. The great works she has produced are familiar to us. Her history we should not be so well acquainted with (for it belongs to a country far distant from us in every respect) had not some of its best-known representatives made it their business to disclose it to us in its most intimate detail. Two members of that group of the "Five" who, though they now all have disappeared from life's stage, still remain the two most representative of the symphonic and lyric genius of Russia, César Cui and Rimsky-Korsakov in turn, and at widely separated intervals, have informed us with regard to its aspirations, efforts and, finally, its realizations. It is now more than forty years ago that the first-named composer published his study on *Les Musiques en Russie*, in France (Paris, 1869), telling the story of the appearance on the scene of the new school, and quite recently we have been able to read the book of reminiscences entitled *Ma vie musicale*, left by Rimsky-Korsakov, in which the whole history of the period during which an evolution of such great interest unfolded has been retraced. Finally, letters of Rimsky's have been published which, since they were not intended for publication, are the more interesting because of the fact, as they supply valuable details regarding the artists' private life.

The times have run their course; the book is closed, the thread cut. In the midst of the upheaval which has so profoundly disturbed the social life of Russia, the future opening-up to art in this great country is still unknown. The majority of Russian musicians have left their native land; they are living in exile, and do not feel themselves impelled to produce new works. As to those who have remained, all their energies are confined to giving auditions, performances which exultate under moon or

less precarious conditions, of the approved works of the former repertory. And in the first rank of these works are those proceeding out of the national movement represented by the group already mentioned. It seems as though this might be a propitious time for casting a summary glance over the history of this group, summing up what has been told us by those among its representatives best qualified to speak.

However, their coming forward had not been awaited in France in order to awaken an interest in Russian music. It was then that as early as 1844, Hector Berlioz, the master best fitted to appreciate at their true value works of a lofty and novel trend, dedicated an assiduously written study to Mikhail Gluka, some of whose things he had produced in his own concerts. Subsequently he himself went to Russia, on two different occasions, and for all that he had undertaken these expeditions for the purpose of carrying on a propaganda for his own works, he did not fail to interest himself in the developments of an art of recent creation and, reciprocally, took pains to make it known in occidental Europe. It is most unjust of Rimsky-Korsakov to reproach him for not devoting attention to the young Russian school during his last trip. It was in 1848 that Berlioz paid his last visit to Russia; he was very ill, worn out by the strenuous life he had led, and he was soon to die. It would have been showing him but little charity to have insisted that under such circumstances he study these new works, then only in process of working-out, in a thorough-going way. As to Rimsky-Korsakov, he was just about twenty-four at the time; had as yet produced little or nothing, and people hardly knew as yet whether he was a musician or a writer. But Berlioz had been in touch with his friends, and his relations with them were most cordial; the letters he wrote on his return to the friends he had left in Russia, and which are among the last of his correspondences preserved, mention César Cui and Balakirev several times, and express his regret that they are not near him. "I know that I am going to die . . . I would like to see you; perhaps you would wind up the springs again, Cui, and would severly my blood." These are the sentiments he expresses in a letter of August 21, 1848, the last letter of his which has been printed to date.

The two names we have just mentioned are, in fact, those of the two composers, the remnant among the "Five," to whom the credit of the first initiative in the new movement belongs. And this initiative, at the date we have reached, was no longer so very recent, for those who had taken it had no more than outgrown

their childhood at the moment when they met for the first time. This is how César Cui recalls the event.

In 1856, two Russians, very young, and passionately devoted to their art, met in St. Petersburg. The capital of Russia being the principal musical centre of the country, they made it their permanent place of residence. One was Balakirev, the other the writer of these pages. Some time after, Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodine and Moussorgsky joined them, and, little by little, a small circle of friends was formed, which had been brought together by one and the same love for musical art.

The activity of this youthful group was immediate and incessant, though individually they were all professionally engaged to an extent which seemed to relegate them, as musicians, to the ranks of the amateurs. Balakirev, the eldest among them, did not long delay in devoting himself entirely to the art of music, though he had taken a scientific course in a university in his youth. But César Cui was an engineer officer and became a general; Moussorgsky was a functionary in the War Department, Borodine a professor of chemistry in a medical college, and Rimsky-Korsakov was a sailor. Nevertheless, all of them became masters, and it was as musicians that they gained fame.

César Cui, after reviewing the outstanding facts of the preceding period, the work of Michael Glinka, the founder of Russian music; then that of Borov and Dargomizsky, the intermediaries; then the patriotic composers and the new-comers, in the study which we have already mentioned, suggested the first valuable indications regarding the beginning activity of the young school. Yet, writing so soon, he could not give a complete idea of the subject: it is Rimsky-Korsakov's book which presents a really collective picture.

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What is primarily interesting about this book is the fact that it allows us to penetrate into the vital intimacy of a collectivity of art, an intimacy so close that it reached even on the output of the works. And these last responded so perfectly to an ideal held in common, that one cannot always tell which one of the "Five" may have contributed the major portion of labor in a work bearing a single signature. There is hardly one work of Moussorgsky's, of César Cui's, of Borodine's and—at the beginning—of Rimsky-Korsakov's which, to a greater or lesser extent, did not represent the collaboration, in first instance, of Balakirev, their dean and

recognized leader, and then, as circumstances might dictate, sometimes that of one, sometimes that of another.

Examples which prove this abound. On the very first page of Rimsky-Korsakov's memoirs, we see Balakirev, to whom young Rimsky comes to submit his first efforts, busy orchestrating the overture of the *Prisonnier de Cavares*, an opera by César Cui. The young neophyte ambitiously desires to make his bow with a symphony, and has brought along his sketch. And Balakirev orchestrates the first movement on the spot, in order to show the new disciple how it should be done. At the same time he submits his own works to the judgment of his young friends: nothing comes from the pen of one of the "Five" that was not at once submitted to the examination of the rest, among whom Balakirev's voice preponderated since, being the eldest (was he not all of us captive at the time when Rimsky-Korsakov placed himself under his wing?), he exercised on the others the prestige of an undisputed mastery.

He was obeyed blindly, for his ascendancy was great. Young, with handsome eyes, bright and full of life, a luxuriant beard, speaking with authority and frankness, ready to impose as a master's notice, repeating without a single mistake any composition once played for him, he had an ascendancy which none other could gain. . . . Besides, he insisted that a work should be revised following the very letter of his indications. In fact, more than once, one could discover entire passages of his own in the works of the others.

In one of his own compositions Rimsky-Korsakov has given an example of this cooperation by means of which the master and his disciples corrected each other, rectifying errors which were a natural result of their respective individual deficiencies, and each supplying what the other lacked.

I had, too, he tells us with no attempt at concealment, composed a song to words by Heine. . . . Balakirev was well enough satisfied with it, but finding that the piano accompaniment was inadequate, which was quite natural in my case, since I was no pianist, he rewrote the piano part completely. And it was with his piano accompaniment that my song was eventually published.

Before long it was Rimsky's turn to assist in the collective production and none gave himself up to the task with greater activity than he did. Is it generally known that a large part of the output of the gifted Moussorgsky was simply written by Rimsky-Korsakov? His *Five* memoirs abound in instances of this sort, and the others have done their share as well. We may follow their collaborators from page to page.

First of all there is a "Scherzo," and a chorus from *Oedipus*, which Rubinstein had included on the program of one of his concerts. They did not succeed at all badly, because "these compositions had gone through Balakirev's hands."

The selected portions in the *Chants* journal on Elvira preceded the opera *Le Fatale de Scythie*. This portion was composed and orchestrated by Moussorgsky himself, and I still have his own score. It was, later, put into shape by Lisina. The detached numbers from *Le Khovnotchina*, which were played at the second concert (of the Free Music School, under Rimsky-Korsakow's direction), were not all orchestrated by Moussorgsky. . . . The "Persian Dance" was orchestrated by me. Though he had promised this number for the concert, Moussorgsky delayed handing it over, and when I proposed to orchestrate it for him, he agreed no sooner had I spoken, and appeared very well satisfied with my work, for all that I had introduced a number of changes in his harmonies.

There was even more done in this way after Moussorgsky died. In fact, among the inextricable confusion of sketches found among his belongings there was, properly speaking, hardly anything which might be termed finished or completed. Pages differing in the most radical manner were discovered among these manuscripts, and it was often quite impossible to distinguish the compositions which had been partially set down from each other—to say nothing of those cases in which survivors recalled hearing the composer play pieces that were entirely complete, and which they had admired when they grew beneath his fingers on the keyboard, but of which not a trace remained in the shape of written notes.

Among the works which Moussorgsky had planned and which were never completed was a *Salammbô*, whose sketches were a mine from which the composer drew material with which to build several other works; matter taken from this source has been discovered even in the most inspired pages of Boris Godounov.

"After his death," says Rimsky-Korsakow, "all his manuscripts were handed over to me to arrange and order, to complete the works which had been commenced and to prepare them for publication." With entire disinterestedness the composer of so many original, living works consented to undertake this long and arduous task, without a thought of remuneration, either for Moussorgsky's heirs or for himself. This labor engaged Rimsky's time for two entire years, and came to a satisfactory end with the completion of an opera, *Le Khovnotchina*, that of another, *Le Fatale de Scythie*, choruses, orchestral compositions, etc.,



completed after auto-sketches, and incomplete and uncorrected manuscripts.

In *Le Carnaval*, especially, there was much to rewrite and recompose; there were, for instance, unnecessary and repetitive sections in the first and second acts, which tended to make them too long, while the fifth act, on the contrary, was largely lacking, and what there was of it was sketched out only in the most superficial manner. The change of the *Rossini*id, with the bell-effect before they meet the wraiths to be hanged alive, had to be entirely rewritten, since it was quite impossible to have been primarily written. As for the first chorus, it only arrived in the shape of a melody, written out by Miss Karamina, and given by her to Moussorgsky. Utilising this melody, I wrote the entire chorus, as well as the orientated episode accompanying the scene of the burning of the stable. For a monologue in the fifth act I used music which I had taken from the first. The variations in Naphe's song, in the third act, were considerably modified and worked over by me.

*Le Waltz de Mont Chauve*, a symphonic piece which has been played more than once in our Parisian concerts, has undergone the most extraordinary vicissitudes, turn and turn about, at the hands of Moussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakow. In the beginning it was a youthful composition of the first-mentioned composer, written in imitation of Liszt. Balakirew having criticised it severely, the composer had had it aside. Deciding to appeal from the condemnation pronounced on it, he took it up again later on, introduced vocal parts, and a place was made for it in Rimsky's *Missa*. But *Missa* was in turn abandoned, and then the composition passed (still tentatively) into Moussorgsky's *Le Faute de Saint-Etienne*, where it was to serve to accompany a fantastic drama. Thus this piece first took form as a solo for piano and orchestra, and in its second and third versions became a vocal composition without orchestra.

Since none of these variants could be played in public, says Rimsky-Korsakow, I determined to write an instrumental piece with the material furnished by Moussorgsky, retaining all that was best and most useful in the composer's work, and avoiding, so far as possible, to add to it any conceptions of my own. The proper thing to do was to create a form in which Moussorgsky's ideas could be framed to the best advantage. The problem was a difficult one . . . .

It was in this way that Moussorgsky's music was written and in quite our author's own name:

All these manuscripts were in a condition of the greatest disorder. Among them were the most absurd harmonies, monstrous passages of softness, strikingly illogical modulations, contrivedness which had failed of success, unselected numbers all giving proof of the most

impudent amateurism and an absolute technical ignorance. In spite of all this, these productions in most cases showed such greatness of genius, such originality, and so novel a character, that their publication appeared to be indispensable. Nevertheless, they called for arrangement, for a coordination without which they could command no more than a bibliographical interest. In this way, Mussorgsky's works still will be able to exist in all their freshness half a century after his death. When they become public property, it will always be time enough to undertake this purely bibliographical edition, since I have hoarded over all manuscripts to the Imperial Public Library.

Even Boris Godunov, represented during the composer's lifetime, reflected the mutations undergone owing to these successive editions. Mussorgsky wrote his score himself, and his orchestration was conceived without brilliancy. There was, for instance, a Polonaise, brilliant as regards its musical style and its form; but whose instrumentation had been written, no doubt in the spirit of archaism, in the retrospective style of Lohé's *poème symphonique*. Rimsky-Korsakov invested it with a brilliant Wagnerian orchestration—as he informs us—and the effect of the piece was enhanced. And later he elaborates a complete new "edition" of Boris Godunov. In this new working-out the score was first executed at the Petrushev Conservatory, conducted by the "editor," and was then taken over and definitely placed in the Maryinsky Theatre.

I was beyond measure satisfied with my editing and orchestration of Boris (with Rimsky-Korsakov), which I have heard for the first time with the accompaniment of a grand orchestra. Fervent admirers of Mussorgsky looked rather baffled and expressed vague regrets. Yet in substituting Boris to a revision I did not suppress the original version. When the day comes that the original is found to be superior to my revision, it will only be necessary to present the work according to Mussorgsky's own score.

It is in this final form, however, in whose preparation Rimsky-Korsakov was associated, as we have just shown, that Boris Godunov has been performed whenever this fine work has been staged.

After Mussorgsky comes Borodine—who died even more prematurely, and without having completed his musical life-work. Even while still living, he had not disclaimed the aid of his friends. When, in the season of 1878-1879, Rimsky-Korsakov was entrusted with the directorship of the Petrushev School of Music, he announced in his program the first hearing of the dances from *Prince Igor*, in the belief that Borodine had completed the opera in question. But this was not the case. The orchestration was

locking altogether, and, in fact, it was necessary for Rimsky-Korsakov and another friend, Ljadow, to get to work and supply it. To their efforts is due the brilliant instrumentation of these dances, which have become so famous. On another occasion, Rimsky-Korsakov, disappointed at realizing that his friend Borodine, occupied by other matters, seemed to lack all initiative to proceed with the composition of "his best opera," offered to act as his musical secretary, and carried off with him to the country pages of sketches in order to put them in shape. Hence, when Borodine died, it was quite natural that Rimsky-Korsakov should undertake to gather and save for posterity such precious fragments as might be found. *Prince Igor*, notably, was far from having been completed. After mentioning those portions which Borodine had last written, Rimsky goes on to say:

Yet these pieces were still in the form of plain sketches, and, finally, the remainder were only present in the shape of incomplete and confused drafts, without saying anything of numerous gaps. Thus, there was no book for the second and third acts, not even a scenario, only here and there a few stanzas had been set down accompanied by staves, which, however, had no relation to each other. Fortunately, I remembered what these two acts should contain from conversations I had had with Borodine, even though he had not been altogether devoted as regards his intentions. In the third act in particular the music was missing. It was understood, therefore, between Chassanow and myself, that he should compose all that was missing in the third act and, drawing on our memory, he would write the structure which the composer had often played for us. For my part, I was to look after the instrumentation of the entire work, the composition of what was lacking and the coordination of the numbers left uncompleted by Borodine.

We may admire, in passing, the penetration of these geniuses who, under the impulse of their fraternal feelings, could thus supplement each other in the most natural way in the world, as well as the manumitted fidelity which allowed his survivors to realize entire pages that the original composer had never set down on paper.

Hence, is it altogether fair to concede to the original composer the merit of having written a work so evidently collective, and should not Borodine's *Prince Igor* with quite as much justice bear the signature of Rimsky-Korsakov and Chassanow as well as his?

And it is not alone to his immediate contemporaries, to his comrades, that Rimsky-Korsakov rendered such good offices. We see him, in addition, busy saving the choruses of *Officia*. He also orchestrated an opera by one of his predecessors, *Da gromnitsky*.

*Le Casier de pièce*, which the composer had left simply in the shape of a vocal score. He even undertook this task twice, beginning it in his youth and resuming it later, in order to give the work of a colleague a definitive existence.

He was also accustomed in his own case to undertake such "remakings." *Pobitrensko*, his first opera, was written three times: on the first occasion with the exuberance and freshness of youthful imagination, but also with youth's lack of skill. The second time he rewrote it under the disillusioning influence of his academic studies; the third time, finally, with the experience of an art which had come into its full heritage of development.

*Sadko*, the symphonic poem, was one of his earliest works. It was played in Paris (at the Concerts-Pasteloup), when still a novelty, a long, long time ago. Later on the composer reshaped it, while still allowing it to retain its original form as an orchestral composition. At length, he did not shrink from composing a third *Sadko*, this time an opera, in which he employed all the thematic elements found in his preceding symphonic pages.

*Azar* is one of Rimsky-Korsakov's most perfected concert-pieces. Still he mentions it as being among his first attempts, dating back to a period when, as he himself avows, he hardly knew how to write. It must be that in this case, too, he gathered up his thematic elements and subjected them to a reconstructive process later on.

The other masters of the group, though they did not work so hard, acted in the same manner. Rimsky-Korsakov's *Fin Muscovite* testifies to the fact that Mussorgsky, who left so many incomplete works at his death, himself subjected some of the works of others to this same process by which the musical material is taken up again, and reworked and reshaped in a thousand ways. Instances of his having done so are known.

It was because, at the time their group came into being, these musicians, so truly impetive, with so fresh an echo in their veins, and but newly entered upon a domain of art which also was practically a novelty in their country, had such confidence in their budding genius that they wished to write nothing but what was exclusively and directly dictated by it. The example of their predecessors only seemed to them calculated to modify their own personality; their aim was to stand on their own feet creatively. Yet they were not long in realising that their improvisations would not withstand the test of time. Hence their perpetual hesitations, their continual reworking of conceptions whose generative ideas remained vital, but whose execution

formal structure weakened their effect. They found it necessary, when experience had opened their eyes, to shade somewhat that sovereign contempt which they had inherited for all that tended to be scholastic. Rimsky-Korsakov's example in this respect is most significant:

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He had entered Balakirev's group in 1864, when he was no more than seventeen years of age. At the time he was a student in the Naval school, and had taken a few piano lessons (he always regretted that they had been so few in number) and, purely by instinct, he had covered a few sheets of music-paper with his scribblings. This was the beginning and the end of his musical knowledge. He submitted a Nocturne and some symphonic fragments to Balakirev, and the latter at once told him that he would have to write his symphony in complete form. And in this manner, without even knowing what a chord of the seventh, a modulation, a development, a tie or a tone really was, the young man undertook to rival Beethoven.

The incidental works which they read among themselves and then suffered apart, were the only musical examples which the members of the group could follow. Their repertory was restricted and their opinions regarding the masters who had produced them were distinguished principally by their severity; Balakirev and Messiaen being the panacea of the group, they played transcriptions of the Schumann symphonies and the last quartets of Beethoven for four hands. As regards the last named composer his eight earlier symphonies were, in their judgment, only "middling successful," their themes "were adjudged feeble." In fact, these "eclectic creations" were but little relished by the group of young Russian musicians. Chopin's melodies appeared to them "musical and written for the ladies," and he himself was even termed "a neurotic warbling." Mendelssohn's compositions seemed "shilly and written to please the taste of small shopkeepers." Bach's figure, nevertheless, was esteemed, according to one paragraph, while in another the composer of the "Passion" is called "petitified." Mozart and Haydn were regarded as "antiquated and naive." And, note the following affinity: "Beethoven, whose acquaintance they were just beginning to make, was highly appreciated," while Liszt was regarded as "musically corrupt and at times even caricatural." Wagner was hardly mentioned, according to the first chapter, but the fourth, recording

remembrance of the presentation of Lohengrin in Petrograd, says frankly: "Balakirev, Cia, Messingky and myself were in a box with Dargomyzky. We expressed all our contempt for Lohengrin."<sup>2</sup>

In fact, the only models which these new creators accepted were those which they offered one another, in the shape of their own compositions, as well as the works of their immediate predecessors in Russia, after Glinka. And they were not gentle either, with those composers who did not belong to their own little group. (Liszt was accounted a snob, Rimsky without either talent or gift for composition; and, later, Tchaikovsky was only tolerated because of his amiable character, not at all because of his music). "His conservatorial education always raised a barrier between him and us," says our writer. In brief, there never was a more narrow, more intolerant little group, a little circle more closely united, and yet one which has given an example of such power. And still, its surprising originality all resulted from its application of the principle to which it adhered with inveterate rigor: *Faisle de sa (let of your own volition)*.

Nevertheless, the moment could not fail to come when a spirit as judicious and well-balanced as that of Rimsky-Korsakov was obliged to admit that instinct, powerful though it might be, was not everything in art-creation; that mere practical development, swiftly degenerating into experiments, does not suffice for the invention of the diverse and multiple forms without which the labor of art cannot renew itself; that, in a word, there is a minimum of technical knowledge, of professional knowledge, "which cannot be ignored if one wishes to write," and it is in the following circumstances which opened his eyes to the fact.

In 1871, he was twenty-seven years of age, and was still a naval officer. He had composed and had presented his first opera, *Falcorpomba*, and his first symphonic poems, *Faith* and *Star*, which furnished the nucleus of the future, though they had not as yet opened his eyes beyond the limits of a somewhat narrow circle, when he was given a great surprise. He was offered the post of professor of composition and instrumentation at the Petrograd Conservatory. Let us record the name of the unusual man who showed such unexpected confidence in a school which, not without reason, was reputed to be revolutionary, even anarchic in its tendencies. He was called Anshkovsky, had just been appointed director of the Conservatory, and claimed that "he would vivify the water which had grown stagnant."

This offer caused the scales to fall from Rimsky-Korsakov's eyes. Professor of composition, he, who had never even learned to compose? How then was he to teach composition to others? He hesitated. His friends encouraged him. They, who had always held themselves aloof from all that might be called "unassisted authority," regarded this recognition of one of their number as an entering wedge for their party in the councils of the government. Hence he accepted the position offered. Yet, honestly, he began with self-examination: "Although the composer of works which held their own and did not sound badly, and which had earned the approval of the public and of many musicians," he says, "I was only an amateur and knew nothing. I admit this openly before all."

It seems to me that this confession recalls another, that of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, admitting the gaps in his own musical education. — He, too, has been frostily accused of being an amateur. Will we be more indulgent in his case when it turns out that, later, a master of Rimsky-Korsakov's culture says the identical thing about himself?

In order to make the necessary progress, the new-comer at the Conservatory acted in exactly the same way: "I learned music through teaching it," Rousseau had said, and it was through teaching composition that Rimsky-Korsakov found the way to a knowledge of its mechanics and its principles. With frank good humor he tells us that, at the commencement of his professional career, the pupils who were more advanced in their studies quite unconsciously gave him his education; after which he felt himself able to instruct the others.

Yet it was a composer that he realized in an even greater degree the benefits of theoretic and professional instruction:

After I had composed *Peterpanka*, (the knowledge, the lack of harmonic technique caused my imagination, which had at its disposal only the same mere processes, to cease to work. It was only the development of technique, which I had set myself to studying, that made a renewal of my creative powers possible, by subjecting them with a fresh current and maintaining the flow of my interior activity.

We have just quoted the case of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The great minds of the French eighteenth century were endowed with a penetration, a power of apprehension which led them, a

One might object that after having made his offer with amateur works Rimsky-Korsakov later on "learned great masters." While Jean-Jacques Rousseau never was above the level of the *Jeune de Philosophie*. Yet this was because instead of writing out scores, he gave his words to Le Franc de Ménil and the Count de La Motte. Had he not shared in this or many, if not more, that he would have made the same progress.

century in advance, to discover truths which our contemporaries believe they themselves have been the first to note. Let us cite, as an example, what Ramenski has written, in order to prove that genius must needs be frustrated by art:

He whose taste has been formed merely by comparisons which are within the scope of his sensations, is able, at the most, to excel only in certain genres. When you take from him the characters to which he is accustomed, you will no longer recognize him. Since he draws all from his imagination, without the assistance of art in its relations to his expression, he wastes out in the end. In the fire of his first efforts he is altogether brilliant, yet this fire consumes itself in measure as he attempts to revive it, and all that he has to offer are repetitions or plattitudes.

"He wears out in the end. . . ." "His fire consumes itself. . . ." This is exactly what the Russian master, more than a century and a half after Ramenski, observed in his own case.

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Rinsky-Korsakow's book is not merely the story of his own life. Just as a large part of his time, as we have seen, is devoted to compiling and perfecting the works of his companions, so his memoirs are the history of the entire group of which he was a member; in them the figures of his friends live again, traced in truly striking relief.

One of the most curious is that of Borodine. Some ten years older than Rinsky-Korsakow, he nevertheless took up his medical career at a later period, and joined that group which an irony, perhaps not barren of result, had named "the patient band." In this group, hardly a member of which was exclusively a professional musician, Borodine was the one who devoted the smallest portion of his time to the art. Professor of chemistry at the School of Medicine, he declared that he loved science quite as much as he did music. And yet it was neither his laboratory nor his academic chair which preoccupied his attention, for the major portion of his time was given up to philanthropic and charitable works, to which he devoted himself with ardor. A strange physiognomy, a strange life was that of this man, endowed with real musical genius, busied at the same time with scientific research, and who, meanwhile, impelled by a spirit of love and self-sacrifice, led the life of an apostle, wellnigh that of an anchorite. He is worthy of a place in the gallery of characters created by Tolstoi, who are contented only in the fulness of true and absolute



renunciation of self. We can see him, as witnessed by Rimsky-Korsakov, consecrating himself, body and soul, to those works of social regeneration which Russia saw spring up in great number during the closing years of the nineteenth century. He had been one of the organizers of the Women's School of Medicine, and was a member of all sorts of charitable organizations and societies for the encouragement of studious youth, of female students in particular. One of these organizations, for which he acted as treasurer, deprived him of a great part of his time. Society ladies, while displaying a great deal of enthusiasm for his musical gifts, took advantage of his unsophisticated character to induce him to sit on welfare committees, robbing him of all the time he might have devoted to composition. At the same time he was given over to the assaults of the Russian students, who, knowing him to be a freemason, too often abused his kindness. His wife, though ill, identified herself with his efforts. They adopted children and brought them up; often the parents came to see them and had to be taken in over night; they were accommodated with friends, and even slept on the ground floor, and the professor's apartment situated on the ground-floor of the School of Medicine itself, was then transformed into a species of asylum.

As to the current obligations of life, they were the least of Borodine's worries. His inconsiderance made his friends smile and might often have garished a monograph—it has already been well-written elsewhere—with piquant details regarding "The absent-minded one." In summer he took his vacation, which he passed in the country, in the middle of Russia. This should have been the favorable season for his medical work, but was nothing of the sort. He usually installed himself in a vat, but poorly furnished and uncomfortable one, and there he lived a regular peasant's life; his wife going out bare-foot. Thus the summer went by for them, in the midst of privation and inactivity, and without profit to art. Borodine died prematurely, having practically spoiled his musical career, and we have already seen what would have happened to his work had Rimsky-Korsakov not been there to complete and perfect it. It would have perished, practically in its entirety. And yet, what lofty, vibrant and delightful musical qualities it evinces.

The figure of Mozucorgsky, as traced by the pen of Rimsky-Korsakov, is no less characteristic. The composer of Boris Godunov had been an officer in the Guards, and had then become an employe in an administrative bureau. He was a good pianist and had a pleasant baritone voice: at the meetings of the group, when the

young masters let their friends hear their new compositions. It was Messagerily who sang the grand rules from Jean le terrible, *Pskovitskaya*, *Clear Cut's* operas and his own *North*. None had so deliberately ignored the technique of composition as Messagerily; hence he assumed an attitude not alone contemptuous, but actually gloried in his ignorance. He led the life of a Bohemian—a Bohemian of Petrograd, a type quite as strange in another way as that of Montmartre or the Italian Quarter of Paris. His friends at times found it difficult to take him seriously. "His brain is feeble—he has no head," Balakirev said of him. His concentrations increased in number when, after the performance of his operas, he gave up the bourgeois duties to which he had hitherto owed his existence, in order to play the artist. He joined a woman singer in order to offer a course in music, in which he confined himself entirely to the part of accompanist; at times he appeared in order to play the strangest possible repertory of transcriptions, improvisations and fantasies. Then, his mind unbalanced by his success, he broke with his old friends, and sought the company of the self-styled admirers who surrounded him in the nocturnal saloons of Petrograd. He took to drink, became a confirmed alcoholic and died in an excess of alcoholic bromide. We have seen his portrait, his heavy nose, with bushy locks and protruberant forehead, giving his features a certain resemblance to those of Verhaere. Was there not a spiritual analogy between them as well? Older in years than the poet, he seems to be a personage in some romantic drama of the boulevard, one which the pen of Frédéric Lemaître might have portrayed with realistic power: "Genius and Disaster." That he had genius is not to be doubted, the genius which comes from the soul, which is most intense and most human.

*Clear Cut*, one of the elders of the group, played a specially defined part in it, he was regarded as a lyricist, devoted to vocal music; while the others, on the contrary, were symphonists. Rimsky-Korsakov points out an "Athenian thread" in his music, whose presence he explains by the composer's semi-French origin. The fact is that he followed a road which diverged notably from that taken by his colleagues. In the earlier period of their relations with each other, Rimsky-Korsakov was aware that he lived in the lower section of the town, keeping a boarding-school where boys were prepared for a military career, for *Cut* was a professor of fortification. Yet he found time to devote a large portion of his activity to music. Less of a symphonist than the other representatives of the group, he composed operas, above all *Le*

*Procureur du Conseil*, a Russian subject, and Willem Kachyfe, as well as others in which, as the result of a marked preference, he had recourse to French subjects: *Angelo*, after Victor Hugo's drama; *Le Filibuster*, whose music he wrote to M. Jean Bachevin's verses; and even *Mademoiselle Fgl*, after Gay de Mupassant's story. He also, to the very last, was active as a musical critic, writing for leading Russian papers, and we already know that he has written for French readers an account of the history of music in his own land. One of the oldest members of the group of the "Five," he was also its last survivor, and it is only quite recently that we were advised of his death, which occurred after the Revolution had begun and Russia was isolated from the rest of the world. If he had survived to the present day he would be the dean of European composers, M. Saint-Saëns, who holds the present rights to that title, having been born the same year (1835), but several months later. Yet it was not given Cui to hold his prerogative to the end.

As to Balakirew, we already know that at the beginning of this musical movement he played the part of the head of the school. He had been started on his career by Glinka, and was the only professional musician of the group. He played piano well and, from the very beginning of his professional activities, had conducted a private orchestra in an artistic home, circumstances which greatly favored his aptitude for critical observation, and gave him, at the onset, that practice in music-making which no study of the musical theory and method had given him, seeing that he had never studied those subjects. He was, says Rimsky-Korsakow, "endowed with acute instinct for harmony and polyphony; and he possessed the technique of composition, partly as a natural gift, partly as the acquisition of personal experience. He commanded both the science of counterpoint and that of orchestration, and had a feeling for form, in a word, all that the composer must have." All this he had acquired without a teacher, through the sole power of his critical acumen; and it was because of these natural acquisitions that he in turn was acclaimed the master. He was tenacious and suspicious with respect to his former companions and disciples, and now they had attained their full development after following his guidance, he could not guard against the intrusion of that evil feeling which it is hard to qualify by any other name than that of jealousy. Rimsky-Korsakow in his own person made this unpleasant experience. When the time of maturity had come to all of them, when each was ready to take his own road, and still younger disciples were joining them,

Balakirev would still have liked to have kept them beneath the shadow of his paternal wing. Yet each took flight in one or another direction, and once more reunited, they grouped themselves under another patronage—that of the Russian Marcosus Belsiev. "A new season, new birds, new songs," says Rimsky-Korsakov, philosophically. But Balakirev looked on this desertion as a kind of treason; he retired to his tent, and toward Belsiev, who had readjusted up his former circle, he showed the frankest animosity.

Rimsky-Korsakov, who had become the outstanding musical leader of the new group, kept in touch, at least professionally, with his former chief; yet this artificial understanding could not well last. It was true that the Russian school of 1880 already was no longer that of 1860-1870. The latter had been more primitive, more natural, more provincially Russian in character; it had profited by the strength of harshness, it had known the advantages of intolerance. The second group had grown more cosmopolitan. In it what might be called the avengery of the primitive period had been succeeded by something more polished, more refinement, more universal and also more prolific.

We should note that in the interim between these two epochs the original principle has not changed; forms alone have been modified, have grown more polished from one generation to another. The proof of this is that if the representative type of the first period is Balakirev, Rimsky-Korsakov is the incarnation of the second, and he is connected in a sufficiently intimate manner with his predecessor. Yet the evolution had been accomplished and it could not well take place without bounding some line. Hence the attitude of the two masters as regards each other was necessarily fatal, and the sequence of events which developed between them have almost a symbolic meaning. Both of them officially intrusted with the duties of conductors of the Imperial orchestra, they had, to all appearances, remained on a friendly footing with each other. The day might have dawned which would have seen them once more united in casual friendship, yet the exact opposite took place. On the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the beginning of Rimsky-Korsakov's career, the Russian musical world wished to celebrate the event. Did Balakirev ask himself why the twenty-fifth anniversary of his own debut had not been the occasion of a celebration? One cannot say, but it is possible. At any rate, Balakirev officially presented the compliments of the Imperial authorities to his former disciple, but his felicitations did not come from the heart. The

very first protest, the well-known day, was seized upon to furnish the subject of a discussion which degenerated into a quarrel, in consequence of which their rupture became definite. Those who know the Russians, and who are acquainted with their susceptibilities and their suspicious character, will not be surprised at this disagreement between two masters who had become rivals, two veterans of the vanguard whom one should have liked to have seen, on such a day, enjoying the fruit of their common labors side by side.

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As to Rimsky-Korsakov, his autobiography, which makes him so directly acquainted with his readers, presents him in a most favorable light. "I have finished the tale of my musical life," he says, in concluding it. "It is confused, it is not well-written as regards style, it is often quite dry; on the other hand, it contains nothing but the truth, and therein lies its interest." We feel that this final impression is entirely accurate and sincere. Those who were privileged to know Rimsky-Korsakov ever so slightly will have been able to realize at once that they had to do with a personality in whose uprightness and frankness were lacking virtues. The perusal of his memoirs can only strengthen this impression.

In his recollections we are able to follow the Russian master step by step through all the circumstances of his life as a musician, from the day of his first interview with Balakirev, Czar Cui and Mussorgsky, in 1863, up to the close of the year 1906, less than two years before his death. He does not speak of much more his art, which, evidently was his exclusive preoccupation. Toward the close of a single chapter, in a few words, he touches lightly on his ideas regarding the Beyond, and these thoughts are devoid of all mysticism, even of spiritualism in its most elementary form. All in all, the artist appears to us as though imbued with the spirit of rationalism to a preponderating degree. He informs us that one day he made up his mind to solve the enigmas of philosophy and esthetics, and that for this purpose he attended lectures and took notes which were to supply material for a book he intended to write. And he turned these ideas destined to formulate theories of the greatest profundity over in his head until it made him ill. He feared that he would have a brain storm, lost his appetite, and was obliged to stop. He resumed his task on two different occasions, and in each case the same symptoms

suspended. Unquestionably Rimsky-Korsakov was not meant to be a philosopher; he abandoned his transcendental speculations, once more began to write music and all was for the best.

This was because he was far more the man of action than the thinker: active, decided, energetic, gifted with clear insight. The part he played in the evolution of Russian art is indelible: that of a leader, one who knows how to command. He was placed in turn at the head of various important institutions, which prospered under his direction.

Toward the end of his life, he was drawn into the vortex of events which, although they were localized in his account within the bounds of the world of music, were nevertheless, closely connected with the revolutionary movements heralding the terrible upheavals which were to follow. In 1908, the youth of the universities rose in revolt: the pupils at the Imperial Conservatory followed its example. Rimsky-Korsakov, the professor of the highest class, aligned himself with the young folk, and took his stand beside them. He was dismissed. The disorders increased. In the autumn came those historic days, and the general strike of six million workmen which brought the national life of Russia to a standstill for twenty-seven days. These events had their repercussion in every strata of society. The Conservatory was reorganized, following the meetings of committees—veritable Soviets before the fact—in which, during stormy sessions, Rimsky-Korsakov took a daring part. Death prevented his taking part in other and even graver events, of which those in which he had shared as a witness, and in some sort, as a participant, were certainly the preliminaries.

More than one detail in his book gives us information regarding the state of Russian society at a time when the shadow of its power was still widely impressed upon the world. His struggles with the Imperial censorship are interesting. It seemed at first as though he would not be able to have his *Priglasenie* performed, since the Tsar Ivan was one of the characters, and an old imperial ukase—which, however, authorized the appearance of the ancient tears on the dramatic stage, provided they belonged to dynasties antedating the Romanoffs—forbade their appearance in opera. Why this distinction? "Because," the composer was told, "it would hardly be proper to see a tsar sing a chansonette." Yet, under certain forms of government, few will accomplish much. Rimsky-Korsakov took advantage of a favorable opportunity to induce a grand-duke to take steps to intervene with the emperor, and the authorization was given.

Later, the same thing happened again, in the case of another score, though the affair ended in a different manner. "A Christmas Night" (*Une Nuit de Noël*). The poem, borrowed from Gogol, had a part for a tsarina, who, for all that her name was not mentioned, and though the characters in the drama were all imaginary, was recognizable as the Empress Catherine the Great. Relying on precedent furnished by the performance of *Fabryantski* and having received a formal authorization, both composer and manager thought they could present the opera without danger; but on this occasion it was the grand-duches who grew indignant. The emperor, who had already given his consent, withdrew it after he had listened to them, and forbade the performance. There was only one thing left to do, and that was to change the empress of Russia into an imaginary character, a symbolic figure—and make her a man! It is an example of the hanging, the arbitrariness, the self-contradiction which were the rule under a government of mere despots and froids, and which, displayed on a greater and surer scale, were bound to have those consequences which are only too well known in history.

To return to more purely musical considerations, we call attention, without more than mention, to some interesting pages in Rimsky-Korsakow's book, regarding the use made of the popular melody, the folk-song, in art-works and the legitimacy of so doing. It is well known what use the Russian school has made of this material, which is the common property of the national genius, and to what degree it has been re-visited thereby.

We instance, without adding a single word of commentary, the following definition: "Wagner's leading motive, sounding violent military signals . . ." There is also this appreciation, which the author lets fall in passing: ". . . the trend toward decadence, which came to us from the occident."

We recall that, during the year which preceded his death, Rimsky-Korsakow having come to Paris, was invited to hear *Filias et Mithras*. Surrounded by admirers who awaited his judgment with anxiety, he could not help declaring, with his customary frankness, that he did not understand a bit of it. We may recall this judgment as a supplement to what he says in his memoirs, which he had caused to edit some months anterior to the time when it was spoken.

Finally, the book stops, from page to page, at each of those works which, all of them together, make up their composer's musical baggage, and here we find that Rimsky-Korsakow has made confessions which are precious. He quite simply tells us

what he has done, and what his intentions were in so doing. To-day we are familiar with his orchestral music, so picturesque, so vital, so rich in daring color, and two of his operas have been heard in Paris; this is enough to allow us to understand by means of analogy his explanations regarding his other works with which we are unacquainted.

What stands out first of all, when we consider them as a whole, is their composer's almost total preoccupation, altogether spontaneous, however, with the creation of art-works which would be exclusively national in character. Practically every subject he treats is drawn from Russian legend, history or life. Once, and once only did he accept a Roman subject, *Scythia*, and he was greatly taken up with his thoughts as to the musical color which it would be proper to give this work. He also wrote a Polish opera, *Pan Popielko*, drawing his inspiration from folk-songs to whose sound he had been rocked in the cradle, and finding an echo for them in his Slavic soul. As to *Moset at Solovki*, with a subject taken from a mystical anecdote, this little score does not occupy an important place among his works; incidentally, its moral is pointed by Pouchkine, so it is, after all, sufficiently Russian.

But *Polnoletenko*, with which he made his debut, is truly and broadly a national drama. Its hero is Ivan the Terrible, the score is traversed by scenes from the life of the people, living and colorful, and the composer, not without pride, speaks of the impression produced on the student youth of Russia by his "Songs of the Liberator."

*Sadko*, a subject dear to his heart, is, because of its poem, one of the most characteristic creations of the Russian spirit and soul. Rimsky, in order to interpret it, created the new form of "the legendary recitative," without doubt an imitation of the melopoeia upon which the folk-minstrels recited their ancient ballads.

There is, above all, one group of works at which he pauses with satisfaction. It is that which represents the expression of a nationalism in which the Russian soul lives again in all its spontaneity.

The first of these is the "Night in May," in which the musician gives free rein to his love for the poetry of the ancient sun-cult, "whose traditions have survived in the masses of the populace by reason of the songs and ritual games unconsciously tolerated and maintained by Christianity." Our author adds, "In fact, the last vestiges of these ancient songs seem to be disappearing, and



with them all the godheads of the ancient pantheon." Thus it is in Russia as in France, where analogous traditions of the early ages disappear from year to year.

Then comes *Svignevskitch*, this score whose poetry is as varied, which he composed in the course of a few summer weeks, in the country, and which seemed to him to have been dictated by "virgin nature" in whose midst he was living, among the forests, the meadows, the fields, the riverbanks, the villages with their old Russian names, the birds and flowers.

*Miofa* is a fantasy more exterior in its nature. The composer has sought to find for it effects of sonority as yet unheard, as, for example, when he introduces the Pandean pipes he had noticed the Gypsies use at the Paris Exposition in 1889, in the orchestra.

"Christmas Night," finally, is again inspired by the myths of solar adoration, and by the composers' longing toward "the gods and demons of Slavic mythology." In this score he has the loticida song, those venerable monochord chants associated with the traditions of the festival of the winter solstice in Russia.

In this same national, thoroughly Slavic vein, the major portion of the works which belong Rimsky-Korsakow's active and prolific career to us and are also conceived. We have *Fava Scilope*, a prelude written for *Felvelipenko* after the completion of that score, *Tsvety Sibirsta* (The Year's Bride), *Tour Sotom*, *Pan Vagovoda*, "Kastel' the Immortal," "The Inevitable City of Kiteak," and a concluding work, *Le Coq d'Or*, shortly after whose completion he died. It is not mentioned in his memoirs because it was written after their completion: the last line in *Ma vie musicale* is dated August 24, 1908, while the score of the *Coq d'Or* is preceded by a preface written in 1905, and Rimsky-Korsakow died in 1908. Yet this very preface fills in the gap thus left in the volume, since it clearly expresses the intentions of the two authors, the poet and the musician. The former, whose libretto represented an adaptation of Pushkin's, while admitting that the legend he had developed was of oriental origin, gave the less pleasant scene of action "among the Russian people, with all the strong, crude coloring, exuberance and freedom dear to the poet's heart." Rimsky-Korsakow, for his part, wishing to end his life with a statement doing honor to his art, upholds the rights of music and—without dwelling on principles which he had already often advanced on other occasions, regarding the subordination of music to the drama—firmly asserts: "An opera, first of all, is a musical work!"

All these works he handles in the freest and most diversified musical styles, without restricting himself to any one well determined form, at times taking up again and continuing the tradition of Gluck, at others having recourse to Wagnerian procedure, orchestrally and by use of the leading motive. There are occasions when he does not even blush to fall back upon the operatic style, giving the voices first place, "but not in the accidental, only momentarily connected fashion of making one voice follow after another, as has been suggested by the modern exigencies of so-called dramatic verity, according to which two or more persons must not speak at the same time," but by writing perfectly regular ensembles, and, in the end, often assigning the most important part to the symphonic instruments. His individual genius lent this diversified work perfect unity. The mere sacrifice of effect in such a score as *Le Cig a'Or* would suffice to fill us with respect for the upright and industrious man who produced it, even if the artist, at the same time, had not created a collective output of living art-works, representative among those of their period, and in themselves worthy of admiration. They worthily crown the collective work of this group of artists of a new generation, young and ardent and who, with an activity as great as their patrons, and with a conquering spirit of originality, have erected an absolutely novel monument of art. What they did was to plow under the barren a plot of virgin soil, and draw from it wealth which, as we have already seen, in no wise yields to that brought forth by the nations musically most gifted, and subsisting on the traditions of a cultured past.

(Translated by Frederick H. Motson.)

## OF NOTABLE PIANO CONCERTOS, NEGLECTED AND OTHERWISE

By H. H. BELLAMANN

**C**ONCERT-GIVERS and concert-goers have conspired to make certain piano concertos distressingly well known to us. The innumerable repetitions of these concertos, judged by the legitimate demands of musical progress, seems unjustifiable; but the experience of those intrepid enough to venture the unfamiliar, exhibit some results of sufficient weight to give us pause in the very act of renouncing the less conspicuous.

A most excellent pianist—a pianist of eclectic tastes and immense repertoire, played in London recently a concerto by Tchaikovic. An impatient concert-goer said, "Oh, I can't go and sit through an unfamiliar work!"

There was but slight critical remark in the press—neither the concertos nor the playing received anything like the fulsome of comment which followed later performances by the same pianist of more familiar works. It is, of course, not conceivable that the deprivation of certain familiar critical hand-holds could deter critics and public from an expression of either approval or disapproval. It must be attributed to a state of mind that is quickened from apathy only by the anticipation of familiar applause-making moments which render comparative criticism easy.

We are frequently pleased by the utterances of platitudes because we believe they give expression to something which we believe we have thought for ourselves. The confirmation of our views is flattering though it may be of things the world has known and accepted for a thousand years. In some such fashion are we pleased at a concert by the traditional presentation of a familiar work. It confirms our notion of how the thing should be done and our approbation of the performance and of ourselves proceeds in hand-in-hand accessibility by a broad and easy road.

Aside from a very few heaven-raising achievements in concert literature such as Beethoven's E-flat, Schumann's, and Brahms' D-minor, whose performances should be frequent and whose execution should be approached with something of sacramental gravity, aside from these we might do well with quite rare hearings

of the large majority of constantly programmed concertos. Of course we shall wish, probably for generations to come, to hear sometimes one or two of the Mozart concertos, if given in concert-halls of appropriately intimate size. The Chopin Fantasy may not be a time-defying work, but its somewhat overdone lyricism is engaging even now when we have accustomed ourselves to a more startling beauty. Trust has withered forever, let us hope, on the Elmore, the Kossuta, the Litoffs and Mendelssohns—"die unerbittlichen Nichtsopernden." The Concerto Pathétique of Liszt, originally for two pianos, is forgotten. One of the others will conceivably follow. Brahms's inflated scores enjoy longer and longer periods of repose. Some of Saint-Saens' show indubitable signs of dry rot though the fourth and fifth have a right to be heard more frequently and deserve long and happy lives for their ingratiating charm, sanity and sometimes cynically devious handling of program material.

The piano has already fallen from the poor skeleton of Massenet's one essay in this field, the Martucci is no more, those by Dupont and Gubaid were still-born and the one by Tcha. Youre must have seen the light but a short time. The Grieg is still fresh. Many of the Russian concertos are lit by dramatic moments all too quickly obscured by thick German writing—the later Rachmaninoff excepted, as well as that colorful and gratefully short one movement concerto by Rimsky-Korsakoff. Of Tchaikowsky, why not "the other one" sometimes? It loses its name less dramatically and gives the earth in less fiery manner but it is beautiful in quite its own way. The extremely Lisztian concerto in B-flat by Scriabin is brilliant and pretentious but original. Max Reger's one concerto for piano is a rather splendid effort. It is done on a big canvas with surprisingly gaseous color. The middle movement, a slow one, differs in atmosphere and content from any concerto I know. There is a hint of something legendary, almost operatic, that reaches quite to the remote regions of modern imagination. Then there is a hard-swing, ear-sling concerto in D-flat by Stokow that Shattuck would play well.

It is regrettable that Sibelius has given us no piano concertos. He should do a good one. His long melodic line and individual impressionism—a kind of unusual frankness—should make capital concerto material.

Of concertos written by learned but quite unimpaired lesser German composers there is a small regiment. From these, by reason of superior taste, emerges one by Otto Staps. The concerto by Karol Scherwenka had to intrigue the interest. Quite

unaccountably MacDowell's concerto failed to take on. It deserves more attention—it is sparkling, witty and often distinguished.

One must feel grateful for a very small number of modern concertos most useful for teaching. I mean that when a concerto is too old fashioned, too true and therefore for the public, that the schoolroom is no place for it and I resent the remark: "This should be left for the conservatory student and boarding-school girl." We might well be more careful of what we offer to an unlearned taste than we are of what we offer to the public!

Two modern examples, securing to memory at this moment, are highly useful for the teacher who wishes the benefits of concerto study for the pupil who has not the technical equipment for greater epics, one is by Gabriel Fauré, the other, an almost unknown composition, by Louis Albéric.

Fauré's concerto is very fresh and lovely, though it must truthfully be said, of extreme poverty of content; but it is so tactful and so useful for rhythm and crispness of phrasing and is so grateful to the student that even the most conservative teacher must be thankful for it. Instead of the usual andante the middle movement is a scherzo characterized by genuine Gallic piquancy. The Albéric is less valuable but can be used for less advanced players. The first movement affords some excellent practice in double notes, octaves, and rapid passages. The second movement, a Berceuse and Scherzo is slight; the third, built on transformed themes of the first movement, is good rhythmically. The entire composition is not too long.

Comparatively recently there has been brought to hearing in England a concerto by Debussy (I think not yet heard in America), and in this country one by George W. Boyls.

Arne Oldberg's rather Brahmsian but scholarly concerto is one of the most dignified compositions of large caliber that America can lay claim to. There are some very dull ones which are occasionally heard when their composers elect to feature them. The MacDowell concertos have made a place for themselves and are likely to last for a long time, though they show a distressing tendency to wear dull in spots—few concertos do not, for that matter.

Passing in review the number of fine concertos, old and new, we find a considerable number that disengage themselves and stand apart and aloft, but how unconsciously similar of content and contour! One rises at even great mountain peaks of unvarying profile.

Contemporary piano concertos lean very heavily on either Liszt or Brahms. Very few can claim an individual silhouette.

I can think of three which seem to me to be exceptions. These seem to be rooted in the nature of the modern piano and to be of the peculiar genius of that instrument. I am speaking of the great Concerto in C by Beethoven, the Concerto Eroica, Op. 8, by Ottokar Nováček, and the Concerto in G-minor, Op. 77, by Charles Marie Widor.

The first of these is widely known by reputation or by slight acquaintance with the score; the other two, I fancy, are being called to the attention of many readers for the first time. These concertos, widely different in psychology, are yet related in that they are distinguished from the rank and file of concerto literature by boldness of purpose, profundity of content, finished workmanship and deep clarity. Although they show certain hereditary traits which but acknowledge the debt that every composer owes to his predecessors, they are yet so original in concept and execution that not one of them may be said to bear more than a superficial resemblance, and those of a technical character, to other works. One thing they have strongly in common: each one exhibits the synthetic piano idiom, and so stands sharply differentiated from the two great classes of modern concertos, which, as has been said, lean so heavily on Liszt and Brahms. The Brahms piano concerto is not of the piano, but is abstract or absolute. The Liszt habit of thought, while pianistic in every sense, does not always exploit the unique possibilities of the piano as it is understood in modern times. He forewent in some pages of the *Sonata pour Javahis après son lettre de Dante* the elaborate and diffused "repetitional persuasion" which Beethoven uses so tellingly in his transcription of the Bach Chaconne. The intricate and colorful polyphonic web which may be woven on the piano keyboard waited for larger exploitation on Górowsky and Beethoven, with a contribution, not generally recognized, from Max Regner. Of course, as has often been pointed out, no one can write as though Debussy had not lived—and no one dies.

These features of the piano in field ancestry which can be handled in mass and made to surge like waves of the sea, its peculiarly sculptural play of light and shade which gives us a Rodin-esque sense of solidity, volume and profile, its vibrant impressionism which the pedal over concurrent harmonies gives us—an impressionism comparable to the effect of broken color in painting—these eminently modern developments appear richly and plentifully in these concertos.

The gigantic Beethoven score—it runs through one hundred and seventy-eight pages (inclusive of the separately printed cadenzas) in

Egon Petri's two piano version—is probably the longest of all piano concertos. It is in five movements and utilizes a male chorus in the last movement to a text from Odhenschiager's "Aladin." It has had public performances—Egon Petri, a disciple of Busoni, being a noteworthy interpreter.

The German text of the choral section will probably make it impossible of future production in countries where it might otherwise be heard, though I am sure some other language could give us an adequate restatement of the text—Latin perhaps! No one could charge Latin as being the vehicle of any unpleasant hang-over from the late war.

Personally, I have never been quite happy in the German text for the last movement. It imparts a localizing flavor that seems out of harmony with the super-geographical atmosphere of the work as a whole.

Busoni's commanding position in the world of art has drawn attention to his work at times when one is constrained to believe that its transcendental character could have won the notice of only the very few. He has the uncompensating artistic conscience of great genius. So colossal a work as this piano concerto must necessarily wait upon proper perspective for adequate judgment, but a consideration of its striking differences must impress one even an superficial examination with the sense of having assisted at the discovery of a giant and solitary monument of human imagination.

The first movement, *Prälude e Intermezzo*, begins *allegro, dolce e sereno*. The deftness with which the swift play of harmonic color is handled proclaims Busoni's Latin blood at once. A lesser composer could not have resisted the temptation to be grandiose.

The piano solo begins with a series of magnificent chordal arches whose thematic evolution in the following pages imposes stupendous difficulties upon the concertant. The first few pages suggest, not in either matter or manner, but in their cosmic magnificence, the opening pages of Stravinsky's *also opened Zarathustra*. It is difficult to recall any composer who has given such aid to the interpreter as Busoni has done in these pages by vivid and graphic direction through verbal words. The following words arrest the eye upon every survey of the score: *Impassioned, burlesco, staccato, ritardando, frenetico, assai sfondo*.

The second movement: *Poco giocoso*; the third: *Poco sereno*, containing some of the most beautiful pages in the whole score; the fourth movement: *All. fischoso*, a tarantella movement which in itself demands the utmost of the pianist. The fifth movement:

Contino, beginning with a swinging figure similar to the solo beginning of the first movement leads into the choral section. This is very nice and beautiful writing and proceeds by gravity mounting lines over a *piano obbligato* to a thrilling climax.

It is not the purpose of this article to analyze a score easily accessible, but to redirect attention to a great artistic paper which no serious student of music can afford to ignore. Very few will ever play it—very few can, but the pianist can learn much about novel effects which may be carried back to the familiar repertoire; the composer will be struck by the amazing unity in a work of such dimensions and variety. It is an unforgettable lesson in composition to observe how even the slightest ornament is made to bear its share in the symphonic burden.

The brief notice of Ottokar Nováček in biographical dictionaries yields the scant information that he was born in Hungary in 1848 and died in New York in 1909. He played in the Boston Symphony under Nisinsk and in the New York Symphony under Dvoráček until weakness of the heart compelled him to give up playing when he devoted himself to composition. Three string quartets, two concert caprices for piano, the first a *Procházka*, the second a *Toccata*, both dedicated to Grieg, some compositions for violin and a few songs make up the list of his published compositions with the addition of his remarkable *Concerto Eroico* which is dedicated to Liszt who later gave it its first public performance. Of the concert caprices for violin, the "*Paganini*" and the "*Perpetuum Mobile*" are especially effective. Among the songs, the "*Fantasia*" approaches greatness.

The *Concerto Eroico* is in one movement with a number of divisions. In content it is abstract, technically it is very difficult, requiring in addition to exceptionally strong wrists, great dexterity of finger and the mental capacity to sustain an unusual mood through forty-five pages of slowly warring notes. Sober without being fatal, fatal without being pessimistic, funeral at times without hystericalness, triumphant without becoming bacchanalian, the conclusion leaves one with a sense of the spiritual greatness that accepts life without entirely vanquishing fate. There is just that acceptance of life, almost defiant, which we feel in so many of Beethoven's greatest works, the *Appassionata* sonata for example—in fact, the expression Nováček leaves is that of a rather Hungarian Beethoven. There is a tragic grandeur that wears a garb more brilliant and exotically colored than does Beethoven. Reading the concerto from the dramatic and threatening opening in *Crescendo* to its dangerous conclusion in *Kollá* one receives a



picture which might be most well expressed by the splendid lines that open Edwin Arlington Robinson's "The Man Against the Sky":

Between me and the sunset, like a dove  
Against the glory of a world on fire,  
Now loomed a sudden hill  
Black, round, and high, by flame its height made light.  
With nothing on it but the flame to fill  
Sate one who moved and was above up there  
To look before the shade and the glare  
As if he were the last god going down  
With his last order.

Most musicians are likely to be surprised at the claim that the great organist at St. Sulpice in Paris, distinguished composer of the new classic organ symphonies, is the creator of a noteworthy piano concerto. Anyone familiar with his first concerto for piano, a work written many years ago and bearing the stamp of hypochondriacal hubris, would be totally unprepared for the work of the master's maturity as set forth in his Op. 77.

Charles Marie Widor has been growing steadily through a long life devoted to musical composition—he was born in 1842 and has been organist at St. Sulpice since 1876. His output has been very large although he works slowly. A survey of his compositions would reveal that he has always been most keenly conscious of the tendencies in musical composition. But Parisians, like a large part of the musical world, have been unable to think of Widor in any other rôle than that of organist and composer for the organ. The impressive and unequalled performances of Bach have overshadowed the composer of the charming piano pieces such as the delicate, gay and very French *Courant*. The *Fantaisie*, Op. 68, for piano and orchestra, a large work dedicated to his son Philipp and the sonata for violin and piano, Op. 76, dedicated to Massenet, are works of extremely modern character. They have a quality that is highly individual—they are scholarly without being in the least dry, and original with a dextrous avoidance of the commonplace that is greater than cleverness. But works of monumental magnitude for the piano are very little to the taste of the Parisian musical public. Widor has traveled less than most French composers and virtuosi and has therefore not made a public for himself outside of France.

The Concerto, Op. 77, is dedicated to Francis Florschütz but was played for the first time at the Colonne concerts by Philipp. Philipp has played it several times since, occasionally under the

composer's intent. It has not been publicly played, I think, in America, excepting one obscure performance on two pianos.

Certainly, this concerto could be recommended only for a cultured and musically sophisticated audience. It is very long, it is indefinitely difficult to play and its import is not easily grasped, but every pianist should know it as an example of the French school of composition at its distinguished best. For the formation of a pianistic style informed with French clarity and precision, simplicity and grace this concerto is invaluable. The many technical problems are varied and great. Oft-times the phrases under the hand is crushingly intractable, but the problems solved mean an enormous gain in that polish and finish which are so admirable in the playing of the best French pianists.

There is but little "brilliant" work in the first movement—little brilliancy of the fire-water type, but the entire movement is alive with the restrained brilliancy of a well cut and well set jewel. The notes are beautifully subordinated to the end and the entire concerto is a document in proof that French piano composition, like French piano playing, has remained true to the genius of the instrument. Everywhere in these pages there is palpable a profound knowledge of the peculiar sensitivities of the piano, whether it is in a simple cadence, two notes apart, but lying in the best sounding registers as at the beginning of the solo part, or whether it is in widely dispersed aggregate passages in cross rhythms such as occur near the finale—always the piano seems to be at its best and gracefully disposed to yield a surprising surplus upon the economical material used.

The slow movement is contemplative to a degree almost Franciscan, though there is no suggestion of Finnish mysticism. *Waldes* is always French. The orchestration is reworking here for the first twenty-five or thirty bars, then the piano part moves in greater animation and finally breaks from the orchestra in a very striking cadenza. The second movement merges into the third without a pause.

One of the most effective passages in the last movement is made up of rapid descending scales played in the lower registers of the piano against strings only in which the divided violas playing a wavering woom rhythm of accents seems to drop veil upon veil over the rising and falling piano figures and the later entrance in the wood wind of a sharply rhythmical transformation of a theme from the first movement.

This concerto is much less ready to yield results of the kind designated as "effective" than either of the other two we have had

under consideration. Like many other art-works of a very advanced and sophisticated civilization it presents at times a rather glacial exterior. The pianist learns gradually that he is dealing with a quite different set of values. These are not the shouting colors of the virtuosic school. Making all the demands of a virtuosic technique, it asks a more delicately modulated tone, a greater command of half lights, and more degrees of force between mezzoforte and pianissimo. The pianist is suddenly required to speak a very finished French with his fingers!

The music of Widor is a music very different from the music of Debussy and Ravel. He has little to do with that pastel impressionism which is temperamentally such close kin to Oriental mysticism, nor has he much more to do with that Babelianism which Roussel Rolland says is more essentially French. His music, as I see it, is of that finely tempered French spirit which expounds itself with an aristocratic disdain of the commonplace and keeps absolute faith with artistic integrity.

These three concertos represent three widely separated phases of modern musical thought; they differ from the large number of compositions in this form not only in degree but in kind; they make widely different demands upon piano technique and upon musical understanding. The pianist who is familiar with them will find himself surprisingly well prepared, musically and technically, for the future development of his art.

## THE ASSAULT ON MODERNISM IN MUSIC

By R. D. WELCH

**M**ODERNISM, new-born in every generation, utters its first cries in warring sons. Child of Tradition and Change, it is repudiated by both parents. Not as the legitimate heir of its cherished treasures does a generation greet its modernism, but as an ugly changeling whose features forebode neglect and destruction of all that one of its parents prizes. Yet, somehow, and in spite of neglect, this verminous infant comes to maturity; imperceptibly its wounds lose their harshness; its features soften and its acts prove it the legitimate heir of all its finest heritage. Such is the life-history of the New Idea of any generation.

The musician who stands on a vantage ground, mid-way as it were, between two generations, may review the whole process of birth, growth and acceptance of modernism. There was (and not long since) when our ears were assailed by strange, new sounds from the piano and orchestra, evoked by one Claude Debussy. Contemporary criticism strengthened the belief of many of us that music had fallen upon evil times; that men had turned their backs on beauty; that melody had been deformed; and that harmony had become an instrument of torture. And then, after a few short years, Debussy becomes our familiar, friendly friend. He appears without apology as a conservative concert programmatic; his name becomes a symbol for the delicate and imaginative and suggestive in all modern art; he is given over to the tender mercies of the young persons who possess the piano, and he attains the fame of immobility in the Victor catalogue. But while this process has been going on, we have been confronted by new and more merciless modernists. Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Malipiero and the "infant terrible" Korngold, now bear the brunt of our hostility. Yet, one may, if he read the future from the past, see for these writers an approaching fate not unlike that which has overtaken Debussy.

Our experience with Debussy—I use him as a symbol for many; substitute Richard Strauss and the argument remains the same—does not encourage us for the future. Nor does it

induce us to temper our assault on modernism. We are not content to say that we shall, in time, accustom ourselves to these strange sounds.

But it is not just to lay the blame for all our hostility at the door of prejudice and tradition. We feel—and the sentiment is genuine—that what is beautiful, and for which the greatest minds of our past have labored, has been set aside and rejected. I believe we are sincere, although we may be mistaken, in the feeling that our dislike of a new work is of far greater importance than our mere pleasure or displeasure. We feel, and I think it an admirable feeling, that our distaste is directed at a fundamental error, and that our protest may serve to rectify that error. We sincerely do wish to see the good in the new, we sincerely do feel that art is falling upon evil times; and more than this, we do try to believe that a vital, immutable truth, although it may appear in ugly strangeness, lives in and animates the art of our day, connecting it with the past, and assuring the health of its future.

Frequently that we may discern this eternal and unchanging principle in music, is it of value to analyze the assault on modernism, not only as it is delivered to-day, but as it has been launched in other generations? If we can detach these features of modernism which have invited attack, we shall then know whether or not the works which have survived the attack have been strong enough to do so because of those very features or for some other reason.

It makes no difference into which age we dip, we find that war is the natural state of man—critical war—and curiously enough we find, too, that the cause left is much the same, and that the strategy of offense and defense differs very little.



Phrynis was a Greek. He lived in the fifth century before Christ and at a time when man had just found that music could be made by instruments—as the syrinx and the aulos—without aid of the human voice. Men had learned it, but by painful steps and not all men were willing to admit it as a truth. But Phrynis and his followers, Timotheos and Melanipides, pleased their public with this music and while they pleased their public, at the same time, they brought against themselves the charge of having corrupted the art. Phrynis was reproached "for striving after unexpected effects, seeking contrasts, and a taste for the difficult," while his friend, Timotheos, was censured for transforming the

dithyramb, a hymn to Dionysius, into a show-piece destined to give glory to the talent of a virtuoso. The spectators who had heard a certain tragedy, written by Euripides, are said to have cried out, "But what is there in this for Dionysius?" "What is there in this for Dionysius?" is the cry of all those who feel that art is being torn away from its exalted place and distracted from its high mission.

Palestrina, two thousand years after Phrynis, directed on his deathbed that the publication of his last manuscripts should be devoted "to the glory of the most high God and the worship of His holy temple," and at another time this same gentle Palestrina accused his contemporaries in these words,

the greater blame, therefore, do those deserve who employ so great and splendid a gift of God in light or unworthy things, and thereby waste men, who of themselves are inclined to all evil, to sin and stumbling.

In his own way, and in a new time, Palestrina was maintaining the standard of the Hellenistic aesthetic: "What is there in this for Dionysius?" A little later, when music had come out of the cloister and the church, and had frankly given up its allegiance to the services of the "most high God," another aim of its being was sought in giving pleasure. With the beginning of opera, music turned to a new purpose and it was held accountable for its deeds in the light of that purpose—to give pleasure.

Monte-celli, who for dramatic reasons introduced dissonance into his scores, became the center of an attack by one Artusi, who in 1600 wrote his treatise concerning "The Imperfections of Modern Music." Signor Artusi, accused the modern composers of having "lost sight of the proper function of music, which is to give pleasure." Dionysius has been dethroned. We ask no longer "What is there in this for Dionysius?" but "What is there in this that gives us pleasure?" The interest is the same. Music in both cases is claimed to have lost sight of its purpose.

Franz Monteverdi to Bach is, after all, but a short step. Bach, too, was reproached for having forgotten the purpose of his art. He was a young man at the time, and his duties as organist at Arnstadt evidently left his imagination much time for experiment. There is, in an official record, a rebuke delivered in these terms:

His Bach's heaviest work sundry perplexing variations and imported diverse strange harmonies of such wise that the congregation was thereby confounded.

and a witness added that

the opposite: Bach both at the first played too tediously, however, an opinion received from the superintendant, he both straightway fallen into the other extreme and made the music too short,

which goes to inform us that the future authors of the *St. Matthew Passion* and the *B. Minor Mass* at times found his positioners a little tiresome, and that he had a sense of humor.

But the assault on the moderns does not limit itself to the purposes that the modernists cultivate or fail to cultivate. Technical virtues or errors come in for a large share of the attack. Moser's publishers, sending the scores of certain of his quartets back with a sarcastic comment regarding the "obvious misprints," pronounced a sentence on their own harmonic obtuseness. They were not the first, nor alas! the last, to find in every unfamiliar combination of sounds an object of contempt and scorn. Here is Rollstah, the once highly accredited critic of Berlin, about certain music works of Chopin:

Chopin is indefatigable, and I might say insupportable in his own spitting discords, forced transitions, harsh inclivities, ugly disturbances of melody and rhythm. Everything it is possible to think of is raked up to produce the effect of continually but especially strange leaps and the unartful puerilities of chords.

The nowadays better known Ernst Newman puts himself on record, in his work on Richard Strauss, in this way:

Merely a piece of laborious stupidity; a blunder and hideous piece of work. There must be a flaw, one fault, in the mind of a man who can deliberately spend a great and beautiful, artistic conception by inserting such monotones as these in it.

Henry T. Finck likewise finds Strauss deserving the sharpest censure for the same reason.—Henry T. Finck, who, as it is remembered, writes with such heroic protest against all the critics of Richard Wagner because they used almost the same words as he used in his book on Richard Strauss:

There are too many disconnected blotches in Strauss' pages. Not content, like Liszt and the other great masters with dissonance, he progresses to cacophonies for their own sake. hideous drabs of sounds, they torture the ear like a concert of mechanical whistles on a foggy morning in the bay. In these cacophonies, even the admission of Strauss led like saying, "Out, damned spot!"

The assault in all of these latter instances is being delivered not at the failure to maintain a high purpose, but at the use or misuse of tools. It is beyond the purpose of this article to consider whether or not in any of these cases the critics were justified in

their feeling that harmony was misused, but it may be observed that the disharmony of our generation commonly becomes the current usage of the next, and there is a sense in which the whole history of music may be said to be the history of the acceptance of discord.

Our critics direct their attention to melody as well as harmony. There is one instance of such criticism that might, on account of its authorship, have weight for the contrary. Here is what Ruskin found in the *Meistersinger*:

Of all the lute, clump, blundering, lugging, balloon-headed stuff I ever saw on a human stage, that thing last night, as far as the story and acting went, and of all the affected, vulgar, soulless, heartless, cold-blooded, tedious, bottomless, top-heavy, twisted, fanciful, arrant-headed, long and highest disapproved of music I ever endured, the dullness of that starchy of nothing was the dullest as far as its sound went. I was never so relieved, so far as I can remember, in my life by the stopping of any sound not excepting railroad whistles, as I was by the cessation of the cobbler's howling; even the sewerer's caricatured burgle was a rest after. As for the great deal, I never made out where it began or where it ended except by the fellow's coming off the horse block.

Evidently Mr. Ruskin had a hard evening! To be sure Ruskin has been proved mistaken in his judgment of other arts than music, but what he says here was asserted also by eminent musicians among his contemporaries. And then there is Hermann Krolland, who "could not find a single melody truly original or interesting in itself in Strauss' works." Krolland, too, brings up the question of purpose again when he summarizes the whole work of Strauss:

And this is how the work of Richard Strauss appears to me up to the present. Götterdämmerung kills Duke Robert, and immediately lets his fire spread. The frenzied laugh of Zarathustra ends in an account of discouraged impotence. The delicious passion of Don Juan dies away in nothingness. Don Quixote, when dying, discovers his illusions. Even the Hero (*Das Heldenhild*), admits the futility of his work and seeks oblivion in an indifferent Nature. We get all this display of superhuman will, and the end is only "My desire is gone." It was not thus that Beethoven overcame his miseries. His misdeeds make their lament in the middle of his symphonies, but a note of joy and triumph is always sounded at the end. His work is the triumph of a conquered hero; that of Strauss is the defeat of a vanquishing hero.

Rhythm, also, that more subtle and easily confused element in the whole musical mixture, receives with harmony and melody, its share of the attack on modernism. From the multitude of examples that might be quoted I choose a criticism of Debussy's



*Notes of Strauss's* written by Henry Edward Krehbiel in his "Chapters of Opera."

A discordant busy web of dissonant sounds, now solid, now biting-sweet, wandering along from scene to scene, unshelved by a single melodic phrase.

Still, Mr. Krehbiel is inclined to a grudging realization that others may not agree with him. He continues:

No one should be advised to proscribe his pleasure in four hours of uninterrupted, massively selected speech, over a substratum of shifting harmonies, each with its individual tang and instrumental color. Neither should anyone be advised to say that nine-tenths of the music is a dreary monotony because of the absence of what stands to him as marked thought.

There is an unusual critical generosity about all this; it isn't common for a critic to admit that those who disagree with him have a perfect right to do so.

And, finally, form is likewise the object of attack. But I shall not labor the case.

The instances might be multiplied almost without number, all pointing to the same conclusion; namely, that the attack on modernism is directed at an alleged failure to maintain the high purpose of art, and at an ugliness and a strangeness which has come about through the use of new harmonies, unfamiliar melodies, obscure rhythms and unconvictional forms. As one reads a large part of modern criticism, one feels that their writers could not hear the music for the notes. In many respects they recall the ancient fable of the three blind men who went out to acquaint themselves with the elephant. One of these blind men, on approaching the elephant, got hold of his tail; a second seized the head by the leg; and the third explored its ear. When they returned and compared accounts, they fell into a desperate struggle because one declared the elephant to be very like a rope, and the second was equally sure that an elephant was like a tree, while the third maintained stoutly that an elephant resembled a fan. Each was right and each was wrong. In one instance we find the modern critic has seized music by its harmonies, and he reports that the new work is like nothing so much as "a concert of steamboat whistles;" the second has turned his attention to melody, and he declares that modern music is either deficient in this desirable element or else that each melody as it is to be found gives evidence of a dejected and irrational mind, and lastly, our third critic

picks up the rhythm and assures us that we have nothing but amorphous soundings "without form and void."

Now the interesting fact with regard to all of the quotations that I have cited (and a very large number of others that I have omitted), is that there is a measure of truth in each of them. Indeed, as each of these criticisms was written, it seemed without doubt wholly true to its writer. It must be admitted that there was "nothing for Dionysius" in that lyrical tragedy of Eggers. Wagner's harmonies *did* and some of Strauss' do hurt the ear. Schoenberg quite frankly sets about to avoid what is commonly known as rhythm, and as for melody, if it is to be found in certain modern works we shall have to revise the meaning of the word melody. Yet many of the works which we have seen us censured are masterpieces! Are they such in spite of their faults? A thousand times, no; rather because of them, or rather because of what was commonly reckoned faults by contemporary critics. But leaving aside the question as to whether or not the works which have been the heart of the assault on modernism have survived in spite of or because of their faults, it is clear that the reason for the greatness of these works must be sought elsewhere than in those details which seize the critics' mind. It will not suffice to say simply that the critics were wrong. It will be more true, perhaps, to say that they were partial, biased, or of small vision. The fact remains that these works, however they may have appeared to their contemporaries, embodied a living spirit that pervades the art of tone; a spirit that does not destroy, but fulfills the law.

Can we find that spirit? Can we isolate it from the accidents of harmony and melody and rhythm, or from the purpose to which a given work is directed, whether that purpose be something "for Dionysius," "to the glory of the most high God" or "to give pleasure?" If we pursue such a search, are we likely to find ourselves in the position of those anatomists who, having dissected away all the limbs and organs of the body in their search for the vital spark, find that they have only dead debris? The obvious insufficiency of the criticism that attaches itself only to harmonics and rhythm and purpose, leaves us so unsatisfied that the search for some deeper truth presents itself almost as an obligation. We cannot escape it unless we are content to be partial and superficial in our judgment. If at the end of our search we find we have nothing, that there is no interesting life in a work of music transcending the accidents of form and structure, we shall at least be on solid ground, though that ground be "of the earth, earthy."

There have been many who have attempted this search, and they have left us an illuminating record. In a word, they posed the question, "What is music about; in what consists its beauty, and what human purpose does it serve?" Here are some of the answers:

"Music is the art of combining sounds in a manner agreeable to the ear." Thus concludes J. J. Rousseau. It is the same doctrine that Artur Schopenhauer hated at Mendelssohn when he reminded him that the purpose of music was to give pleasure, and it is a doctrine by no means out of vogue to-day. It has fallen, to be sure, into discredit since it has been overworked by that type of critic or semi-critic who does not know anything about music, but knows what he likes. It has long been a favorite sport of the newer generation of intellectuals to show up the absurdities of the conclusions of the eighteenth century. The eighteenth century had no automobiles and no electric lights, no sewing machines and no victrolas. What could it know of life? By the same token the eighteenth century did not have a Beethoven or a Wagner or a Strauss. Its musical conclusions must consequently be wholly fallacious. Yet in all seriousness, even if Rousseau's doctrines were strictly correct, we should never have witnessed the phenomenon of works seeming at first appearance very unpleasing to the ear, and upon better acquaintance revealing great beauty. Moreover, if to please the ear were the the sole end of music, what becomes of the other values we instinctively and unconsciously read into fine compositions, such as seriousness or gaiety or vigor or pathos? The fifth symphony of Beethoven pleases the ear and at the same time it satisfies the mind with a complete presentation of an idea, however intangible the idea and difficult to put it into words. The same may be said for the symphony by Clara Frensch, but how different the ideas that we impute to the two works.

"Music is a combination of arabesques in sound." It was Hanslick, in 1854, who came to this conclusion in his treatise on "The Beautiful in Music," after rejecting Rousseau's doctrine and also combating the idea that music is the language of emotions. For Hanslick, music need not please the ear, and for him it certainly was not a means of expressing an emotion. For his clearing up of the emotional quagmire into which music seems to fall in the minds of a large number of writers, we are the eternal debtors of Hanslick. He puts us down to a precise confusion of faith. "Is the adagio of such and such a sonata, a love story or a meditation or despondency or what you will?" and we retire in confusion. Emotion plays a large part in any work, but music goes at it as

vaguely—"all things to all men"—that we are forced to the conclusion that if music occupies itself with nothing but the expression of emotion it does its job very badly. Furthermore, this continual picking and probing at emotion, is just a little tiresome. No emotion pure and unadorned ever produced a work of art, or even a rational human utterance. And yet Hindleik's theory that music is arabesque, leaves us quite cold. Arabesques is, after all, a pretty, but unessential adornment. Has the human race devoted so much of its time and attention to an unessential and decorative ornament when it has cultivated music? Is the weaving of pretty patterns the aim and end of music?

Better than either of these theories of music, or better than any of the many others that might be quoted, seems to me the one formulated by Jules Cambareau: "Music is the art of thought in tone." I have no doubt that this definition is found by many to be full of flaws, and that though it may receive general recognition now, will be found by subsequent generations to be as inadequate as those that our forefathers have set before us. Nevertheless, the more one considers that simple sentence, the more comprehensive does it seem of all those elemental purposes, rhythm, melody, harmony, style—what you will—that enter into the making of a musical composition. Its first four words, "Music is the art" define for us immediately the category of human activity in which music is placed. As an art it must take due account of unity and variety, symmetry and balance, and other inseparable conditions of artistic expression. The artist takes colors, forms, light, marble, and combines them with his own inner conceptions; he thinks with and in them. Just so the musician takes tone, not tone as it exists in nature, but tone as man has refined it. Only rarely does a sound occur in nature that we may call a tone.

Sentimentalists are aptious over the Music of Nature. The expression contains a contradiction of terms. Bird songs come as near to tone, as opposed to noise, as one will find it in nature, but bird songs are not art, for art is a conscious human product; it is the embodiment of man's will in the search for beauty. Man takes tone as he takes marble, and he does something with it. In other words, he thinks in tone. He makes it express his thought. "Music is the art of thought in tone," or stated in another way, thought, using tone as its medium, creates an art-work. It builds structures that eye hath not seen and it weaves indeed—at times—arabesques. Thought in tone reveals the grandeur or the swiftness, the loftiness or the meanness of the human mind—thought in tone, with no responsibility to anything but thought. No purpose

colors is except that the thought express itself. Whatever tools, harmonic or melodic, are needed that the thought may express itself, these tools must be employed. And that of artistic necessity, though they may shock tradition and hurt the ear.

We found out, not many yesterdays ago, that modern painters (let us take as more modern a group than the post-impressionists) strove for a beauty not of accidents or externals, but one that was fundamental and eternal. The light that played upon the surface of things, the phenomena that so fascinated the impressionists, to the post-impressionists seemed superficialities of their art; true forms and the nature of things remained to be revealed. The modern musician is working in much the same spirit. He is not concerned with pleasing the ear; he is not concerned with imitation of traditional style, but I believe he is concerned with the fundamentals and the realities of thought, as it is found in a complex, changing, striated, modern world. The one shining fact that is true of all great works of any kind is this—that a man has tried to reveal what seemed true to him. Not the current sentiment; not a traditional style, not even that which men call beautiful, have of themselves been the goal for which the truly original creative mind has ever worked. He has had allegiance to nothing except the integrity of his own mind. There will always be artists so saturated, so engrossed with their own subjects that they will see purposes hidden to the many, and they will speak with a language, that, while it seems familiar, seems forbidding. So there will always be musicians who understand so much better the untouchable possibilities of tone, and whose "thought in tone" is so much more advanced than that of their contemporaries that they will write music that is music of the future. But whether a musician uses harsh means or gentle, whether he be simple or obscure, there is only one question that matters: Has the mind used tone purposefully to the ends of artistic creation?

In the contemporary estimate of new and strange works it is generally at first the accidents, the harmony, the melody, the form that are hit upon, but when the attack launched against a great work aims at these accidents, it glances, and in no way reaches the essentials.

## THE PIANO WORKS OF CLAUDE DEBUSSY

By GUIDO M. GATTI

THE piano works of Claude Debussy, which characterize the composer of *Pelléas* above all others, should be considered by themselves for this very reason, withdrawn, as it were, from the influence of the esthetic total of that musician's output. And even if we withdraw their musical substance—which, as has been remarked, is great—the group made up of Debussy's piano compositions will remain important in the highest degree. If we study them merely from the point of view of the instrument for which they were composed:

The pianoforte has passed through that succession of technical phases—we use the word *technical* to indicate, not crude and lifeless mechanism, but the firm compact of expressive writing combined with especial regard for instrumental possibilities—which is characteristic of the development of every instrument, and which may advance only to a certain boundary of constructive mechanical perfection which it parallels. From the primitive keyboard with its plucked quill, to the dynamic and calculative possibilities of the latter nineteenth century pianoforte, represents an immense stride forward in the art of the piano builder, but as a result, what a broadening out, and, at the same time, what a wealth of dissonance in the field of pianoforte literature. From the early forms of a thin and transparent schematism, we move through successive stations to the complexity of the Beethovenian and Brahmsian sonata, in which the piano must fairly burst its bounds in the effort of a dissonance which drives it ever onward in an endeavor to undertake and equal orchestral effects. For the orchestra is the dream of the German romanticists! Owing to this, the piano, little by little, becomes more other than an orchestra of reduced means, the role of an immense instrumental phalanx, and the arena for effects. It gives the composer the manners of happiness when he is able to hear in the pages of his piano score the blast of the trumpet, the blast of the horn, or the gurgling of the bassoon, the stony ring of the violin or the growling of the basses. Just as the piano tends to lose its autonomy in an increasing measure, its distinctive character, thus the compositions written for it lose their intrinsically pianistic

design, and increasingly coming the impression of being orchestral scores reduced for the keyboard instrument. From the classic elegance of Mozart to the Clementine sonata, from the brilliancy of Haydn to the virtuosity of Czerny and Kalkbrenner, the road is a long one; but the transformation is uninterrupted. There, too, we find the powerful works of Beethoven—an admirer of the school of Clementi—which reflect a distinct suggestion of the orchestra or, at times, of the quartet (the last is noticeable occasionally, in Mozart as well); and the no less suggestive works of Schumann, which reveal symphonic colors at every step, at times in sharp contrast to the dynamic economy of the composition (as, for example, in the Sonata in D minor, for violin and piano), and finally, the marvelously varied works of Johannes Brahms, that towering musical genius, endowed with imaginative powers as vast as it is possible to conceive, but checked at times by the fixed idea of piling up effect on effect, without heeding the limitations imposed by his form and instrument. This, of course, with the natural exceptions to the rule, in particular the three Intermèdes. All that Claude Debussy has written for the piano, on the other hand, exists to testify to a regenerated and renewed piano technique, instinctively pianistic in its nature, whose every dynamic and timbre effect is born of the instrument itself, and which generates an ample, novel and fascinating sonority. With all this, however, one cannot assert that this revival and renewal are exclusively the work of the French composer. Even without harking back to the French composers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—that is to say to those classicists who have elsewhere been mentioned by me as the true ancestors of contemporary French music and to Mozart (of whom our subject was wont to say: "O, what a pity that Mozart was not a Frenchman! He would then have found more imitators!")—Debussy had a great master quite near at hand in our own time: Chopin.

It has been stated more than once in what tender affection Debussy held works of the great Pole. He himself (we must remember that he was the pupil of a pupil of Chopin), publicly expressed this point long ago in a number of times, a love which is disclosed, incidentally, in his revisions of Chopin's works for the firm of Durand. Yet, even if his own confession had not made this clear to us, it would be easy to discover the spirit of Chopin dwelling in the composer of the *Images*, by means of clues often enough revealed in his piano compositions.

Chopin was a poet of the keyboard, and for that very reason he hears all its voices, even those which are most subtle and most

evanescent. He loved to create atmospheres of sound, in which his melodies, so pure and profoundly human in their emotion, move slowly as though through their own natural ambient, the ambient out of which they are created, out of which they are born like perfumed flowers, at the same time giving it, in turn, the imprint of their own firmness. Chopin in his papers has created that right harmonic method by means of which we are able to discern and understand his winking melodic line, a line at times clear and limpid, as though seen through an immaculate crystal lens, as if appearing against a serene and deep-sea sky; at others as though suffused with mist, veiled in a light wreath of smoke, in a pearlaceous cloud traversed by vivid and insatiable gleams. And this aqueous realization, of such exquisite lyric and coloristic sensibility, is achieved in the most simple, most spontaneous, most fluid manner, one that comes out unadorned on every page. Where Liszt has overemphasized elaboration, as though he were not sufficiently satisfied with his usual power and structural complexity, where he indulges himself in interlacing part with part, voice with voice, and lumbering across the keyboard in a dense, but heavy and receding gallopade, Chopin has simplified more and more, and has ordered the page black with notes, clustering on the staves like a pushing crowd at a theater entrance, to attain a page white and pure, where all that is superfluous, all that does not contribute effectively and necessarily to the expressive expression, is elided. For Liszt and for his followers, the pianoforte was an end and virtuosity was an ideal of art; for Chopin the instrument was merely the means best adapted for him—since it was the most varied and most ductile—to express the inner soul of his music, and the height at which he sought to arrive was to create in the spirit of the player and listener a poetic state of being—dramatic and more particularly, lyric—to refine, as much as possible, the stream which discharged his musical speech. And it is for this reason—one of many—that Liszt's piano music is almost always mechanically difficult; while that of Chopin, on the contrary, is supremely difficult to interpret, yet not insurmountably nor transcendently difficult with respect to finger agility, and mechanical dexterity.

A clear proof of this is the difficulty in *fingering* compositions "poetry thought out" for the piano keyboard. Among such compositions are many of the Beethoven sonatas, which literally oppress the phalanges of the musician, not infrequently subjecting them to inhuman and constant efforts. In Chopin, on the other hand, "the musical concepts are, to a certain degree, dependent upon and inseparable from the marvellous manual possibilities of their author"



(Czells). It is true that Chopin is not easy—although many think that he is, and seeing on that supposition too often delight themselves with lawless excursions of his music—yet by reason of his clear, strictly pianistic manner of writing, he does not call for that strength of wrist and fingers which still makes certain of the Liszt studies, so to say, a bag-bear to pianists of more than average ability. Only, it is not enough to play Chopin's music, one needs most understand it as well. It is not enough for the hands to digest themselves on the keys; it is necessary for the intellect and, above all, for sensibility and the heart to play their part, which is one of the first importance. And then, when the soul of the composition is quite clear to the player, and he has absorbed it, he may proceed to an artistic execution in a short time. If he does not do this, it is quite probable that he may arrive at playing a Liszt Rhapsody with more or less success, but not even the simplest and shortest of the Chopin Preludes.

Now, many of the above observations may be repeated with regard to the piano compositions of Claude Debussy, who nevertheless extends—and at the same time restricts, from the expressive point of view—the boundaries of the instrument, in compass and along parallel lines with the wealth of his means of expression. For him, also, the pianoforte was a most faithful friend, and the guardian of his most profound and cherished secrets, to the piano he confided, within the intimate privacy of his chamber, his sensations of the world of appearances and actual beings; for it he has written his most personal and his most moving pages. And although he conceived the piano piece as enclosed in the brief ambient of a picture, yet he knew how to give it so much of light and air as to cause it, by reason of its ample sonority and the universality of its pathos, to spread beyond the narrow limits of its frame in a manner that is ideal. He also had an affection for psychic states of being, caught up in their most significant instances, and considered in a union more and more sustained and expressive. For this reason, and in order to draw new sonorousness from the instrument he, like the Pole, gives the greatest possible measure of extension to his chords, now repeating the tones of the chord several times, at the distance of an octave, now superimposing them. And this *seppia*, like that of Chopin, is aerial, light and limpidness, while that of Liszt is massive and noisy, and in the majority of cases, unexpressive. This Chopin influence, also betrayed by a number of other more or less significant signs, is more especially visible in the piano compositions preceding the *Preludes*, and may be said to end only with the second book of the *Images*, in which the traces of Debussy's Chopinian passion

grow more feeble, and finally disappear, though not in all the twenty-four pieces contained in that collection. Yet they only disappear as signs, that is to say, tangible and formal indications, and always remain present in the spiritual continuity which these two great masters had in common. And I myself, reading the exalted words which Georges Fauré wrote about her pathetic lover, can do no less than think of Claude Debussy: "Chopin's genius is filled to overflowing with sentiment, and with nuances which have never existed in richer variety. He endowed a single instrument with the language of the Infinite, he knew how to sum up, in a few Bars, which a child could play, poems of the greatest loftiness, domains of unequalled energy. Nor did he have to have recourse to extended sustained notes to give the measure of his genius: he did not have to fall back either on the saxophone nor on the ophicleide in order to fill the soul with terror, nor on the church organ to fill it with faith and enthusiasm." With certain limitations, these lines may serve to trace some of the outlines of Debussy's personality.

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In the rapid survey which we are about to make of the piano-works of Claude Debussy, we shall have to speak of periods. We might at once say that such subdivisions, proposed and accepted by some for convenience of reference are, nevertheless, without value as criticisms in serious critical writing. Such periods are broad time divisions in which to include certain characteristic and unchanged features of Debussy's music; but to speak of successive phases of development already constitutes an error where any artist is concerned, and more particularly so when the artist in question is an artist like Debussy. All those fanciful conceits of eclectic criticism are in reality devoid of meaning: the expression of a genuine artistic personality is not subject to a species of perfecting process, though we may speak of an enrichment of means, in other words, of changes in quantity—but the intrinsic essence of the artist's personality simply exists, and does not change in quality from the artist's very first expression on (I mean expression in the sense of *Henriette Croze*, the artistic evaluation of an individual intuition: there being no such thing as a non-artistic expression). The personality of Debussy is one of those which unfolded in concentric circles, and indeed, one may say that nothing vitally necessary had been forgotten on the road of its unfolding, while at the same time no conquest could have been made which was not, qualitatively possible from the very beginning.

There are, in the works of his first youth, not alone hints, but conspicuous gestures and poses which we find again in the works of his maturity (for one, in order to cite a single example, the theme of *Millicende* may be found in the first measure of the lyric *Nuit d'été*, of the year 1876), just as in his last pages he returns to some of the earlier gestures, which he appeared to have forgotten—compare a few passages of the *Sonate* with some of those in *Quatre pour cordes*. Yet these are isolated cases; aside from these are a multitude of echoes which repeat themselves again and again, insistently, occasionally in a striking manner; yet always in such a way as to establish a cohesion of form and spirit throughout the whole of the master's very considerable creative output. We need only add that we will always take for granted that chronological references have a merely relative value, since when they are used arbitrarily they serve to build up—as has already been remarked—a sequence, and not a organic coming into being, which is what really takes place in the artist's inward consciousness.

We begin then, with a first, youthful period, which already has the earmarks of original talent, and of a decisive will to escape from the enclosure of romantic form, exhausted and impotent, and incapable of renewing itself. And the light which irradiates the new road comes from the eighteenth century: Couperin, Daquin, Rameau, Costeley, and all the cleverness who return to earth for the baptism of the first expression of the Debussyan creative gift. Debussy, approaching his art to the echo of the Wagnerian tubas, in the presence of Berlioz's conception, snuckly yet a-bell with genius, and in that of the metaphysical Frenchman mysticism, could find nothing better to do than to take refuge in the past of the *Table de France*; and in daily and fraternal communion with the great spirits of the eighteenth century to recreate a style, clean-cut and positively French, yet at the same time modern. And as he was precisely Rameau's successor, all showed their breath as on what they insisted was the attempt of an abstract sensibility and degenerate sensibility, or of an abstract and disorganized mentality, all this, of course, in the name of tradition, whose self-appointed policemen they constituted themselves. Few among the intelligent could then realize that Debussy, like all real innovators, was moving in the path of the great, the true tradition. (It would be interesting to appose the situation some thirty years ago in the France of Gounod and Massenet, with the more recent and still existing bitterness in our own Paderewski and Mascagni's Italy.)

The first piano numbers by Debussy of which we know, are the two *Andantes*, but immediately afterward come the *Ballade*,

the *Naxos*, the *Storia*, etc., as well as the *Suite Bergamasque* which, however, not having been published until 1948, may have undergone a final revision. I confess my admiration for these compositions though the latter-day Debussystes have but contempt for them. We find in the four movements of the suite in question so moving a grace, so delicate a sensibility, that we cannot show preference for other pages more interesting, perhaps, yet not more secure. *C'est si bon!* Here we have, among all the most exquisite utterances that Debussy the man matured wrested out of his genius, the vision of a landscape bathed in moonlight, here we have all the effects, only less simply expressed, which reappear in the *Images* and in the *Prefaces*. For example, what an airy flowering of arpeggios across the keyboard, to leap up again like a fountain-jet which scatters its water on the air, then collapses into calm again in solemn tonic and dominant undulations, upon which the theme spreads out, ample, untroubled, expressive. And therein lies—and it is what is of import above all else—all the poetry of nature which the musician can voice.

It is of no importance that today our admiration of these pieces is shared by those well-meaning critics who relegated them to herbs, because they found in them melodic blisssongings of five measures, or more.

After ten years, dedicated principally to vocal chamber music, came the suite *Four li pieces*. In connection with it, Debussy's production for the old classic forms should be noted—for the French

*C'est si bon* from *Suite Bergamasque*—MEASURE 21-22





note, for the dance—in which he has known how to fuse his new harmonies, his restless rhythms, and his exquisite modernist spirit, with such elegance and finish. In pages of this kind (we have already mentioned some of these, others we rediscover in the *Children's Corner*, in the *Estuaries*), the composer has known how to couple his classicism—intense in the broadest sense of the word—with his modernism, the serious and solemn with the light and brilliant. The *Prelude* with which the suite begins is a conspicuous example. It is built up on two themes: one, rhythmic, vigorous and, if one

*Andante* from the suite (first to present) measures 1-8  
*Andante* from the suite (second)



notes, slightly Baroque in character, appearing in the first measure; the other, slow and solemn, confined to the basses (this recalls, likewise in the accompaniment certain Baroque themes, such as that of the organ *Prelude* in A minor). These two themes follow, interweave, fly from each other, and return to bear each other company;

and the most delightful contrast characterizes the actual coexistence of the nobility and majesty of the second theme, and the playful vivacity of the first. The composition ends with a long happy cadence, light, aerial and ending suddenly, with effect, after the resonance of a few chords in the form of a chorale. It is the maturity of the cathedral together with the house of the highway—Old Johann Sebastian Bach and that "good spot," Chopin.

II, in the same *Four* is piano, we are still in the numbers of the compositions thus far discussed—although this work was written after the *Nocturne* and at the same time as *Fallias*—the short compositions which follow, in *D'un color d'opéra*, already offer some

*Un color d'opéra—morceau 10 11*

*En quatre par opéra*



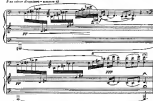
*Un color d'opéra—morceau 10 11*

*Un peu vite—Morceau 10 11*



anticipations of the future to which we will have occasion to refer again at various times. This color, this look, though little known because published outside of France, is sufficiently interesting because it realizes new contrasts, and draws rare and singular effects from the instrument; in the other look, among other things, there appear for the first time those low pedal resonances joined with a rapid play of suspension in the high registers, and their continuation of a theme, repeated periodically, in the interval of an octave.

Les estampes - Opus 105



The *Estampes* are among the most highly developed compositions which the master has written for the piano. If, in the case of the *Pelléas*, one may speak of impressions, in so much as they determine a certain integral moment of intuition, in the *Estampes* we cannot hide from ourselves the loyalty existing to the forms of composition there made manifest, with their well-established boundaries and repetitions. Yet all this thematic and constructive workmanship is overshadowed by a continuous uninterrupted veil of far-away poesy, through which the music is transported into a fantastic world, realized by the musician with the intrinsic magic of sound. The *Estampes*, perhaps, have something of the delicately faded color of ancient copper-plates, in which the transitions of light and shade have been marvelously softened by the hand of time, and which, when we now rediscover their forgotten sheets, recall none too remote a past with a sense of infinite melancholy and longing. The musician holds us and lures us in the dream which his own nerve-drawn soul has visioned in the beginning: in the *Pavane* evoking a Chinese landscape of vaporous and fascinating unreality, in the *Soleil dans Grand* interesting us with the melancholy color of a night of fragrance, upon whose air sound the thousand and one echoes and rhythms of songs and dances; in *Jardins sous la pluie*, leaning against the window-pane to watch the gardens beneath the April rain, a loose and beneficent shower which gives the verdure a shining brilliancy and clarity, and makes all things appear newer and

passer after their heavenly bath. To evoke visions of this kind by means other than those supplied by music is something more than difficult, it is impossible. Music alone—and the music of Debussy is particularly adapted to the case at point—can give our sensibility those thrills, those slight shocks, those excesses which transmute themselves into visions of the imagination. In these pictures, which are of frequent occurrence in the Debussyian output, there is no attempt to draw the outlines nor to recall anything to our memory by way of mnemotechnics, or to try the application of material or photographic actualities; but instead we have the suggestion which carries them over into a spiritual world, where every hue becomes an idea, every color a sentiment, every sound a passion. Nevertheless, the language of Debussy remains absolutely musical. And this because the feelings of the artist himself are absolutely so. Those who have thought to estimate the value of the works of the composer of *Pelléas*, as they would those of an exquisite writer, yet are who in a painter and poet rather than a musician, have advanced the most regrettably valuable suggestion which their heads might have originated. They have confused—and this should not surprise us too greatly—the undetermined and unlearned language of sound, with the fixed and established language of their books. For people of this kind there exists a certain musical vocabulary which is far from taking into account the variety and multiplicity of human speech, and these people, therefore, denounce as faulty and ungrammatical those who are unaware of such limitations, or who know them only to deny them.

Nevertheless, if the *Estampes* really belong to that group of compositions which has called forth the consideration of the critics aforementioned, it is a sign that in their entirety they are still conceived in the spirit of those which have preceded them. Among them we find pages of wonderful breadth and of high poetry (such as the first two pages of the *Fugues*, for example), as well as pages less happy, and more conventionalized (such as the last two of the same composition). At bottom, this composition maintains that symmetry which demands a slowly moving episode half-and-half religious in character, intercalated between the brilliant, rather lively movement of *Tempo primo*, and the last section, which is a more or less varied reprise of the first one. Yet with what a sense of breadth, of wide horizons, and with what a variety of life and posture! We need only recall the rhythmic vivacity of the *Saints dans Grenade*, where the sense of movement is never held down, not even transiently, within stereotyped patterns, nor loses itself in interpretive gaps. We need only think of the *Jardins sous la pluie*, in



which a figure—anything but changeable and varied gives place to pages which are of unattainable sweetness and perfection. The musician has understood the song of the rain which falls upon the leaves and on the ground, he has felt its freshness on his face, and has voluptuously inhaled the perfume of the flowers bedewed by it, and the scent of the humid earth. The driving rain is falling, with gusts of wind and shotted balls of water. Then it closes up, and deep by drop, the leaves let fall the first notes of an infantile sound: *Non s'ouvre plus au sole, les feuilles sont coupés*. . . . Another driving gust of rain, and the childish fugitive sound is frightened off, groping, with difficult breathing, for a chance to return. The water runs in rivulets, the rain beats like a tambourine against the window-panes. And then comes the rainbow. . . . Who is there who cannot feel the subtle poetry of the exact detail contained in the last two pages of the composition, the trembling of the last



rain-drops, irradiated by the sun, already peering through a gap in the opening clouds, and which in a single stride breaks forth resplendent in the luminous chord of E major?

The *Musique* and *L'Isle joyeuse* seem to belong to an antecedent period, to that of the *Suite symphonique* rather, than to that of the *Estampes*. They are two brilliant compositions, in which, as is invariably the case, the composer's two instinctive qualities are shown forth—acute sensibility and refined taste; yet in which we find lacking those accents of undeniable originality to be discovered in other works, contemporary or antecedent, such as the *Nocturnes*, already mentioned, and the second of the *Filles paléstrine* for the voice. Nevertheless, some of the rhythmic gestures in the *Musique* deserve attention. Of particular interest is the rhythmic effect due to the

fact that the movement is in three-quarter time, while the accentuation is in six-eight time.

A new step in advance is taken the following year—1868—with the first collection of the *Images* a short step, for the suite in question is still closely allied to the *Etampes*, with the exception, notwithstanding, of the first tempo of *Reflets dans l'eau* which, owing to a certain harmonic coloring, and a tendency to amplify its compositional limits, presages the clarity of the second book of the *Images*. In this piece Debussy depicts a musical landscape: the reflections mirrored in a pool, shifting and changeable, having all the beauty of tender fancies. These dwell in these pages the feeling of solitude and of reverie, expressed in the three notes which are born independently of their chordal tissue, and which repeat without inter-



ruption, while light plays over the entire gamut of their notes, from the sparkling of the sunlight to its evanescence in the evening shadows. And they return, these three notes, now that night has come, "in distant and harmonious sonority." The last page of *Reflets dans l'eau* is worthy of a very great poet. Of the other two movements, the *Hommage à Rameau* stands for a tribute of devotion to this great man of the eighteenth century, whom Debussy helped to rescue from undeserved neglect. (Of such "homages," Debussy wrote only one other, for Haydn, a brief little occasional number, without any particular pretensions.) *Musées* represents the pleasure taken by the expertly skilled artist in the combination of innumerable triplets with a brief and untamed theme, and in his drawing from them every possible effect.

With the second book of the *Images* we already enter upon a new period of Debussy's art; that which has been called his third period—of which his symphonic suite *La Mer* sings the magnificent successory chorines. This period may be summed up in a single word—but one to be understood in a certain definite sense—the word "melodic." The harmonic sensibility predominating in the *Naxos* and in the *Etampes* gives way in the second book of the *Images* to an affirmation of the melodic line which is no less

sensitive. We say *melodic*, since the word does not mean a specified quality of melody, but all melody, melody in general, the song which finds its expression in a line, monodic and essential line. And a line of this sort—which may beiform, thread-like, or built up of small successive masses, established the character of the composition—constitutes its real substance, and its living and moving frame-work.

This difference in attitude in the field of music—first disclosed in Debussy—finds its analogies in painting and in literature, in which it evolves, nevertheless, as always, a step in advance. Symbolism and impressionism are no longer the only concepts which divide the field of esthetics; it is beginning to be admitted that art has become an instrument of marvelous deftness, yet that presently, it must and will have to have recourse to something more definite, more exact. In painting, Gauguin's sublimated nature with the authority of his figures, void of detail, and of his colors whose harmony is all the richer after their gradations have been removed. The artist regains his right of straightforwardness of interpretation: Matisse, Cézanne, Picasso, Braque, join themselves to Gauguin. Literature wishes to disengage from poetry above all what pertains to the history of some individual consciousness, and instead preserves all that which shows itself to be a legacy of life in general. Mallarmé passes on, and in his place appear new gods: Chautel, Peggy, Roland, Susette, Bertrand, etc. In music all this is translated into an affirmation of greater definiteness and of greater solidarity, and in addition, as a new conception of sentiment which turns toward a multiplicity more vast and simple. Debussy's art no longer wishes to be an art of languor, which might be defined, *en latin*, by Verlaine's celebrated stanza, than which no other better express its emotion:

*Je suis l'Empire à la fin le décliné,  
 et regard passer les grands Barbares blancs,  
 en composant des symphonies indolentes  
 d'un style d'or où le langage de soleil danse.*

*[I am the Empire which, in decadence spent,  
 Watches the huge, white Barbarian advance,  
 While writing symphonies indolent*

*In golden style, where the sun's language dances.]*

The humanitarian crisis which the musician traversed during this period finds its apex in the first book of the *Pelléas*, and in the *Heroic*, in which the human values are of absolute, if not exclusive, importance. Yet emotion is always restrained within certain limits not established by the composer's will, but insisted upon by the expressive contents themselves. And nevertheless, there is not a

note, not an effect, not a sentiment that is obscure in it. All is expressed with so great a beauty, with so delicate a melody (or, rather, in the spirit of that famous saying, "take eloquence and wing its words") that it seems as though it were the passionately trembling evocation of our own innermost being. In not say one of its moments does this music of Debussy's surprise us, in any one of life's hours, listening to it, we can yield ourselves up to it, interiorly, allow ourselves to be cradled upon its waves with confidence and joy. We do not understand, therefore, why the emotion which vibrates in the first movement of the *Scènes pour une forêt* should be considered potentially human, and that which is born of the miraculous re-creation of the *Temps qui fu*, illumined by the rays of a paled moon, should not. A vast, sleeping country-side, a moon which at times peeps through the clouds which crown the skies, and at others irradiates the umbriferous of that which has been (a temple? the temple of our faith, the temple of our love, with all the softness of our smiles, and whose recollection brings the beam of homo-universis to our eyes?) There are alternations of diaphanous clarity, and of deep and awesome obscurity; a forest crowded with ailment, full of attraction and mystery. And above this landscape a voice—our own voice—which sings infinitely. Beethoven makes his melody proceed out of an arpeggio in triplets in the same tonality of C sharp minor, and Debussy gives shape to his lunar atmosphere with its song. And it is more than a melodic line, it is a figure in full, in which the musician, a sculptor in tones, has condensed all the vanishing life round about, in which he has enclosed all the radiance, and all the meaning of the surrounding landscape, and is the incontestable master of the scene. In the second one of the *Scènes*—in particular the one of which we have spoken, and in the *Chœur à travers les feuilles*—we find defined for the first time that intrinsic, creative process of the suggestion of the picture, about which so much has been said. Debussy does not wish to describe a picture in its actuality, with the cerebral realism of Wagner—notwithstanding that in the *Trology* there already are discernible inklings of new expressional evocations—Debussy has sought to translate, to carry over into music the musicality expressed by the natural landscape, by means of total reproductions. For example, a character piece, let us say one that is slow and religious, becomes a mournful impression if at times we feel the claims of bells ringing through it; or a shepherd's melody intoned on a rustic pipe gives a page of pastoral character. And the latter, when written in certain traditional rhythms definitely regarded as *haecce* in style, becomes a woodland sketch, no sooner has the composer uttered a half-ry, or

named the brooklet to measure in triplets, or flow in appoggios, and then it goes. This retrospection proceeds, therefore, out of the exterior and the extrinsic, inasmuch as there may be mountains without bells or shepherds, and woods without brooklets. Debussy, on the contrary, wishes to express the inner, intimate musicality, the unexpressed music of things; that aspect of them which is capable of transforming itself in the inwardness of a musical being in musical expression to present auditive sensations, musical rather than visible. Suggestion takes the place of illustration. The things which he hears and sees are those for which it is impossible to find a definite musical form (that is to say a formula); yet the non-acoustic phenomena of nature make so decisively a musical impression on him, that its expression inevitably brings us into direct contact with the phenomenon itself, with its outward appearance. (In this connection I should mention that it is not even possible to affirm to what degree Debussy's last compositions, the *Prefaces* in particular, really contribute to illustrate their respective titles. Their composer was so conscious of this fact that, in effect, in some of the pages he has placed the title after the composition, as though to leave the question of the precedence of the visual impression upon his auditive, or the contrary, quite open.)

From the standpoint of musical expressiveness in itself, the second book of *Images* gives evidence of far more simplicity than the first, be it by reason of the stripping off of unnecessary elements, be it because of a condensation of substance in phrase and harmony. This trend toward simplicity is the sign of the artist's maturity. A certain excessive thickness of writing, which we rediscover here and there in the *Estampes*, and in the first book of the *Images*, disappears in the second book, in which, however, the composer takes pleasure, at times, in certain gestures of his own, personal if one wishes, yet which end by becoming stereotypes (we notice some such, which from being no more than passing, hardly stressed, have grown more frequent and disadvantageous, more pattern-like). Such are, for example, those contained in the first measure of *III* in *Le Jardin* . . . a progression of chordal blocks to give a sense of mystery and, so to say, of insubstantial movement, the appoggiatura in thirds.

At its first descent we do simply get the chord. (Images, II, composition 1-4)



whose employ is discreetly abused, from the *Pièces d'or* to Debussy's very last numbers, and the insistence on the whole-tone scale which in the *Clavier à quatre* leads each by causing a certain necessity. Yet, on the other hand, the harmonic unity of the composition shows itself in all its perfection. We have elsewhere said that Debussy found a species of music which develops itself, conceived in its own measure, in such wise that it becomes necessary to seek in the beats which follow, the meaning hidden in the preceding ones. Yet at other times he has written pages in which, as it were, the music is confined to the moment, in which not alone the individual chord, but each individual note as well, seems to be vitalized with the most intense life.

This condensation must of necessity lead the French composer away from the more spacious and complex forms, and conduct him toward the composition which is brief and succinct in the late japonais, looking across the *Images*, we almost obtain the synthetic expressiveness of the *Preludes*. To simplify and to condense, such was the constant preoccupation of Claude Debussy (we observe it in his pianoforte compositions, but it also exists—though somewhat less evidently—in those for orchestra: *Compagnie En mer* with Ben Seabring). On the eve of the war he wrote to a friend: "The further I progress, the more I detect that intentional disorder which is no more than a means of taking the ear, consisting only of odd and entertaining harmonies which are merely society amusements.

Whatever happens, we must first find, then suppress, in order to reach the living heart of emotion!" It is the speech of a master artist, whose soul knows the incessant and laborious labor of creation, and the anxiety of finding the expression which will reveal it in its every vibration.

In his twenty-four *Preludes*, and especially in the first twelve, Debussy has given us his master-work in pianoforte composition.



Before this, however, aside from the two brief pages of the *Épilogue à Mopse* and the waltz *En plus que l'air*, we have a short parenthesis, dedicated to childhood as, better said, inspired by child life: the collection known as *The Children's Corner* and the *Boîte à joujoux* (this last, in fact, actually appeared three years after the *Preludes*; but because of its kinship to *The Children's Corner*, we doubt that it was written later).

Debussy was a great lover of children, he had but one child of his own, lively and graceful, who was his whole joy. For his

"Chouchou" he would drop any work upon which he might be engaged, to amuse himself with this baby of his (poor "Chouchou," she has replaced her father in the realm of disembodied spirits), for her he would have given up the conversation of all of his great colleagues. He was one who remained to the very last—as an artist who was on terms of brotherly affection with him has related—"a genuine big child." That same marvelous imagery and clarity of sentiment which is the fundamental characteristic of his art, showed itself in his every gesture, in his every word. At the age of fifty he still took great pleasure in his baby, in handling and playing with her as a mother might." This, which might prevent the appearance of a vague form of sensibility, was instead no more than the expansiveness of his clear and rapid soul, to which things still presented themselves in the same forms, and were productive of the same sensations which they might have given a babe. He realized in the most perfect manner those anti-intellectualist notions of mystic origin, which have brought forth Claudel, Barre, and Gourds, and which have achieved their philosophic apex in Bergson's work. The latter says in one of his pages (*La Perception des changements*):

There exists at least one class of these privileged beings, who move in an ambient of pure perceptions, which is, in the pure being or consciousness in things, uncoloured by the intellect, and they are artists. These can only abstain entering these perceptions, without seeing in the clearest form . . .

Art, in a word, must show these things as they actually are, and not in the distortions wrought by the intellect. Now no art has a more emotional origin than that of Debussy: in no music does the intellect play a more secondary role than it has played in Debussy's music. It is childish, then, an art like this, when we take into consideration that with the child, sensations and perceptions predominate over idea and representation. It is childish, also, inasmuch as it looks upon the appearance of things and the birth of phenomena with the eyes of stupefaction; inasmuch as it thinks that all is novel and miraculous, and that man, in giving names to things, and tabulating in the form of definite conceptions spiritual and physical attainments, only destroys poetry and beauty. Indeed: the art which draws its inspiration from these ethereal principles—mystic or spiritual, if one chooses to call them so—denies the isolation of things, and thereby their very self-determination, it precludes the possibility of things being recognized and comprehended in themselves alone, rigid with some definite sign which is built-up around them like a preserving barrier. The indistinct—the idea of the uncoloured, as Bergson calls it in his *Evolution creative*—is not regarded

as a negation of the definite, but by itself alone, as a positive value. It is precisely the application of these aesthetic principles in the field of figurative impressionism, that gave birth to the paintings of the ultra-academy; and there is more than one example of it to be found in Debussy's music.

All that has been said by way of digression is put forth to make clear that this attitude of sympathy on the part of the French musician for little children and child-life, as the result of a consciousness of an art particularly directed to their sensibilities, makes it easier to understand its aesthetics, as displaying a natural trend toward the intimate.

The "Children's Corner" is a suite of six pieces, of modest dimensions, in some of which another aspect of the composer's sensibility is revealed; namely that which comes upon the grotesque in man and in things, and exercises its irony upon them, not in a caustic, yet in a sharp and pungent manner. The *Doctor Gradus ad Parnassum* is a caricature of the vain scientific inflexibility of the compilers of studies and methods and, in a broader way, a satire upon the whole world of professors and those "strong in their subject." The arrow flies straight to the mark and hits the majority of the German musicians, the contemporaries of the great mathematicians and scientists of mental art, whose conservatism is slightly psychodynamism; like that of the poor elephant Jumbo, perhaps, who follows immediately after, and who suddenly falls placidly asleep, lulled like a good bourgeois by a mechanical cradle-song; for the proximity of the two pieces is not without its significance. Yet all the composer's capacity for irony or satire—which, nevertheless, must be regarded as an intellectual matter—seems for the moment exhausted, and does not reappear until we reach the last piece of the collection Gollig's *Calveskull*, where it is re-encouraged in the form of a dance, and supplies a practical reason for a conclusion. Debussy is quite the reverse in his *Sivirade à la poupée*, in his *La valse d'Anna*, and in his *Petit boquer*, in which his heart is a-quiver with homœopathic emotion, and finds accents of subconsciously lyric quality. To speak of the stylistic perfection of these pages is no hyperbole: the beauty of the compositions is revealed in their harmonic entirety, in the balance of their episodes, in the deftness of their detail.

Never, perhaps, did Debussy combine in fixed forms, such as those of the "Children's Corner," a greater facility of expression with a feeling so full of humanity and of tenderness. Certain touches in the *Sivirade* (in particular that in which the passionate phrase is entrusted to the left hand) are characterized by a movement



at once vivid and sincere which, perhaps—such vivacity and

*Allegretto in G major from "Pastorale" (Debussy), measures 44-48*

*Allegretto in G major*

such sincerity—the composer will not be fated to find again. "The Snow is Dancing" is the precursor of the subtle poetry of the *Prélude*, and the latter's creative power; while at the same time it is able to speak with a voice that appeals to the heart (notice the repeated theme, which emerges from the swirling extravagance of the innocent snowflakes).

*Allegretto in G major from "Pastorale" (Debussy), measures 49-51*

*Allegretto in G major*

The *Petit boyer* is written with a simplicity and purity which make us think of the direction of the second number of the *Filles du Calvaire*. All together, the six numbers of the collection once more affirm the composer's tendency to ever further clarify expression, to ever further simplify the language of tone, making no more

concessions to technical virtuosity or to the instrumental important, something we have already had occasion to acknowledge and which, before long, we will find realized in full. The ballet *Le conte à propos* came to the composer's mind as a result of the celebrated performance of Serge Diaghileff's "Russian Ballet" at the Châtelet, which took place in 1913; and it undoubtedly reflects the influence of these compositions, in particular, and in quite a special way that of Stravinsky's *Petrushka*. This last remark, however, refers rather to the *form* of the inspiration, to its scenic plot and the disposition of its parts, than to the quality of its music which, as may be imagined, is different enough from that of Stravinsky. Yet, even in his conception of the ballet, Debussy was somewhat at variance with the Russian spirit. At bottom of the burlesque scenes of *Petrushka*, there is something indescribable of bitterness and tragedy, transcending the boundaries of the comic—though the scene *can* be played by wooden marionettes—and which invests them with a symbolic significance altogether human. The music of the *Charlatan*, as the author informs us, has communicated to the rest, to the marionettes, to *Petrushka*, to the *Ballerina*, to the *Moss*, all the feelings and passions of human beings. In the *Belle à propos*, on the other hand, we have genuine wooden marionettes, in whom, at the most, a somewhat awkward tenderness serves to indicate their human quality. André Hellé's argument, however, infantile in form, is delicious by reason of its poetry:

This story happened in a box of toys. Boxes of toys, you, in fact, kinds of cities, in which the toys live just like people. Or rather, perhaps, cities are only boxes of toys in which the people live like playthings. The dolls dance; a soldier meets one of them, and falls in love with her, but the doll has already given away her heart to an idle, insolent and quarrelsome clown. Then the soldier and the clown have a great battle with each other, in the course of which the poor little wooden soldier is grievously wounded. Abandoned by the villainous clown, the doll takes to the soldier and loves him. They marry, are happy and have numerous children. The frivolous clown becomes a village constable—and life goes right on in the box of toys.

Here we have all that there is in Debussy of sensibility, of subtle tenderness and beauty, and delicate sentiments, for whose intimate expression the composer decided the piano would suffice, and in consequence of which the ballet takes its course with no more than a pianoforte accompaniment. (Later, André Caplet orchestrated the piano scenes, and in this new dress it was recently presented at the Théâtre Lyrique.) It is a little jewel: the silhouettes of the elephant, of the negro, of the policeman, are drawn with restraint; yet

incisively and conclusively drawn; the effluviante sweetness of the timbre is all contained in that sinuous and extraordinarily resonant-

*En telle a propos: There is in paper.*

*Deux, premier et seul.*



place waltz and the proud vacancy of the English soldier in that march which well-nigh recalls *The Gallies' Carrousel*. (We might

*En telle a propos: On white English.*

*Morceu de Marche anglaise.*



mention in passing that this frequently occurs in characteristically English subjects—landscape and figure subjects—and is one of the characteristics not neglected by the French artists of Vermeer's period. England, a land of legs and of pale men, seemed to them to be the background best adapted for their dreams, and their indeterminate nostalgia. And this is another point of contact between musicians and poets who were brethren: it is the pre-Raphaelite England of the *Demiolelle sin*, of "The Blessed Damozel"; the Verlainean England of *Geant*; the Shakespearean England of *Fach*, and of his sisters, the *Petes*, the Turquoise England of the *Smalleris*, the homogenous and formalistic England of *Parkish*, *Kap*, of *General Larkin*, of the *Miscellaneous*.

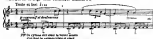
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The four-and-twenty *Preludes* (twenty-four, the perfect number where *Preludes* are concerned, from Bach to Chopin and Scriabin, no matter how they may compare as regards their tonal specifications), were printed in two books, each containing twelve, in 1910 and 1913 respectively, yet we may take for granted that they were written without interruption in the years from 1893 to 1913, according to information supplied by the composer's friends. In the first twelve, little by little, Debussy, as he goes, abandons by the roadside the last traces of any personality save his own—in particular as regards their instrumental dress—and creates for himself a musical-plastic language which is truly his personal possession. He reduces his compositions, so far as length is concerned, within more modest limits, henceforth does away with all repeats, and with episodes not called for by inspiration, but merely by the symmetry of parts. He frees himself from all restraint, and is able to express himself in full, recounting his impressions in a manner at once strong and lyrical. Each of the *Preludes*—a title only too unfitting to express the informing spirit of these compositions—is a picture in itself, sustained in its every portion, and expressing a special mental condition of being on the part of the artist. His impressions come to him from every side: from visions of the country, from recollections of distant lands, from poetic and literary creations, from the figures of plastic art; in the very centre of his extraordinarily vivid life, he sees and feels; and this is how these translations into music are generated within his inner self, and thus come to signify to him the true meaning and conduct of his art. It is a collection of sensations identifiable as regards space and time, and which are all equally a legacy on the part of the composer's decisive personality.

When he began to write them Debussy was already master of his characteristic mode of expression to such a degree that he could dispense with his favorite patterns. The variety of his musical gestures, and the multiplicity of his resources allowed him, to use on the one hand the whole-tone scale, even to the extent of building up a whole prelude on it (as in *Foibles*, where the only exceptions are the six measures, *en ascendant*, and the little chromatic fragment in measure 12a), and elsewhere, to stick to the most orthodox of harmonies, the most permissible tonal observations and modulations (as, for example, in the delightful *Le fil de l'ancien de lin*, infused with so straightforward and moving a poetry). Yet, even where he employed traditional means, Debussy knew how to infuse them with novel feeling. Certain of the *Preludes*, when we come to examine them, after having been fascinated by their sonority, leave us somewhat disillusioned, and at the same time

filled with admiration for their simplicity, their transparent clearness, and the revealed reality of their technical construction. All, or nearly all, are built up on one or two themes, linear and self-contained, with little modulation, and with hardly any embellishment; one episode either, if by episode we understand, as usual, something which enters to interrupt the course of the principal idea. The whole of the prelude *Deux par un le soir* (What and things they say to each other, those footsteps which lose themselves in the night) may be said to have been born of a single theme, which from time to time is

—Deux par un le soir. Deux Violons, 2<sup>e</sup> mouvement (24)



emphasized by a desperate innovation, and after which there resound "under phantasies" to die away slowly against the constant background of an equalized design, one balanced without closing after-effects, which gives us the feeling of the naked, empty countryside, where all things have lost their shape, and noises have no echo. Elsewhere Debussy gives us the impression of the even sweep of the farious wind, without having recourse to the venerable chromatic scale, the passages played with great finger-power up and down the keyboard, without trills or appoggiato. How? By means of a design of the greatest simplicity, which is neither more nor less than the minor second. Thus it is that "the wind in the plain" walks and

—Deux dans le piano (deux Violons, 2<sup>e</sup> mouvement 4)

whistles, and we feel all the tragic poetry of this inevitable and omnipotent force. Elsewhere the composer's sensitiveness is, to be frank, divided, not in two in *Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir*—as one of our musicians, who is a just and acute interpreter of Debussy has remarked—two distinct conceptions may be

noted in more than one passage (like first measures, for instance), in which the elements contained in the two principal lines express, so-to-say, the tone-poet's human feeling, that of "his tender heart, which absorbs the vast blackness of nothingness"; and the mystic atmosphere of evening and the skies, "sad and lovely, like a great open-air altar." The prelude has no development, but is a succession of ideas and of fragments, a multiplicity of vague and indistinct harmonies and colors, among which one can hear groups at times the voice of a violin which trembles "like a heart afflicted." And from the harmonies of this page, so rare, so interesting in their voluptuously decadentism in their particular exquisiteness—we come to those which follow, clear, open and meridional, of *Les collines d'Assyrie*, luminous with the radiance of the key of B major. Debussy wished them not only to obey the laws of distant harmony, but also those of time-hallowed form, and the whole composition is rightly constructed as regards its themes, with its frank code and its frank intermezzo, *moderate*, without showing any signs of the monotony or conservatism, owing to the variety of colors and designs, of contemporary details so informed with good taste, and whose equal it would be hard to find. For all this we need only refer to the detail of measure 31, and the measures following, where the popular folk-tune theme is handled contrapuntally with the descending scale of the key, and in the reprise of the last five measures, which form such a luminous close. Then there is the vast open-air

Excerpt from *Clair de lune* (Debussy, 2—first measure)



celestine of *Les Collines assyriennes* and that of *Chopin's* *no. 10* and *d'Opus*. Debussy's music has an extraordinary affinity with the

spirit of water, its transparency, its rapid shifting of colors and reflections: the magic mirror of Debussyan musicality is surrounded and, so to say, incensed in the fluid element. Water shimmers lightly in the gull, or flows laughing from the hollow of laughing hands torn which the snow does not dissolve (*Le promenoir des amants*); its agile jet spouts upward the blue (*Sonnet*), or falls back in a liquid, flowered madley like a rain of tears (*Le jet d'eau*); the heart weeps when "it rains on the town." The water sings with the voice of the Sirens, and from sea to sea one views the horizon widening to red in the infinity of the oceaned freshness of *La mer*.

And let us note the legend of the *Cathédrale engloutie*. The fishermen of Brittany believe that they can behold, emerging from the waves at dawn, the legendary city of Ys, buried for centuries at the bottom of the sea. Yet the musician gives us no more than the suggestion of this definite vision: a suggestion that is the very intensity of the emotion which the poetry of the legend has called forth in his soul. Whether or no there be hell is a matter of slight importance: the scene has no realistic value. But what no one will fail to experience in this simple composition—altogether developed along a fragment consisting of three notes, D, E, and B—is the sense of the sea's infinite mystery which it diffuses, the feeling of the grandeur of this aqueous plain, and finally, a sense of eternity which cannot be put into words, in whose presence one is overcome by a sentiment of humility and devotion. What more effective impression of eternity exists than that given in the last page of the *Pavane* where, upon a muted undulation of eighth-notes, an octave lower, gravitating about the tonic note, rises the harmonic theme, in liquid chords which move with all the solemnity of officiating priests? The sea, lashed by the east wind, no longer shows a tranquil surface, but becomes a battle-field, balcyon birds and storm-petrels pierce the air, like arrows, and the wind ululates and quivers: all nature is in a tumult. Yet the musician still remains within the placidly ambient, although occasionally the architect makes itself felt for the first time, in the exuberance of his colors and the complexity of his vocal web.

Le Cathédrale engloutie (see *Debussy, Op. 44*, no. 10)





This first book of the *Préludes*, we note, opens with a number that is evaded with Hellenic serenity, one which may be compared to a Parthenonian bas-relief. They pass lightly by, hardly touching the earth with their bare feet, the *Danseuse au Dolphin* (a simple line, rising over melodies strictly written in the scale tonality, with hardly any modulation). Their dance is a mirror: the dancers are imbued with the spirit of Apollo, and the gestures of their arms, and the movements of their bodies flower into the attainment, not a motion, breaks the rhythm of their melodies. What a contrast to the *Danse de Faust*! *Faust*, the burlesque spirit of the Shakespearean "Dream," is—a little—the ironic spite in the composer's soul, for *Faust* appears to some extent in all his variable musical caricatures, in which, nevertheless, he is a good fellow and never really succeeds in musing his victims. This dance of his is all a bit of *understudy*; as regards the elegance with which it is written, an elegance of which it is one of the collection's most notable examples, and also, because of its variety of mood: its playfulness, its burlesque notes, its sentimentality, hypocritical seriousness, and above all, its lightness, lightness, lightness. Ah, what a divine gift is this lightness of Debussy's which he never loses, from his first to his very last work!

The second book of the *Préludes*, though, as regards expressive richness and perfection of means, it represents an advance on the first book, seems inferior to it in its emotional contents. When he reached his thirteenth *Prélude*, Debussy's soul appears to have turned away—more or less—from any human subject as though his soul no longer vibrated now in response to the refinements and delicacies of artifice.

One need only turn over the pages of the book in order to be convinced of this fact. First of all, the titles of these compositions in themselves are such as to show that their inspiration, the motive of their composition, has, in most cases, an intellectual origin. Debussy wished to write these *Préludes* of his second book, but did not feel them intimately and driven by necessity, as he did those of the first. *La Puente del Pino*, *General Lavine*, *Messagerie à S.*



*Prelude, Op., Les silences alternés, First d'artifile*, are so many little jewels, considered as extreme cases; yet they no longer give us those sensations of life and poetry which *Voilà* and *En son air* in some ways do. We feel that the composer is always ready to sing about what he likes, indeed, to sing merely for his own pleasure. A species of blind humor steps him in the midst of his enthusiasms, and in his yielding to the promptings of inspiration. He may show himself as a free and dancing guide; but his grip is no longer firm. We have the impression as of something indeed spoiled by excess, even contrast. Hence the character of his emotion, which, if it be not superficial, is at any rate peripheral, and in a measure no more than epidermic, skin-deep.

And finally, from the pianistic point of view, these pieces no longer possess that expressive-ness restrained within the instrument's established limits of sonority. Some among them even decidedly overpass these limits, in endeavoring to give the piano orchestral volume of tone (one may note, incidentally, that these are in nearly every case written upon three staves, which is not an indication of a movement toward more perfect pianist dissonation, but rather denotes a trend in the direction of expansion, something like intemperance of the keyboard's limitations). At times the effect is more one of groping for what he is in search of than finding it. Certain passages, for instance, in the *First d'artifile*, look better on the printed page than they sound at the keyboard.

At other times some heterogeneous element, some episode—and here, indeed, we may say that term in its customary sense—obtrude themselves in the development of the composition, which are neither beautiful in themselves, nor homogeneous and "at ease" with the context as, for example, in measures 33-34 of *Le terrain des vallées de clair de lune*.

In fact, it seems at times as though Debussy had run short of thoughts, and were satisfied, for this kind of reason, to work over, though always with good taste, elements and phrases which he had given their most vital expression in other pages. More significant in this respect than any of the others is the prelude *Concept*, which

Change from *Voilà*, 2d measure 1-4.

This value of movement: forte



clearly betrays the anthology of the Debussyan formula:

George Gershwin, *Op. 25, No. 1*



from the first to the last measure (see measures 1-4, 15-18, 24-28 and others). The melodic progressions of the initial harmonies of the prelude in *quasi* may be found with but slight rhythmic variants, in the *Fantaisie* music, measures 4-8.

Yet now, the worst having been said, and the necessary reservations made, we hasten to add that in this second collection, however, there are pearls of price and among them, in first instance, we would place *Onive*. This prelude gives evidence of an exactitude of harmonic elaboration which Debussy, perhaps, does not achieve elsewhere: its swiftness and elegance of idiom are only exceeded by the grace of its melodic line, and the mother-of-pearl iridescence of its harmonic web. The composer has coaxed with a lover's hand this magnificent music creature, so full of living movement, dripping water and with a smile like a rainbow. *Septier* has been conceived in the same vein as *La fille aux cheveux de lin*, but with a greater wealth of emphasis. It also has a sweet and delicate throng of afflicted tenderness, comprising but a few lines, with brief phrases and fragments which join, part from and appeal one to the other. The whole piece breathes an atmosphere of candor and innocence. Debussy knows the language of its simple soul: it seems as though the angels and the *Alto*s with linen caps are the only ones who can speak it; and in it he puts the whole heart, all that there is of passion and of memory.

Two other masterly pieces, humorous this time, are *Grand Laiton*, "eccentric," and *Rouage à Peibich*. The first is no more than a cakewalk—with a few short parentheses—but it is a cakewalk written by Claude Debussy, who knows how to endow the most commonplace things with grace and refinement. We need but recall for a moment what a rebuke the very ordinary guitar accompaniment into which the theme of the grotesque *Volonté* itself, has received at his hands. In *Peibich* the English character-sketch is still more

of a success; the seriousness, at times ridiculous, of Albin's case is here depicted in an inexpressible manner. Suddenly, after the solemn theme of the English national hymn, which lends itself so readily to the framing of an admirable framework for choral harmonies, there darts forth the leaping design with appoggiaturas, which give shape to the whole composition, and which above all is characteristic of English dances. And after it restores the solemn theme, making a contrast full of wish and humor. This is in truth the Samuel Peckwick of Debussy's immortal portrait, down to a

Figure 1.2 Albin by Sam Peckwick, at measure 1 and 2  
Edward Elgar's piano music



species of little whistle which he utters, as to say, in the background, before withdrawing.

\* \* \*

In the year which succeeded the publication of the second book of the *Préludes*, the war began. Terrible, during its first months, for every French heart; ruin swept across the most smiling provinces of France and a frenzy of violence and of destruction seemed to have turned man into a beast. Art quite suddenly seemed to be a far-away and useless thing, to which it seemed no one could continue to listen; those among the artists who went away were, perhaps, happier than those who remained, stunned and inert amid the rising and falling tides of enthusiasm and dejection which alternated, turn and turn about. Debussy did not rally from the blow; his own rising fever notably increased by the universal rise in temperature, his illness, from that time on, manifested itself in all its inexorable violence. No more soft, sweet evenings during which, in his little study in the Avenue du Bois, he could catch the echoes of a serene and carefree life, echoes of songs and dances, and of serenades; but instead the vertiginous phantasmagoria of arms and of armed men, the commands of "Forward, march!", the howling

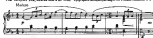
of the work causing the ecstasy, and working itself up into an exaltation of patriotic valor, religion, humanity. And Debussy for a time is silent. The musician of eighteenth century France, imbued with its delicate refinement of spirit, cannot well be the musician of the stentor and the drum or of Mars. The subtle music of Vivaldi and Monteverdi is succeeded by the tumultuous and militaristic music of Paul Deshayes, and the empty and resounding music of Edmond Rostand. Since Debussy's soul had not been touched by the dramatic impetus of romanticism, and a feeling for the heroic and epic was foreign to his nature, he did not thrill to the national drama which developed day by day (I am speaking, for it clearly understood, of the composer's *esthétique*, not of his moral sentiment, for Debussy was a good citizen and a zealous Frenchman). "He belonged to that tribe of artists," says Laloy, "whose art was produce only love, nothing else, and which ignores hatred, despair, violence and vulgarity. Among the musicians he recalls Mozart in particular, owing to a like disposition of innocence and chastity, both possessed the power of inventing all that they touched with a limpid serenity, whence their thought progressed toward peacefulness and joy."

Hence there was missing for his *violins* those vibrations which he drew, so to speak, from the atmosphere which surrounded him, those things which he saw within the immediacy of his daily perceptions. He sought to adjust himself to this new life, and in the three *Sonatas* for different instruments there is, in fact, more than one tentative toward a broadening out and renewing of substance which opened up to him new roads of expression. He sensed, whether consciously or clearly we cannot say, that he had exhausted all the possibilities of the trend in which he was the supreme leader; but a considerable space of time was needed to allow the vision which had come to him to mature and express itself in works as perfect as those which had signified the apogee of his preceding output. The compositions of the last three years of the French master's life—I am speaking, naturally, of his pianoforte works, but might also refer to the pages for viola, flute, violin, etc., already cited—with the exception, perhaps, of the *Etudes*, are weak, either because they are built up out of material happily barren in itself, and not capable of a new vital display of strength, or because manifestly elements of a new *violins* not as yet well proportioned, and at any rate, not always in homogeneous accord with other predominating components. These compositions are the *Épigraphes antiques*, the *Revue littéraire*, the twelve *Etudes* and *Les Jeux de l'enfant*.

Furthermore, Debussy moves sensibly toward a change in his pianistic style, which reached its highest degree of perfection in the second book of *Images*, and in the first book of the *Préludes*. From the three staves mentioned we pass to four-hand pieces and to such for two pianos. In his desire for increasing the sonority of his pianistic elaboration, the composer does not see that he is entering upon the wrong road, one which will no longer lead him to purity but to contamination.

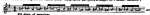
In the six two-rehearsals which Debussy has entitled *Épigraphes*, he comes near to renewing the stylistic perfection which is the beauty of the *Clairières de Rilly*. These six pieces are closely connected in unity of inspiration and affinity of conception; in addition, the composer wishes us to realize their solidarity, for at the conclusion of the work, he once more calls up the theme with which it began. And yet, regarding the *Six Épigraphes* *antiques*, we must repeat what has already been said with respect to the second book of the *Préludes*. Debussy makes use of all his efforts, his patterns—for this is what some of his individual "ways of putting things" have become—

Four measures (two, one in each hand) from "Épigraphes antiques, arranged for 2 hands, measure 14



in order to write pages which still have a soothing beauty; yet which never of itself, and are lacking in life and movement. Of what account is it that everything is in its place, and that the balance of the composition, as always, is marvellously observed. Today we stand silent before these pictures: they no longer have anything to say to us. The cold admiration we may concede them wakes no echo in our hearts. And when, for all that it has been done with indispensible mastery, the composer struggles with the difficulty of finding accents as varied as possible to a fundamental elaboration throughout three entire pages on the whole-tone scale (II. *Four un tonbeurs sans nom*), we are oppressed by all this effort which is deployed without any noteworthy result. And when he hunts for new sonorities to depict the rain (VI. *Four souvenir de pluie en*

Four measures in piano in each hand from "Épigraphes antiques, arranged for 2 hands, measure 1



metre), we think with longing and sorrow of the freshness and radiance of *Jardins sous la pluie*.

Passing over the *Requiem évangélique*, an occasional number dedicated to the King of the Belgians in a moment of exultation (he that outraged land (far more truly felt in the *Mot des septuagint qu'on s'est plus de malice, composé—words and music—on the eve of a painful operation); we will not dwell at length on the three larger compositions for two pianos which Debussy has named *En blanc et noir*, perhaps to indicate the *opus ferib* character, the stiched quality in its accentuated contrast with *color*. Although standing out among the composer's productions, by reason of their unusual dimensions, these pieces tell us nothing that we do not already know. The first movement is vivacious in spirit, and has great rhythmic fluidity; yet at bottom it is no more than an elegant *valse-caprice*, whose first chord-succussions and whose tonality bring to mind the *Grotesque et Pantomime*. In the second Debussy gives us a war scene, in which he endeavors to present a great fracas, perhaps better adapted to symphonic than to pianistic expression. The various phases through which the composition moves, may be traced and described with ease, so well differentiated and characteristic are its various episodes. The piece begins with a signal alarm on a double pedal (F sharp and C), whose upper note is a far-away beat of the drum, after a few measures a folk-song, a wail, resistent of heroic-sickness, is heard, immediately succeeded by another song, heroic in quality, as though a peal were celebrating funeral rites. Meanwhile, as the song rises once more in the distance, against a gloomy and asymmetric harmonic background, the rolling beat of the insistent drum continues on the same menacing pedal-point which announces the imminent battle. Then we have Luther's solemn chorale, to which is shortly opposed a ringing French fanfare. These are, practically, the various moments as they succeed each other, and the alarm signal completes the military picture. We have not overmuch sympathy for this species of invocation, in whose episodes we find a logic more refined than artistic, and which, usually, give evidence of no more than a far-off affinity among themselves. In the third movement we have, in a fashion, the effect of being transported into the intimacy of a room, while without the wind is whirling (see, for a movement similar to this one, *Le vent dans la plaine*), bringing with it wails of lamentation. The rain beats against the window-panes and the old custodian relates a terrifying legend (a sensitive rhythm in the seventh measure, later renewed with chords of the north, and with major thirds in chromatic progression). The whirlwind passes and dies in the distance, the sky regains its serenity, and the moon*

(*Etendue* a white and silent landscape). Although as regards this last movement of the composition, we may repeat what has already been said regarding the second, it evinces, besides, a more annoying mood of disorganization, and shows in a more evident degree an extension beyond the potentialities of its generating material. How far superior are the *Etudes*, contemporary with them. The twelve Debussyan *Etudes*, albeit loyal to the exigencies of a mechanical formula chosen among the principal difficulties of pianoforte technique, are very far from conveying that impression of weariness and monotony which we experience when listening to other celebrated studies written merely to overcome mechanical difficulties, and to bring them to a head in concert virtuosity. Debussy, in his *Etudes* wrote imaginative compositions, in which is evident the predominance of his personality over their didactic end and aim. He wrote compositions which are named according to the mechanical formula predominating in each, yet which may be provided with titles in accordance with individual taste. As a result, it would be absurd and possible to think of these *Etudes*, these studies, as means for propounding vigor to the hand and freedom of movement to the fingers; rather is it opportune to regard these pages as an ultimate of perfection, as an end of conquest, in which the composer's imaginative intelligence, and his virtuosity, in turn complete each other, without interference.

As is natural, among the many artifices of piano technique Debussy chooses those in particular which are peculiar to his own manner of musical expression; and in so doing he reveals himself most completely, with the greatest freedom less constrained in his method of procedure, and spontaneity in accomplishment. This, for example, in the studies for fourths and for thirds—intervals dear to this French composer—and those for contrasting accents, for comparative *crescendo*, and for chords. In these, whoever is familiar with Debussy's works and loves them, will find refreshment, across the web of his harmonic delicacies, the most felicitous moments of the past, retold with discretion, and what is more, with all the composer's marvellous science, which he shows in the broadest sense of the word. In such wise that these *Etudes*, though difficult beyond the ordinary, should not intimidate the player who attempts them, after he has truly felt and comprehended the spirit of Debussy's art. When the pianist endowed with a good technique will have dissected their organic structure, and their musical conception, they will all prove to be manageable to the fingers, owing to the pianistic manner, akin to the nature of the keyboard itself, in which they have been written. And it will be as easy for him to give a title, in his own

mind, to each one of these compositions, as it is for one who has long lived in communion with the human soul to derive a word or a name from a gesture. As regards the first of the *Etudes*, for example: the one "for the five fingers," after Monsieur Czerny, we may repeat what has already been said about the first movement of the *Suite pour piano*. In it two adversaries, equally well intentioned, confront each other, Debussy and Czerny. At last Mr. Czerny has the word, and triumphantly begins with the most pedantic of diatonic exercises on five notes but along comes Debussy to annoy him with notes which do not belong to the key, and with a 7/8 rhythm. His impertinence is without any limit, and a battle rages all along the line of the five white and the five black keys. Then Mr. Czerny begins to lose his calmness and—his memory of the key in which he was playing!—and with impetuous fury attacks a long scale in D flat major, in order to take refuge from the mockery of his scholastic rival, or to shoot out in desperation his excellent professional arguments. Debussy, joking him in the bass, makes fun of him with his most terrible schisms: with one turn of the hand he forces him back within the confines of law and tonality, and leaves poor Mr. Czerny with a finger to his nose. This magnificent study might well be named: "A personal affair between Messrs. Czerny, teacher by profession, and Debussy, without fixed profession."

Perhaps the suggestion of what it expresses might evoke a melancholy and arid landscape in the case of the second study, *Four les sixtes*, which, nevertheless, is not composed of thirds only, but in which these are in most cases preceded by sixths and fourths, with frequent hints of *Les sixtes alternées*. The following one, *Four les quatrièmes*, is more a prelude from the second book of the *Preludes* than a true study. In the fourth study we find a few fugitive echoes of Chopin in the middle part while in the fifth study a graceful ball design, which recalls Balloons and other Rameaux, is developed in the movement of a waltz *opérée*. In the study for *Four les sept doigts*, the composer's suggestion excludes the thumb in the four-note groups confided to each of the hands, and which make us think of the technique of Bach's day, employed in the preludes, the fantasias, and in the toccatas.

In the second book of the *Etudes*, the composer frees himself to a still greater extent from the bonds of form, abandoning himself to that lyric fancy which has given us the *Preludes*. The study *Four les onzièmes opposées* presents, in alternations of light and shade, the contrast between jolly resplendent peaks and deep, shadowed skyways, opposites of sonority heard in the most profound silence. And only the chime of a bell in the distance (see the first measures of *Les*



(*Calme d'Anacréon*) brings an echo of human life into the solitary mountain regions.

In the eighth *Étude*, nymphs and fauns are dancing, and in the one following, the comical figure of good General Larive reappears while the chromatic design of the study devoted to precision in chromatic steps, makes one think of a sea-breeze. It is worthy of note that in these two compositions the composer succeeds in reconciling us to the use of certain stereotype designs, which no longer seemed capable of renewing themselves in his spirit: be it the design which records the numberless "spinnets" and "at the fountains," or the one in repeated notes, dear to every composer of salon music during the past century. The final *Étude* leads up to conscious effects of a novel experience, and is given the characteristic gift of a barbarous dance.

We venture to hope that the hour may never strike in which such *Études* will be "adapted" (is that what they call it?) in the schools and conservatories, for that hour would mark the decline of their beauty. That day would see their entire sacrifice to the materialism of mechanics, and the victims to whom they were thus taught, would end by loathing this divine part of sound, perhaps more than he himself loathed the "scholastic faculty" in general. This overdoing in the technical direction has been the fate of other composers of the past, not excluding Chopin, who have been in a fair way of becoming mere program numbers in examinations for a diploma. Students devoid of more than normal talent, have ended by placing in the same category the studies of Liszt and those of Czerny, those of Brahms and of Moszkowski, of Schumann and of Henselt, of Chopin and of Rubinstein, as they may end, to-morrow, by bracketing Debussy and—for all I know—Schubert! It is thus, with a tribute of devotion to the great Pale—to whom the *Études* are dedicated—that Debussy's works for the pianoforte end.

The infirmity of his output for piano discloses itself—we repeat—is particularly significant of the personality of the French composer. Debussy's production as a whole embraces—it is true—many other genres and forms to other instruments: to the voice in his chamber lyrics, to the orchestra, to the harp, to the clarinet, and, toward the end, to the flute, and to the viola, the viola and the 'cello as solo instruments (in the last three *Sonatas*). But the piano remains his preferred instrument, since it is at the same time the most intimate and most capable of variety, its vocal resources are those which seem to express most completely, and in its most subtle resources the atmosphere in which Debussy's art frays. Debussy achieves a union of the greatest softness with the drama and the

symphonic poem; yet the impression he makes on us is that he has not revealed himself to the full in them as in his piano pages. The effect conveyed is that one portion of the sensitive soul of this shy and timid artist—who hated, as strongly as it is possible to hate, grandiloquent gestures, resounding cries, martellottina compositions and multiple orchestral phalanxes—must always have remained in hiding when he came to express himself symphonically. And although, at bottom, just as many pianoforte compositions by the nineteenth-century romanticists masquerade as the orchestra, in quite a few of Debussy's symphonic scores, perhaps, we feel the piano. This is because he has made such extreme use of those subtle sonorities, sometimes definitely high, or as though drawn in staccato-trance (it is hard to find words which really express artistic sensations as exquisitely French, perhaps), which are the property of the piano, even more so of the clavichord or of the pianoforte of fifty years ago: in a word of an instrument of percussion, or one plucked. We need only recall for a moment, in the composition of the *Deuxième symphonie*, the major importance of the "battery" of percussives, the ataphone, celesta, caillon, etc., as well as of the harp and the company of the wood-winds, as contrasted with the string quartet and the horns. With all this we do not wish to belittle the perspicacity of expression of the *Deuxième symphonie*. Whosoever would deny it, would he not be questioning the perfect fit of the instrumental park to the thought of *Herès* or *La Mer*? We merely desired to emphasize the importance of his pianistic production, as a medium which reveals in the most explicit manner Debussy's sensitiveness and esthetic personality.

This piano music is little played, and that last poorly. The pianists have begun to introduce a few of the *Préludes* in their programs, yet usually attribute to them only a color value: it is as though a pinch of salt were put in a cauldron of water. True pianistic importance—beyond its musical value—as a rule, is not accorded the music written by Claude Debussy for the instrument. Very few appreciate the importance which such an output occupies in the history of the pianoforte literature. A more reflective study of this music would open up to the pianist a vast, new horizon, and would place the public in more frequent contact with the musical ideas, so pure and so characteristic in quality.

We have already explained the difficulty inherent in this music, a difficulty more of an intimate order, interpretative rather than mechanical. Because of this, many who cannot succeed in liberating their senses of hearing from the four-squareness and symmetry of classical pieces, call Debussy *difficile* and *difficult* the

music of Debussy will always remain for those who can see in it nothing but dissonances, and are desperately seeking their melody. There is no need of searching in Debussy's compositions for something which is not there, it is enough to understand fully that which they do contain in particular as regards their poetry. Then we will already be well advanced toward becoming its qualified interpreters. But in order to attain this end, it is necessary, before all, to lay aside the idea of drawing out "effects," because frequently such effects were not in the composer's mind, and only the pianist is apt to see as such. "That quality of execution which is of major importance is total unity," is Laloy's precious dictum, and he may be considered the most faithful interpreter of the master's idea. "All that disturbs this unity, vocal ornaments, suspensions in rhythm, arbitrary rubato's or accelerandi, is not only useless but fatal. It would be better, perhaps, to devote one's self completely with regard to the character of a composition and, for instance, play the *Pavane* rapidly, or the *Suite sans paroles* after the manner of a towerer on guard, than to hesitantly shatter the charm of the music by a blow of the fist, or a grimace. . . . The pianist should, in addition, give up their pretensions to emphasizing the melody whatever slight relief of this kind may be necessary will come of itself and to insist would be to drop into romantic affectation. On the other hand, pianists should not draw undue attention to the rapid figures whose business it is to envelope the principal song theme, to signalize it with a linear harmony, conforming to the individual character of the piece itself, and to give life to the background. It is better to confound, to mix these designs, even to drop occasional false notes, than to conquer their difficulties in order to celebrate a triumph, and bid for applause with a gymnast's grace. . . ." As regards those notes marked with a little line, some are played accented, others not emphasized. What should determine the manner of rendition, "is, instead, a transparent sensitivity, which may be secured by a frank attack for a tone without hardness, which the pedal will prolong, the finger suddenly releasing the key. . . ."

To these counsels of a more special order, may be added a final word of advice which covers the execution of all that Debussy has written for the piano, and which may be deduced as a consequence deduced from the very essence of Debussy's works themselves. Debussy's piano music does not develop a measure depends neither on its successor nor on its predecessor for its own reason for being; the measures are not subordinate parts, one of the other, but all have their own essential value. The measures suggest themselves, one

after another, but in each case of them the music is complete, as though all elaboration had been condensed, and the component elements had come to place themselves one beside the other. The musician, therefore, must pay heed, almost to the point of incredulity, to the expression of each melodic fragment, of each chord. In the interpretation of each page he must follow an analytical criterion, far removed from that which he would adopt in interpreting the pages of other composers who have preceded Debussy. The results which he will obtain will be such as will compensate him largely for his patient toil and the violence done his vocal habit.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Claude-Achille Debussy, b. at Saint-Germain-en-Laye, August 22, 1862; d. in Paris, March 25, 1918.

The following is a complete list of all the compositions Debussy has written for the piano, and which have been published to date. (The date of composition precedes each work; the date of publication follows it. The date has been drawn from well-authenticated sources, such as Laloy and Jean-Aubry.)

1888: *Grand Arabesque*, pub. Durand (1894).

1888: *Pavane* for piano and orchestra,<sup>1</sup> pub. Pissoneur (1911).

1892: *Ballade*, pub. Pissoneur (1898).

*Paris*, id.

*Mazurka*, id.

*Etude*, id.

*Prélude romantique*, id.

*Noturne*, pub. Société d'Éditions musicales (previously, Fugère-Moussy) (1899).

<sup>1</sup> This *Pavane* was played for the first time in public on December 7, 1911, at the Concerto Lamoureux, and has a little history that is worth while relating. Debussy wrote it at the Villa Mairea, and it was a "Mus. and Soc. Seren." It greatly pleased the publisher and also the Debussists who were offered the honor of a performance on their part. It was then engraved by a Paris publisher (Pissoneur) but when the composer received proofs he was pleased with samples and wanted to make great modifications. The publisher objected, substantially for reasons of economy, and in view of the brilliant clarity of the composer, actual publication of the work was suspended . . . and after Debussy's death.

We have not been able to ascertain the possible work by the composer. Ernest Schostakoff tells us that it "surpassed the Debussists in interest, and strongly criticized some very quaint later pretenses so that no other melodic and harmonic constructions are required." The work returns to, if you may say so, the manner and *raison d'être* of *L'Après-midi d'un Faune* of the *Finis* and the *Amor de negro*. As far as the piano part is concerned, it is handled in sufficiently characteristic fashion, breaking an integral part of the structure, in the manner of manipulating the procedure in *Pavane*, without, however, applying to it even so well the aggressive vehemence of the solo recitals.

- Suite longue-mémoire*, pub. Frennest (1932).
1. *Prélude*.
  2. *Mémoire*.
  3. *Clair de lune*.
  4. *Passé*.
1093. *Marche fantastique (Marche des Contes de fées)* en 4 soli-thème—orchestrated in 1908—pub. Frennest.
- Four le piano*, pub. Frennest (1931).
1. *Prélude*.
  2. *Sarabande*.
  3. *Tourterelle*.
1094. *Étux enchaînés d'expressions*, pub. Schott, Bruxelles (1934).
- Entompe*, pub. Durand (1935).
1. *Papillon*.
  2. *Les Étoiles dans le Ciel*.
  3. *Jardins sous le pluie*.
1095. *Images*, pub. Durand (1934).
- L'été joyeux*, id.
1096. *Images*, First Series, pub. Durand (1935).
1. *Étoiles dans le Ciel*.
  2. *Homage à Rimbaud*.
  3. *Homage*.
1097. *Images*, Second Series, pub. Durand (1936).
1. *Clair de lune* sur les feuilles.
  2. *Et la lune descend sur le temple qui fut*.
  3. *Fontaine d'ivoire*.
1098. *Children's Corner (Clos de enfants)*. Little Suite, pub. Durand (1908).
1. *Doctor Gradus ad Parnassum*.
  2. *Jarbo's Lullaby (Berceuse des bébés)*.
  3. *Sarabande for the doll (Sarabande à la poupée)*.
  4. *The game is dancing (Le jeu dansé)*.
  5. *The Wolf Shepherd (Le pasteur loup)*.
  6. *Gottswagg's cat's-math*.
1099. *Homage à Haydn*, pub. Durand (1939), but previously in the S. I. M.
1110. *Les plus pieux jours*. *Waltz*, pub. Durand (1935).
- Préludes*. First Book, pub. Durand (1913).
1. *Danseuse de Delphes*.
  2. *Pois*.
  3. *Le vent dans les plaines*.
  4. "Les vents et les profonds tourment dans l'air du ciel" (*Andantino*).
  5. *Les collines d'Alger*.
  6. *Une nuit sur le canal*.
  7. *Ce qui a vu le vent d'ouest*.
  8. *La fille aux cheveux de lin*.
  9. *Les arbrassés interrompus*.

10. *La cathédrale engloutie*.  
 11. *La danse de Puck*.  
 12. *Minstrel*.
- 1912-1913. *Prologue*. Second Book; pub. Durand (1912).  
 1. *Brandebourgs*.  
 2. *Frédéric mortis*.  
 3. *La Fiancée du vent*.  
 4. "Les fils sont d'espérance décevante."  
 5. *Prologue*.  
 6. *Grand Lament "viventis."*  
 7. *La traversée des confins du ciel de l'eau*.  
 8. *Ondine*.  
 9. *Hommage à E. Fichelsch* Op. F. F. M. F. C.  
 10. *Concert*.  
 11. *Les arbres effondrés*.  
 12. *Feux d'artifice*.
1913. *Le bébé à papa* (The Boy at Top) Children's Ballet by André Hildt, pub. Durand (1913).
1914. (December). *Prologue belgique*, in honor to H. M. King Albert I. of Belgium, and his soldiers, pub. Durand (1914).
- 1912-1915. *Sonata Studies*. Two Books; pub. Durand (1912)  
 1. *Pour les "vingt doigts"* (After Mr. Chopin).  
 2. *Pour les Faibles*.  
 3. *Pour les Quatre*.  
 4. *Pour les Sixtes*.  
 5. *Pour les Octaves*.  
 6. *Pour les huit doigts*.  
 7. *Pour les Signes chromatiques*.  
 8. *Pour les Appuis*.  
 9. *Pour les Notes étiquées*.  
 10. *Pour les Sonorités opposées*.  
 11. *Pour les Accords non posés*.  
 12. *Pour les Accords*.
1915. *Sur l'épigraphie malgache* For four hands, pub. Durand (1915).  
 1. *Pour incarner Pua, dieu du vent d'été*.  
 2. *Pour un combat, sans nom*.  
 3. *Pour que la nuit soit peuplée*.  
 4. *Pour la danse des ancêtres*.  
 5. *Pour l'Égyptienne*.  
 6. *Pour retrouver le phœnix au matin*.  
*En deux et sur*. For two-pianos, four hands, pub. Durand (1915)  
 1. *Qui reste à sa place*  
*et se laisse voir,*  
*de quelques degrés*  
*just'au-dessus de sa*  
 ("Who stays in his place  
 Not dances for others:  
 The while some disagree  
 He stands in low state.")  
 (J. Bachelot et M. Caré—*Roman of Juliette*)

- II. *France, patrie et de ses vœux Eclair*  
*en la forêt où dormait Glaucon*  
*Où grand vent de peur et d'espérance*  
*sur l'air s'est de possible levé*  
*qui meut emblèmes au royaume de France*  
 ["France, as carved by Kolch's oaks  
 In woods where Glaucon reigns supreme,  
 Of robbed of peace and hope's fair chance,  
 Worth having written none I deem  
 Who wish ill to the realm of France."] (P. Villon.)
- III. *Yes, vous n'êtes guère vaine . . .*  
 (Ch. d'Orléans.)  
 ["Yes, you are but low-born . . ."]

Much has been written concerning Debussy, particularly in France: in Italy his works have not as yet been made the subject of an exhaustive study, at least, unless we wish to regard as such the inconclusive pamphlet *Debussy e un innovatore?* (Is Debussy an innovator?) published in Rome, in 1909, and which demonstrates its author's mediocre equipment for a critical comprehension of modern art, and that of Debussy in particular. Rather there may be read with interest Torricelli's essay (*Rivista Musicale Italiana*, vol. XIV, p. 107); that of Debessele Finetti (which refers especially to Pellis) published in the same magazine (XV, 540), and in the volume *Musicisti Contemporanei* (Treves, 1914) and that of Adriano Lualdi, mainly devoted to an examination of the *Manège de St-Sébastien* (*Rivista Musicale Italiana*, XXV, 371). We know of no critical essays dealing specifically with the piano compositions, with the exception of the insignificant one by Hoffmann 181 in the *Revue Musicale* (Oct. 15, 1906). As regards Debussy's art in general there is nothing more worth while calling attention to than Louis Laloy's *Debussy* (Paris, 1909, but now out of print), which is the keenest and most comprehensive work among those which this poet and prophet of Debussism has written, and among those which have been written by others on the same subject. Notwithstanding, among these writings may be mentioned the valuable pages which G. Jean-Aubry dedicated to the author of Pellis in *Le musique française d'aujourd'hui* (Paris, 1910), those of Ronald Rolland in *Musiciens d'aujourd'hui* (Paris, 1908), Daniel Chodat's monograph (Dorand), and one, in English, by F. Leibich (John Lane). Among articles appearing in foreign reviews the following might be instanced as being of the greatest interest: M. D. Calverton, "Claude Debussy" (*The Musical Times*, Feb., 1908); Lawrence Gilman, "Wagner and Debussy" (*Musical Standard*,

Nov. 26, 1928); L. Laloy, *Claude Debussy et la simplicité dans la musique* (*Revue Musicale*, Feb. 15, 1924); L. Laloy, *Debussy et le Debussisme* (*S. J. M.*, Aug., 1925); J. Marnold, *Debussy* (*Mercure de France*, April 16, 1925); Ernest Newman, "The Development of Claude Debussy" (*The Musical Times*, May-June, 1918), and the November issue of the *John Musical*, entirely devoted to Debussy, with articles by Schmitt, Chastovaine, Roussel, Boucaud and others.<sup>2</sup>

(Translated by Pauline E. Motson)

<sup>2</sup>Any bibliography of Debussyan literature should include the articles published in "The Musical Quarterly" of October, 1929: "Claude Debussy," by J. Jean-Louis; and F. H. Poughon's "Claude Debussy Debussy." His article in *L'Europe Culturelle* "Nouveaux Musées (L'Opéra de Paris)" he published the previous collection on Debussy's works and books in "Les L'Europe Culturelle" (p. 11) and "Musée and the Sea" (p. 12) and his book back on "Fêtes et Musique" (October). The second number of *Le Livre de l'Opéra* (Paris, Dec. 5, 1929) is entirely devoted to Debussy, and contains the "Fêtes de l'Opéra de Paris" (two musical compositions by Claude Debussy, Maurice Strakosky, Marcel de Pêche and other) included in the same program (number) contains articles, a number of leading French critics on various phases of Debussy's art.



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*Volume 1*

# THE MUSICAL QUARTERLY



G. SCHIRMER, Inc. NEW YORK

THE MUSICAL QUARTERLY

# THE MUSICAL QUARTERLY

Vol. 7, No. 4

D. G. SONNECK, *Editor*

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PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

THIRD DOLLAR A YEAR

ALL THE MUSICAL  
NEW YORK, N. Y.

SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS A COPY

Second-class postage paid December 31, 1918, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

G. SCHIRMER, Inc. NEW YORK

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# THE MUSICAL QUARTERLY

VOL. VII

OCTOBER, 1921

NO. 4

## MUSIC, MELODIOUS AND ODISIOUS

By CARL ENGEL.

I would rather be a man of disinterested taste and liberal feeling, to see and acknowledge truth and beauty wherever I find it, than a man of prejudice and mere original genius to hate, pity and despise all opposites, but not perceive that poor wretched pretenses of it [combined with the whole] which I had myself professed.

—Bacon—"De Dignitate."

**I**N some deep furrow of my brain—where unwarmed imaginations slumber open-eyed, until the ripening rays of disillusionment awake them into blind convictions—I harbor the belief that to a multitude of people music has always meant, and will continually mean, but one thing out of two: something melodious or odious. Here is the tone of your critical scale, and here its higher octave. That listless ear must ever be confounding them, is but the natural result of stupidity. Nor am I thinking only of her who defined music as "the breath of God made audible," or of him who pronounced it "the outflow of rackets." As a matter of fact, it would require little dialectic to prove that the most odious and the most melodious music are the same. This much admitted, we might as well confess ourselves dead, and remain drunk to boot. But that would be cowardice, or a temper so closely resembling it as to rob discretion of its share in valor. It would stunt the noble courage which makes us enter the tilt-yard of criticism, where we face, not possible defeat in even combat, but the inevitable disadvantage of becoming offensive to our acquaintances and absurd to posterity. We are ever assailing reprehensible windmills, or fighting invulnerable phantoms, for the simple reason that the polar point in all critical debate on music is that dividing diapason, melodious—odious; and never can a reasonable majority of ears be expected to agree: which is the higher, which the lower sound?

Of course, we know this octave spans an infinity of other octaves, at least, the assumption that it does is the described plumb and compass for all intrepid mariners who venture upon the lawless waters of musical arbitrament. But it is nothing unusual to see the sun rising where we expected it to set, because the two polar points of our musical axis, those of melancholousness and ebullience, are so very nearly undistinguishable that each individual sails by a private armistice of taste. Hence the occasional collisions between opinionated pilots and the general failure to get anywhere. The musical lunchdinner, being equally "at sea," is by his very uncertainty made all the more determined to proclaim his stand on terra firma, while he is merely crowing loudly into the world his elevation as a slippery and unfirm mixer. The net result of this condition is the variously edifying legacy of musical dicta to which each successive generation falls heir and adds its portion for the enlightenment and the amusement of all the following.

Would it were always as enlightening as it is amusing. Unfortunately, contemporaneous musical criticism is not kept or read long enough after it was written to prove as instructive as it might be. Only the salient blunders are preserved by tradition for the titillation of those who are just as prone to guess the wrong way as were their ancestors. One of the distressing effects directly attributable to this calamity, is the fact that so many wary critics, preferring to play safe, stoop to be downright "Tunny." They hope thus to evade the squabs by quipping. And that is greatly to be regretted. For not the most entertaining article, the clearest review, or the most brilliant perillage, will be as illuminative as is the honest mind of the contemporary reviewer who detected in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony "the obnoxious rearings of modern fancy," and who suspected the composer of writing "to suit the present (1804) mania!" At a time when Weber's was still "wild and visionary music" and it could be said that "all the songs in 'Der Freischütz,' with the exception of three, are wretched," poor Marchand was accused of jockeying "to the prevailing passion of the day—noise!" By people of account the melodic invention of "that merry manufacturer," Rossini, was called extremely limited; only a few phrases were granted him to be his own, and those he was "repeating on all occasions, whether they relate to the low intrigues of a hater in Spain or to the mighty acts of a prophet in Egypt." Along came Paolo Bonai, who predicted the early and certain fall of "Lobengrin" and "Tannhäuser" because of Liszt's enthusiasm for this music—"ce qui est de tels succès n'est que pour l'évanouir



de M. Wagner"—and proclaimed Rossini's "Mozart" a work of true genius, asserting that neither Mozart, Gluck nor Weber "n'égale la fécondité et la variété d'accents qui distinguent le compositeur italien!" Who shall blame a music critic after that—and the sampling might be indefinitely prolonged—if he chooses to be designedly humorous rather than involuntarily so?

Now, the whole trouble lies in the fact that between melodious and odious there seems to be no secure foot-hold. The truth and the paradox of music is that both extremes constantly meet, that they are ever undergoing an imperceptible fusion and transformation. The two terms do not express a difference in kind, but in degree, and the degree depends on the listener, not on the music. Greater than the joy of hearing music is that of remembering it. Man dearly loves a tune that he can whistle. But let him go on whistling the finest tune for any length of time and he will drop it like hot coal. The ear must become accustomed to, and conscious of, a sound before it can derive from it full æsthetic pleasure; and with the moment that a sound, or succession of sounds, has been established and accepted, the ear, grown used and overconscious, immediately begins to tire of it.

Jules Combarieu has defined music as "the art of thinking in tones." He must have been not a little impressed with his own definition, since he placed it as a motto at the head of his book on the laws and evolution of music. While it does not embrace all the elements, all the aspects of music any more than do other attempts at concentrating the essence of so volatile a substance, it may serve, if we take into account not only that thought can traverse the whole long range from baseness, through commonplace, to sublimity, but also realize that not all of our thoughts must necessarily rise to the surface of consciousness. Our subconscious mind has had to take the blame for a lot of things that we are either too ignorant to comprehend or too ashamed to acknowledge. The pleasure of listening to music is largely a matter of subconscious spheres, in thought or in emotion. Only when the reasons for this pleasure are wholly understood, when music becomes sufficiently articulate to penetrate our consciousness, does the thought "register," as it were, and we have the proud gratification of "following the composer." To lag behind is no worse than to be ahead of him, which is a not infrequent sensation derived from hearing the work of certain men. For if all the arts in common aspire towards the principle of music, all music aspires towards the state of aliveness. We may as well go farther and say that music

which does not at some time or other reach this state, has not been sought a natural expression of a clear and consequential thought. But what is obvious "before the time" has no claim at all to arouse our desire for the mystifying, the exalting tendencies of art, which quenches a finer thirst, which fill a higher want, and make of art the noblest form of human satisfaction. Only what has been so concealed that, once become obvious, it reveals greater mystery and unveils deeper truth, may hope to live and to avoid the danger incurred by all things that are too obvious, namely of growing odious. The finest music is perhaps that which persistently evades all efforts of the patient investigator to pluck the petals and petals apart in majestic *Dei phœnix*, and yet is manifestly a symbol of cosmic serenity and human perturbation. Take the hellish attempt to explain Chopin's Mazurka, Op. 17, No. 4, as portraying the altercation between a Jewish innkeeper and a drunken peasant, arising for it "in Poland"—so "in welt—the name of "Zyabi," little Jew! Imagine, a silly pot-house brawl, that vague and most concrete bit of Chopin, containing in a few measures the nostalgia of a whole civilization, the subtlest glimpses of personal revelation, exalting the resistance of cancer, smilingly kissing the hand of Death, frightful and beautiful like all things tragic and compassionate? God gave the former perfume, man gave it a Latin name. No, when music is passed between the leaves of an herbarium, it becomes more ghastly than when organs grind it out in the street, when fiddlers scrape it as a seasoning into our food, or when trombone and rattle accompany with it the rites of modern orgiasts.

The most forward, because the most obvious, thing in music is a melodic phrase. Hence it is constantly on the point of becoming odious to someone for whom it has nothing more to resolve, nothing new to unveil. And thus a piece of music will make the wider, the more instant appeal the more obvious it is, and for the same reason it will fall sooner into dislike and obduracy. The so-called "popular" music abounds in pertinent examples. Where are the doors of posterity? Greater the pity that such gaudy hickety as the "Japanese Bandman" must meet the almost dozen of hackneyed eloquent. But all music, in general, obeys this law. All music that wages without the threshold, all that has too far overstepped the line of consciousness, is apt to be equally odious to discerning individuals.

At all times a musical idiom is forming in which some of us read a new melodic message, while to the rest, it remains unintelligible, on the other hand, we are inclined to reject as stale

an increasingly large number of tunes which by many are still held, or just perceived, to contain the magic of melody. "Both are right in what they admire, both are wrong in condemning the others for what they admire." We might announce the perplexing axiom that melody, "the life of music," is its death-germ. Undoubtedly it is the "melodious" type of music which becomes somewhat odious, especially if it tries to be too much of a good thing. Which means that melodies should be picked before they are ripe. The Paris version of the "Bacchanale" still throbs with the communicative pulse of passion and flames with electrifying colors, while the "Evening Star" has paled before the splendor of a richer night and the promise of a fevered dawn. The sands of time are running nowhere faster than in the realm of tone. Some of the best music is apt to "wear out," and, in the act of wearing, it does not gain enhanced attraction as does an old, familiar suit of clothes. What saves and preserves a great many compositions, is the fact that we have them so seldom.

For my part, I do not require the emboldening authority of Arthur Schopenhauer to own my unwavering attachment to a good tune. But when Mr. Rachmaninoff presents it to the readers of "The Etude" as his opinion that the efforts of the poor, haughty Futurists must fail because of "their hatred for anything faintly resembling melody," I instantly climb upon my little dog-bill and cry out, with all the vigor and lung power I command, that a few of Mr. Rachmaninoff's pretentious melodies have to my mind already passed into the stage of odiousness, while a good deal of music that is alleged to be tuneful holds me with potent charms. When all is said and done, the essential thing in criticism is the particular perch from which we view art and from which we do our critical crowing. Let the view be a fairly open one, and let our cock-a-doodle-do be possessed of an ingratiating ring, what more can you demand? We shall not quarrel as to what is melodious and what odious, so long as we realize that both terms may be, and are being, applied to the identical music, and that all we require of the critic is to make it attractive and profitable for us to consort with him his reason, to listen for a "key" note in his call. He must be "the critic as artist." In that capacity, we may well believe that he is a necessity to art, that he is more creative than the artist himself, because "there is no fine art without self-consciousness, and self-consciousness and the critical spirit are one." It matters little, therefore, whether we range ourselves on the side of a waning or on that of a nascent phase of art. There are, indeed, different standards of de-

light, but there is only one pass, strong fire burning with which to search the whole reach of our lives; and we must give a true account of what we see. For, after all, the highest criticism, really, "is the record of one's own soul."

Fate has been often kind to me; its hardest blows have nurtured humbleness and Christian love within my breast. In all concerns with fellow men (and women) I try to be a stoic. Towards music I hold inconceivably drastic views. The composers for whose works I care, are comparatively few, but they give much to me. That does not mean that I am unshakably impatient with the rest. My familiarity with the great mass as well as the great masters of music is far from thorough. Thus have I succeeded in remaining unperturbed by the former, and in retaining my respect for the latter. Never having learned to read on any instrument, I still can go to a piano or violin recital and find the rest of novelty in pieces which other people, connoisseurs by over-appreciation, look upon as higgens. Nor is my enjoyment marred by constraining sympathy with struggles overcome. I see academic fervor as if anything soaked with the sweat of drifting. The best of Croce and Melior is irrevocably lost to me by school associations.

Encyclopedic knowledge of opera numbers was never given me. My musical horizon is closely bounded. But in that narrow space there are no obstacles to keep me from the sparing stars above. Their light meets me undimmed and warms me with peculiar pleasures. The thing is, not to lose sight of stellar fixedness, while our neighbor sets off, with much ado, his Bengal fires, as described as they are meteoric. Like the moving heavens above, these musical constellations have a very disconcerting way of change. They are subject to frequent shifting—around, perhaps, one or two stars of prime magnitude. New clusters, ever forming, are floating into the field of vision with startling suddenness, only to be eclipsed as suddenly by larger planets. There should be in music, as in astronomy, an open season for shooting stars. Some of these cannot be shot too soon to suit me.

I have not the slightest pretension to think that my case is unparalleled. My experience, rarely, is shared by many people, unless they be hidebound: in pain, least or crushed misery. To all intents it is the same. For the assembling of impressions and beliefs in art, the card index and loose-leaf book are unsurpassed. An occasional rearrangement and weeding-out of cards and leaves is to be recommended. Hence such frank, if otherwise unimportant, reveals as mine have at least the effect

of a wholesome catharsis on the individual who makes them; sometimes they help others in doing a little house-cleaning among dusty notions of their own. And nothing gathers cobwebs more easily than the inherited ideas which, like the precious and useless china of grandmas, are reverentially placed so high on the shelves of our mental cupboard, that the daily feather-duster of doubting does not reach them. Descartes should have been considered patron saint of critics. Instead of dispelling doubt, most critics cast lividly of it before the public. Only the very old and very young enjoy the privilege of being recklessly positive or obstinately negative. For that reason their criticisms are the best reading.

There is nothing more horrid than being well-nigh incomprehensible, than an unprejudiced art-critic. Take away from any form of expression the personal note, and you have but an empty blast. What is intolerable is the uninformed critic and the dull. There can hardly be any question that we have too much of the wrong kind of criticism, too little of the right. Here is a pertinent remark penned not in 1863 but in 1788:

With respect to all the books and dissertations lately examined by Music in France, they seem to have annihilated the former disposition of the inhabitants to receive delight from such Music as their country afforded. There are at present certainly too many critics, and too few capable hearers in France, as well as elsewhere. I have seen French and German analytical commentaries taken in the most exquisite musical performance with the same *serenité* (ser?) as an anatomist attends a dissection. It is all analysis, calculation, and parallel; they are to be won, not pleased.

And the special home of contention to which these able surgeons apply their saws, is that muffled dilemma: melodious—odious.

The critic as performer of autopsies does not exactly measure up to Wilde's demands. And yet he should use probe and scalpel, but on himself. That is the "round of one's own soul." Is not in literature, in art the autobiographical the most arresting? And next to ourselves what is there to interest us more than our fellow-sufferer? Rousseau's Confessions will outlive "Le Contrat Social" for reasons other than those that put the book on the Index. The pages of musical self-revelation in "Tristan" and "Die Meistersinger" have other qualities to boast of than the exhibitionist tendencies of a "Sinfonia domestica." Music is becoming less and less autobiographical, nor is it getting better for that reason. By the side of the great confessors in music, Bach and Beethoven, stand Franck with his *servent de profonde* and the

musical mirrors of Tchaikovsky. We have drifted into an era where music, brazenly self-accusing, more often shouts poverty. But on the whole, ours is reflective music, casting reflections of moods and pictures on the mind. And in this often dazzling play of mirrors the reflection of music has been intensified, while its outline and substance have become effused. Suggestion has taken the place of statement, and thereby music has learned to say a great many more things than it had ever said before. But again we hear cries of "effusion" from those who will not recognize a space unless you call it by its proper name. Meanwhile the diggers go on with their excavation which becomes the grave of the old and the foundation for the new. Perhaps we are writing music to-day that is too solidly reposing on dead matter. There is nothing deadlier in music than devices. Christopher Simpson, come he to earth again, might find that his opinion of 1697, "concerning our common scale of music," needed revision. If ten parts in the ultra-modern Schoenberg's compositions are three, prophetic gongs, forty are helplessness and fifty are sheer joy, that is obvious before the first!

And yet real art should never age. It links remote epochs of history into one Spring of high endeavor, and makes of alien races kindreds in the search for beauty. Let the artist cater to fashion, and his work will die with the birth of another whim. That is the fate of all things which are only finely, that they recede with time. To create is to build new temples, to sing is to increase the sum of silence. But to create and sing is, nevertheless, the most precious business we can have here below. It is its own reward, and we must do it in the face of certainty that we can only dream these greater treasures, the intangible, elusive masterpieces of the soul: in painting, a shadowy and fragment landscape, hushed in the strange light of an unfamiliar hour; in sculpture, a vibrantly responsive hand, held but in passing and forever felt; in literature, a page of splendid imagination, colored in the silver elegance of clean and ringing prose, denoting nothing of importance save to the heart that languishes; in music, the echo of a cherished voice, the soft, contrived laughter of a million known and lost in days when she was too much innocent. Here is true art; more, here is lasting art. For through it all there moves a thread—all art, all life, aspiring towards the principles of music—a thread of living and expressive melody that will not soon give obvious or effused.

The skeptic turned instrumentalist:—Er! What unsteady attitude to strike, what challenge to the glancing crowd!

## ARCHITECTURAL ACOUSTICS

By ARTHUR ELSON

**T**HE velocity of sound in our atmosphere is about 1100 feet a second—more in warm weather, and less in cold. Sound travels via the "bar line," that is, unless disturbed by reflections or obstacles, it radiates outward from its source in straight lines, each particle of air being moved, and transmitting its motion to the next particle beyond it. Under these conditions the intensity of sound diminishes in proportion to the square of the distance it has travelled. In this respect it resembles light.

But while light is an impendurable vibration in the ether (if Einstein will let us keep the undulatory theory), sound waves are movements of actual matter. In this respect they have some analogy with ocean waves, and will follow curved surfaces in much the same way that the billows will wash up the slope of a shelving rock.

Sound has also the power of arousing sympathetic vibrations. The many resonators of Heilschalta, which he used to detect eavesdroppers, were antedated in principle by the hollow vessels placed here and there in the Greek or Roman theatres, to reinforce the speaker's voice.

All of these properties are employed in modern architecture, which is gradually mastering the rules of acoustics, and is becoming less of a hit-or-miss affair than it has been in previous centuries.

The chief obstacles to the best propagation of sound may be enumerated under five headings—natural dissipation, absorption, obstruction, reverberation, and echo.

The first of these is the lessening of sound mentioned above, due to the increasing distance traveled. Thus at twice the distance from the speaker, the sound of his voice would seem only one-fourth as loud. This obstacle is encountered only in very large buildings, in which there is room for many devices that may aid the spread of sound and obviate this advantage.

Absorption takes place when there are large empty places above or behind the speaker. This is a negative rather than a positive action, and merely means that the building is not well

arranged to intensify the sound. A speaker in such a building is under much the same conditions as one who talks outdoors, in which case an ordinary voice is not clearly audible beyond sixty feet. For this reason the best concert-halls, and even churches, have performers' seats, or the pulpit, placed in a little recess, with a ceiling lower than that of the main building, and sloping upward as it extends forward. Theaters have somewhat the same structure, though there is no sloping ceiling over the stage.

A more real absorption of sound takes place when it encounters non-reflecting surfaces. Curtains, draperies, and even the clothing of the audience, are of this type. Every observant reader will know of cases in which the reverberation of a room or hall when empty would sound excessive, while the same structure when filled with furniture, or people, or both, would seem acoustically excellent. Usually there is an excess of such reverberation in public buildings, so that absorption becomes a benefit instead of a defect. For example, churches are very often improved by the use of matting or carpets on the floor. A similar treatment of floor and walls is often used to deaden sound in library reading-rooms. But in large halls, where power of tone is needed, the audience will produce all the necessary deadening, and perhaps too much.

Obstructions should be avoided as much as possible. Columns for the support of balconies are often necessary, but should be made as thin as is consistent with the necessary strength; and many halls dispense with them altogether. But in addition to having the hall consist of one large open space, it is advisable for the auditorium to be so arranged that each seat may command an unobstructed view of the speaker or performer. This is more important for speech than for music, as a sight of the orator's face is often a help to comprehension; but it is advisable for all buildings for public use. The curve thus formed by successive rows of seats is called the *isocoustic curve*. It is not always necessary to make this curve rise by rows, as it may rise by groups of rows. Thus in Jordan Hall, Boston, the slope is such that the front rows are on a gentle incline, while those at the back are steeper; and the effect is excellent. Many Scotch churches, and a number of concert-halls, make use of this curve, though it has not been generally adopted by theaters. It is shown in the Roman amphitheater at Nîmes. Chladni states that a better effect is obtained by having the stage low and the curve steep than by reversing these conditions, as sound seems to be delivered



best on a level (at least by voice), and is then most effectively diverted upward by the curving top of seats.

Obstruction to sound occurs when it suddenly enters a narrow space, such as that below balconies. The seats in such cases should be made steeper, so that the sound will be entering the open end of a wedge, instead of traversing a passage with parallel sides; but the overhang of the gallery often prevents this. In such cases the under side of the floor of the gallery should slope down toward the back if possible. Obstruction also occurs when sound leaves a very confined space. Thus a note made in a tunnel, near its end, will produce an echo from that end, even though it is open to the outer air. This, however, need cause the architect no worry, since the head-on stage is never constricted enough to produce such an effect.

Reverberation is an excess of resonance, that prolongs a sound and gives it a confused effect without actually producing an echo. The cause of this defect is sometimes rather hard to locate. It may arise from the proportions of the building, or from the materials used in its construction, or from hollow places outside the walls, floor or ceiling. It may even be due to a partial echo at close range. It is an excess of resonance, which is a good quality when present in proper amount. The best buildings for hearing are those that have a large amount of resonance, without quite reaching the point where reverberation begins. Unduly high halls, with continuous walls, are apt to show excessive reverberation. Large open spaces in the ceiling, such as deep recesses or skylight openings, seem to cause the same defect, and should be cut off from below by some interruption, or should have their sides tapered whenever possible, to avoid rectangular recesses. Dampness of the walls seems to be another cause of reverberation, so that new buildings may seem poor at first, though improving greatly after a few months. This is usually true of plastered walls. It has been possible in certain cases to exceed the walls with drapery until they have become thoroughly dry. The cause of the trouble is not very clear; but since seasoned wood gives better resonance than green wood, it is probable that the wet walls merely cause an echo, while after drying they vibrate in sympathy with the sound that strikes them, causing resonance without echo. Yet excessive resonance, as well as short-range smothered echo, is held to be a cause of reverberation, which would seem to contradict the above suggestion. Reverberation is allowable in buildings of the stock-exchange type, where some is permissible; but it should be checked elsewhere. The most successful man-

of remedying reverberation by a slight change was at Exeter Hall, England, where a plain ceiling was substituted for one which was coffered, or filled with rectangular recesses.

The formation of echoes depends upon principles readily understood, and therefore easily avoidable. It is only in large buildings that there is a chance for sound to be reflected directly, and this is usually caused by the wall furthest from the stage or orchestra. In smaller rooms an echo follows too closely on the original sound to be heard separately. It is possible to have echoes caused by a ceiling, as in the reading room of the British-Museum. In that place, when it is not well filled, a sound in the middle will produce an echo from the dome, though, of course, this is not a serious defect in a room devoted to silence. In halls for speaking or singing, the ceiling echo, if present, is usually heard by the audience at the rear.

The lower the ceiling, the less chance there is of its producing an echo. In cases where this defect is caused by a high ceiling, something must be interposed to check the effect. Thus at Coblenz, when a large law court, 65 feet high, was found to show echoes, a cloth stretched below the top remedied the defect at once, and proved that the ceiling was the cause. Such a cloth, or velarium, is in use at Albert Hall, London, where it serves not only to prevent echo, but to cut off a large empty space that would deaden the sound by absorption.

In many good halls, the rear wall is made semicircular, or given some other form that is not a plain surface. If the wall is plane, the tendency to echo may be obviated by the use of many openings in it, or draperies over it, or columns before it. In some cases the erection of a balcony at the rear has been sufficient to diminish or destroy an echo. Sometimes more complex echoes exist, due to the diagonal reflection of sound around a rectangular hall. In such cases, entrance doors are sometimes put in the corners. Another remedy is to do away with the sharp angles by substituting curved surfaces where walls or ceiling meet. The walls are usually plane, but the ceiling itself may be made in two slopes, or a curve, as well as having rounded ribs. Symphony Hall, in Boston, has its ceiling rounded off at the edges.

A noted example of echo was found in one of the Black Bay churches of Boston, when the congregation first tested it. Every word of the preacher was duly repeated, producing an effect not in the least devotional. The owners finally sold the structure at a loss. The new congregation succeeded in overcoming the defect only after many trials, their experiments including the

building of a gallery, with the raising of the floor, and the stringing of many wires. When the same architect afterwards built Trinity Church, he was greeted with the remark: "I hear you have built a church where they can hear the preacher." Yet the architect was a famous exponent of his art, which goes to show that acoustics at that time was even more a *terra incognita* than at present.

Among the famous echoes of nature, it is said that Lake Killarney possesses a harmonic echo, returning an overtone instead of giving the original sound. If true (and some writers mention other instances) this may become another defect to which buildings could be liable, though the present writer has not yet heard of an instance.

Bad proportions may make a hall an acoustic failure, in addition to the defects already mentioned. Usually, however, the defect of unfavorable dimensions is reverberation; but other troubles may be caused. Thus if the height is greater than the breadth, absorption may take place, the sound filling the upper volume at the expense of the lower. Great height also makes ceiling echoes possible. Undue width will too low a ceiling might cause reverberation, and would be apt to produce certain spots among the audience where the hearing would be confused. The best effect is obtained with the width about one and one half times the height. The length must of course be the largest dimension. A good effect is always produced by having the three dimensions proportional multiples of some given number. This is especially true of the width and height. Thus in Free Trade Hall, at Manchester, England, the height is 58 feet, and the width 78 feet. The length, from the rear to the middle point of the recessed stage, is about 150 feet. This building is one of the best examples of good acoustics.

As an example of what to avoid in architectural acoustics, the Christmas Science Temple, in Boston, may easily be awarded highest honors. The main part of its service-hall would be practically square by itself; but the height is too great in proportion, and the dome at the top causes a fairly noticeable echo. The side walls of this square, however, do not exist; for each side is rounded off in a large semicircle, topped by a half-dome. This makes the width much greater than the length. The back wall has a gallery, with supports that may divide the air into the vibrating spaces that produce reverberation; but the semicircular sides of the building cannot fail to cause this defect, since they carry a veritable network of arches and columns, rising in tiers, and extending all around the two curves. The reverberation of

these air spaces is so marked that the hearing is better and clearer a few feet outside of the doors than in the hall itself. The reader does the best that he can, by separating his syllables, and by giving them a long, sing-song effect, so that the reverberation and muffled echo from one syllable are not allowed to interfere much with the next; but the defects are still very noticeable.

Aids to good hearing in halls may be grouped under the two general heads of materials to obtain resonance, and reflectors of various sorts.

The use of sound-reflectors is widespread, and productive of excellent effects. This is necessarily true, were any reflector causing a bad effect is promptly and easily removed. A hard, polished surface is apt to produce a harsh effect, bearing a too distinct echo that is not separate from the original sound, but produces an unpleasant effect. It is better to use resonant material rather than a reflecting surface, and slightly rough rather than smooth reflectors. The best material for this, as well as one of the cheapest, is wood.

Therefore, a reflector shaped like a parabola seemed for many years the best form. The parabola is a curve so shaped that all lines reflected from a given point within it, called the focus, are parallel. Parabolic reflectors for light are used on automobile lamps and engine headlights. For reflecting sound, their most common use has been in churches, which always seem to present problems in architectural acoustics. A prominent example was a church at Attleboro, near Sheffield. When the preacher spoke first in the new building, there was a powerful resonance, but in spite of the resulting loudness, the words sounded unclear and confused. Changing the position of the pulpit proved unavailing, and nothing seemed to cause any improvement until the parabolic reflector was erected. This was hailed as a cure-all, and many other churches followed the example. But while this rendered the minister audible, the reflectors were soon found to have several defects. If the preacher moved about at all while talking, he would not always be in focus. But even in a fixed pulpit, trouble arose from the fact that the speaker could hear slight noises among the people, which were magnified by the reflector. He also heard a distinct and annoying echo of his own voice. Many of the reflectors, so popular at first, were afterwards torn down. At Attleboro, it was found that the original defects were less noticeable, probably because the plaster of the walls had had time to dry. Some churches had gone so

far as to build their walls in a parabolic shape; and they came to regret this procedure.

The parabolic reflector has been used to prevent sound. In the Santa County prison, in our own country, such reflectors have been introduced into the ventilating pipes, to prevent prisoners from communicating with one another. The sound is reflected back to its source in this case. *Asbestos lining* is often used to make walls sound-proof.

A plane reflector, inclined at an angle of from  $15^{\circ}$  to  $30^{\circ}$ , and sloping upward toward the audience, is now the most common form. Such a reflector cuts off some air space, and thus prevents absorption; it reflects sound directly toward the audience; and its material helps the tone by vibrating, as a sounding-board does in a piano.

The sympathetic vibration in any such material, whether in a sounding-board or in the wall, floor, or ceiling, adds to the resonance. This quality is sometimes obtained also by the intensifying power of the air itself. It may be helped by other devices, and where the ancients used resonating jars at various places in their public buildings, a modern authority has suggested the use of tubes of various sizes near the foot-lights of our theatres.

Almost all halls depend upon wooden linings for their resonance. The old ducal theatre at Parma, famous for its acoustics, was an early example. In this theatre a whisper from the stage could be heard anywhere in the auditorium. A more modern example is the hall of the Paris Conservatoire. The hall is stuffy and ill-ventilated, but the management is afraid to make any changes, lest the excellent acoustic qualities be destroyed.

The wooden linings for walls or ceiling, or the floor timbers, or the sounding-board, should all be thoroughly seasoned. The linings, and floor-boards, should be of uniform size, and as long as possible.

Empty spaces under the floor or above the ceiling have often proved excellent in increasing resonance. In European theatres and halls, especially in Italy, it has been customary to construct a hollow chamber below the stage. The value of this is shown by the case of the Teatro del Argentario, at Rome. When it became necessary to make the course of a canal run beneath the stage, the resulting air-space greatly improved the acoustics of the building.

That the ancient Romans were acquainted with the value of wooden construction is shown by a statement of Vitruvius. He advises the omission of the resonators used by the Greeks,

"since all public theaters built of wood have many floors, which are necessarily conductors of sound."

Wood is so cheap and so excellent a material that as yet no real substitutes for it are in use. For fireproof construction, however, thin metal plates have been suggested for use as room panels.

The excessive use of wooden linings may produce too much resonance, especially if the air-space of a hall is of such a form as to aid in the effect. But this is a fault that leans to virtue's side, for excessive resonance is very easily remedied. It must also be remembered that the presence of an audience helps to deaden the tone.

In dealing with air resonance, it might seem at first sight as if this would appear only on certain notes, in which cases the air would vibrate as a whole, or in fractional parts for overtones. That this is true to some extent is proved by the necessity for "voicing" such instruments as organs, or even pianos. The string, or pipe, that synchronizes with the vibration rate of the whole body of air will seem much louder than the others, and its power of tone must be lessened, to obviate this effect. But the example of the *vocali* will show that it is possible for the semi-confined air, which must vibrate with the wood, to be set in motion at any vibration rate. In this way the air of certain buildings may help the speaker, no matter whether he pitches his voice high or low. But if he talks on the pitch of the entire air body, his voice, not "voiced" like the organ pipe mentioned above, will seem to gain greatly in power and resonance.

Good architects claim that the air resonates best when the dimensions of the building bear some simple relation to each other, as already illustrated by the figures given for Fox Trade Hall. Under this condition the vibration rates for a certain overtone lengthwise will correspond with the rates of another overtone sidewise, and still another vertically. This reinforcement of overtones will add brilliancy to the speaker's voice, or the musical tone, and make it penetrate better.

Air currents are apt to interfere with the best transmission of sound. The slightest drift of air caused by an outside wind produces no important effects, but the currents due to heating have more influence. Some architects advise admitting the heat at the sides of the hall, and having openings between the balcony and the wall, through which the hot air may rise. It is also advisable to admit more than enough hot air from below, and at the same time allow the requisite amount of cold air to come in from above, through the roof.

Aerial resonance may sometimes be excessive; and this is probably the case in Canterbury Cathedral, where a note or chord is prolonged as if moving slowly around the walls of the edifice. While this effect may be beautiful in the slow passages of anthems, it interferes with the distinctness of the preacher's words, even if he talks slowly. For clearness in speaking, it is always advisable to diminish the air space as much as possible. Public halls may therefore be made low; while theatres should have areas restricted, to make up for their great height. The extensive balconies are thus an aid to hearing, except to those auditors who are hidden below.

The avoidance of the chief and most noticeable defects that have been enumerated has been considered sufficient by the architects of the past. But the fullest attention to all details is most necessary; for the difference between tolerable halls and good halls is most marked. The good hall necessitates no severe effort on the part of the speaker, while a poor edifice, such as a badly built church, will tax the speaker greatly, so that a preacher's life may be actually shortened by the work forced upon him by bad acoustical conditions.

The phenomenon of whispering galleries is one that always attracts attention. They result from the fact that various sound waves from one point are made to converge to another. This may be caused by direct reflection, but sometimes, as in St. Paul's and in the Capitol at Washington, it is caused by the waves following the wall around, close to the floor, instead of being wholly a reflection from the dome.

The very strong tendency of sound waves to follow curved surfaces is made use of in the Mormon Tabernacle at Salt Lake City. This edifice is shaped exactly like half an egg, cut lengthwise, and as a result the speaker is clearly audible in every part of the huge structure, which is probably the most successful building in the world, acoustically speaking.

Before any further mention of modern successes is made, it will be decidedly in place to give due praise to the ancient Greek theatres. The stage was backed by a wall, which formed an excellent reflector. The semicircular tiers of seats, up which the sound waves could travel, just as ocean waves wash up a slope, were practically in an isometric curve. To the good effect of all this was added the resonance of the *Ekcheia*, or hollow vessels. Under such favorable circumstances, it is no wonder that the Greek drama flourished. Even when the theatres were built of stone or marble instead of wood, the loss

of resonance was hardly noticed, resonance being at a minimum in open air.

It is a far cry from these amphitheatres to the dual Theatre at Parma, which flourished in the sixteenth century, and fell into disuse only when the court left the city. Its form was oblong, with the back corners of the walls rounded off. It was 154 feet from the stage front to the rear wall, and the width was 105 feet. Calling the distance to a point near mid-stage 150 feet, the width and length were in the proportion of 5 to 4. Before the stage was an open space, from which the seats arose in a slight. The wooden boards of the walls were placed vertically instead of horizontally.

More directly derived from the Greek theatres are the semi-circular or semi-polygonal lecture rooms so common at our universities. These have their seats arranged on slopes that set like lacustrine curves; the roof is generally low rather than high, and the rise of the seats toward the ceiling makes the sound waves converge, and increases the hearing power in the rear.

The modern theatrical architect is confronted with several problems. The slope of the floor cannot be made as steep as it should be, though the floor could often be given more of an lacustrine structure than it usually has, to avoid "dead" places. The balconies must have their upward slope, though their under sides should be made to slope downward if possible, thus of course often injury the reflecting power of the side walls, ceiling ribs must be avoided, and the absorption of the actor's voice, due to the large space on and above the stage, must be minimized. The actors always aid in the last point by keeping their faces toward the audience, and by speaking near the front of the stage. But even though the performers take these precautions, the seats should be "boxed in" as much as possible, even if the hearing is above the range of vision of the audience. In theatres, the relation of length to height, if correct at one spot, will be incorrect at others. It may be best made by taking the distance to the back of the first balcony in some proportion to the height. The seats under the first balcony, as already intimated, should be given more slope than the floor, if possible. The walls may be pear-shaped rather than semicircular, with the stage corresponding to the stem end, and the side walls straight. The ceiling is usually curved, and joins the walls with an obtuse angle if not an actual rounding. Sometimes the ceiling is made parallel to the floor. Walls nearly or wholly parallel, as in the Metropolitan Opera House, and the Parma theatre, will make it



possible to accommodate a larger number of auditors, the pear-shaped form being best for theatres of moderate size, with restricted sites. The Haymarket Theatre, in London, is an excellent example of this form, the back being slightly more than a semicircle, with straight side walls converging toward the stage. The stage itself is shallow, and extends forward into the house—a most excellent practice, in the present writer's opinion. The ceiling is curved down toward the stage, reflecting the sound excellently. The boxes are flat in front, so as to give partial aid in reflecting the sound. There are no columns. The walls in this theatre are lined with long lengths of thin wood. There are hollow spaces below the floor and above the ceiling. Originally the floor was isolated on strong frames, but that seemed to prevent it from resonating, and the floor is now given the customary structure, as an integral part of the building.

In view of all the difficulties in designing theatres, it is not surprising that many writers confine their attention wholly to the class of buildings.

Law courts form a much neglected class of edifices, from an acoustical point of view. In many cases they are little more than large rooms; but even in these, the proper structure would relieve judge and counsel of some effort. If reverberation is the trouble, as is usually the case, a gallery for draperies on the rear wall will often prove sufficient.

Concert-halls should be fairly easy to construct, in view of the rules now adopted by architects, and described in this article. Any hall that is ill-laid acoustically will probably be found to violate one or more of the principles enumerated. The dimensions (with length to the middle of the stage) should be multiples of some proportional number; the stage should be recessed, with a roof (or sounding board) rising at the proper angle as it extends forward; the ceiling should join the walls in a curve, and the back wall may join the sides in similar fashion; the ceiling (as also the walls) should not have any deep rectangular recesses; and the back wall should be diversified by a gallery, or entrance door, or batty, or it may be deeped if necessary. The whole building should be lined with unseasoned wood, in long pieces. There should be hollow spaces below the floor, or the stage, at any rate, and above the ceiling. Promenades outside the walls will have the same good effect. If necessary, the seats may be raised in the proper curve as their distance from the stage increases. Large halls should be oblong, but small ones may be built on the amphitheatre plan, with nearly semicircular auditoriums and rising

scale. Symphony Hall and Jordan Hall, both in Boston, are excellent illustrations of the two types. Concert-halls on the half-egg principle are also excellent, Stinson Hall, in Boston, being an example.

The mechanical cathedrals were chiefly intended for great choruses, or grand ceremonials. In these the music could fill all the air space, which was far too lofty for ordinary speaking. Such cathedrals, like that at Cologne, contained some small chapels for devotional purposes. But if it became necessary for the preacher to talk to a larger congregation in such a building, he generally had to have a sounding-board placed over him, with a group of pillars as backing. In such a case, as in all halls used for lectures, there will be a certain pitch of voice which will obtain the best effect, this pitch being evidently an overtone of the pitch to which the total mass of air corresponds. The enclosed air thus acts like the air in an organ pipe, which will vibrate to one fundamental pitch, or to any of the stronger overtones of that pitch. A speaker may thus gain clear and forcible tones with a minimum of effort, even in a large cathedral.

Churches built with a nave and aisles have often shown acoustical excellence. The nave, or long main body of the church, has its aisles marked off by rows of pillars. These divide the air into several small vibrating masses, which are easily set in motion. Sir Christopher Wren designed many excellent buildings of this sort.

Churches that have one large open space, instead of the nave-and-aisle structure, have seemed more apt to show acoustical defects. If the two sides of the roof are too nearly vertical, they form a sort of sound-destroying trench, and fail to give any helpful resonance. If they are smooth, they may cause too definite an echo or reverberation; so that it has become customary to let the roof timbers show. These defects seem to prove that the Gothic style, in spite of its large size, was based on correct principles, the groups of pillars dividing the air in a way to help the sound. The bad effect of steep roofs in the open church structure may be remedied by a rounded off polygonal ceiling placed some distance below the ridge-pole.

The use of iron in modern churches has enabled architects to call for columns without obstructing the view as much as formerly. The modern tendency, however, has been towards an open space, without columns. The architect of churches should be able to avoid the usual troubles, because he generally has a free hand in regard to area of site. Where a theatre is often

built on restricted ground, surrounded by other buildings, a church is usually placed on an extensive lot.

The position of the pulpit and lectern was formerly influenced by acoustical conditions. Many churches were found to be poor for speaking; and sometimes the defects were remedied by moving the pulpit out among the congregation. At present, with a recessed chancel, this is scarcely ever necessary. The chancel is built on much the same principle as the recessed stage in concert-halls.

The use of transepts has sometimes introduced defects. If the transept is made too deep, and any acoustical trouble arises, the defect may usually be remedied by galleries, or by anything that will make the transept shallower in proportion to its width.

If a gallery is used in the nave, it should be located on the back wall, where it will help to break up any echo effect.

The writer, when in the church of the First Parish in Brookline, has found that this edifice seems to combine many excellences. The chancel is recessed, with the back wall semicircular, and the top low in comparison with the main building. The pulpit and lectern are well in front, each a little to one side of the center. The transepts, almost as far front as the pulpit itself, are only half as deep as they are wide. The main part of the church has no columns. At the back are three entrances, breaking up the end wall below, and a gallery above, for organ and choir. In this gallery are some of the larger organ pipes, which break the upper surface of the wall. The height to the ridge-pole is scarcely more than the width of the nave. The two sides of the roof slope at an angle of  $45^{\circ}$ , an excellent angle, which reflects the sound down toward the back of the church, and does so too quickly to cause reverberation. The sides of the roof are lined with wood, extra strips at short intervals breaking up the plane surface. The resonance from this is excellent. At the top of the walls (the base of the roof slopes) two or three tie-rods of iron, provided with turn buckles, neutralize the outer thrust of the roof. The tie-rods are held on each side by beams projecting inward. These beams and tie-rods are evidently sufficient to act as nodes, and let the air-space vibrate in an upper and lower half, instead of as a whole, thus requiring less effort from the speaker. The side walls are plane, with very shallow tapered recesses for the stained glass windows.

Architectural acoustics is not yet thoroughly mastered. If it were, then every modern building would be as perfect as the old Parma Theatre. There is still much that is empirical, but

with the rules herein mentioned, and with the ever-present chance to insure buildings that have shown exceptional excellence, no architect should go wholly wrong.



LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN  
After the Bust by Franz Klein  
1843

## THE MAN BEETHOVEN : AN ESTIMATE OF HIS CHARACTER

By ALEXANDER W. THAYER

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of the author's "Life of Ludwig van Beethoven," published by Knickerbocker and Company, in  
their "Golden Library."

THE year 1800 is an important era in Beethoven's history. It is the year in which, cutting loose from the pianoforte, he asserted his claims to a position with Mozart and the still living and productive Haydn in the higher forms of chamber and orchestral composition—the quartet and the symphony. It is the year, too, in which the bitter consciousness of an increasing derangement of his organs of hearing was forced upon him and the terrible anticipation of its incurable nature and of its final result in almost total deafness began to harass and distress him. The course of his life was afterwards so modified, on the one hand, by the prosperous issue of these new appeals to the taste and judgment of the public, and, on the other, by the unhappy progress of his malady, each acting and reacting upon a nature singularly exceptional, that for this and other reasons some points in his personal character and habits, and a few general remarks upon and illustrations of another topic or two, must be made before resuming the narrative of events.

A true and exhaustive picture of Beethoven as a man would present an almost ludicrous contrast to that which is generally entertained as correct. As sculptors and painters have each in turn idealized the work of his profession, until the composer stands before us like a Homeric god—until those who knew him personally, could they return to earth, would never suspect that the grand form and noble features of the more pretentious portraits are intended to represent the short muscular figure and pock-pitted face of their old friend—so in literature evoked by the composer a similar process has gone on, with a corresponding suppression of whatever is deemed common and trivial, until he is made a being living in his own peculiar realm of gigantic ideas, above and apart from the rest of mankind—a sort of intellectual Titan, dwelling in "darkness and clouds of verbal state," and making

in his music mysterious revelations of things unutterable? But it is really some generations too soon for a conventional arranger of his history to view him as a semi-mythological personage, or to discover that his notes to friends asking for pens, making appointments to dinner at taverns, or complaining of servants, are "cyclopean blocks of granite," which, like the "shops and tomate mace" of Mr. Peckwick, contain depths unfathomable of profound meaning. The present age must be content to find in Beethoven, with all his greatness, a very human nature, one which, if it showed extraordinary strength, exhibited also extraordinary weakness.

It was the great misfortune of Beethoven's youth—his impulses good and bad being by nature exceedingly quick and violent—that he did not grow up under the influence of a wise and strict parental control, which would have given him those habits of self-restraint that, once fixed, are a sound and better armor, and through which the passions, cooled and moderated, remain only as sources of noble energy and power. His very early admission into the orchestra of the theatre as combatant, was more to the advantage of his musical than of his moral development. It was another misfortune that, in those years, when the strict regulations of a school would have compensated in some measure for the erratic, unsteady, often harsh discipline of his father, he was thus thrown into close connection with actors and actresses, who, in those days, were not very distinguished for the propriety of their manners and morals. Before his seventeenth or eighteenth year, when he became known to the Breuning family and Count Waldstein, he could hardly have learned the importance of cultivating those high principles of life and conduct on which in later years he laid so much stress. And, at that period of life, the character even under ordinary circumstances is so far developed, the habits have become so far formed and fixed, and the natural tendencies have acquired so much strength, that it is, as a rule, too late to conquer the power of a perfect self-command. At all events, the consequences of a deficient early moral education followed Beethoven through life and are visible in the frequent conflicts between his worse and his better nature and in his constant tendency to extremes. To-day, upon some perhaps trivial matter, he bursts into ungovernable wrath, to-morrow, his penitence exceeds the measure of his fault. To-day he is proud, unbending, obstinately careless of those claims which society grants to people of high rank, to-morrow his humility is more than adequate to the occasion. The poverty in which he grew up was not without

its effect upon his character. He never learned to estimate money at its real value; though often profuse and generous to a fault, even wasteful, yet at times he would fall into the other extreme. With all his sense of ability and independence, he early formed the habit of leaning upon others; and this the more, as his malady increased, which certainly was a partial justification; but he thus became prone to follow unwise counsels, or, when his pride was touched, to assert an equally unwise independence. At other times, in the multitude of counsellors he became the victim of utter irresolution, when decision and firmness were indispensable and essential to his welfare. Thus, both by following the impulse of the moment, and by hesitation when a prompt determination was demanded, he took many a false step, which could no longer be retrieved when reflection brought with it bitter regret.

It would be doing great injustice both to Beethoven and to the present writer to understand the preceding remarks as being intended to represent the composer's lapses in these regards, as being more than unpleasant and unfortunate episodes in the general tenor of his life, but as they did seem to his great disadvantage, the fact cannot be silently passed over.

A romantically sentimental admiration of the heroes of ancient classic literature, having its origin in Paris, had become widely the fashion in Beethoven's youth. The democratic theories of the French sentimentalists had received a new impulse from the dignified simplicity of the foreign representatives of the young American Republic, Franklin, Adams, Jay—from the retirement to private life on their plantations and farms of the great military leaders in the contest, Washington, Greene, Schuyler, Knox and others, after the war with England was over, from the pride taken by the French officers, who had served in America, in their insignias of the order of the Cincinnati; and even from the letters and journals of German officers, who, in captivity, had formed friendships with many of the better class of the republican leaders, and seen with their own eyes in what simplicity they lived while guiding the darkness of the new-born nation. Thus through the greater part of Central Europe the idea became current of a pure and sublime humanity, above and beyond the influence of the passions, of which Cincinnati, Seligie, Cato, Washington, Franklin, were the supposed representatives. Zschokke makes his Herwen say: "Virtue and the heroes of antiquity had inspired me with enthusiasm for virtue and heroism"; and so, also, Beethoven. He excited his imagination and fancy by the proud



of the German poets and translations of the ancient and English classics, especially Homer, Plutarch and Shakespeare, dwell fondly upon the great characters as models for the conduct of life; but between the sentiment which one feels and the active principle on which he acts, there is often a wide chasm. That Beethoven proved to be no Stoic, that he never succeeded in governing his passions with absolute sway, was not because the spirit was unwilling; the flesh was weak. Adequate firmness of character had not been acquired in early years. But those who have most thoroughly studied his life, know best how pure and lofty were his aspirations, how wide and deep his sympathies with all that is good, how great his heart, how, on the whole, heroic his endurance of his great calamity. They can best feel the man's true greatness, admire the nobility of his nature, and drop the tear of sorrow and regret upon his vagaries and faults. He who is morbidly sensitive, and compelled to keep constant ward and watch over his passions, can best appreciate and sympathize with the man, Beethoven.

Truth and candor compel the confession, that in those days of prosperity he bore his losses with less of meekness than we could wish, that he had lost something of that modesty and ingenuitatem-culogized by Junker ten years before, in his *Margarethen* letter. His "somewhat lofty bearing" had even been reported by the correspondent of the "*Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*." Traces of self-sufficiency and even arrogance—faults almost universal among young and successful geniuses, often in a far higher degree than was true of Beethoven, and with not a tinge of his reason—are unquestionably visible. No one can read without regret his remarks upon certain persons not named, with whom at this very time he was upon terms of apparently intimate friendship. "I value them," he writes, "only by what they do for me. . . . I look upon them only as instruments upon which I play when I feel so disposed." His "somewhat lofty bearing" was matter for jest to the venerable Haydn, who, according to a trustworthy tradition, when Beethoven's visits to him had become few and far between would inquire of other visitors: "How goes it with our Great Magus?" Nor would the young ladies, whose society he frequented, take offense; but it certainly made him stand out among those whom he "valued according to their service and looked upon as mere instruments"—and no wonder!

Pfennoc, in his edition of the so-called "Beethoven's Studies," has added to Seyfried's personal sketches a few reminiscences

of that Griesinger, who was as long Saxon Minister in Vienna, and to whom we owe the valuable "Biographische Notizen über Joseph Haydn." One of his anecdotes is to the purpose here and may be taken as substantially historical.

When he was still only an attacké, and Beethoven was little known except as a celebrated pianoforte player, both being still young, they happened to meet at the house of Prince Lichnowitz in conversation with a gentleman present. Beethoven said in substance, that he wished to be relieved from all burthen and sale of his works, and would gladly find some one willing to pay him a certain income for life, for which he should possess the exclusive right of publishing all he wrote, adding, "and I would not be idle in composition. I believe Goethe does this with Cotta, and, if I mistake not, Handel's London publisher held similar terms with him."

"My dear young man," returned the other, "You must not complain for you are neither a Goethe nor a Handel, and it is not to be expected that you ever will be; for such masters will not be born again." Beethoven bit his lips, gave a most contemptuous glance at the speaker, and said no more. Lichnowitz endeavored to appease him, and in a subsequent conversation said:

"My dear Beethoven, the gentleman did not intend to wound you. It is an established maxim, to which most men adhere, that the present generation cannot possibly produce such mighty spirits as the dead, who have already earned their fame."

"So much the worse, Your Highness," retorted Beethoven; "but with men who will not believe and trust in me because I am as yet unknown to universal fame, I cannot hold intercourse."

It is easy for this generation, which has the productions of the composer's whole life as the basis of its judgment of his powers, to speak disparagingly of his contemporaries for not being able to discover in his first twelve or fifteen works good reasons for classing him with Goethe and Handel, but he who stands upon a mountain cannot justly ridicule him on the plain for the narrow extent of his view. It was as difficult then to conceive the possibility of instrumental music being elevated to heights greater than those reached by Haydn and Mozart, as it is for us to conceive of Beethoven being altogether surpassed.

In the short personal sketches of Beethoven's friends which have been introduced, the dates of their births have been noted so far as known, that the reader may observe how very large a proportion of them were of the same age as the composer, or still

younger—some indeed but boys—when he came to Vienna. And so it continued. As the years pass by in our narrative and names familiar to us disappear, the new ones which take their place, with rare exceptions, are still of men much younger than himself. The older generation of musical amateurs at Vienna, van Swieten and his class, had accepted the young Beethoven against and patronized him, as a pianist. But when Beethoven began to press his claims as a composer, and, somewhat later, as his deafness increased, to neglect his playing, some of the older friends had passed away, others had withdrawn from society, and the number was few of those who, like Lichnerowsky, could comprehend that departures from the forms and styles of Mozart and Haydn were not necessarily faults. With the greater number, as perfection necessarily admits of no improvement and both quartet and symphony in form had been carried to that point by Haydn and Mozart, it was a perfectly logical conclusion that further progress was impossible. They could not perceive that there was still room for the invention or discovery of new elements of interest, beauty, power; for such perceptions are the offspring of genius. With Beethoven they were instinctive.

One more remark. Towards the decline of life, the masterpieces of literature and art, on which the taste was formed, are apt to become invested in the mind with a sort of nimbus of sanctity; hence, the productions of a young and daring innovator, even when the genius and talent displayed in them are felt and receive just acknowledgment, have the aspect, not only of an extravagant and irritating waste of unapplied powers, but of a kind of profane audacity. For these and similar reasons Beethoven's novelties found little favor with the veterans of the concert-room.

The criticism of the day was naturally riled and stimulated by the same spirit. Beethoven's own confession how it at first wounded him, will come in its order; but after he felt that his victory over it was sure—was in fact gained with a younger generation—he only laughed at the critics; to answer them, except by new works, was beneath him. Sceptical says of him (during the years of the "Eroica," "Fidelio," etc.): "When he came across criticisms in which he was accused of grammatical errors he rubbed his hands in glee and cried out with a loud laugh: 'Yes, yes! they marvel and put their heads together because they do not find it in any school of thoroughness!'" But for the young of both sexes, Beethoven's music had an extraordinary charm. And this not upon technical grounds, nor solely for its

novelties, always an attractive feature to the young, but because it appealed to the sensitivities, excited emotions and touched the heart as no other purely instrumental compositions had ever done. And as it was that Beethoven also in his quality of composer soon gathered about him a circle of young disciples, enthusiastic admirers. Their homage may well have been grateful to him—as such is to every artist and scholar of genius, who, striking out and steadfastly pursuing a new path, subjects himself to the sharp animadversions of critics who, in all honesty, really can see little or nothing of good in that which is not to be measured and judged by old standards. The voice of praise under such circumstances is doubly pleasing. It is known that, when Beethoven's works began to find a just appreciation from a new generation of critics, who had indeed been schooled by them, he collected and preserved a considerable number of laudatory articles, whose fate cannot now be traced. When, however, the natural and just satisfaction which is afforded by the homage of honest admirers and deservedly eulogistic criticism, degenerates into a love of indiscriminate praise and flattery, it becomes a weakness, a fault. Of this error in Beethoven there are traces easily discernible, and especially in his later years, there are pages of fulsome eulogy addressed to him in the *Conversations Books*, which would make the reader blush for him, did not the mere fact that such books existed remind him of the bitterness of the composer's lot. The flattery was also sometimes his misfortune; for those who were most profuse in their flattery, and thus gained his ear, were by no means the best of his counsellors. But aside from the attractive force of his genius, Beethoven possessed a personal magnetism, which attracted his young worshippers to him and, all things considered, to his solid and lasting benefit in his private affairs. Just at this time, and for some years to come, his brothers usually rendered him the aid he needed, but thenceforth to the close of his life, the names of a constant succession of young men will appear to and vanish from our narrative, who were ever necessary to him and ever ready at his call with their voluntary services.

Beethoven's love of nature was already a marked trait of his character. This was indulged and strengthened by long rambles upon the lofty hills and in the exquisitely beautiful valleys which render the environs of Vienna to the north and west so charming. Hence, when he left the city to spend the hot summer months in the country, with but an exception or two in a long series of years, his residence was selected with a view to the lo-

dulgence of this noble passion. Hence, too, his great delight in the most celebrated work of Christian Sturm: "Beobachtungen über die Werke Gottes," which, however abused much of its natural philosophy (in the old editions) appears now in the light of advanced scientific truth, and was unsurpassed in fitness to awaken and foster a taste for, and the understanding of, the beauties of nature. Schindler has revealed the master's life-long study and admiration of this book. It was one which cherished his veneration for the Creator and Preserver of the universe, and yet left his contempt for promiscuous religious systems and ecclesiastical dogmas its free course. "To him, who, in the love of Nature, holds communion with her visible forms, she speaks a various language," says Bryant. Her language was thoroughly well understood by Beethoven; and when, as nature and affliction, his art, his Plutarch, his "Odyssey," proved to be resources too feeble for his comfort, he went to Nature for solace, and rarely failed to find it.

Art has been so often disgraced by the bad morals and shameless lives of its votaries, that it is doubly gratifying to be able to affirm of Beethoven that, like Handel, Bach and Mozart, he did honor to his profession by his personal character and habits. Although irregular, still he was as simple and temperate in eating and drinking as was possible in the state of society in which he lived. That he was no inordinate lover of wine or strong drinks is certain. No allusion is remembered in any of his letters, notes, manuscripts, nor in the Conversation Books, which indicate a liking for any game of chance or skill. He does not appear to have known one playing-card from another. Music, books, conversation with men and women of taste and intelligence, dancing, according to Ries (who adds that he could never learn to dance in time—but Beethoven's dancing days were soon over—), and, above all, his long walks, were his amusements and recreations. His whim for riding was of short duration—at all events, the last allusion to any horse owned by him is in the anecdote on a previous page.

One rather delicate point demands a word: and surely, what Franklin in his autobiography could confess of himself, and Lockhart mention without scruple of Walter Scott, his father-in-law, need not be here suppressed. Nor can it well be, since a false assumption on the point has been made the basis already of a considerable quantity of fine writing, and employed to explain certain facts relative to Beethoven's compositions. Spending

his whole life in a state of society in which the view of college was by no means a vow of chastity, in which the parentage of a cardinal's or archbishop's children was neither a secret nor a disgrace; in which the flagrant offspring of princes and magnates were proud of their descent and formed upon it well-grounded hopes of advancement and success in life; in which the moderate gratification of the senses was no more discountenanced than the satisfying of any other natural appetite—it is nonsense to suppose, that, under such circumstances, Beethoven could have puritanic scruples on that point. Those who have had occasion and opportunity to ascertain the facts, know that he had not, and are also aware that he did not always escape the common penalties of transgressing the laws of strict purity. But he had too much dignity of character ever to take part in scenes of low debauchery, or even when still young to descend to the familiar jesting once so common between tavern girls and the guests. Thus, as the sister Simrock related, upon the journey to Mengertshain recorded in the earlier pages of this work, it happened at some place where the company dined, that some of the young men prompted the waiting-girl to play off her charms upon Beethoven. He received her advances and familiarities with repellent coldness and as she, encouraged by the others, still persevered, he lost his patience, and put an end to her importunities by a smart box on the ear.

The practice, not uncommon in his time, of living with an unmarried woman as a wife, was always abhorrent to him—how much so, a sad story will hereafter illustrate, to a still greater degree an intrigue with the wife of another man. In his later years he so broke off his once familiar intercourse with a distinguished composer and conductor of Vienna, as hardly to return his greetings with common politeness. Schindler affirmed that the only reason for this was that the man in question had taken to his bed and board the wife of another.

The names of two married women might be here given, to whom at a later period Beethoven was warmly attached, names which happily have hitherto escaped the eyes of literary scavengers, and are therefore here suppressed. Certain of his friends used to joke him about these ladies, and it is certain that he rather enjoyed their jests even when the insinuations, that his affection was beyond the limit of the Platonic, were somewhat broad; but careful enquiry has failed to elicit any evidence that even in these cases he proved unfaithful to his principles. A story related by John is also to the point, viz : that Beethoven only by the urgent

solicitations of the Czerny family was after much refusal persuaded to extemporize in the presence of a certain Madame Hoffmann. She was the widow of a man who had attempted her life and then committed suicide; and the refusal of Beethoven to play before her arose from his having the general belief at the time, that a too great intimacy had existed between her and Mozart. John, it may be observed, has recently had the great satisfaction of being able to prove the innocence of Mozart in this matter and of rescuing his memory from the only dark shadow which rested upon it. This much on this topic it has been deemed necessary to say here, not only for the reasons above given, but to put an end to long-prevailing misconceptions and misconstructions of passages in Beethoven's letters and private manuscripts and to save further comment when they shall be introduced hereafter.

# CARMEN

NOVEL AND LIBRETTO—A DRAMATURGIC ANALYSIS

By EDGAR ISTEL.

THE source of "Carmen," Hart's masterpiece, justly to be termed the most original of French operas, was a novel of the same name, published in 1847 by Prosper Mérimé. This distinguished author, whom Goethe esteemed very highly, perfused his famous story with Palædas' most exalting Greek motto: "Woman as a whole is bitter. She possesses but two redeeming moments: one in bed and the other at death." The contents of the novel would certainly seem to justify this pessimistic verdict—which, however, is not meant to be generalised. A "she-devil," as one might designate her, after the famous drama ("Der Weber-teufel") of the Austrian author Schöckner, here plays her game of destruction with the man, until both man and woman are sent to eternity. Mérimé's novel consists of four chapters; the fourth is really only a scientific study on the race of the gypsies, the first and second chapters also, in which Mérimé recounts his meeting with José and Carmen, are of only incidental interest in their description of the characteristics of both. It is the third chapter, an autobiographical confession of José when he was condemned to death, which became the source and the plot of the opera.

Carmen, a Christian name, very common in Andalusia, signifies "garden" or "country-house," and is still met with in this signification as the name of cities in Mexico and Argentina. The diminutive form "Carmenita," which also occurs in the opera, is more frequently used as a woman's name. Mérimé's story certainly depicts an actual occurrence. The truthful portrayal of Andalusian life with all its sympathetic and repulsive features must have sprung from very close observation, and the characteristic psychology of the people can be fully appreciated only by one who has spent some time in Andalusia, the most Spanish of Spanish districts. Of special significance, however, is a feature not mentioned in the later version of the opera: José



is a *Nazareño*, therefore not an *Andalusian*. This explains his proud, self-assertive attitude, intolerant of humiliation. Carmen, on the other hand, is a gypsy, both in the novel and in the opera. Thus, although the scene is laid in Andalusia, only the subordinate figures are natives of that district. At the beginning of the novel, Mérimé describes an archaeological excursion which he made through Andalusia, in the autumn of 1839, accompanied by a guide from Córdoba. By a spring in a woody region, they came across a man of wild appearance, whom the guide at once recognized as the notorious bandit, José Navarro, for whose capture a reward of two hundred ducats had been offered. For the dramatist the most interesting part of this first chapter is the description of José: "A young man of middle height, apparently robust, with a proud but gloomy look. His complexion, which originally must have been beautiful, had been tanned by the sun to a darker color than his hair." And lists "Blood hair, blue eyes, a large mouth, fine teeth, small hands, a fine shirt, a velvet jacket with silver buttons, white leather leggings and a brown hose." This gives us a fairly clear idea of José as a bandit.

In the second chapter Mérimé describes how he met Carmen, the gypsy, one night on the banks of the Guadalquivir:

She had in her hair a bunch of jessies, whose blossoms gave forth a sweet intoxicating perfume. She was dressed plainly, almost poorly, in black, like most of the gypsies in the evening. She was young, small, well-built, and she had very large eyes. Mérimé says later: I doubt very much whether Carmen was thoroughbred—at any rate she was very much more beautiful than any other woman of her race that I have ever seen.

Generally, as he explains in the fourth chapter, the gypsies are very ugly. After speaking of the Spanish ideal of beauty, Mérimé remarks:

My gypsy could not lay claim to so many merits. Her skin was very nearly of the color of copper. Her eyes were shining, but more markedly so; her lips, a little too thick, were well formed and showed teeth whiter than diamonds gleaming through them. Her black hair, perhaps too thick, had the bluish reflection of the mare's wing and was long and glossy. In order not to tire by a lengthy description, I will summarize by saying, that to every fault she possessed was added a good feature, which perhaps proved more effective by the contrast. It was a wild, strange sort of beauty, a face which at first horrified, but which one never forgets. Especially the eyes, which had a voluptuous and at the same time a wild expression which I have never since found in any human face. "Gypsy eyes, wolf eyes," says a Spanish proverb, which shows good observation. Such a person was Carmen.

Later Mirandó heard that José Navarro, as he was called, or Don José Llanabergos, as he really was, was in prison and soon to be executed. He visited the bandit, who told the post the story of his life after having begged him, if he ever passed through Navarro, to give a medal which José had always worn around his neck to a "good woman" (José's mother) in Vittoria. "Tell her I am dead, but not how I died," he added, deeply moved; then he began his story.

We have thus far made the acquaintance of the two principal characters, José and Carmen, and gained an important dramatic motive in the mention of José's mother, who, though not appearing in the drama, influences the plot. Two remarks which José incidentally makes to Mirandó seem to contain the quintessence of the third chapter, the real Carmen tragedy, or perhaps better, the tragedy of José.

*Mouroux, on deviant requin sans y penser. Une jolo file vous fait perdre la tête, ça se voit pour elle, un malheur arrive, il faut aller à la montagne, et de contrebandier on devient voleur, avant d'avoir volé. Une femme a ruiné un régus sans vouloir ça. A pretty woman makes you lose your head, you fight for her, have a lot of bad luck, are compelled to live in the mountains, and (from a smuggler one becomes a robber without reflecting.)*

The antecedent history of the Carmen plot in the novel is exceptionally short. Only a few words are to be found in the introduction telling how José became a soldier. The librettists have cleverly shortened these words and wove them almost literally into the dialogue in the third scene of the first act—José's conversation with the lieutenant. Incidentally noting that Mircóla is dressed in Navarrese costume, the lieutenant asks: "Are you a Navarrese?" Whereupon José answers: "And of old Christian family. My name is Don José Llanabergos. I was to have become a priest and begun my studies, but did not learn anything, for I was too fond of the ball game. One day, after having won a youth from Alava sought a quarrel with me; I had the better luck [that meant most likely that José either killed his adversary, or wounded him severely] and was forced to leave the country. I became a soldier." Up to this point the antecedent history is the same as in the novel. Mirandó continues: "Within a short time I became a brigadier, and was promised the position of ser-

<sup>1</sup>Don, from the Latin *dominus*, at that time a title of nobility. José was of ancient Basque descent, and (like millions of ancient Christian Spaniards) with neither Mirandó nor Joseph allied to the color,—that most significant of quality, proved to be when upon the country is true.

grant, when, unhappily, I was detained as guard before the cigarette factory in Sevilla." Here the drama acts in.

The libretto was written by the famous Parisian playwrights, Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy. Each had worked individually until 1869, when they joined forces and achieved great success with their stage works. In addition to the Carmen libretto their texts to the best Offenbach operettas are especially well known; and the original adaptation of the "Fledermaus" was their idea.

I have shown that the two principal characters were taken from Mérimée's novel. On the other hand, the librettists were obliged to invent the character of Micaëla as a substitute for José's mother, who does not appear. This character was necessary for dramatic reasons, in order to create a contrast to Carmen, and, as it were, to personify the voice of the good in José. Nevertheless, one must admit that the figure possesses little individual life and is too obviously brought in only for construction. As for the other principal characters in the opera, the bull-fighter Escamillo (Mérimée's *Louca*), the inn-keeper Elías, Pastia, the song-girls Danzonla and Remendado and also the lieutenant (Zarigo), they are all to be found in the novel. The librettists had merely to invent the two unimportant figures of the gipsies and the brigadier. And yet how genuinely theatrical the work of the text has turned out, even though occasional literal expressions are taken from the novel!

Let us single out a few of the principal scenes to show the dramatic art of the librettists. Take, for instance, the most important moment of the exposition, Carmen's entry. Observe how dramatic is her introduction. She does not merely enter alone, nor does she come with the swarm of workers, who precede her like the personal attendants at the state entry of a princess. After all the girls have passed, we hear the soldiers sing: "We do not see Carmencita!" whereupon the workers and young men answer: "There she is! see the Carmencita!" Carmen is thus made conspicuous as a very individual figure, similarly to José, who is not on the stage at the beginning of the opera. At last she appears. The librettists describe exactly the same costume and manner of entry as that described by Mérimée. She has a bunch of roses in her hair, and a blossom in the corner of her mouth. Three or four young men enter with her, they follow her, surround her, and speak to her; she flirts and talks with them. José raises his head, looks at Carmen, and then quietly resumes work on the chain. The young men urge Carmen to tell them when she will

less than. Her first words here give us a sharply defined picture of her personality, in contradistinction to the more detailed description in the novel. It is also to be noticed that Carmen does not directly approach José as in the novel, this would not be so effective on the stage. Instead, she is obliged to disclose her character somewhat through her conversation with the young man, and wins time to study more closely the handsome brigadier, whom she has espied at ease, and—to entice him. This is expressed in her first very witty and precise answer:

Quand je vous demand? Ma foi, je ne sais pas  
 Pourquoi j'arrive, peut-être d'instinct,  
 Mais pas sûrement, c'est certain!

This refusal plainly discloses the fact that Carmen has chosen José for her lover of to-day. And still more clearly is this expressed in the following famous "Habanera"—which reveals Carmen's conception of love. Nietzsche says: "Love, as conceived by the ancients—playfully alluring, unobtrusive, disinterested, inevitable. A veritable witch is necessary for the performance. I know of nothing to be compared with this song." Another feature of dramaturgic significance in the first act is the scene commonly designated as the "tragic moment." In his famous book: "The Technique of the Drama", which was profoundly inspired by Shakespeare's technique, Gustav Freytag writes as follows about the introduction of this "moment":

If at a certain point of the plot something sad, gloomy, or dreadful suddenly occurs which, though quite contrary to that which precedes it, can immediately be recognized as a result of the sensitive combination of incidents preceding and which the assumption of the plot renders probable—this new instant is to be considered a "tragic moment." The "tragic moment" must therefore possess the three following distinctive features:

1. It must be important and momentous for the hero.
2. It must burst upon one unexpectedly.
3. It must, by means of a chain of subordinate ideas perceptible to the spectator, stand in a reasonable connection with the foregoing action.

These three conditions are fulfilled here. The "tragic moment" in this case is especially caused by the circumstance that, exactly at the moment when José, owing to his mother's letter and the newly sealed love for Micaëla, fancies himself to be protected from Carmen and the "demon," the incident occurs which forms the first link in the chain of his fate—Carmen's business with the knife. Without this episode, the entire following tragedy would be quite inconceivable. To be sure, the "tragic moment" in the

drama is only one of many effects. It can, as is usually the case, appear only once, but it can also be used more frequently in the same play. In "Carmen," for instance, the second "tragic moment" is to be found in the second act. José here has decided to leave Carmen forever, and to remain true to his soldier's honor, when suddenly he is driven to jealousy by the return of the lieutenant. Here the effect is particularly strong owing to the contrast between José's intention and this sudden occurrence, which is so momentous for him. In Greek dramaturgy the term "peripetia" was used for this kind of "tragic moment."

The events of the second act have been sharply worked out by the librettists from single facts taken from the novel, where their course is blurred by all sorts of accessories. The choice of Lillas Pardo's inn as the scene of these events seems a happy one. In the novel the inn does not play an important part; there it is in the house of an old match-making gypsy in the Candelilla Street that Carmen's love-meetings take place, first with José and later with the lieutenant.

The main line of José's development in the novel is this: From a punished brigadier he is degraded to a common soldier, who, however, retains his soldier's honor; through jealousy, he passes to open rebellion against an officer and even to murder of that officer; then, no other choice remaining, he becomes a smuggler. Let us now briefly examine how the novel proceeds, emphasizing those points which the dramatists could use.

José in prison describes his spiritual condition, the regret for his heedless folly, the contempt he felt for Carmen. And yet he could not cease thinking of her; he became sensually intoxicated when he recalled the extraordinary usage of her silk stockings with the numerous holes in them; he compared all the women who passed by the prison to Carmen, found none as beautiful as she, and unhesitatingly intimated the want of the same blossom. "If there are such things as witches," he says, "then this girl is one." But Carmen also thought of him. She smuggled a loaf of bread and a gold piece into the prison. The bread concealed a strong English file with which he could have fled through the strongest bars, and with the gold piece he could have bought other clothes and escaped. José, however, looked upon desertion as a crime, and the gold piece seemed to him like pay and angered him. After having served his term, he was degraded and put on guard as a common soldier. Here, in front of the colonel's house, where Carmen had been dancing, he first saw her again. She asked him to meet her that same evening at Lillas Pardo's when he came off

duty. Pastic is described as an "old fish-halter, gypsy, as black as a Moor, at whose place many of the city-loft ate fish, especially since Carmen had been in the habit of going there." Carmen at once took José to walk with her, and he returned to her the gold piece, keeping the fish, however, as a souvenir. Not having much money just then, Carmen suggested that they consume the gold piece together and so they bought oranges, bread, sausage, a bottle of Maestrella, a great quantity of sweets and candied fruit. Then they went to the gypsy's house, and as soon as they were alone Carmen began to dance as if she were crazy and to sing, saying: "You are my Boss! I your Boss!" (in gypsy language, "Boss" means husband, "Boss," wife), and falling on his neck cried: "I will pay my debt according to the law of the gypsies!" The manner in which she paid her debt is pretty plainly alluded to in the novel: "Ah! Monsieur, that day! . . . that day! . . . when I think of it I forget to-morrow!" cried the hawk, who is telling the writer of his life after he has been condemned to death. Carmen and José spent the entire day together, eating and drinking, and there was not a word said she left undone. José wished to see Carmen dance. She had no castanets, so she broke the only plate the old gypsy had and danced as if she had had real ones. "One was never loved with this gait, to that I can swear," said José. When evening came, José, hearing the retreat, said to Carmen: "I must return to the barracks." "To the barracks?" she replied disdainfully, "are you a negro slave that loses the stick? You are a real gypsy and! inside and out. Go, you are a coward!" And José remained, though he knew it meant arrest for him again.

This turn of affairs in the novel, where José has already enjoyed Carmen's favors and fallen a victim to her charms, is most natural. In the drama it was better to let the conflict between soldier's honor and love (which in the novel had occurred much earlier, during José's arrest) occur here, and to allow José to decide to avoid Carmen forever. Mountains we are told that after the first night Carmen already speaks of parting, though she declared that she was "a little in love" with José. However, she said that wolf and dog could not agree for long. He should be happy that she, the veritable devil, had not wrong his neck, he should burn a candle before the Madonna and forget Caramazita, she he would probably finish by hanging on her account. But ultimately Carmen made use of José's absolute surrender to win him for the smuggler's band. She described, in a most tempting manner, the romantic life they would lead together on horseback in the moun-

—A silhouette for the yellow dragon.

take. No officer, no tattoo for him to obey, absolute freedom! He must follow her there if he loved her. Wonderful here, and similar to the parallel seduction scene in the first act, is José's cry, "Carmen!" This cry contains all the nuances of his feelings up to the point where it seems as though he must surrender. But here, where Carmen demands everything, not as in the first act only a small favor—here, where his honor as a soldier is concerned, conscience still is the stronger; he tears himself away and bids Carmen farewell. She tells him she hates him and that parting now means farewell forever. Very well, José has decided to break with her. At this point fate appears: as José is about to open the door, some one on the other side knocks and we hear the voice of the lieutenant calling Carmen. From this moment José is forever at the mercy of the fate which leads him to Carmen, and the incidents urge rapidly forward to the inevitable crisis. The careful manner in which the dramatic entry of the lieutenant is led up to, beginning with the first act, the way in which his untimely arrival occurs exactly on the dinner of the last farewell, are admirable, when compared with the chance meeting in the novel. Here one is reminded prominently of Goethe's exposition in his "Wilhelm Meister's Lehrjahre" (V, 11).

In a novel, opinions and events should be given precedence to a drama, characters and deeds. The novel must proceed slowly and the movements of the principal figures should, in whatever manner it may be, retard the development of the plot. The drama should move quickly and the character of the principal figure should have the tendency to push on to the end, and only then be retarded. The novel hero should be passive, or at least not active in the highest degree: one requires effort and action for the dramatic hero. . . . Therefore it is agreed that chance might play its part in a novel, that, however, such chance must always be controlled and directed by the movements of the characters, but that, on the other hand, a Fate which urges people on without their cognation, by means of disconnected outward circumstances, toward an unforeseen catastrophe, can occur only in a drama, that chance may well bring forth pathetic but never tragic situations, that Fate, however, must always be terrible, and that it becomes tragic in the highest degree when it involves able innocent and guilty deeds that are independent of each other.

The further development of the second act seems to me to be an improvement on the novel. In the opera José does not kill the lieutenant. Instead, the officer is disgraced by the smugglers who come at Carmen's bidding. And this change in scene's humor adds a welcome touch of color to the picture. Moreover, Carmen's death at the close produces a much more thrilling effect if no one has been killed earlier in the drama. The less frequent a

murder, the more terrible its effects. The piling of corpses, of which Shakespeare was so fond, does not appeal to our modern taste.

The events of the third act have very little connection with the plot of the novel, for it was formed quite independently, although many a feature of the original sketch was used. The novel describes a great number of adventures in the smuggler's life. A few characteristic features, in so far as they are of value for a clearer understanding of the act, shall be mentioned here. Carmen served the smugglers as an efficient spy, goods were continually being smuggled from Gibraltar to the coast, then brought up into the mountains, where they were hidden, and later taken to Honds (a magnificent lofty crag high up in the mountains). It is probable that the third act takes place near Honds. José maintained that the life of a smuggler pleased him more than the life of a soldier. When he had money and a sweet heart, a soldier he felt useless. (One should observe how cleverly his romance is weakened in the third act by the appearance of Micaëla.) José was highly esteemed by these people because he had already killed a man, a deed which was looked upon as an act of heroism. At first Carmen was very much in love with him, but would not admit to her comrades that he was her lover, yes, he even had to swear not to say anything about this. José soon learned the reason for this secrecy. For Carmen was married! (This feature was rightly done away with by the librettists.) Her husband, the one-eyed Garcia, a crafty rascal, had up to this time been a galley-slave. Carmen, who did not lack a certain feeling of selfishness, despite her love-affairs with José, had succeeded in freeing her husband by capturing the doctor at the citadel. Soon after, Garcia appeared on the scene, and José maintained that he had never met a more shameful scoundrel and that his soul was blacker than his skin. The following incident illustrates Carmen's treacherous character. She wished to lure a rich Englishman to Honds, where he should suddenly be attacked, robbed, perhaps even killed. José was to arrange it so that Garcia would be in the foreground, where he would serve as a target for the Englishmen, who were good shots, and would probably kill him. José disapproved of the thought of this devilish plan, which Carmen smilingly proposed to him. He answered that though he hated Garcia, he was his comrade and that some day he would see Carmen from him, not by treachery but in an honorable duel. Soon after this conversation, José really provoked a quarrel with Garcia, which ended in a combat with knives, during which José killed his adversary.



This episode served the librettists as a model for the fight between José and Escamillo in the third act. Carmen, on hearing she was a widow, remarked: "Her time had come, and yours will also come." José answered: "You're also, if you are not a faithful wife." "For all I care!" she cried. "I have often enough seen in the grounds of the coffee that we are to end together.—Bah! come what may?" This feeling of fatalism, which also inspired Bizet with the touching Carmen theme, has been strongly emphasized by the librettists, especially in the third and fourth acts. Without mentioning further incidents in the struggler's life, let us single out an instance of Carmen, which is very characteristic of her as she appears in the third act:

Do you know that once you are my husband (José) I love you much less than when you were my lover (Micaëlla)?<sup>21</sup> I do not like to be tormented, and still more I hate being commended. I wish to be free and do what I please. Take care not to drive me to desperation; if you begin to love me, I shall know where to find an obliging youth, who will treat you as you did the one-eyed man.

This is the material from which the librettists have formed the third act. It is not very abundant, and was utilized to a much less degree than that which was at their disposal for the first and second acts. What the librettists had in view with their third act is clear. They wished to sketch a picture of the struggler's life and José's new existence, and at the same time to show that Carmen, weary of the jealous tyranny of her lover, looks forward with keen anticipation to a new attachment. José, on the other hand, though feeling remorse over his new mode of life, cannot tear himself away from Carmen. The introduction of Micaëlla and Escamillo into this act, even though their appearance is "opera-like" and but weakly motivated, serves only to this end. This third act is, on the whole, not so well founded, in a dramatic sense, as the preceding ones. The Carmen tragedy draws to its close. The love-affair with the bull-fighter becomes the cause of the catastrophe in the novel as well as in the opera. The dramatists introduced the figure of Escamillo quite early in the plot. In the second act he is kept in suspense by Carmen, while in the third it is quite clear that she has grown tired of José and bestowed her affections on him. In the novel the Picador Luena (the original model for Escamillo) does not appear until much later. Carmen makes his acquaintance during the bull-fight in Granada. When taken to task by José, she tries to persuade him to accept the

<sup>21</sup>Op. 109.

young fellow as one of the herd. José forbids her to speak to the Priest, as he neither trades Lucas nor his money. "Take care" is Carmen's characteristic answer, "if one expects me of doing a thing, it soon happens!" In the meantime she seems to have forgotten Lucas. Then, however, José, hearing she had gone to the bull-fights in Cordoba, followed her in a fury. He saw her together with Lucas, and immediately grasped the situation. On this day, however, Lucas met with an accident. His horse stumbled and threw him in front of the bull, thereby endangering his life. Carmen vanished without leaving any trace, but appeared again at two in the morning in their joint lurking-place and followed José without assistance on horseback. They arrived at a lonely inn, near a hermitage, in the morning. That which follows, though differing for the greater part from the drama, none the less evinces a certain similarity. The difference between novel and drama can best be studied at this point. Let us merely outline the most essential moments of the novel:

*José:* Hear me, I will forget everything, and never allude to anything again; but promise to follow me to America and be respectable.

*Carmen (defiantly):* I do not wish to go to America. I am happy here.

*José:* Because you are near Lucas. But let me tell you, when he is cured he will not give aid. But why should I lay hands on him? I am tired of kissing your lovers, I will kill you.

*Carmen (staring at him with a wild look):* I have always known you would kill me. . . . It is written so.

*José, Caramuzita, do you no longer love me? (She gives no answer, but sat on a mat with her legs crossed, and drew figures in the sand with her fingers.)*

*José (tripped):* We will begin a new life, Carmen, we will live something and never be separated. (He then began to count the money he had with him.)

*Carmen (smiling):* First I and then you. I know it would be that way (another allusion to Fate).

*José:* Think it over! My passion and strength are exhausted. Decide, or I shall have to

Then he left her and went to the hermitage, where he had a mass read for a soul which perhaps might soon appear before its Maker. This gross trait in a hermit and masses is very characteristic of southern life. During the mass, however, he remained outside the chapel, and then returned to the inn. He hoped that Carmen might have escaped—she could have mounted the horse and fled to safety. But she was still there. She did not want him to be able to say that she had been afraid. He found her pointing lead, with a sad expression on her face, and singing an

old gipsy song. She again followed him on horseback, and after a while the discussion was resumed.

Just: My Carmen, you will come with me, will you not?

Carmen: To the grave, yes, but I will not longer live with you. I see that you will kill me, this is certain, but you will never force me to yield.

Just: I beg you to be sensible. Listen! Let all that is past be forgotten! You know it was for your sake alone that I ruined myself. For you alone I have become a robber and assassin. Carmen, my Carmen! Let me save you and myself with you!

Carmen: Look, you demand the impossible. I no longer love you, but you love me and therefore wish to kill me. I could be to you, but I will not take the trouble. Deprive us all is even. As my husband you have the right to kill your wife, but Carmen will always remain free. She was born a gipsy and will die one!

Just: You love Lovers, then?

Carmen: Yes, I loved him, as I did you, a moment only, perhaps less than you. Now I love no one, and hate myself for having loved you.

Just threw himself at her feet, seized her hands and covered them with tears. He reminded her of all the happy hours they had passed together. He would remain a robber for her sake, would promise her everything if she would but love him again. She answered, "To love you again is impossible, and I will not live with you." . . . At this he became furious and drew his knife. He warned she had shown love and had begged for mercy, but the wrong was a damnation. "For the last time," he cried, "will you remain with me?" "No! no no!" she cried, and stamping her feet on the ground, drew a ring, which Just had given her, from her finger, and threw it into the bushes. At this he stabbed her twice, and with Garcia's knife to boot. She fell at the second thrust without uttering a sound.

I thought (said Just) I saw her large black eyes fixed on me again; they became dim and closed. I stood for an hour unmoved before the body, then it occurred to me that I had often heard Carmen say she wished to be buried in the woods. I dug a grave for her with my knife. For a long while I searched for her ring, I found it at last and placed it, together with a small cross, in the grave. Perhaps I did wrong. Then I mounted my horse, rode to Cordoba and gave myself up to the police. I confessed to having killed Carmen, but refused to tell where her grave was. The sergeant was a good man; he had prayed for her, and had made a mass for her soul! Four children! The gipsies are so insane; they brought her up that way!

Such is the close of Métraine's novel, one of the most touching descriptions of the tragic end of a great love. Death and burial in a lonely wood, the hermit's mass. What a picture of poetic

charm! The dramatists, however, had to be relentless. The drama demanded brevity and sharp contrasts, and therefore very few of these poetic features could be utilized. For this reason, the librettists brought the ruined José and the splendidly dressed Carmen together. This created a sharp outward contrast. They let Carmen, by no means in relaxed circumstances, but rather as the happy mistress of the brilliant Escarillo, whom she loves in her turn, die at the very moment when her new lover has won a great victory. The tragic feature of the ring (also taken from the novel) which Carmen throws away, is here used as the climax of a short discussion which more and more provokes José. Nietzsche wrote on the margin of his piano score:

Last scene a dramatic masterpiece, to study for drama, contrast, logic, etc.—And again, concerning the resolution of the opera, in the "Case of Wagner": At last love, love restored to nature! Not the mere of a "higher stage"! No Santa-santissimality! But love as fate, as fatality, as fatal, as sacred, as sacred, as sacred—goddess! Goddess nature, Love, which in its essence signifies war, in its foundation the deadly hatred of the sexes! I know of no other case where the tragic yoke, which in the essence of love, is so sharply expressed, becomes so frightful a formula, as in José's last cry, with which the work closes:

C'est moi qui l'ai tué!

Où! ma Carmen, ma Carmen adorée!

Such an interpretation of love (the only one worthy of a philosopher) is rare. It raises a work of art above thousands of others. For the most part artists see like everyone else, even worse—they misunderstand love.

It is very little known, by most theatre-goers, that the "Carmen" produced on most stages to-day is not in the original form as composed by Bizet. At the first performance of the work at the Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique,<sup>1</sup> Paris, on March 24, 1875, it was given as an "opéra comique" in the conventional sense of the word—that is, an opera with spoken dialogue. In this form it has been published in Vol. VI of "Théâtre-de Méliès et Halévy," in which the intimate relation of the detailed dialogue to the novel may be studied. The completely composed version, with the recitatives, performed on most stages to-day, first sprung into existence after Bizet's death. The recitatives, musically composed in Bizet's style, were written by Ernest Guiraud, one of his most intimate friends. Guiraud's recitatives, the texts of which were presumably shortened and adapted by Méliès and Halévy, are certainly a little masterpiece. Strange to say, they were

<sup>1</sup>As everyone knows the idea of "opéra comique" is quite inaccurately explained by the French, and is even applied to tragic works if they happen to contain spoken dialogue.

composed for the first Vienna performance (Oct 22, 1875) which, as is well known, insured the success of the work all over the world. "Carmen" had been so coldly received in Paris that Bizet's unexpected early death has frequently been attributed to the Parisian failure. According to information received from the Vienna Opera House management, Jauner, then Director in Vienna, used only a part, to be sure, of the recitatives. Apparently they seemed to him too incomplete, while he retained the dialogue for other scenes. To my great surprise I heard the work in this "Jauner" form in Vienna in 1896. At that time I had no idea that the original version included the dialogue, and mistook the form given for a later adaptation. It was not until May 29, 1900, that Gustav Mahler produced the opera in Vienna with the recitatives only. The revival of "Carmen" in Berlin on Dec. 18, 1891, showed that generally speaking no very clear idea prevailed as to how matters stood. The critics thought Bizet's recitatives had been "restored," and found the dialogue "ridiculous." Whoever takes pains to study the dialogue will hardly be able to agree with this verdict. On the contrary, the question is, whether it might not be better to return to the original form. To be sure, the completely composed version has the one great advantage, that it allows our opera singers to reach their "effective" numbers more quickly. On the other hand, the plot, as a consequence of this short version, remains in most cases quite unintelligible to those who have not read the novel. It would overstep the bounds of this study were I to compare both versions in detail. Those especially interested in this question may turn to a dissertation entitled "Carmen as a type of musical poetry" (1915), written by a young Berlin philologist, Fritz Hübsch. Following my suggestion, Hübsch used this theme in taking his Doctor's degree at the University of Gießenwald. In this very painstaking study—I regret to say, more scholarly than artistic—Hübsch has attempted to show the contrast between both forms in detail, and with characteristic German thoroughness has examined the plot with regard to "idea," "uniformity," and "probability." We can here forget all such philosophico-philological fault-finding, and confine ourselves to an examination of the principal points of the plot in both versions. On the whole, the recitative form in the first act does not produce an unfavorable effect, though occasionally it creates slight improbabilities because of lack of motivation. Take as an example the lieutenant's first question about the cigarette factory. In the dialogue, this is very briefly motivated. He has been only two days with the regiment, and is in Seville for the

first time. In the recitative form, on the other hand, the stiff lieutenant, who questions his sergent about something known all over town, appears positively ridiculous. There are many such passages in "Carmen," but the public has grown so accustomed to absurd opera text-books, that it puts up with anything as long as it hears "beautiful" music.

Gilroy did right to cut out a first-act episode, in pantomime, which took place between Micaëla's exit and the mounting of the guard, and to replace it with a repetition of the opening chorus. Though set to music by Bizet, this episode checked the dramatic program and was probably written only in order to give the singer of "Micaëla" a "patrol" number. It was all the more disturbing, as the public would readily imagine that the episode would have importance in the drama later on. The first law in dramatic art is, never to divert attention from the principal line of action by the insertion of unimportant incidents.

Gilroy's very much shortened adaptation has an unfavorable effect especially in the second act, where the fifth scene between Carmen and José is robbed of many essential features. The original dialog follows the novel very closely. José has just been at liberty two hours, when Carmen reminds him of the file and the gold piece, with which he could have bought other clothes and escaped notice. José answers with an allusion to his officer's honor, and returns Carmen's money. She buys all sorts of good things from Parris with the gold piece. José tells her that he loves his punishment willingly, because he loved, adored her. She answers that she will pay her debt according to the law of the gipsies. They eat together and Carmen sports herself as if crazy and tells him she has just been dancing for the lieutenant and other officers and that the lieutenant had made her a declaration of love. José is jealous, but she laughs at him, saying that she will dance for him alone. She breaks his plate to use the pieces as ornaments, as she cannot find him at first.

In the recitative version we totally miss the really lovable sides of Carmen's character. Such a radical method of shortening robs this scene of very much of its charm. José says he has been in prison two months, but that he bore the punishment willingly because he loves Carmen. Her only answer is that officers were there and that she had been dancing for them. José is jealous, but she pacifies him by saying she will dance for him alone. These proceedings are extremely unnatural, and rob Carmen's character of all sympathetic traits. Her lover comes to her straight from prison, she has not troubled herself about him,

does not even offer him the least refreshment, torments him with jealousy, and then—dances for him. This is apparently nonsense, but nevertheless Carmen is given with this version on most stages, year in year out.

In Méhul's novel as well as in Hoffme and Halévy's dialogue, Carmen is folkie and wild, but not of such a bad nature. She is not the "alien-suckle" of most of our prima donnas, but a naive child of the people, who merely follows her primitive instincts. Much of the nonsense about Bizet's Carmen character would never have been written had people taken pains to look at the librettist's original text. While brevity is desirable for the stage, it should never be employed at the expense of all that is characteristic. This scene could easily have been depicted with more detail in the recitative version. Again, owing to Guinand's brevity, Méhul's appearance alone in the mountains in the middle of the night becomes quite incomprehensible. The original form called for a guide, who is seen on the rocks shortly before José disappears, and who, after José is gone, calls Méhul, who approaches cautiously. The guide assures her that he is acquainted with the smugglers' habits. One of them is keeping guard, and therefore it is dangerous to be seen. Méhul answers she wishes to be seen, as she must speak to one of the smugglers. The guide thinks she is a brave girl, because she had shown no fear when they met the wild steers, which the famous Escarilla was transporting, and now even wishes to go to the gipson. She answers she is not afraid to be alone, whereupon the guide "natively" begs to be dismissed, saying she had paid him well, otherwise he would never have come. He wishes her good luck, but thinks it most extraordinary that she should stroll about here.

In the recitative this entire scene is cut and only a short introduction leads up to Méhul's aria. I do not consider this to be effective, for her appearance here alone, in the middle of the night, is inclined to produce an "opera-like" effect in the worst sense of the word. Escarilla's sudden entry would also be more effective were it better led up to. In fact, at this point the new adaptation is unquestionably to be condemned. The scenic disposition is also poor. Méhul's sentimental aria, written only in order to give the singer a "gratch" number, and her appearance in the Finale, are one of make-bill constructions.

It is not quite clear to me whether Bizet or Guinand chattered the duel between Escarilla and José. The librettists have sketched it in detail. Escarilla fights nobly and does not take advantage over José, declaring that he is a bull-fighter and not a

murderer (rather sentimental for one of his calling). Then José gets the advantage over his adversary as Escarmella slips, and is about to kill him, despite his noble-mindedness, when Carmen saves his life in the nick of time. In the final version the duel takes place quietly in pantomime.

Gounod inserted a Ballet taken from Bizet's "Arlésienne" into the last act, which originally contained only a dialogue between the lieutenant and the gipsies. In this way Frasquita learns many particulars which cause her to warn Carmen. The adaptation here is good, as it does away with the dialogue, which was not absolutely necessary and only interrupted the line of action.

Generally speaking, one can say that despite a lack of motivation which the original Carmen libretto possessed, the book in its present form is one of the most eminent opera-texts to be found. It is a masterpiece, especially in its splendid music construction, fine individual characterization, and real contrasts for music.

One of the chief merits of the Carmen subject is that it has no antecedent history. It opens thus in grossly hazy fashion, as the public rarely understands the words, and a detailed exposition remains entirely unintelligible. When the curtain rises in "Carmen" we are not obliged to know a thing about any of the characters. All we have to learn is that José has an old mother who has chosen Micaëla for his wife, and that he really loves the little country girl. We see this simple bit of antecedent history before our eyes. That Carmen's past is shrouded in mystery adds to her charm as we follow the development of her relations to the different men in the opera. The action is masterfully divided among four acts in such a manner as to place the climax exactly in the middle, at the close of the second act. The close of each act is in its way the climax of a part of the action. In the first two acts Carmen attracts José; in the last two, up to the catastrophe, she casts him off.

It is astonishing how late the recognition of the "Carmen" libretto came. Comparatively speaking, Bizet's music was appreciated much earlier than the book of the text. Even before the first performance, the director of the Opéra-Comique begged the librettists to let the opera end "happily," because to please the public it should under no circumstances end tragically.

At the first performance other objections began to make themselves manifest: above all, the heroine's character was found fault with. The "Ménestrel" of March 7, 1875, says: "The fault with this book is not that it is poorly constructed; on the contrary, it



is full of talent, but none of the characters are interesting." And the "Guide Musical" of March 1914 maintains that both the principal characters were "of an antipathetic nature and devoid of interest." In Vienna the libretto was termed "uninteresting," and at the first Berlin performance there were critics who found Carmen's character "repulsive." For a long time, in spite of "Carmen's" growing popularity, one might have heard opinions, especially in "Wagnerian" circles, radically different from that of Nietzsche, who was enthusiastic in his praise and admiration of the opera. He called it an untamed piece of nature. Setting aside the fact that Guisard decidedly misrepresented Carmen's character at the most critical moments, it was probably the originality and genius of the work which was most painful for the average French and German philistine to bear. For such natures are accustomed to see beautiful wild beasts well guarded in zoological gardens, and if they happen to run about free and untamed, the philistines immediately call for the pathetic police. This diverting spectacle has been the custom for a long time in all European countries. On the other hand, Goethe once declared: "America, you are better off than our old continent." Let us hope that he was right—in this matter as in others.

(Translated by Janet Wylie Duff)

## WHITHER?

By FRANK PATTERSON

**M**ANY musicians have fallen into the habit of preaching rather loudly that the music of France is the greatest in the world and that France is the greatest of musical nations, an opinion of which the present writer has had the opportunity, during a long residence in France, of observing the gradual growth, even before the war, and the sudden excessive development during the past year or two of peace.

Unfortunately this belief is not isolated, not that of a few, but is rather frequent. Of course, the level-headed French artists preach caution, but others appear so convinced of the manifest truth of this belief that they no longer hesitate to proclaim it, forgetting that "self-praise is no praise." Yet there must be a foundation for this belief, there must be an array of facts that can be placed behind the assertion to support it.

And what is this foundation? Debussy!

Debussy, the great innovator of this century, the man who has performed the wonder of creating a school which all the world follows. Debussy, the inventor of a style, a manner. An iconoclast who set up new idols to worship in place of the old, who mapped a new country, who chartered unknown seas.

Is this fact or fancy? Is it indeed true that Debussy has exercised a universal influence over the music of the day? Undoubtedly!

There are few who have not come, directly or indirectly, under his sway. He was not a great composer. He was not a Bach, a Beethoven, a Wagner. But he was a very definite composer, if I may use the term. He possessed a definite individuality, an unswerving unity of style that is a sure indication of a very strong nature.

And he was French spiritualized, just as Verlaine and Mallarmé were French spiritualized. They are called decadent because they have fallen away from the purely impure, the directly, brutally carnal passions of an earlier generation. Tired souls of their race, they realize the failure of love to bring any real, lasting happiness. The drops of earthly love are bitter to the

taste—therefore, all things are futile and there is no joy but in dreams of imaginary times, of Hellenic Utopias that had never any more veritable existence than the fables of the ancients or the fancies of poetic folk-lore.

Verdine and Mallarmé with their Fauns and the passionate decadence of their love sonnets, Maeterlinck with the mystic rhapsodies of his early days (the days of his greatness), these are the concrete expression of the soul of Debussy. And we have but to study carefully, to follow up step by step, the development of the arts in France during the past century or century and a half, to note the impractical dreams of a Rousseau, the Utopianism of the Neo-Classicalists, the only half-conscious carnality of the Romanticists, the evolutions of the Latin-Quarter and Montmartre Bohemians, and in all and through all the costly self-deception of lace ruffles and queens' antichambers—to realize that Debussy was no new thing, as no great thing is ever new, but a simple step in the world's slow evolution. Just as Bach grew out of the Bachian School, just as Beethoven arose as the apex of the melodists, just as Wagner was a unified expression of all that came before, with Weber, Beethoven and Schubert as his direct forebears, so Debussy was the pinnacle of French art-growth, not only in music, but in poetry and painting as well.

No one can look at the paintings of the great impressionists, with their vague coloring and their vaguer lines, no one can read the poetry of the Romanticists and their successors, poetry which seems to say so much but which really says so little, and in all the more expressive for that very fact—without understanding on the instant Debussy's place in the scheme of things, how he fits right in with the rest, a more part of the whole.

But it is a strange thing of these developments that they are, indeed, always a part, never a whole. From them begins a new phase of development which seems at first a retrogression, and that for the reason that these new developments gather up lost threads and to weave them into a tapestry which is static in tendency and design.

It would seem that, though we say, perhaps rightly, that the master founds a school, it is fatal to be his too slavish disciple. This is curiously contradictory, but it is undoubtedly true. The imitators of Beethoven failed one and all, so that even their names are now forgotten. And the imitators of Wagner? Within our own memory they sprang up by tens and dozens. Twenty or thirty years ago, every new opera that was given in Germany, and often enough in France and Italy too, was Wagnerian. I saw

in 1856 or '57, a perfect French "Melotoneur" at the Opéra Comique—and even such a man as Verdi, of Wagner's own age, with nearly his whole career behind him, made his "Falstaff" in the master's own image.

Yet those who took what was best in the Wagnerian plan, benefited by it and through them we see how Wagner has benefited the whole of music, or, at least, the whole of opera. Puccini, for instance, uses the Wagnerian method complete, uses it, having made it his own, uses it to his own advantage and to the advantage of the whole world of music-lovers. He uses a few set pieces just as Wagner did, his accompanied recitative is just as truly dramatic as ever Wagner's was; his harmony is vivid and expressive, and he uses a few well-chosen motives to lend unity to the whole.

But, being Italian, he gives melody to the voices (and may not that be a distinct improvement?) and, being Italian, he has written lighter music than the Bayreuth master and has left the gods and goddesses to the dwellers of the Rhineland. It looks like a retrogression but is not, just as the music of Chopin looks like a retrogression when compared with that of Beethoven but is not, for what it lacks in architectural beauty it makes up for in the strength and freedom of the position of a less formal era.

Yet "Wagnerian" is a term of many meanings. It is used to express all sorts of things, almost everything, in fact, except what it is, what it has proved to be under the successful touch of Puccini, of Humperdinck, of Charpentier and of many others. I.e., an architectural design, just as all forms in music is an architectural design.

It is used, generally, not in praise but in blame, not heartily but sincerely. To call a work "Wagnerian" is enough to damn it in the eyes of many. It is a term of opprobrium, a reproach, an infamy. Because "Wagnerian" has come to mean heavy, tramped, all too serious, unsuited to the gay after-dinner parties and frivolous social functions of the dress circle. It has come to mean dark stages, comic stunts, gods and goddesses or kings and queens whose emotions move us too much or too little by their depth or their height or their remoteness from mundane hopes and ambitions. Like anything but small-talk and scandal, it is out of place at the dinner table. Give us something gay and adulterous like *Faust* or *Thaïs*, which leave our deeper emotions untouched and give us a tickling, tingling delight and a subject for subsequent conversation as to the beauty and attractiveness of the musicians, who are not too far removed from us and through whose diagrams we easily penetrate.

But "Wagnerian" is also a term of praise. It was intended so when certain foolish well-wishers dubbed Charpentier, on the occasion of the production of his "Louise," the French Wagner. Yet not without some reason. For if we could possibly imagine Wagner being French we might also imagine him penning something like "Louise." Certain it is that Charpentier evaluated the principles of the master in this excellent work and, notably, without any slavish imitation. He did, in fact, in his way, just what Puccioni and others have done in their ways.

Vincent d'Indy, on the other hand, and many other French composers before and after him, was Wagnerian in the worst sense of the word. He adopted, notably in "Fervaal," the spirit and the letter of the Wagnerian style. It is a feeble copy of "Fervaal" in which the author proves himself to possess as little ability as a dramatist as invention as a composer. This destruction, assimilation by absorption, of the master's music is one of the most fatal features of Wagnerianism.

And now we come to another feature which is scarcely less tragic: I allude to the one-work composer. He is one of the most notable manifestations of our time, and he exists in the realm of instrumental music, on the concert-stage, as well as in opera.

How is a Mascagni or a Leoncavallo accounted for, with their single excellent works? And how the dozens, the hundreds, of composers who have started their careers with one or two lovely compositions in lighter vein and then fallen into oblivion?

How account for them? Perhaps an examination of the career of Mascagni, by far the most notable of them all, may furnish a clue. Let us look at his work. We find his *Cavalleria* a bold, unrefined dramatic statement, possessed of neither subtlety nor nobility, yet super-excellent of its kind and of the very soil of Italy. And then, it seems, this composer wanted to be what he was not—a noble ambition in a way, and certainly no one can blame him for it. We find him repudiating his old style altogether and trying to be, as I wrong to say, Wagnerian? At least striving to be big, strong, technically complicated, stirring, perhaps, to be recognized as a musician by musicians (and forgetting to write melody).

Leoncavallo? Did he not plan a trilogy to be dedicated to the Kaiser Wilhelm or something of the sort? And Verdi? Can we say that he, too, would not have been led astray had he come under the august influence either in his career, since he turned his back on the 'song-opera' when he penned "Falstaff"?

And now the French? Is not the same thing taking place in France on a large scale? The history of French music is a record rather of lightness than of depth. With the very early composers—Coperin, Rameau—we have nothing to do, nor are we concerned with the importations—Gluck, Meyerbeer, Rossini. We might also credit the name of Berlioz. For he was thoroughly un-French. And was he not one of those unsuccessful successors of Beethoven of whom we have spoken above? Nor was his talent sufficient to assure his lasting success—and it is the successful ones who are copied, copied, often enough, just because of their success.

The others? The real French school? Let us pick out a few at random as memory brings them to mind: Boieldieu, Auber, Bini, Halévy, Adam, Delibes, Gilet, Méhul, Lécocq, Gounod—all of them successful writers of opera and ballet, all light with the scintillating lightness of France. And the instrumentalists? Lalo, Chausson, Camille Saint-Saëns, Sauret,—Verdizotti was a Belgian, so was César Franck. Then there was Massenet, Saint-Saëns, Godard, Messager, d'Indy, and, finally, Debussy.

And where does Debussy belong? Surely, it must be evident at a glance that he does not belong at all! He stands alone, an isolated figure, who belongs rather to the painters and the poets than to the musicians—a curious development which seems to have taken place in poetry and painting while music drifted along untouched by its influence until Debussy burst forth with the glorious song of its emancipation from the old shack.

It is true that the style of Faure is somewhat related to that of Debussy and may have influenced it to some small extent. It is also true that there is a certain similarity between the Debussy manner and that of Dukas and Florent Schmitt, and, in a curiously indirect way, certain works of Stravinsky; indeed Debussy has been accused of having borrowed his style from the Russians. (As if any great composer could really borrow anything worth while from anybody!)

It is obvious, of course, that Debussy's modernism kept pace with other modernisms. The whole world of music grew modern, as we call it, after Wagner; some naturally, others with affectation and malice aforethought with the evident object of making up in originality for what they lacked in talent. This development

There were others of course. I have not tried to "hit them all" but only to point out the general business.

It is curious to note that a passage in the introduction to "L'Apprenti Sorcier" (Debussy) is almost identical with a passage in Stravinsky's "Fireworks," and that the principal passage of the Debussy piece is completely like the "Festive March of a Slavonic rite" (Stravinsky). It must be coincidence!

is in line with what has already been mentioned with reference to the immediate succession of all great musical plants and would be discouraging did not history point out the strictly temporary nature of this sort of illness and the world's rapid recovery from it. It consists in the case of the immediate successors of Wagner, and perhaps in other cases as well, of stealing the bees and leaving the nest. All that these modernists could see for awhile was a freedom from all formal rules, an apparent absence of tonality, an unrestrained use of discords or dissonances, mixed contrapuntal possibilities, and so on and so forth. What they were blind to, was the firm, healthy, full-blooded flesh that covered this skeleton and made it possible for it to live: the splendid melody, the firm rhythm, the salty and salty of the whole. They seized upon the dry bones and mistook their jangle and cracklings for the sweetest of music.

And so it is to-day in France. They are overcome with modernism, with the spirit of Wagnerism or Debussyism. They tell themselves, they tell each other, they do not hesitate to tell the world, that the music of France is to-day the greatest of all music. "Déclarons la musique française à la draft de violence, dans le concert des nations, la place qui lui appartient, et qui est, ne craignons plus de la déclarer, la première"—thus Julien Tiersot in "Un demi-siècle de Musique Française." Henri Collet writes in similar vein. Vincent d'Indy stammers bitterly against foreign music on the French concert and opera stage. And so also many others.<sup>1</sup>

Who are these composers of the day who set French music above that of the rest of the world? Tiersot says "that he has been able to cite almost two hundred names of French composers every one of whom deserves to be applauded for his serious qualities, and of this number a large proportion are of the first rank."

But who are these composers? We need surely not bother our heads about Berlioz, Bizet, Brémond, Clément, Gounod, Massenet, Saint-Saëns and others of the older school whom we know not to be of the highest rank (with the possible exception of Saint-Saëns.)

And of the others, the younger school? We have Aubert, Charpentier, Chausson, Dukas, Fauré, d'Indy, Puccini, Rabaud, Ravel and Schmitt, and again we have none that are of the highest class. For the output of those who are really interesting—Aubert,

<sup>1</sup>The writer "I think because not it is the, simple very one, its movement simple" and these quote a line in it. Another place with that performance of "Felix" in the future history of the musicology.

Charpentier, Dukas, Ravel, Schmitt—is too limited. You cannot make a career and enter for your nation into the musical world-Olympiads with but two works like "Wagner" and the "Habanera" (Anbert) or with one "Louise" (Charpentier) or "L'Apprenti Sorcier" (Dukas) or "Salome" (Schmitt) or the few of Ravel—his "Dadine," his "Mother Goose Tales," his "Heavenly Espagnole," etc.

Again we are left with just Debussy—and his successors. But who are these successors and whither are they going? Schmitt and Ravel and Anbert we have already mentioned. As to the others, the list is long—a few may be mentioned: Gabriel Dupont, composer of orchestral pieces and operas, Roger-Ducasse, poetical and piano works and songs, Raoul Laparra, composer of "La Habanera," "Modest de Sévigné," Léon Hurot, who wrote so interesting flute concerti, Albert Roussel, Grovler, Samamaïch, Caplet, Bonavent, Prouy, Milhaud, Koehlin, Rhenst-Baton, Guibert, Fauriolis, Noaguen of "Que Vadis" fame—these and many others furnish the programs of the concerts of the Société Nationale, the Société Musicale Indépendante, the "Cœuvres Indéfini," furnish occasional new works for the large orchestras and for the opera houses of Paris and the smaller cities of France and Belgium.

Of these men too many suffer from the strange disease the symptoms and characteristics of which have already been outlined, the disease of insincerity, of striving to be what one is not, of stretching oneself like a child and saying "I am a giant" and of imagining oneself so in reality. The successful French composers—Massenet, Saint-Saëns, Bizet, Gounod, etc.—were free from this (how can any composer be successful without being free from it?). Even Debussy was nearly (perhaps entirely) free from it. His larger things (with the exception of "Pelléas")—"L'Après-midi d'un Faune," "La Mer"—are his best. And, if he strove seemingly to out-Debussy Debussy in the exaggeration of his adopted style, he was, at least, standing on his own legs and not on somebody else's.

That is not true of the present generation. Whither are they heading? What path do they follow? It is hard to say, but, whatever way it may be, it is certainly not their own, for these vague outpourings, these imitations of greatness, Debussian on the one hand, Wagnerian on the other, could not possibly be natural to anybody. The interesting and deplorable part of it is that many of them evidently have talent and have begun their careers by penning bits of such pure melody that their ability is indisputable. One may well ask what has become of Fauré



since he wrote his charming little "Serenade!" What has become of Louis Aubert since he composed that lovely bit of song entitled "Légende?" What has Paladiké done since he gave the world "Psyche" and "Mandolista?" If these and others had been willing to walk in the footsteps of Baltoy, Guinard, Buet, Massenet—but they were not! Paladiké wrote heavy grand operas and symphonies, Fauré oratorios and symphonic poems, Aubert shortness, unobjectionable songs.

The songs of Ravel and Louis Aubert, and, indeed, practically of all of the present generation of French composers, all show the same glaring fault: the accompaniments are lovely, the voice parts still. That is to say, they are musically attractive but as songs destined to failure. (One of the results of the influence of Wagner. For did anybody ever think of placing the melody—whatever melody there is—entirely in the accompaniment until Wagner pointed the way?) Does Ravel really imagine that the sort of discords he is dealing with at present are likely to add anything to the love he deservedly won with his "Ondine?"

The influence of Debussy and Wagner, the baneful influence of modernism (which is the natural expression of the few but not of all the world), the desire to be "big," especially bigger than the hated rival, Germany, have pushed out of sight any memory of the true spirit of the French music of the past. Its greatness was its charming spirituality, its lightness, its daintiness, its gaiety, its expressiveness, in other words, of French nature as all the world knows it.

It is true that there is another side of French nature, or rather a more refined, and deeper, variant of this other, which led to Debussy and to the influences, cited above, which were his artistic patrimony. But the musicians of the young generation are not inspired by these influences. They are trying to write chamber music, symphonies, though no French composer (nor Italian, and the French are surely more Latin than Teutonic) has ever eminently succeeded in either of these fields—and their operas are more Wagnerian than either Italian or French. The influence of the successful opera writers of France is wholly absent. "Faust" and "Carmen" are not wholly forgotten but indignantly repudiated (and the works of Puccini are scorned. It hardly even goes so far as to say that they are "not even well written," in spite of which they regularly draw crowded audiences at the Opéra Comique). The traditional German claim that France could only write optimistic is left to be the vilest of insults, though the French might well reply that Germany has utterly failed in this line.

But of this the new generation does not think. Massenet, who was the teacher of many of them, is scorned. They must be "great," "big," "symphonic," must cling to Wagner's cantata or wear Debussy's old clothes, must be anything but what they are: charming, affable Frenchmen, descendants of Louis XV and Louis XVI, with the gaiety and lightheartedness of their furniture, the reason of their decoration, the spindle-legged delicacy of their chairs and tables, which remind one, somehow, of the stiffness of toy spaniels—of the "salons" where philosophy was not a subject for target thought and narrowed beams of light and bright conversation—of light loves and gay infidelities, of formal gardens with their statues of mythical beings, of Fauns and Amazons, of Psyche, Nymphs and Hamadryads. Why should the French *Adonis* wish to pull himself out (like Mark Twain's 'Jumping Frog' which could not jump) to imitate the German Hercules?

## TWO UNPUBLISHED LISZT LETTERS TO MOSONYI

By BELA BARTÓK

**T**HE economic distress produced by the War in Central Europe has compelled many formerly well-to-do collectors of literary and musical rarities to throw them on the public market or at least to draw public attention to them for the purpose of finding a purchaser. The two hitherto unpublished letters by Franz Liszt belong to this category and form part, together with two unimportant letters of Richard Wagner, of the collection of Mr. E. E.

The first of the two Liszt letters—both in German—was undoubtedly and the second very probably written by Liszt to his Hungarian compatriot, Michael Mosonyi (1807-1870). Presumably some of the readers of *The Musical Quarterly* have seen the group-picture with Richard Wagner as the central figure, in which Mosonyi attracts the eye by virtue of his native costume. It is not likely that Mosonyi as a composer, was esteemed in strictly Wagnerian circles as highly as he was by Liszt who in 1837 intended to perform Mosonyi's German opera "Maximilian" in Weimar, evidently the opera alluded to in the letter of April 20, 1837. The project came to naught, because Liszt insisted on some changes, whereupon Mosonyi withdrew the score. On the whole, his operas and other compositions remained even in his day confined to Hungary and to-day Mosonyi is practically forgotten as a composer. At the time of Liszt's letter, Mosonyi apparently still adhered to his more German sounding name, Brand.

This letter is eminently characteristic of Franz Liszt. Probably he certainly was not in the habit of extolling the merits of his works, nor of answering under the frequent attacks on his works by the opponents of the "Neu-deutsche Schule" who saw in him a brilliant piano virtuoso but an impotent composer and moreover resented his championship of Richard Wagner. Liszt's usually modest "Ich kann warten" when a disciple of his expressed his

\*When preparing ultimately these preliminary remarks for the printer, I also took the liberty of referring, in accordance with the illustrations of the original letter among contemporary Hungarian composers, various names to their original form. For instance Károlyffy instead of Liszt's presumably phonetic Karolyffy.—Ed.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY \_\_\_\_\_

1. _____	2. _____	3. _____	4. _____	5. _____	6. _____	7. _____	8. _____	9. _____	10. _____
11. _____	12. _____	13. _____	14. _____	15. _____	16. _____	17. _____	18. _____	19. _____	20. _____
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indignation over the public indifference of the master's symphonic poems has become famous. The letter to Mosonyi, however, reveals that Liszt, without relinquishing his attitude of proud reserve, in the privacy of his correspondence could show quite human signs of impatience, irritation and disgust. And on the other hand, that he took an equally human pride in his own works, in this case the "Grande Première" awarded, the mass which he composed (1860) for the dedication of the Cathedral at Göss.

If this letter is of some importance for the history of this famous "Missa solennis," the second letter, probably also written to Mosonyi, gives us a deeper insight into the history of his "Legende der heiligen Elisabeth." Inasmuch as he says that the score was finished "six weeks ago," September, 1862, would be the date of this undated letter.

From this letter it becomes quite evident that and why Liszt considered the "Legende der heiligen Elisabeth" a contribution to "modern Hungarian music" as much as his previous symphonic poem "Hungaria." Consciousness though he was, he never ceased to consider himself at heart "Hungarian."

The remark about his "answer to Václavský" will become clear if the reader remembers that Václavský (1800-1858) was one of Hungary's greatest poets and in 1846 addressed an Ode to Liszt, which in Breitkopf and Härtel's edition of Liszt's complete works, is prefixed to the symphonic poem "Hungaria."

If Liszt in 1862 for the reasons mentioned in his letter could not accept the call to associate himself with the Budapest Conservatory, no such obstacle seems to have prevented him in 1878 to "get in closer touch again with Hungary." In that year he accepted the directorate of the newly founded national "Ungarische Musik Akademie" and since then spent every year about three months in Budapest as the head of the institute.

## I

## FROM LISZT TO MOSONYI

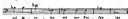
Highly esteemed friend:

It was as a skilled, richly endowed and capable musician and fellow-artist that I first learned to know and appreciate you; and once I have once come to cherish you as a friend, I feel that we are united by ties of affection. Your letter was a source of varied pleasure: first, I was glad to know that you had nearly completed your opera, and that you had finished the work without any contemptible and cowardly concessions, in accordance with your most serious convictions. This is the only road to art: that which leads from the true, to the beautiful and elevated, without false hypocrisy or bargaining—*friend, friend!* I look on you as a

good, honest fellow, no longer in this Cölnerberg County of ours! Hold fast to this admirable manner of thinking and acting, then, as you are not lacking in the ability to do things, success is sure to crown your efforts, sooner or later. I shall take continuous interest in going through your opera with you from A to K, and I shall hold you to your promise to give me the pleasure at the beginning of September, in Weimar. On September 13th, 14th and 15th, Carl August's jubilee will be celebrated here, and probably some of my named compositions (the "Fest" symphony and others) will be performed. I will send you the program and a special invitation letter. So come to the festival, and we will then at once make all arrangements for the performance of your opera by the end of this year. It goes without saying that you are to take up your quarters with me, where you can work quite undisturbed if you see no mind. You will also meet your poet, Paquet, with whom I am on quite a friendly footing, in Weimar (as stage manager).

Your letter also contains a strikingly correct criticism of the situation which my many-headed, though, in most cases, most brainless opposition creates for me. If we look at the whole matter calmly, things must happen as they do, since it is just in the course of this fermenting that good matter is separated from the dross. As was the case in the kingdom of Denmark, something in our musical system of management has grown "rotten," the only difference being that, unlike Hamlet, we do not wait to allow ourselves to be murdered by "The Norwegian" and "The Guildenstern," the truth of the matter being that we really have nothing to do with these busy people, and their impotence, their anger and their envy cannot wound us in the least. When we meet again I can tell you a number of similar incidents which will amuse you—regarding Frazer as well, where, as everywhere else, there is no lack of gossip and trouble. As a document of more than consoling value for me as regards the attacks to which I have been exposed for years, and will still be exposed for years to come, I am sending you by mail, through Kitzschke (the publisher), a few copies of Richard Wagner's letter. Will you be so kind as to pay Kitzschke the small postal charge in-gold, since it is safer for me to send the package unstamped, and to distribute a few copies in my name to Baron August, Count Rüdiger, Doppler, Kibel, and Rosenfeldt himself. The composition of the words with the libretto has been expressed in this letter in a masterly way. Kitzschke has only printed it in part, but the Neue Zeitschrift für Musik in Leipzig published the entire letter in the issue which appeared at Easter.

You, dear friend, will not be dissatisfied, I hope, with the changes, facilitations and additions which I have carried out in the last volume of my Mass.



become still more elevated, and the final figure in the Gloria and the Credo have not been cut in the usual Schott's mold! The leading motive of the Gloria Deo, too, now stands out more independently in the double-

bars (in your bow) and the whole thing done with the motive of the *Credo*. ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ which produces an impression of entire unity,

popular as well as musical. At the performance in Pest, of all by far the most successful, ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ felt at Prague were too insufficient, the chorus too small, and many among those taking part too little acquainted with the work; I felt that there was something missing there at the close but not until later, when I had a second copy made, did I find something which I could use. I hope that the score will be printed not later than September, and then you can take it along when you leave here. As regards an intended performance of the *Missa in Vienna*, my information thus far has come only from newspaper reports.

Do not forget to send me those Hungarian things of yours<sup>1</sup> as soon as they appear, as well as the choruses which you have composed to greet Their Majesties. I am eagerly looking forward to your latest works.

My transient illness, which forces me to keep to my bed for a few days, because I had left it at too early a time, prevents my finishing a congratulatory to *Missa* and *Requiem's* album. I will, however, keep the promise I made *Missa* and *Requiem's*, later, when during the course of the summer I open more than myself in the mood to write a serviceable piano piece for him. My oriental composition, which I am minded to lay aside this year for some time to come, since I have already produced sufficient orchestral music during the past four or five years, now takes up my attention so fully and completely that I can find time for no other work.

On May 10th, I am going to Aachen, which will give a number of domestic and foreign papers an opportunity to write me. Turanyi visited me here, and after what you had written him concerning me, he appears to be very amably inclined toward me, so that I am able to count with certainty on a most friendly understanding with him as regards the whole music festival.

Winterkeper will probably come to Aachen, and I will deliver your greetings to him there, which will be sure to please him. He has wintered himself for the entire winter in Rotterdam, where he is quite comfortable. We gave a couple of concerts there together with Singer, who was making a Dutch concert tour.

My excellent and admirable Gross uncle has best thanks for your kindly remembrance of him, and will be only too glad to trumpet forth your praise loudly when you bring us your opera. The day before yesterday I saw him playing double bass in an orchestra, something which he manages to do quite possibly.

Once more my kindest thanks, my esteemed friend, for your kind letter, and till we meet again at the beginning of September—regardless of all "divisions," who, like political parrot-like plants, make a nuisance of themselves everywhere—let our watchword be Labor and nobility of thought, and our aim—to serve Art faithfully.

Sincerely your devoted friend,

Wienau, April 28, 1837.

F. Liszt.

Send me your exact address when next you write.

<sup>1</sup>Think to that sheet apparently missing in the original.—Ed.

## II

## FRANK LEHLY TO MOSCOWE (1)

My esteemed friend:

Since I have had this moment written down your name to be printed, it seems quite natural for me to write you personally. I am sure that you will hold neither the one nor the other fact against me. I will inform you, first of all, how the incident came about. To the point of the "Legend of Saint Elizabeth," which I finished six weeks ago, I am adding an extended introduction, and am quoting the Flais being chanted in *Just Santa Elizabeth*:



and that of the Hungarian church song "To Saint Elizabeth," from the seventeenth century:



both of which reached me, thanks to your friendly selection and good offices. The Flais being chanted forms the leading motive of the "Legend of St. Elizabeth," and the church song (*Chanson de S. Elizabeth, Wagonner Royal Fils*), appears in connection with the works of chant, immediately before the death of the saint. Matray was obliging enough to write out the entire song for me. It is to be printed exactly as accordinary with his autograph handwriting, as a supplement to the score, in which I shall also express my most sincere thanks to the Arch-abbot of Mauterberg, Michael von Henck, the Baron von Angen, the Reverend Father Meuron (Canon Librarian of the Abbey of Mauterberg), and our admirable Father Guardian of the Franciscans in Pest (whose exact name I beg you will write me when opportunity offers).

As to the work itself, I can only inform you that it is divided into choruses and solos, and contains six numbers complete in themselves, yet inter-connected, as follows: 1. The Arrival of Elizabeth in the Wartburg (the Hungarian organist who accompanies her enters at the very beginning); 2. The Miracle of the Rose; 3. The Knight of the Cross; 4. The Landgrave's Grief—Elizabeth is driven from Wartburg; 5. Elizabeth's Prayer—Chorus of the Poor—Her Death; 6. Solemn Interment of the Saint by Frederick II, the Hohenzollern. To this must be added the orchestral introduction with the leading motive (I had, already announced), treated in light and melodic lyrical style, as well as a few completed instrumental movements, such as the "March of the Crusade" and an "Interlude" (also No. 4). The time of performance will be, so all, two and a half hours, hence the work will furnish an entire evening concert. Should my wish be realized, this work will, later on, form an integral contribution to a new Hungarian musical literature. I think I have already given my answer to Vincenzo with my symphonic poem, *Wagoner*. Yet there still remain several things for me to say, irrespective as to whether they may be quickly understood and recognized.



some time, when I am no longer on this earth, the rest will find itself. I can calmly await the event while I go on working, and meanwhile composedly repair my virtuous reputation with the disapproval my contemporaries have excited.

You know my thoughts in this connection, esteemed friend, and will not take it amiss that I continue to follow my "higher aim" in full earnest.

In the course of the past few days a special scripture has been my portion. I received a very friendly letter, in the name of the (Swiss) Conservatory, and signed by Baron Froyay, in which I am invited to visit Pest. Unfortunately it is impossible for me to leave Rome this winter, and for the time being I was obliged to excuse myself as best I could to Baron Froyay. Yet assistance is an acquittance, it is mainly a question for which reason, and under which conditions I am to go there. My personal position would have to be carefully considered. The reports of gratitude for my musical activity here for several years must decidedly have at my disposal, since interests at present I can further best and most comfortably in Rome. In addition my obligations as regards the Grand-Duke at Weimar have not ceased.

Quite a while ago the Grand-Duke excused me from all duties connected with my position as conductor, and only last year, shortly before my departure, he made me use of his chamberlains. In accordance with the promise I gave him, and which the Grand-Duke recalls in the most friendly manner in his letters to me, I am pledged, as soon as I leave Rome, to establish myself for the time being in Weimar. I also intend to spend several weeks there next summer and perhaps, if circumstances seem to warrant, to have a performance of "St. Elizabeth" given at the Fuxthury.

If at an earlier date, say five or six years ago, the matter of conducting me a sphere of activity in Pest had been thought of, it would have been much easier for me, to be frank, to make my arrangements accordingly. Yet I hear there not the slightest ill will because they did not know what they were to think of me, and what they were to do with me.

Most of my acquaintances do not even know to this very day, only, I must now consider very carefully as regards the acceptance of any proposals, and to what extent I may allow myself to share in them and assume responsibilities. After having directed more than thirty different orchestras, and especially in Weimar, having functioned as a conductor for full ten years (from '48 to '58), my career as an orchestral leader has also come to an end; although less acceptably than my career as a virtuoso, which I brought to a close once and for all in the year '47, since which time I do not play in public. Possibly, however, sooner or later, something will turn up—perhaps a task like that involved in the *Grand Mass*—which would once more bring me nearer to Hungary. Then I will gladly come to Pest, and can promise you that I shall bring along me worthless occasional goods.

Let me hear from you soon, esteemed friend, with regard to your musical labors and, if possible, send me some of your later compositions. In all probability I shall still pass several winters in Rome: do you keep me company mainly in an agreeable and interesting fashion by means of

your works. You know that I shall meet them with an open ear and a sympathetic mind, in which I remain as ever, with sincere sympathy and esteem,

Your devoted friend,

F. List.

P.S. Since but few people are able or inclined to read my scores, I seldom offer them to anyone. However, esteemed friend, should you be able to find time for reading of the sort, I should take pleasure in sending you (through Franz Brendel at Leipzig) the "Faust" symphony and the last three symphonic poems to appear.

Will you be so kind as to either give the enclosed letter to Herr von Angerer personally, or give one that it is sure to reach him? I do not know where he is at the moment, and am desirous that he have some news of me. In your next letter will you please remember to set down your correct address.

[Translated by Frederic E. Mottow.]

## MEDICAL MEN WHO HAVE LOVED MUSIC

By FIELDING H. GARRISON<sup>1</sup>

**O**f music, the mathematician LaGrange observed: "*Je l'aime pour qu'elle m'aide.*" He frequently did some of his best work during meals. But that was in the eighteenth century.

If a physician, particularly a modern physician, has cared for music at all, at least to the extent of becoming a proficient performer upon some instrument, or an amateur composer, it is usually at the expense of what little leisure he has. He may be what the Spaniards style an *oplenoso*, frequenting concerts with the same enthusiasm that tourists at San Sebastian followed the sea on the virtuosity of some traveler. If dragged by his wife to musical functions, as a lamb to the slaughter, he may sit there out "in sad civility," his professional respect saving him from the afflictions of Balzac's critic, who "applauded in the wrong place, blew his nose during the overture, and was ever on the lookout to appropriate the sayings of witty men", or he may be frankly and blankly indifferent. Like the character in Turgenieff's story, who said: "If music affects us deeply, it is injurious; if it does not affect us at all, it is tiresome." The doctor of to-day is a busy man; if he is to succeed in his profession, he is apt to be an overworked man. Like all professionals or industrialists in modern life, with the little of the large leisure which people enjoyed in the eighteenth century or in other ages gone by. His hobbies, as a rule, are likely to be of some literary or technical kind more intimately related to the details of his profession. Until recent times, moreover, or at least outside of the Germanic countries, music and the musician did not enjoy the tolerance and esteem which we know of to-day. In antiquity, the "godlike minstrel" of Homer, the long-haired musician (*primitus Apollus*) of Virgil, the glossman of the Saxons, the Celtic and German bards with their drapodics (the barditas of Tacitus), were familiar figures

<sup>1</sup>Quoted by courtesy from the Bulletin of the Society of Medical History of Chicago October, 1927.

in the halls and courtyards of the great. Greek music, with its tetrachord and embasmonics, its Doric, Phrygian and Lydian modes, its double flutes, its masses of psaltery, symbols and syrinx, was immediately connected with the rhythmic and structural origins of lyric and dramatic poetry, the vectors of which were actually stamped on the ground, dance-wise, by Pindar and Sophocles, as they chanted their sublime numbers. The old pentatonic scale of Scotland and Ireland, which gives this mode its peculiar, quaint monotony, points to the primitive five-toned instruments of the ancient Celtic lands. In the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the spinet (virginale), the harp and the harpsichord were much in the hands of the ladies. The contra-bass, the old "bass-fiddle" of New England and the Protestant countries, was affected by the sterner sex, as affording the ground-bass to psalmody. "Have you played over all your old lessons o' the virginale," says the goldsmith's wife to her daughter in Middleton's comedy; and one recalls the scene in the house of the Lord Advocate of Scotland, where the arch Barbara Grant, at the spinet, puts David Ballou through his paces:

Baron: I just got the bit o' it?  
Was nae this the time that ye wheeled it?

I am Mrs Grant, oh, to the Advocate,  
Yes, I believe, an David Ballou

But, by this time, the musician, like the actor and the surgeon, had become a dilettant, almost an outcast. In the seventeenth century Puritanism began its imprisonment of the human spirit for three solid centuries; and, in the middle of the eighteenth century, as humorously documented by Oliver Goldsmith in the episode of Mrs. Tithus, another, the mean education of mean things, arose, and the composer or virtuoso, while tolerated, came to be looked on as a half-mental, who, like the needy parson, might well sit below the salt. Church congregations might saunter at Bach's organ lectures upon a spread lawn, but he lived in comparative obscurity. As Russeton says, "he hardly cared to claim social equality with the citizens who tanned hides or slaughtered pigs; and probably the high percentages who trimmed the Lord Sevenoaks Highway's townials scarcely knew of his existence." Mozart, divine child of genius, was scolded, humiliated and allowed to starve by his patrons, who addressed him in the third person singular, and was once kicked down stairs by an archbishop's lackey. Emerson tells us in "English Traits" that "when John Gile and Mame sang at the houses of the Duke of Wellington

and other grandees, a ribbon was stretched between the singer and the company." Hans von Erlow, Theodore Thomas and others are said to have interrupted musical performances until the talking ceased. Arthur Nikisch once declined to conduct at a private residence at which his players were instructed to enter by the servant's door below stairs. In the noble patrician in George Moore's novel, the idea of a professional musician connotes "long hair and dirty hands." The epigram of the poet-composer, Peter Cornelius, summarizes the general bourgeois feeling, that a musician, as Major Prederick's case observed of the family doctor, is not a good part for the daughter of a thrifty Patricianhaus:

Sei erd ich Knecht, sei ganz eckhart,  
 Mir ungeschick dachere,  
 Doch sei der Herr im Haushalt!  
 Dumm, Humm! Humm!  
 Wir s die Frauen, hat es eye,  
 Das alle noch anders eye,  
 Doch Musikant—O jeinne!  
 Humm! Humm! Humm!

In John Galsworthy's recent novel, "Beyond," the relation of the professional musician to married life is worked in detail. Its remorseless realism is evidence of the distance we have travelled since the romantic days of "Charles Anster" and the sugar-candy tables of Elias Falke. The whole episode of Gyp's unhappy marriage with the musical violinist Fersen brings to focus a world-old problem. The artist, particularly the musical and dramatic artist, is not well fitted for the married state. It is sometimes the source of his being that he should be mobile and changeable rather than stable, wild and temperamental rather than staid and reliable; while for the young god, carefully brought up, the French proverb still remains true: *Un artiste n'est pas une graine*. In other words, artists, if they want music at all, usually taste best in their own class and kind. But this is a kind of biologic law which applies to all classes and grades of human society, and, other things being equal, it would be difficult to predict that the morals of a given musician might be worse than the morals of a given great-groon.

It seems strange to read, at this time of day, in the biographic memoirs of the eminent clinician, Henry Ingersoll Bowditch, that his father, Nathaniel Bowditch, a celebrated mathematician, who had translated *La Platon*, actually "gave up playing the flute because at one time it brought him in contact with companions whom he thought undesirable in their morals, and in consequence

of which he denied the study of music to his children." This parental spirit, an effect of what President Eliot defined as "the Puritan, Geneva, Scotch Presbyterian and Quaker diases for the time writ," has been happily obliterated in our own time. Dr. Bowditch, at any rate, did not allow his father's propensities to interfere with this part of his life.

I could not (he says) stamp out the intense love of music which at my birth was implanted in me. I whistled as a child early, and at all times. My earliest impressions were of the notes I produced, they came as freely as they came from the bobolink who, dancing on the dry milk-stalk, waddles forth his rich notes in our spring days. I resorted to my tunes as much as the lark does in his, as he ascends towards heaven's gate.<sup>1</sup> My loving mother, being a poor woman, would sometimes say, as I think now, in despair, "Do for the lord's sake (she did not like to say lord), Henry, stop whistling!" My father would launch poetry at me, and say: "He whistled as he went, for want of thought." Ah, no! How much was his mistake, for some of the sweetest, divinest thoughts have come to me all my life through music, although incapable of playing at any time or upon any instrument. How could I ever forget the scornful look which father gave me on one occasion when, fascinated by the music of the Salem Infantercy Company (I presume it was the Light Infantercy, for surely even I, a little fellow, could never have followed the Republican (Democratic) Cadets of that day), I followed closely, marching with the soldiers up the main street in Salem, and expecting of course that they would turn down Federal or Charpent streets, and bring me home in time for dinner. I followed them a little way up along the terraces, still hoping for their return. Finally, as I subsequently heard, they were going to Lyvedale Hotel to have a "good time." I returned disconsolate, and was met with shocked looks from all. My father seemed to look upon me as incorrigible. Alas! what troubles music had brought upon me! Nevertheless, I loved it, and though it became a part of my conscience even not to learn on any instrument, I still practiced. I entered college and soon was thrown in contact with my lifelong dear friend, Rev. Mr. Fudge, of Peppercot, Mass. He played divinely, I thought, on the flute, and we had frequent "duets" at the open window-seat in old Halls during my junior year. I whistled the "first" and he playing "second" to it. Such duets soon attracted the attention of Robert C. Washburn, a chamberlain, president of the Forum Society, and being in want of some bass instrument to play on in that body, proposed to me to try the bassoon. What should I do? Conscience said "Nay." Love of music said, more strongly, "Take up the oboe." And so, leaving my father's chiding and instructions, I plumped in music row. Imagine me then, not knowing a single musical note, seated in my low-studded room in the upper story of Halls, but fingering what notes I brought out! "Whoop!" "whoop!" and "whoop!" again, without variation, was all that I could accomplish. I was; say that I was thoroughly disgusted with myself and with all mankind about me,

<sup>1</sup>E. J. Bowditch: *Life and Correspondence* Of T. G. Bowditch, Boston, 1908, II, 246-247.

and the next day I politely returned the license to Wycliffe, declined the honor of membership in the classic Fiction Society, and decided that I was too old to begin then to try to learn new tricks. But music has been all my life long my delight and my inspiration. I have listened (while standing there and a quarter hour in the Soline Chapel) to the "Missaes," and was almost persuaded thereby to become a Catholic. Under the magnificent and grand robes of Westminster I have been thrilled by the magnificent anthem, "His Body Is Shaved as Peace; His Name Everth Forerunner," as it was sung before thousands of the great men and women of England, gathered there at the interment of the bones of John Hunter, one of the nobles of men, and whose name will float down the centuries as one of the grandest and ever-to-be-remembered disciples of our medical profession.

Thus, gentlemen, I have sketched the trials of my youth, and I compare them with what occurs now. Music is not now generally so commonly connected with dreariness. Music can be the delight of every child, for every child now learns music as a part of the primary education.

Before closing, let me allude to two persons whose influence has been for the best quarter of a century leading up to this blessed result. I allude to John S. Dwight, who, by his "Journal of Music" and his very able and always generous criticism, has upheld the divine effect of music on the human mind and heart; and to Henry L. Higginson, who, by his noble generosity, has sustained for so many years the Symphony Concerts, which have so really educated the present generation to a high appreciation of all that is beautiful and noble in orchestral music.

Dr. Howditch's wife was a talented singer and performer on the piano and harp, sometimes accompanying the fine voices of her sons on these instruments. Of her playing, he wrote:

Olivia is just playing that most magnificent Funeral March by Beethoven, on the death of a hero. It is one of the times that say to me there is something divine in man. Olivia plays it in my taste exactly. I would like to hear its noble strains at the hour of death. They would give what Heide asked for when dying—colds, great thoughts.

Perhaps the earliest of the great European physicians to follow music as a pleasure or hobby was Felix Plater (1536-1584), of Basel, who made a large collection of instruments, which still exists, played three or four of them, was an accomplished botanist, and, in his youth, employed his talents in surrounding his sweet-heart. In the seventeenth century came the learned Jesuit priest, Adamastor Kircher (1602-82), of the old medical town of Padua, who was not only a medical man, but an accomplished mathematician, physicist, optician, microscopist and Orientalist. He was probably the first physician to employ the microscope in investigating the minute organisms causing disease, described "trematium," and made a notable contribution to ethnography in his

splendidly illustrated book on China (*Le Chine illustree*, Amsterdam, 1689), one of the important texts of "sinology." In 1690, he published, at Rome, his *Manuscripta universalis sive ars magna concertus ad organum in 8. libro digesta*, a huge folio of some 1,800 pages, which is a vast summary of all that was known of the theory of music in his time, including the anatomy and physiology of the ear and the throat in man and animals, descriptions and cuts of the different musical instruments, the science of harmony, the physics of the Pythagorean monochord, acoustology or the art of composing melodies, a history of Greek and later music, a long account of chromatics and enharmonics, the theory of time and rhythm in music, in which the rhythms of the Greek, Hebrew and other poets are considered, organ and the art of writing for different instruments. It contains notations of the songs of different birds and the sounds of animals, well executed full-page plates representing various musical instruments, and strange specimens of ecclesiastical and other music of Kircher's time. This work was written at Rome, when Kircher was in residence after 1677, and where, in his museum or "Kircherianum," many of the musical instruments described by him were no doubt to be seen. Kircher also wrote a *Phoenicia nova* (Kompton, 1673). That the learned and versatile priest must have been a performer upon some instrument himself, possibly an organist, may be inferred from the reasons by Pompeo Calzona, Prince di Galliciano, which follow the dedication of the *Manuscripta* to Leopold, Archduke of Austria.

Signor tu, che dei bellissimi sonetti,  
Per favole-cure al tuo-mettere non parti,  
Ti volgi ad ascoltar quel son,  
Ed ascolti or di musici concerta.

E tanto in un momento a suonarla,  
Di nobilitare in simili effetti,  
Fai, ch'io in riverente rispetto  
Di Amore, a' tuoi musici in giogo lieto,

Ben a ragione, che se il musichista  
ATANASIO ogni tua spinga l'armonia,  
Al nome tuo, che tanto il mondo apprende,  
Ben profandamente saper scorta Carlo

Se l'organo d' Epiphania, a Galileo,  
Nell'aria nuova in musica intendono  
E nel concertato l'arveglier possono  
Le voci note di Natura appieno



*Pharmacopœia medicæ minorum,*  
*Chemonia, sive de materia medicæ,*  
*liber quatuordecimus, continens*  
*Chal. Remedio, sive medicæ, regl. d. 1711.*

In 1676, the Danish physician, Casper Bartholinus (1644-1736), son of the famous anatomist, published "De tibis veterum," a study of the double-flutes of Greece, from which the clarinet, the basset horn, the oboe, the English horn, and other modern instruments are derived.

In the eighteenth century, Hermann Boerhaave (1668-1738), of Leyden, one of the great medical teachers and theorists of his time, is perhaps the first physician on record as cultivating chamber music at his home.

Dr. William Barton says, in his *Life of Boerhaave* (1765):

His application to study was greater in the last ten years of his life than in any space of equal duration from the year 1706. When business was over, he took the exercise of riding or walking, and when weary, reviv'd himself with music, his most delightful entertainment, being not only a good performer on several instruments, particularly the lute, which he accompanied also with his voice, but a good theoretic likewise in science, having read the ancient and best modern authors on the subject, as appears by the lectures he gave on sound and hearing, and during the winter he had once a week a concert at his own house, to which by turns were invited some select acquaintances of both sexes, and likewise patients of distinction from other countries.

Leopold Auenbrugger (1720-1809), of Vienna, the discoverer of percussion of the chest in diagnosis, wrote the libretto for "The Chimney-Sweep" (*Der Ruchknecht*), an opera of Salieri's which was a great favorite with Maria Theresa. Boerhaave often visited the house of Johann Peter Frank (1745-1821), the founder of modern public hygiene. In England, John Arbuthnot (1657-1735), friend and medical adviser of the poet Pope, was a composer of sacred anthems, and one of these, "As pants the heart," is in the collection of the Chapel Royal. To him, his colleague, Mand, jestingly said: "I look to you, Arbuthnot, to preserve harmony amongst us." In 1748, Richard Brocklesby (1703-87), one of the founders of military hygiene, published an anonymous treatise recommending music for the cure of disease. The theme is an ancient as music itself—witness the familiar passages in Homer, Shakespeare and the other poets, Dryden's "Alexander's Feast," and "St. Cecilia." The medical literature of the subject is extensive. William Withering (1741-83), a Birmingham practitioner who introduced the use of digitalis in heart disease, devoted his leisure hours to the flute and harpsichord, and Edward Jenner

(1746-1823) played both the violin and the flute. Anne Hunter, the wife of the great Scotch surgeon who was Jenner's preceptor, was a patron of music, and wrote the words for Haydn's "Creations," and for his charming concertos. "My mother bids me bind my hair." But John Hunter himself had no taste or liking for music, as the well-known anecdote makes plain:

On returning home late one evening, after a hard day's lag, Hunter unexpectedly found his drawing-room filled with musical professors, composers, and other idlers, whom Mrs. Hunter had assembled. He was greatly irritated, and, walking straight into the room, addressed the assembled guests pretty much in the following style: "I know nothing of this lock-up, and I ought to have been informed of it beforehand, but as I am now returned home to study, I hope the present company will retire." This intimation was of course speedily followed by an evacuation.

In considering the many physicians who have been amateurs of science in modern times, it seems an outstanding fact that most of them have been in the class distinguished for original work in the exact sciences upon which medicine is based. The great physiologists, in particular, Helmholtz, Ludwig, Engelmann and others, have been famous as musical enthusiasts. Physiology, as Leonardo da Vinci surmised, is, in the last analysis, a mathematical science. We should not think much of a bank clerk, a musician or a physiologist who could not count. There seems a logical relation between pure mathematics and its applied analogues, harmony, counterpoint and the art of fugas. Saint-Saëns has written very capable papers on astronomy. The thought of the mathematician, Joseph Sylvester, seems apposite:

Herein I think one clearly discerns the internal growth of *creatio deus* of parallelism, which observation has long made familiar, between the mathematical and musical. May not Music be described as the Mathematics of sense, Mathematics as Music of the reason? the soul of each the other? Then the musician feels Mathematics, the mathematician thinks Music—Music the dream, Mathematics the waking life—each to receive its consummation from the other when the human intelligence, elevated to its perfect type, shall attain both glorified in some future Mozart (Pöschel) or Bachoven-Glass—a union already not indistinctly foreshadowed in the genius combination of a Helmholtz?

Helmholtz, the greatest mathematical physicist, who was also a medical man, is, in fact, the most prominent of the group of physiologists who have followed music. He was not only a performer and learned connoisseur of music and musical literature, but he was the founder of musical acoustics as a science, the

\*Sylvester, *Phil. Tr.*, London, etc. p. 219, footnote.

author of the most exhaustive treatise on the physiological basis of tonal sensations which has ever been achieved. Musicians themselves, as we know, care little about the scientific import of these things and their aesthetic contributions have been almost entirely of the literary and artistic kind.

Why an octave or a fifth should be more satisfying to the ear than a minor third, why certain chords had a character of their own, what was the physiologic basis of dissonance, what was the true nature of beauty, what was the physiologic significance of the progression of the notes in a melody, what were the physiologic laws, if any, that regulated the development of musical capacity in the human race, all these were questions the musicians cared little about, and if they did allow them to occupy their attention they were dismissed as unimportant. Men took refuge in the notion that music was music because it was adapted to our spiritual nature, and they thought there was little use in endeavoring to examine the physical and physiologic constants of which musical tones were composed.<sup>1</sup>

Helmholtz began to study these things in the 50's, his papers on the physical basis of harmony and dissonance, the theory of open organ pipes, musical temperature, timbre (*Klangfarbe*), the Arabian and Persian scales, etc., culminating, in 1863, in his great work on *Tonempfindungen* or tonal sensations. This work, as is well known, was divided into three parts, of which the first explains the physiologic mechanism of the ear and the way in which sound vibrations and overtones are conducted through the ear to the auditory nerve, the second with the effect upon the nerve itself of tones and combinations of tones, and the third with the psychology of musical æsthetics and the origin of the different scales or modes and harmonies. He divides the historic evolution of music into three periods, viz., the harmonophonic or univocal music of antiquity and of primitive and Achaic peoples, the polyphonic or multivocal music of the Middle Ages, and the harmonic music which arose in the sixteenth century and has been prominent in Europe since the time of Bach. These divisions have been used by historians of music to date, and it seems significant that the feudal spirit of the Middle Ages should be typified by massive polyphony, the struggle for freedom of thought in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by a recognition of the value of melody as well as of thorough bass; and the industrial democratic movement of modern times by the use of the solo-song by Haydn and Beethoven, and the extensions, by Wagner and Brahms, of the Greek *melos*, in which the figurations

<sup>1</sup> *Collected Works of Hermann von Helmholtz*, London, 1895, p. 177.

of the accompaniment are sometimes an essential part of the continuous melody.

All his life Helmholtz was an ardent concert-goer and could have been an able critic of music. He was highly appreciative of the admirable performances at the Paris Conservatoire.

At the concert at the Conservatoire we had a Symphony by Haydn, a piece from Beethoven's Ballet of Prometheus, and the whole of the music from the Mohammed Nijm's Dream, as well as a chorus of Bach, and Handel's *Malchus's* Chorus. One hears better choral singing in Germany, but the perfection of the orchestra is unique of its kind. The chorus in Haydn's Symphony sounded like a gentle whisper, everything was in perfect tone, including the high opening chords of the Mendel-sohn Overture, which was repeated at the end, and generally sound out of tune. The Prometheus was the most exalting melody, with the horns pre-eminent. This concert, after the Feast of Vitis, was the second thing of pure beauty that I have seen.<sup>1</sup>

Professor MacKendrick, of Glasgow, gives the following impression of Helmholtz at a concert:

The first time the writer saw him was in 1874, in the Gewandhaus, in Leipzig, during a performance of Mendelssohn's "Mohammed Nijm's Dream." Near the orchestra he saw a head of such splendid proportions, with the eyes having a rapt expression, as the audience music floated through the hall, and he thought "that must be Helmholtz." It could be no other. A few days later he saw the great physicist in his own laboratory, and received kindly advice regarding the ophthalmometer and associated apparatus.

Helmholtz had indeed a splendid head of the broad-browed Goethe-Beethoven type, and with the admirable breadth between the eyes which characterizes the mathematician par excellence. The physiologist Galk, who is now recognized as a very able investigator of the anatomy of the brain, located the mathematical sense or *Kalkulation* (*sensu des supports des nombres*) in the cerebral convolution which, he says, is "a continuation of the lowest convolution of the organ of music, lying against the lateral part of the roof of the orbit in a furrow or depression which lies anteroposteriorly. If this convolution is scarcely developed, the outer border of the roof of the orbit is not curved, but makes an angle, slanting sharply downward, causing the outer border of the upper eyelid to be sunken and to cover the eye more than ordinarily." This view is born out by the researches of the neurologist, F. J. Muelder, on the hereditary character of mathematical talent.<sup>2</sup> Muelder, after an exhaustive study of typical portraits of eminent mathematicians, locates the mathematical sense in the anterior end of

<sup>1</sup>Keppeler, L.: *Erinnerung an Helmholtz*, Leipzig, 1890, p. 132.

<sup>2</sup>Muelder, F. J.: *Ueber die Anlage zum Mathematik*, 2. Aufl., Leipzig, 1897.

the third frontal convolution (*gyrus frontalis tertius*). Whatever the value of his theory, the resemblance between many of the mathematical heads in his portraits and those of some of the great composers is very striking, particularly in the breadth of brow produced by widening of the temples and causing the characteristic abrupt straight downward slant of the outer margin of the upper eyelid. There is an equally striking resemblance between the portraits of certain great composers and those of certain eminent medical men who have been devotees of pure science and of music. If we place in juxtaposition characteristic portraits of Beethoven, Habener, the anatomist Henle and the mathematician Jacobi, this resemblance will at once become apparent. By the same token Huxley, the anatomist, looks like Haydn, Carl Ludwig in profile is like Liszt or Carl Maria von Weber and in face vaguely resembles Chopin, Brahms and Bizet's look alike and there are portraits of Sir Richard Owen which resemble certain pictures of Richard Wagner. The theory of Moleschott and the points of resemblance in nasal contour and facial features are of course only matters of empirical observation, but at least as striking as the significance of a high brow, a prominent or receding chin, high cheek-bones or deep sockets, etc.

Among the great physiologists who have followed music, the most eminent name after that of Helmholtz is Carl Ludwig of Leipzig, who had over two hundred prominent pupils, most of whom have been the leading teachers of his subject in our own time. One of these pupils refers to his "enthralling personality." He was in fact one of the most attractive of universally professed. In relation to music, his rôle was mainly appreciative, but he followed the Gewandhaus concerts and had chamber music at his house. As his pupil von Kries relates:

As a great friend of music he was a constant visitor of the many concerts with which Leipzig abounds, particularly those at the Gewandhaus. But he loved to assemble musical talent at his own house, where he was a cheerful and intelligent listener. . . . When the new Gewandhaus at Leipzig was erected and the depressive freedom of the concert-hall completed, he said to me, with indignation, that if these remained, he would attend the concerts no more. With such paintings in sight, musical enjoyment would be antipathetic. But he did not mean this, and, in any case, reconsidered his decision.

Among the other eminent German professors, Theodor Wilhelm Engelmann, whose name will always be associated with Gaskell's in the physiology of heart muscle, was a friend of Beethoven

and to him Brahms dedicated his charming string quartet in B flat. Ludwig Hermann, Julius Jacobson (the friend of Goethe), Wilhelm Ebertz, Karl Kuhnemann, the psychiatrist, were all musical, sometimes giving concerts at home. The biologist Hecke learned to play the violin, viola and cello, so that he could take any part as need in an improvised string quartet. Mikulicz and Neisser were accomplished musicians and Chamberpfeifer, and in their youth, had thought of becoming professional musicians. Max Schultze was a good violinist. Wilhelm His identified the remains of Bach when they were reconstructed in the yard of the Johanniskirche at Leipzig and had the sculptor Seifner make a bust of the great composer from his measurements, which turned out to be an admirable likeness. Nannay, the eminent physician at Strasburg, evinces a good deal of the popularism which obtained among the Alsatian population on account of his austere demeanor, through his attractive chamber music evenings, which came to be important social functions in the city. His wife was a talented singer. Julius Jensen, the alchemist, also had a talented wife and was often seen with Wagner's under his arms at concerts. Duke Karl Theodor of Bavaria, who became a well-known ophthalmologist, was musical and played in the orchestra. Alfred de Bary, an assistant of Pflüger at Leipzig, is at once a professor of physiology and a prominent tenor at Bayreuth and Munich. Baudin, one of the composers of "Prince Igor," was once a Russian army surgeon.

In England, Sir Richard Owen was a talented player on the violoncello. His biographer relates:

He was never tired of listening to his favorite compositions, although as he grew older his taste in music became much narrower, and he could only listen with pleasure to the music admitted to be "classical" in his younger days. Wagner, Gungl, and more modern composers were to his mind "intolerable and not to be endured." The keys of his little abandoned piano had been touched by many of his musical friends—Mozzart, John Ellis, and Halle, and had served many a time to accompany Jenny Lind and his own famous voice by Foster.

Sir Robert Christison (1797-1864), of Edinburgh, who wrote the first treatise on toxicology in English, although well taught in music, was a good bass singer. We read in his memoirs:

As a singer, both as a soloist and in part-songs, Sir Robert took a high place among the amateur musicians of Edinburgh. He was gifted with a deep voice of unusual power and good quality, and although he never had time to take lessons, constant practice in quartet singing and in small musical societies brought his voice to some degree of cultivation. He had only the most cursory knowledge of the science of music and

used to quote, as a signal proof of the low condition of music in Edinburgh thirty years ago, that people regarded him as an authority on music simply because he was rather prominent as a singer in society. Nevertheless, music in Edinburgh owed a good deal to him, as he was one of the first students to disregard and oppose the almost universal of Puritanism which regarded the cultivation of secular music by students as liable to be considered as a somewhat dangerous accomplishment, allied to dissipation. When a number of young men, with some hesitation, met together about thirty-five years ago to form one of the first choral societies in Edinburgh, Dr. Robert encouraged them by his presence, and congratulated them on the changed state of opinion which enabled them thus to come forward, contrasting it with the stricter notions prevalent in his youth, when no attempt of the kind could have ventured on.

We are indebted to Dr. Fiddle for the following notice of the musical efforts in which Dr. Robert took a part. "Dr. Christian, Dr. Bennett, Dr. MacLagan, and myself were among the first gentlemen amateur vocalists who ventured to perform publicly in Edinburgh. We had many meals together, and were known as the singing doctors, at parties, and at dinners of the Harveian Society and of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, but it was not till the 20th December, 1821, that we performed in public, at a concert in the original St. Cecilia's Hall, under the patronage of Lord and Lady Murray, for the benefit of the widow of Mr. Hume, when about £70 were raised for her. Dr. Christian, Dr. MacLagan, myself, and Mr. John Christian appeared as play and quartette singers in the Music Hall for the first time on the 27th March, 1822, at a concert for the benefit of the Edinburgh Artisan Rifle Company. This public appearance of professional men as amateur singers made some sensation at the time. We performed subsequently at several of the annual concerts of the University Musical Society. Dr. Christian was one of the most active and enthusiastic members of the Amateur Vocal Club, from its formation at Dr. Bennett's house on 29 April, 1827, till the final meeting in 1838."

Dr. Robert's voice retained much of its power and quality till he was past seventy, and he did not give up taking an occasional share in participating for several years afterwards. The last occasion on which he joined in anything of the kind was on the eighty-third anniversary of his birth, when he took the bass part of Bishop's well-known plan, "Mynter Van Drank."

On three occasions, Christian was asked by the authorities to exercise the right of patronage in filling the vacant Chair of Music in the University of Edinburgh. In making a crossing from Brighton and Dirrpe in his early days, he found that his travelling companions—two English and two Irish doctors and Scherby, a drawing master of the Portsmouth Naval Academy—were musical, so that he was able to improve a nautical concert:

We had not long long together when we discovered that we were a fortuitous congregation of musical atoms, which soon arranged themselves in harmony. Scherby played excellently Turner's violinello, Corkran played the viola family, Crawford the flute well, and Scherby,

Turner, and I found no end of those for tenor, counter-tenor and bass. These passed their very agreeably in spite of badging business, in the high appreciation of the ship's company and the strange passengers, and under the frequent applause of the many vessels which we passed near enough to be within hearing. But, if the whole truth must be told, the harmony of sweet sounds was apt to be frequently and abruptly interrupted by the nautical yodels of Turner and Crewford, and we had the ill-luck, in our last week's excursion, to stir up the storm of the *Mah* in Yarmouth roadstead.

In America, the early history of private and even public interest in music is obscure. Mr. G. G. Sonneck, the learned Chief of the Division of Music in the Library of Congress, has shown that the earliest ascertainable date of a public concert in the country was that advertised in the *Boston Weekly News Letter* of Dec. 10-23, 1751, the next in order of time being the announcement in the *South Carolina Gazette* for Saturday, April 6-15, 1792. After the date of this Charleston concert, there are abundant records of public performances at Charleston, Annapolis, Baltimore, Williamsburg, Va., Fredericksburg, Petersburg, Norfolk, Richmond, Alexandria, Va., Savannah, New Orleans, Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Salem, Newport, Providence, Hartford and other New England cities. The St. Cecilia Society of Charleston, S. C., was originally founded in 1792 as a serious musical club, but after one hundred and fifty years of continuous existence it is now an exclusive association of Charleston's old first families, devoted to assembly halls and other social functions. The musical societies of Stoughton (1784), Concord (1797), and Essex (1797), Massachusetts, followed, and on Jan. 28, 1753, our theatrical season began at Charleston, S. C., with the performance, at the courtroom, of Otway's "Orphan," to be followed on February 10 by our first operatic performance, "Flora, or Hob in the Well," tickets of admission to the courtroom costing 25 shillings each. In these valuable records of early concert-life and early operas in America, which are due to the patriotic zeal and erudition of Mr. Sonneck, we find no note of the participation of physicians,\* although the colonial group of South Carolina physicians is, according to Dr. Welch, the most brilliant in our early medical history. That some of these at least may have secured their leisure hours with flute, violin or keyboard, like Withering or Jenner in Old England, would seem a natural inference. The Florian Society of Harvard University, a gathering of students for mutual improve-

\*The distinguished author of this article is an avowee. In these books I mentioned his previous colleague, Dr. Adam Kirk of Philadelphia, an enthusiastic amateur-musician who attended Governor Penn's musical gatherings in Colonial times.—Ed.



ment in instrumental music, was founded on March 6, 1838. For a number of years, it had from three to fifteen performers, who sometimes surrounded the inhabitants of Cambridge. In 1832 there was only one member, but more than forty in 1839; in 1881 the Sodality fused with the Harvard Glee Club and gave concerts. In 1883, the Sodality was pronounced by the *Boston Herald* to be "foremost among amateur organizations of the land." Independent of the Glee Club during 1898-1904, and tutored by a professional coach, it began to take up the higher forms of music, including the symphonic, about 1907-11, and has now about sixty members. Dr. John W. Parker, librarian of the Boston Medical Library, played the piano parts with the *Florida Sodality* in 1879. The late Dr. James Brown McCaw (1805-1868), of Richmond, Va., who founded the famous Chimborazo Hospital, edited the short-lived *Confederated States Medical and Surgical Journal* (1864-65) and whose son, General Walter D. McCaw, became librarian of the Surgeon General's office, was for many years president of the *Musart Society* of Richmond. This isolated record, at the South, like that of *Bemfitch* at the North, may be typical or exceptional. In most "German-American" families music became a household word. Some American physicians and biologists of German descent, such as Drs. Christian A. Herter, Jacques Loeb, Arpad G. Grosser, John C. Henneter (composer of "Hygiene," dedicated to Professor William H. Welch), Sidney Koh, D'Orsay Becht, Otto Justinger and Gustav Langmann, have been capable performers, or even composers.

Of all medical men who have loved music, the most interesting is *Bilbooth*, of all relations between *Minerva Medica* and *Pans Musicus*, between Polytechnic and the daughters of *Esculapius*, the most alluring is to be found in the musical biographies and epistolary correspondence of *Bilbooth* and *Brakus*. *Brakus*, the stinky, starchy, blond Hamburger, who delighted that his picture was given in German school geographies as a representative of the Aryan race, now gruff and repellent, now exquisitely sensitive and tender hearted, now sarcastic and insouciant, now charitable in the most staidly, modest way, incompressibly the strongest and worthiest figure in modern German art, *Bilbooth*, the stalwart Viking of the North Sea, pioneer of the surgery of the lungs and digestive tract, and greatest German surgeon of his time, grandson of a famous apothecary, sensitive and melancholy underneath his calm exterior, a dreamer and a philosopher, a musician

<sup>1</sup>Harvard Medical Review, July, 1914 (Vol. II). From information kindly furnished by Dr. Parker.

and a part in his natural instincts, a "sentimental North Sea herring," as he wittily styled himself—these two met at Vienna in the winter to found something more than a Helong friendship, indeed a sort of mutual brotherhood. At this time, Brahms was conductor of the *Singakademie*, in 1873-4. He was directing the concerts of the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde*, and Edward Hanushek, of Prague, whose songs have the literary charm of Schumann or Liist, was beginning to make his mark as musical critician. Brahms, Hanushek and Hilbert formed a sort of artistic triumvirate. They were frankly anti-Wagnerian, devoted to the older classical trend of Bach, Beethoven, Haydn and Mozart, and the romantic trend of Schubert, Weber, Schumann and Mendelssohn, which are combined in the music of Brahms. Of this friendship, Hilbert's *Briefe*, published after his death in 1895, are a fascinating memorial. I translate most of the passages relating to music below. The first letter in the collection, addressed to Hilbert's mother in February, 1850, is an enthusiastic diatribe of fourteen pages on the singing of Jenny Lind in Göttingen, the whole-hearted self-surrender of a youth of one and twenty. The first letter to Brahms is dated from Zürich, May 17, 1855, the last (Jan. 18, 1894) from Altona, where Hilbert died on Feb. 6, 1894. In this unique musical correspondence, which ranks with the Schumann letters or the Wagner-Liist *Briefwechsel* in interest, we are taken into the full current of the musical life of Vienna, the concerts, operas and oratorios, Hilbert's piano duets with his friends, and the chamber music evenings, at which Brahms was of course the central figure. Hilbert, in spite of his prejudice against Wagner, is everywhere a charming critic of music, beginning with his account of a trial performance of Brahms's Sextet in G major:

Zürich, June 18, 1868. I wanted to play second viola, and have got amazingly on touch with my part, but as I began to play, I found myself trembling with such anxiety and excitement that I could do nothing. Fortunately Eichmann of Schaffhausen, another viola player, was there and took my place. I was terribly roared and must have cut a fearful figure. The presence of Brahms, the best of the day, the fact that I had been heard at work since 8 a. m., all contributed to get me in the entirely accustomed state of excitement, all the more comprehensible as that I had already taken a part in the Brahms's sextet fourteen days before, when we played it alone at my home. Like an old boy, I had to undergo the latter experience that it is foolhardy to attempt to execute anything in success in art unless one has mastered the matter in hand. Over and above this experience, I have learned never to play a piece in the presence of the company unless it has been perfectly prepared beforehand. I had previously written to you about

the second quartet of Brahms in unfavorable terms. Since then I have got to know it better and find it of extraordinary beauty, so clear, so simple, so masterly that one cannot enjoy it enough. Hagen, Bachmann and Kl, a cellist from the orchestra, Backlund and Genu were the performers. But, as I now know the piece very exactly, I had a very clear idea of the pulse which Brahms must have undergone, although he passed it all off as his most amiable manner. Kirchhoff, Reisinger and Hager had been carrying lively the night before and were fresh all that helped to make the general mood a languid one.

Vienna, Dec. 24, 1895. Brahms becomes the more lovable to me the closer I meet him. Handel's says very rightly about him that he has the same faults as Bach and Beethoven; he has too little of the conscious in his art, both as a composer and player. I believe it is more than an expressed intention to avoid the conscious than from a lack of it. The Requiem, the first half of which was produced recently, is really so subtle in a super-natural way, so Protestant, so Bach-like, that it was only carried through with difficulty here. The humming and clapping because a funeral procession, a battle of the faculties, finally the applause triumphed. Joachim has been here for two months. I have heard him often, have been with him often and have found him personally most amiable. He is a magnificent creature. When one hears him play the last quartets of Beethoven, every one must think himself an ass that he did not hold them, among the most beautiful in existence. Everything becomes so clear and simple, so beautifully modeled in his hands, that no one noticed it was being modeled, it went along of itself like the ring of the sun or the moon. When Brahms and Joachim play Beethoven, Bach, Schubert together, the notes are not photographed in his brain, but the conceptions appear to the ear as living, true pictures, appear and disappear. It seems to me strange that any one should applaud. This genre does not suit everybody, the modern man, with his peppered palate, will not find it to his taste, but to me it is the highest thing which can be done by reproduction.

Very different is my impression of Huberman, who has given five concerts. He is a highly gifted man, a talent of the first rank, not without originality, but badly educated. His compositions (piano concertos, chamber music) are interesting enough to give one pleasure in their beauty, and to neglect what is ugly or barren. So is it, too, with his playing. I have never heard any one play so beautifully, yet never have I seen an artist so little the finest things with such triviality. An innate crudely sentiment becomes impressively apparent, in combination with a grace of execution, an intensity of tone and creation of surprising effect.

Vienna, March 26, 1878. Brahms is very active here as conductor; he has got up incomparable beautiful performances and won the most cordial recognition from the concertgoers. His *Träumerei*, with organ and a colossal chorus, produced a wonderful effect; it is massive, monumental music; its effect being that of a continuously pleasant wave lashing at the same time transparently simple in the grandest of fancy style. It is certain that nothing quite so considerable has been wrought since Handel. In the last concert Brahms had the hardihood to attempt one of the most difficult of Bach's cantatas with text by Luther (Credo) by

in Tchaikovsky). It was damnably fast music (finished *forte* *Musik*), although of sublime effect here and there. But at the hands of a conductor as highly trained as Bruckner, even this was pleasantly received by the Vienna. Two *Falklieder* by Bruckner produced such a storm of applause that it seemed the roof might open to. The old King of the cover was half bent himself with musical intoxication. I wish you could hear something like this once, one is really carried away by the beauty of intonation of this choir, its spontaneity and dynamism, its force and grace, executed as if by one voice. Bruckner directs all that as King steers a trained horse about in his circus.

Vienna, Aug. 1, 1875. Manfred! Ah, but you should have heard and seen *St. Reflections* are useless, it is incomprehensible, full-blooded poetry and full-blooded music! It is stunning in a constant way, my dearest, one floats in the soft air without effort. The noise of the spirit of Austria always brings the tears to my eyes, even now, as I think of it, I am thrilled through and through. Such music! "But pardon me?" "Manfred, farewell!" "Tomorrow my success ends?" If Austria strikes the right note, time here and if Manfred is sympathetic, together with a Vienna orchestra and Herbeck as director? I tell you it is mad-making. Is it a fortune or misfortune to feel things in this way? For me it is my new thing we have had lately decided by comparison. Especially the great D major Mass of Beethoven, which I have heard for the third time, after studying it beforehand. For me this music is more distinct than the weakest of Bach and Handel. Not that it is specially distinct! No! But timeless, insignificant in invention. Textured, borderless music. Beethoven cannot write for the choir, except unfortunately, his fugal themes are nearly without effect, and one is so glad when the tortured squalling ceases to an end. If people wanted to be honest, most of them would speak as I do. For the professional musician all this is as Michael Angelo's Sistine Chapel for the painter. But even for a cultivated musical ear it is dull music, especially for Protestants, who have no youthful poetic associations in mind. . . . I have already heard the Bruckner string quartets seven times this winter, sometimes at home, sometimes in concert. In our four-handed rendering at Carlsbad, we took all the tempi much too fast. Bruckner requires everywhere very moderate tempi, because that music, on account of its many harmonic changes, cannot otherwise unfold itself properly; this is essentially true of all examples modern music. Beethoven, Schumann, Wagner, Bruckner, in all the types works of their later period, favor the Andante-Tempo which Wagner has called "specifically German." Through Mendelssohn's influence, rapid tempi became too much the vogue, but there was much less really strong passion in these efforts than accorded to us formerly. In any case, I will not permit anything to be said against Mendelssohn.

Vienna, Aug. 3, 1875. At this moment my fingers tremble after playing Bach for an hour. That is a tremendous tax for the fingers, for not only each movement but the whole must be shaped forth like a Gothic stone structure, tall and great. This morning I have given myself up to the music with a kind of passion.

Vienna, Jan. 4, 1881. You have naturally heard much through me of Bruckner, also of Strauß, a gigantic talent! If K. speaks of him

somewhat playfully, Brahms says: "I do not understand you, I could almost jump out of my skin with envy at the thoughts which come to this man merely by the way!" Dvořák often writes very hastily indeed, in dashing fashion, but he directs it to Schubert; he is now so highly commended by his publishers that he is carried, through his easy productivity, into Finlandstrasse. Were he younger and had he been discovered earlier, he would undoubtedly have achieved something worth while, but now, whatever he does not achieve successfully by a lucky shot, he does not improve at all by brooding over it. Dvořák's nature is akin to Schubert's, even though he does not come anywhere near him, especially in his song.

Kirchner has arranged the new Hungarian Dances of Brahms, and also his Liederlieder for two hands. Get these wherever you know what benefits Brahms has revealed in the middle and counter voices of these things will not find admiration enough for Kirchner's arrangement.

In the plastic arts, aside from the decorative, Vienna has always been very weak. Yet I find the Beethoven monument entirely unique in its beauty, impressively characteristic, very modest, in any case. The art critics may have their objections to the figures around the base, but you must not abuse the statue itself, or I shall be cross with you.

Vienna, July 27, 1885. From some indications, it appears that my house was once owned by one of the most famous professors of the period just after Joseph II, Johann Peter Frank. I was puzzled with the probability as far as it went. But Paul went immediately to the municipal council, inquired in the dusty property records, and obtained the probability in evidence. The wife of the famous Johann Peter Frank's son, an incomparable medical professor, was in her time a famous singer, she sang in the Cecilia and the Neutons under Haydn. Through this circumstance, Beethoven came to the house, whose musical evenings were often given in the garden, with dignitated scenes from the Italian operas of the time. . . . The interesting thing for me is that Joh. Peter Frank and Beethoven put in my house, and that a similar relation—let us not be arrogant—obtained between you and me one hundred years later. . . . Beethoven certainly wandered in this direction, must not Haydn, too, have had rehearsal with the above mentioned cantata in this house? What a noble trial! Haydn, Beethoven, Schubert!

Athens, Dec. 28, 1886. People say there are no promenades here, unsuccessfully! Along the seashore, in both directions, are excellent roads on which one really leads no hotel guests, though many other can be seen and heard there. "May Night," "On the Lido," "On the Lake," "Evening Twilight," "Summer Evening"—all the Brahms melodies stream towards me here. (The name *Evros* brings me her summer cottage.) I put along the records to the measures of the last movement of your F minor quartette, and the third movement of my (I mean had) A minor string quartette brings me back in comfortable time. I am with nothing better.

Athens, Jan. 8, 1888. Brahms is in Vienna and lives at IV, Carpiasse No. 8. On the seventeenth of this month his new symphony (E minor) will be produced, after which I give a haphazard dinner. The new work is already known to me from an arrangement for two piano;

It is very beautiful and grand in conception and execution. That Strauss will yet surpass himself does not seem to me probable from his latest works. Berlioz and Brahms also, and many others of the great, have really had nothing new to say after reaching fifty. Even the most original artist will give out at fifty, if he lives that long, if we have understood his accomplishment up to that time, his later things seem to give us little that is new. At that time, the artist can still conceive things beautiful and great, but going little by little to go beyond the limits of the beautiful & great and surpass himself give his own head, as Berliozes, to my feeling, tired to do. A singular exception is Haydn, who in the "Seasons" has already assimilated the Mozartian originally to himself and has begun to transform it into a new Haydn species.

London, Oct 3, 1844 Dinner at the hotel and then a charming, but unusually very clever, opera, the "Mihada."

St. Clara, Sept 3, 1844 Wagner was indeed a very considerable talent in many directions, but if he had not been a Capellmeister for twenty years and learned the whole trade of composing and scoring in actual practice from his youth up, he could never have brought his ideas to expression. His scores are the product of a refined practical ability and a very healthy, sometimes washed, over-worked human understanding. He learned the trade of Weber and Meyerbeer. That he has applied his technical experience to the expression of his ideas, and while remaining himself, has stood upon the pedestal erected by others, that is certainly a proof of his high, grand artistic individuality.

Frasca, Feb 18, 1844 (To Professor Kaysermann in Utrecht.) You and I stand apart from our university colleagues, since Strauss has dedicated his third string quartette to you and the first two to ourselves. Joachim was here with his quartette and played yours in B flat. I was almost jealous of you, the effect was sublime. The piece has been repeatedly played here by Hellmesberger, Rosé, Heuckmann, etc., but such a fine exposition of this piece, formless in its beginning and so complex in its modulations, I had hardly thought possible. The most difficult staccato combinations sounded naturally, as if they could not have been otherwise. Even alongside of Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn and Schubert's numbers, its success was colossal. The most conservative old ears of music came up to me (how I pay for a Head-Breaking) with the assurance that they had never understood the quartette until now. And the great glue-binding public was in ecstasies. The whole movement had to be played six times.

Frasca, Dec 18, 1843 (To Strauss.) Our appreciation of yesterday was unanimously instructive to me; your statistics of to-day, for which I am most thankful, show the extent of your interest. It proves to me, that in any scientific work, one cannot be too careful in getting control of his facts before beginning to reflect. . . . That piece in a minor key which attaches themselves rather to us numbers, you will admit, we have the related fact that, in our immediate surroundings, dull soft colors are, on the whole, more agreeable to us than brighter ones. In our youth it was otherwise. Mothers now does not like dazzling light effects in the living room. Now the modest preference for painted windows, high sharp voices are unpleasant to us. In the same, people

speak in a minor key. . . . My general impression would be that with Handel and Haydn, the major period begins, and that before that time, incidentally in the oldest folk-songs, the minor key is supreme. That this view is incorrect, so far as the folk-songs are concerned, you have lately shown me, even though the minor is more prominent in the Scottish and Swedish folk-songs than in those of other people. . . . All folk-songs in the major, as well as all modern folk-songs in major, easily leave with me a liberal impression, while those in the minor seem distinguished. An old melody in the minor seems to me less distinguished than an old melody in the major. . . . What do you think of the following? I have the impression that what you call the "specific physiognomy" (*das eigene Gepräge*) of a composer, and what is otherwise understood to be his specific originality as his novel mode of expression, rests mainly upon new harmonic combinations in the middle voices, otherwise upon the peculiarity of the rhythms employed (*Rhythmus*). The custom of the custom of enhancing the melody by means of variations, and the trick of only repeating them, once they have been set up, seems to me very characteristic of Wagner and the various French and Italian. In this case the organic growth of the musical composition ceases immediately. It is more a laying together of the self-same stones, a mosaic or kaleidoscopic effect with unchangeable, multicolored stones. That can be very pretty, but no other enhancement of values is possible except through the intensity of the color-effects.

Flora, Sept. 25, 1875. (To Liszka.) Unfortunately, my dear colleague, K., otherwise so prominent and so widely cultured, is so absolutely unacquainted that I can do nothing with him. He likes to hear music, especially singing, and sometimes attends concerts with his musical wife. Yesterday I played to him "Wie wärest du" in F sharp major, with accompaniment in F major. He said immediately, "That is from the French," but made no other remark. Then I played the melody in G major, the accompaniment in F major, and asked him if he noticed any difference. Answer: "I liked the first better." Can you form any conception of such a state of hearing? It would be interesting to make such investigations frequently. As yet, we do not in the least know how far people are unacquainted who still get a certain definite pleasure from music as a rhythmic series of sounds.

This investigation was carried out to some extent in Helmholtz's posthumous essay, "Über die Musikalität" which is a kind of miniature pendant to Helmholtz's treatise on tonal sensation. The manuscript, somewhat fragmentary in character towards the end, was turned over, after Helmholtz's death, to Händel, who published it with an introduction. At the beginning, Helmholtz goes into that a sense of rhythm, such as is exhibited by Napoléon dancing the measures of tarantelle to the pulsation of the tambourine, by Egyptian porters moving in processional order to the monotonous rhythm of Arabic verses, by soldiers marching to drum taps, is perhaps the most essential element of a feeling for music. From reports made to him by officers in

various Austro-Hungarian regiments of different racial compositions, he found there are recruits and soldiers who never have, never acquire the sense of rhythm necessary to keep step without watching their comrade's movements. From observations similar to the one mentioned in his letters, he found that there are persons who are rhythm-deaf as well as tone-deaf or harmony-deaf, persons who have learned to play musical compositions in a purely mechanical way, yet are incapable of recognizing the softness given when they are played by others. The essay is a neat little discussion of the scientific aspects of the subject, in the style of Hanslick, whose biographical memoir contains, in an appendix, a number of interesting letters from Bruckner. Huska died in 1897, having survived his friend Bruckner three years. We may take leave of him in the words of that exquisite critic, James Huneker:

He was the greatest contemporary after Bach, the greatest architect after Beethoven, but in his songs he was as simple, as manly, as tender as Robert Burns. His highest peaks are tremendously remote, and glitter and gleam in an atmosphere almost too thin for the dwellers of the plains; but how intimate, how full of charm, of gracefulness and the happy moments in his chamber songs! . . . Often and purposefully he seems to range himself in a hedge of hummocks and quads, but once penetrate it, and you find blooming the great flowers, whose perfume is delicious. To me this is the eternal paradise, that Brahms, the master of ponderous learning, can yet be so tender, so innocent of soul, so fragile, so childlike. He must have vainly protected his soul against earthy meddling to keep it so pure, so sweet, to the very end.



## AMERICAN INDIAN CRADLE-SONGS

By NATALIE CURTIS

I HAVE often been asked if a realization of the responsibilities of parenthood dignifies the life of the American Indian. So important, so sacred even, is to the red man the sense of fatherhood and motherhood that the Indian expands the obvious human tie into a mystic, cosmic relation between man and the life-giving forces of Nature. "And man is blessed when in the holy songs the Mountain calls the man "my son?" say the Navajos. "Father?" cries the Indian of the Plains when praying before the sacred rock, symbol of the fern on which the created universe is hoisted. "The Evening Star," say the Pawnees, "is the mother of the Pawnee people. In the garden of the Evening Star grew the first corn-plant, the Mother-Corn. And the Evening Star took her daughter, child of the Morning Star, and placed her on a cloud and gave into her hand the Mother-Corn saying 'plant this upon the earth.' And the seeds fell to the earth as falling rain." Thereafter, the division of human labor according to sex is particularly symbolized in terms of parenthood: "The bow and arrow is Father, for the father must defend and protect. But the corn is Mother; it feeds us and gives us life. Take a grain of corn and split it; within will be found mother's milk. So in old days the work of planting and tending the Mother-Corn fell to woman. For she, herself the bearer of seed, is the nourisher, the mother of us all." The woman it was who wore the baskets wherein the garnered corn was carried, who cooked and prepared the sustenance for man. "So," said a Pawnee, "we look upon woman as Mother, always. A man might almost call his own wife 'mother.' For we see in woman the giver of life."

To emphasize the human, intimate side of Indian parentage, the following little group of ballads is offered as a glimpse into primitive motherhood; for civilization holds no sacred human

All Indian songs quoted in this article were collected, translated and written down by the author on the Indian reservations and are copyright by her. The Navajo, Pawnee, Cheyenne, Arapaho and Hopi ballads were originally published in Miss Curtis' collection, "The Indian Book," Boston and New York, Publishers. The other songs are here printed for the first time.

In parentheses Indian terms, where not given the continental name: Awak, Hopi, Iowa, Iowa, Iowa.

ties deeper than those felt by early man. The melodies of these Indian "sleep-songs" are so potently sleep-giving that they may well be found acceptable to the white mother.

I once asked some school-children if they knew why the Indian mother carried her baby on her back. A hand flew up: "Because the Indian mother is always busy with her hands!" When the toiling woman went about her many tasks, with her breast her baby, bound securely on her back. How often have I seen the little Hopi women of arid Arizona, like hardened ants, climbing up the precipitous trail to their cliff-patched homes, a heavy jar of fresh-fetched water on the back, and atop of the jar, the baby. Among some tribes the cradle-board to which the very young infant was often bound was highly ornamented with all the red man's age-old talent for conventionalized symbolic design. The backskin covering might be richly embroidered with porcupine quill in geometrical ridges and angles of color, and the hood which shaded the baby's eyes fastened with soft feathers and dangling shells for the tiny hands to play with, or the board itself might be painted with protective emblems of those cosmic forces with which the life of this nature-people is always linked. The Morning Star, dawn-emblem of a Pawnee child, formed the chief design of the cradle-board on which were traced the arrow heads which tipped the arrows of the Morning Star for his journey across the sky. The rainbow enclosed the whole. Thus protected, the child might find strength and growth in sleep while the mother lulled it with the soft syllables, "Hau-wau."

### Pawnee Lullaby

"Hau Wau" "Sleep Rocking"

Not too fast very legato

From Oklahoma

Hau Wau Hau Wau Hau Wau Hau Wau

Hau Wau Hau Wau Hau Wau Hau Wau

Even as the art of a people reflects—whether consciously or not—the land of which the race is the human expression, so does the very person of the individual suggest the environment which has played upon him. Man must even express Deity in terms of mortal art. The Virgin Mother is an Italian, a Fleming, a German,

or even, as in the famous "Black Madonna," a mother of dark-skinned men. On the Yuma desert, near the border of Mexico I came one day upon a young Indian girl who—had the American Indian been Christian—might have seemed to a native painter a fitting symbol of Divine motherhood, though she was utterly the child of the untamed land that stretched on every side of her in brilliant orange, red and gold. She was sitting bare-foot on the sand, the folds of her voluminous skirt spread about her like an inverted flowercup while the desert wind lifted the purple wreath that flowed from her shoulders. The baby, bound with beaded trappings to the cradle-board, made a flash of red across the knee. Flamingo cactus-blossoms flamed behind her. Her loose heavy hair, cut straight across the shoulders with the severity of Egyptian hair-veil, black and glittered in the sun like the wing of the black-bird on the cactus branch. The desert butterfly, with pattern-painted wing, had taught the mother the art of decoration which glowed in a round spot of red paint on each brown cheek. In a voice as low as the half-heard song of the Colorado (the "Red River" of which the Yuma Indians call themselves "the east"), the mother was crooning. The rhythmic words "Kashaman, asow'-wa" ("sleep, child"), alternating with a cooing "loo-loo-loo-loo," were strong like colored beads upon a melody whose minor seventh, added to the five-toned scale, sounds a typical modal characteristic of many a Yuma song.

### Yuma Lullaby

Ash'vor Honor "Kashamatik" "Song for putting Child to sleep"

With slow swinging rhythm From Mother's Memory

1. *ash'vor honor kashamatik ash'vor honor kashamatik ash'vor honor kashamatik ash'vor honor kashamatik*  
 2. *loo-loo-loo-loo loo-loo-loo-loo loo-loo-loo-loo loo-loo-loo-loo*  
 3. *ash'vor honor kashamatik ash'vor honor kashamatik ash'vor honor kashamatik ash'vor honor kashamatik*  
*loo-loo-loo-loo loo-loo-loo-loo loo-loo-loo-loo loo-loo-loo-loo*





Sleep,                    In - ee - ee                    In - ee - ee  
 In - ee - ee,            In - ee - ee                    In - ee - ee  
 In - ee - ee,            In - ee - ee                    In - ee - ee  
 In - ee - ee,            In - ee - ee                    In - ee - ee

### Cheyenne Lullaby

"Heshkotsi No-on" "Baby Song"

From Oklahoma

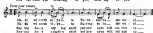
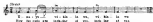
Slow 3/4 Time  
 ee            ee    ee            ee    ee  
 ee            ee                    ee  
 ee            ee                    ee  
 ee - ee - ee - ee - ee            ee - ee  
 ee - ee - ee - ee - ee            ee - ee  
 ee - ee - ee - ee - ee            ee - ee  
 ee - ee - ee - ee - ee            ee - ee  
 ee            ee                    ee

On the steep, rocky trails that lead from the level Arizona desert to the mesa tops of the sedentary Hopi Indians, the "blind" basket-dancer in the hot sun, the little basket-sometimes sleeping on the backs of their elders—so the children say. The Hopi mother sitting in her stone doorway, swaying gently to and fro, herself a living cradle, tells the baby on her back to be blind like the basket—to shut its eyes and see no more while she sings "pa'va, pa'va," the Hopi word for sleep.









\* Sing into hand eye.

The simple philosophy of the natives of our land, whose great teacher is Nature, sees throughout all creation the birth-giving power of two opposite yet making forces, the male and female principles. Symbolized in nature-poetry these primal elements of existence became to the Indian the Earth-Mother, within whose potent breast he hatched and unborn all the seeds of life, and the Sun-Father, awakener and fecundator. Man is the child of these cosmic parents behind whom lies the great life-principle itself, too vast and unknowable to be defined, a force impersonal and infinite—the "Great Mystery." At a Hopi name-giving ceremony which I witnessed, the new-born infant whose tender eyes had been kept within doors for the first days, was at last reverently carried of dawn to the edge of the cliff to behold its father, the Sun, whose first rays welcomed the child into the elemental world of which the new life was now a part. Solemnly the grandmother and aunts waved ears of corn, symbols of fertility and plenty, reciting a short prayer while pronouncing over the child its names. Slowly the sun rose, shining on the upheld infant and on the bronze women outlined on the austere summit of the cliff. Dawn flooded

the desert with swift waves of amethyst and gold. The morning air, pure, unbreathed, unstained, seemed the very breath of a life infinite and sublime. I forgot the degrading discords of the white man's tones. The figures at the edge of the sprawling crags of rock were as yet the only human forms in a land whose vast barrens tossed against the sky in unbelievable color-splendor. The birth-thrills of the coming day throbbled glory and promise and beauty unstained. Into such a world was the Indian baby born. I wonder, does many a white mother offer to her child a birth-gift meaningful as this? And yet the heritage of Nature is ours for the outstretched hand and the voice that asks.

## ON HEARING WHAT YOU WANT WHEN YOU WANT IT

By CARL VAN VECHTEN

**T**HERE are times when life seems to be a very faulty reality. Reflecting to-day, for example, in my garage, I find myself in a melancholy mood following a perusal of the advertising columns of the newspapers. I have looked through the concert-announcements for the day only to discover that I must hear—if I hear anything at all—either Beethoven's Seventh Symphony or Mozart's Symphony in G minor; either the Coriolan Overture or the Overture to Euryanthe; either Chabrier's Bourée Fantasque (which I have never heard) or Sibelius's Finlandia; and, at the opera, I am offered Aida! Now this is all very discouraging to a man of temperament who would like to order his music as he orders his library or his veal kidneys. One is never obliged to eat at some one else's banquet, one reads according to one's fancy, but when one wants to listen to music, one must perforce listen to what is being played or else not listen at all, unless—and here one must admit the facility of the comparison—one is Ludwig of Bavaria. This afternoon I have a whim to attend a concert which shall consist of César Franck's D minor symphony, Stravinsky's Sacre du Printemps, and Debussy's La Mer. Franck's symphony will, of course, be performed some time this winter, but the performance will be sure to fall on a day on which I have no ambition to hear it, and the other pieces will not, in all probability, be performed at all.

My temporary prejudices and tastes in music, indeed, never seem to be in accord with my opportunities. I longed for many years, for example, to hear Vincent d'Indy's *Estac*. The idea of the music drifting, as the goddess of the legend described, awakened my curiosity which was still further whetted by the chaperones which Philip Hale and James Hunsicker have constructed around the piece. But curiosity dies in time and on the day when, finally, I saw the thing announced, I discovered, to my surprise, that all appetite had left me. Nevertheless, on a bright winter afternoon, when I should have preferred to walk in the

park or to go to a moving-picture theatre, I forced myself into the concert-hall. The hall was over-headed and stuffy; I was surrounded by a crowd of hysterical females who had come to see a Russian violinist, whose name, had it been translated, was Miko or Aiko. I sat through a long program, for later was lost, and when, finally, it was played I began idly to turn over the pages of my book of notes about the concert, reading the advertisements with an interest which I found I could not devote to the composition itself. To that, in fact, I scarcely listened. This is not a unique experience, it is usual. The evenings on which I yearn to hear Boris Godunoff they always sing *L'Amour du Tie Ra* at the Opera; the afternoons on which I have a deep longing to listen to Lortz's *B minor sonata*, the Hoffmanns and Busoni and Moscovitches all are busy playing Chopin's.

This is very confusing and irritating, for taste in music changes, especially if you hear a good deal of it. I have worshipped at several altars. To some of them I return when I can. The cool, sane, classic beauty of Gluck, the gay, courtly, tragic-comedy of Mozart, the red glare and poster-like dash of American ragtime, the lovely music of Debussy, so like the nocturns of Whistler, the refreshing melody of Arthur Sullivan, these are seldom remembered, but the days on which I enjoy the orchestral magic of Richard Strauss, the trumpet blasts of Richard Wagner, the fantastic inventions of Hector Berlioz, and the thunderbolts of Beethoven come more rarely. Other intermittent pleasures find me hankering for the ironic acidity of the quaintly perverse *l'Heure Espagnole*, the lambast of Handel, whom Samuel Butler very neatly succeeded in making famous again, Grieg's piano concerto, Chopin's music, the admirations of Charles Martin Loeffler, and the thrilling experiments of Leo Ornstein, but seldom do mood and music strike me simultaneously.

There are days on which the charming melancholy and sentimentality of Werther and Eugene Onegin, lyric dramas curiously similar in feeling, would come as a boon. There are nights when "*Les Larmes*" would send me sobbing from the theatre, for this air and the letter song in Tchaikovsky's opera evoke a certain artificial atmosphere of grief more poignantly than any book or picture with which I am familiar. When Tatjana begins the letter song, if you are in the mood—and how seldom this is!—the key of the play is handed into your keeping, the soul of the composition commences with your own soul, and a vague sympathy with something perhaps alien to your own nature takes possession of you.

Sometimes I am seized with a desire for the dance, a desire for a conventional rhythmic expression, for, at least, even if one cannot dance, one sometimes wants to hear dance music, but these will not be the nights on which the Beautiful Danse, Coppélia, or Beethoven's Seventh Symphony will be played. Der Rosenkavalier would fill the breach, but how often can one hear Der Rosenkavalier?

I have never heard the Barber of Seville without enjoying it, but there are times when I burn to carry Rossini's exuberance farther, when I might perhaps take delight in L'Italiana in Algeri, Tancredi, with its still delicious, although unheard, "In quel palpiti," sacred to the memory of Giuditta Pasta, William Tell, and La Cenerentola. Often, indeed, sitting before the fire in my garret, I wishfully beg the gods to put it into somebody's head to play me the tunes I have read about so often, but which now I can only hear in my mind's ear through the cold formality of the printed score. Felicien David's *Le Désert*, for example, that "idyllo-epic" which Hector Berlioz hailed as a *chef-d'œuvre* and which seemingly remained a *chef-d'œuvre* until the calm ironic Auben one day remarked, "I will wait until David gets off his case!" Either the remark or the subsequent dissenting killed the piece for now it is never played. But I would like to hear it. What could be queerer than Second Empire orientalism? Would Ingres's *Oriental* come to life under this influence and stand in ivory perfection in some shah's harem, listening to the call of the muezzin, while the march tramped the desert with their lumbering, smoggy padding? What of Spontini's *La Vestale*? Would the faded score do for Rome what Gluck's music has done for Greece? I can decorate my garret with mid-Victorian trophies, automata, wall-still-lighthoys, wall-paper representing Roman temples with Victorian shepherd boys playing pipes near their columns, while troops of Indian, dressed like Mrs. Leo Hunter, take boats and embark for Cythera. I can converse at my leisure incantations and engravings by John Martin, Richard Earlom, Valentine Green, Goltzma, Edérack, or J. E. Smith, and I can enjoy the mellow cornfields and forests of George Inness whenever I feel like it, which is not too often. I can take down from the shelves *The Monk* by M. G. Lewis, *Headlong Hall* by Thomas Love Peacock, *The Art of Dining* by Abraham Hayward, *The Truth about Truffata Varrak* by Edgar Saltus, or read of one of Chateaubriand's wasp-figured guardians as often as I please. No strange, old-fashioned byway, no hidden cranny of painting or literature is denied me, but if I were dying of desire to listen to Puccini's *Dido*

and Arsenius, Rameau's *Leppolyte et Ariste*, Balfe's *The Maid of Artois*, or even Wagner's *Die Feen* or Puccini's *Edgar*, I should perish before the medicines arrived.

Wattias, Voltairin, Cranzach, H. R. Fuller, Rodin, and Joseph Kerpelshofer stand ready to please me whenever I am in the proper mood to appreciate their work but, unless I follow Ernest Newman's example—which I am not likely to do—and purchase a player-piano, I am dependent on the Paris Opera or Mr Walter Damrosch for the privilege of listening to Lully, Couperin, or Grétry. Even Ernest Newman must listen to most of his music in transcription—transcriptions, which he admits in his laudatory book on the subject, have been made carefully enough for the most part from transcriptions already fashioned for human players, without reference to the orchestral scores, which the player-piano, being gifted with more than two hands, could make nearly duplicate—and in relation to such music as has not been cut in rolls he would stand in just the same position that I stand. Could he, for instance, buy a roll of *Le Divert?* At this very instant, in reference to my mention of Grétry an inch or two above, I would rather hear a performance of Richard Coeur de Lion, of which an excerpt, quoted in Tchaikovsky's *Pygmalion*, has haunted me ever since I heard that opera, than the complete works of Giuseppe Verdi. Nay! I think I would desert all other pleasures, even an evening at the theatre where *Dalysa* plays, for a performance of the rewritten version of Simone Boccanegra. I might want to hear it only once, but how much I do want to hear it that once! At least I want to to-day. In 1888, when Gatti-Casazza at last mounts *Simone Boccanegra* at the Metropolitan Opera House, I shall probably go to bed utterly ignorant of the fact. Curiosity and desire will equally be dead, probably, so far as Corneille's *The Barber of Bagdad*, Niccolò's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and Berlioz's *Bertram's Coffin* are concerned, when the time at last comes when it will be easy for me to satisfy this curiosity and desire.

The case is no better with modern music. It is just as difficult to satisfy one's yearning to hear Dukas's *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue* as it is to hear Offenbach's *Barbe-Bleue*. The Boston Symphony Orchestra probably will perform Ravel's *Le Tombeau de Couperin* on the night when I am hungry for the *Valces Nuptiales* et *Sentimentales*, and Rodzinsky will provide those last delights on the night when I can be satisfied with nothing but *Daphnis et Chloé*. This is assuredly music in the modern French idiom, although Erik Satie has said, "Ravel has refused the Legion of

Honour, but all his music accepts it," and we know that in ten years this apogee will become a platitude. We have heard a good deal from the modern Italians, Respighi and Malipiero lately, but I wanted to hear them two years ago.

On the whole it is amusing that I or anybody else ever acquires a taste for orchestral music or the opera. We see, it would seem, completely in the power of Messrs. Bodansky, Gatti-Casazza, Stokowski, Pierre Monteux, the Messrs. Sargent and Milton Abram, and Fortune Gullo. They not only decide what we shall hear, they decide when we shall hear it. The situation, of course, is monstrous and unbearable. A few corporations may bring it to you more forcibly. Suppose, for instance, that the directors of the Metropolitan Art Museum issued a decree to the effect that you could see *Mozart's Boy* with a *Swed* only on July 17, 1922, and not again until February 4, 1926. Suppose that these gentlemen further ordered that Renoir's portrait of Madame Chaperon would be on view only on odd Sundays during Lent. Suppose that the Greek vase room or the room containing the Chinese porcelain was only open to the public on December 8, 1919. Let us imagine another example, even more terror-inspiring. Suppose that Messrs. Brentano, Scribner, and Putnam arbitrarily decided that the public could buy certain books only on certain days. On January 1, for example, Putnam's would sell only the works of Harold Bell Wright, Brentano's only Shaw's new volume of *Plays*, and Scribner's, Joseph Bergin's *San Christofal de la Habana*. On January 2, one would be permitted to purchase the novels of James Branch Cabell at Putnam's, Benedetta Croce's *Anthemic* at Brentano's, and Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* at Scribner's. On January 3, Putnam's would dole out a new novel by Sinclair Lewis, Brentano's would vend a book by Arthur Machen (if they could find one), and Scribner's would sell Melancthon's *A Book of Prefaces*. On January 4, perhaps I might persuade Putnam's to put out my *The Tiger in the House*, Brentano's would offer Max Beerholm's *Seven Men*, and Scribner's would display *The Newscomes* by William Makoporo Thackeray. January 5 would be the day to buy *Ether Waters* at Putnam's, *William Dean Howells's Hercules of Fotion*, at Brentano's, and *Wyndham Lewis's Tarr* at Scribner's. On January 6, Putnam's would sell Philip Moeller's *Sophia*, Brentano's Donald Evans's *Sonnets from the Patagonians*, and Scribner's *Webster's Dictionary*. Of course Dutton's, McKim's, Drake's, Stanner's, Schulte's, and Goldsmith's, and the officials of the Public Library would also make arbitrary decisions about

the book of the day. This would all seem very strange, no doubt, and probably we would stop buying books, because the particular book we wanted would never be on sale on the day we wanted it, but it would be no stranger than the situation in the concert and opera world.

The places where one must listen to music are also prescribed. One can read a book by the fire, in an apple orchard, or in the Grand Central Station—an excellent place to read some books, by the way—but if I want to hear an orchestra I must go to a concert-hall where the atmosphere is fatal, sit in a hard-backed chair, surrounded by women smelling of opopanax, musquet, and May Garden and men who have been smoking Lillian Russell cigars.

And yet, it would appear, there is no remedy. Concerts, after all, must be given within certain hours, and the number of pieces that can be played during these hours—a concert that lasts over 100 minutes is too long—is strictly limited. The Metropolitan Opera House can give only one full-length opera, or not more than three short ones, in one evening. Consequently somebody has to make a choice. The directors naturally choose the works which they think will appeal to the greatest number of people at the time they are played. This accounts for the fact that a symphony which perhaps has not been performed at all for several years will be announced for performance in New York by five conductors during as many weeks.

So we must put up with the incoveniences. We must listen to music when we can, where we can, and with whom we can, and not when, where, and with whom we want to. I wonder if there are others who dream of Debussy's *Figures-nuées d'un Faune* while they are listening to Berlioz's *Fantastic Symphony*, who go to hear Wagner's *Die Meistersinger* when they would prefer to hear Gluck's *Arminio*. If some one knows what can be done about it, I hope he will tell me.



## THE MUSIC OF SHADWELL'S "TEMPEST"

By WILLIAM BARCLAY SQUIRE

THE curiously intricate story of the Restoration versions of Shakespeare's "Tempest" has been so fully told by Mr. W. J. Lawrence in 'The Elizabethan Playhouses' (1914), and with less detail in the article on "Parcell's Dramatic Music" contributed by the present writer to the 5th volume of the *Proceedings of the International Music Society*, that some apology is needed for dealing with the matter again. But the recent discovery by Miss Percy in the library of the Paris Conservatoire of a manuscript containing some hitherto unknown music for "The Tempest" by Pelham Humphrey—a discovery which has been described in the *Bulletin of the Société Française de Musicologie* for last October—renders it advisable to recapitulate the results of earlier research, more especially as the new material of the Paris manuscript enables us to correct, in one point, the conclusions arrived at in the above-mentioned papers and in Mr. E. J. Dent's preface to the "Tempest" music printed by the Parcell Society.

The story of the Restoration versions of "The Tempest" is as follows: In 1667 there was played by the Duke of York's Company at the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre a version of Shakespeare's play by D'Avenant and Dryden. This was not published until 1870—two years after D'Avenant's death—with a Preface by Dryden, who says that

Mr William Davenant . . . designed the Counterpart to Shakespeare's Plot, namely that of a Man who had never seen a Woman. . . . This excellent contrivance by was pleas'd to communicate to me, and to desire my assistance in it. I confess that from the very first moment it so pleas'd me, that I never met anything with more delight.

It is not necessary to detail the numerous alterations made in the original play which were involved by D'Avenant's "excellent contrivance," but it must be noted that the 1667 production required the following musical settings:

1. A "Dialogue sung in parts" by two devils, in Act II, which begins "Where does proud ambition dwell." It is followed by the stage direction: "Enter the two that sing in the shape of devils, playing themselves

at the two corners of the stage." They are joined by Froth, Frensh, Rapier and Masher, but these do not sing, "after which they led into a round encompassing the Duke, etc., singing:

Around, around we pace  
About this round place,  
Whilst thus we sing in  
These minstrels and their din."

The scene ends with a dance

1. "Come unto these yellow sands."
2. "Full bottomed bays."
3. "The mistle, the swallow, the junco and I."
4. "No more dams I'll make for fish."
5. "Dry those eyes."
6. "Where the bee sucks."

There are also dances in the last three acts, notably a Baraband for Ariel and Malcha, a female spirit with whom Ariel is in love, but who does not appear elsewhere in the play.

In 1681 the Duke's Company, then managed by Lady D'Armaut, her son Charles, and Harris and Bettinson, two of the principal actors, moved to a new theatre on the east side of Salisbury Court, on the site of the gardens of Dorset House. The theatre, which was larger than the Drury Lane house (then occupied by the King's Company), was designed by Wren. It had approaches both by land and water and seems to have been a very beautiful structure. (There are views of both exterior and interior in the 1875 Quarto of Elkanah Settle's "Empress of Morocco.") With its large stage and improved machinery the Dorset Gardens Theatre from the first became noted for spectacular displays. Thanks to the 'Roscius Anglicanum' of Downes, who was prompter to the Duke of York's Company from 1682 to 1708, we possess a valuable record of the theatrical performances of the reigns of Charles II, James II and William and Mary, and though he is sometimes inaccurate and his dates wrong, yet his mistakes are not so numerous as to invalidate the general correctness of his evidence. From this source we know that there was performed at the Dorset Gardens Theatre

in 1678, the Tempest, or the Enchanted Island, made into an Opera by Mr. Chudwell, having all New in it as Scenes, Machines, particularly, one Scene Painted with Myriads of Ariel Spirits, and another flying away, with a Table Parallel set with Froths, Sweetmeats, and all sorts of Vizards, just when Duke Trinculo and his Comrades were going to Dinner, all was things perform'd in it so Admirably well, that all my succeeding Operas got more success.

Mr. Lawrence has shown, on the evidence of a manuscript Prologue and Epilogue written by Shadwell for this production, that the "Overture" of "The Tempest" must have been performed early in 1674, and not in 1673. But as the year at that time ended in March, Downes was not far wrong in his date. The new version performed at Dorset Gardens was published in 1674, and though the text was very materially altered from the Dryden-D'Avenant version, no notice of this appeared on the title-page, and Dryden's Preface with the Prologue and Epilogue of the older version were retained. Curiously enough, when the new version was re-printed in 1696, though the typesetting was set up afresh, the same thing was done, so that, with recently, both the 1673 and 1696 Quartos were taken as being Dryden-D'Avenant versions. But there can be no doubt that they represent Shadwell's operatic arrangement for the Dorset Gardens Theatre, and one of the songs, "Adieu, ye subterranean winds," occurs with his name as author in a collection of songs issued in 1680 by Pietro Reggio, a Genoese musician who died in London in 1685.

The 1673 Quarto is very interesting from the light it throws on the stage arrangements of the time. At the beginning of Act I

the Front of the Stage is open'd, and the Band of six Violins, with the Musicians and Theorbo's which accompany the Viols, are plac'd between the Pill and the Stage. While the Overture is playing the Curtain rises, and discovers a new Frontispiece, join'd to the great Pillarion, on each side of the Stage. This Frontispiece is a noble Arch, supported by large wreath'd Columns of the Corinthian Order; the wreathings of the Columns are beautif'd with Roses wound round them, and several Cupids flying about them. On the Cornice, just over the Capitals, sits on either side a Figure, with a Trumpet in one hand, and a Palm in the other, representing Fame. A little farther on the same Cornice, on each side of a Compass-plate, is a Lion and a Unicorn, the Supporters of the Royal Arms of England. In the middle of the arch are several Angels, holding the Kings Arms, as if they were placing them in the midst of that Compass-plate. Behind this is the Scene, which represents a thick Cloudy Sky, a very Ruddy Coast, and a Tempestuous Sea in perpetual Agitation. This Tempest (suppos'd to be rais'd by Shadwell) has many dreadful Objects in it, as several Islands in horrid shapes flying down among the Sails, then rising and crossing in the Air. And when the Ship is sinking, the whole House is darken'd, and a shower of Fire falls upon 'em. This is accompanied with lightning, and several Claps of Thunder, to the end of the Storm.

From this description it is clear that room was made for an orchestra by means of a second proscenium, the "New Frontispiece"; the same arrangement is described in Dryden and Gouge's "Albion and Albannus" (1685). The "Band of six Violins" was evidently

the Royal Band, established early in his reign by Charles II. in imitation of the band of Louis XIV. The singers were also recruited from the Royal establishment, for in the Lord Chamberlain's accounts it is recorded, on 18 May, 1674, that

it is his Majesty's pleasure that Mr. Turner and Mr. Hart, or any other men or boys belonging to his Majesty's Chappell Royal that sing in ye Tragedy of his Royal Highness Theatre, doe remaine in scope all the week (during his Majesty's absence from Whitehall) to performe that service

The number of "men and boys" so employed seems to have been thirty, for Shadwell's Epilogue (in Ep. Ms. 6663) says:

We have Musicians to some profession brought,  
And above 30 Teaching vapors got!

How the whole house was darkened is not clear; possibly it was done by raising chandeliers of candles. It seems doubtful whether foot-lights were used, if so, they must have been drawn off at the sides or screened by shades.

In changing the D'Avenant-Dryden play into an Opera, besides the usual Act and Curtain Taxes, Shadwell naturally introduced a number of instrumental dances and "burlesks," and incidental music. He retained the Shakespearian words of "Come unto these yellow sands," "Full fathom five," "The master, the smaller, the gunner and I," "No more damn I'll make for fish," and the D'Avenant-Dryden "Dry those eyes." The "Dialogue" sung in Paris, by two devils in Act II was considerably extended. It was first sung under the stage by three devils, who presently rose and were joined by Pride, Fraud, Rapine and Murder—who were all singing characters. At the end of the scene, as Alonso and his companions are going out, "a Devil rises just before them," who sings a song, "Arise, ye subterranean winds," after which "Two Winds rise, let more enter and dance: at the end of the Dance, three Winds sink, the rest drive" Alonso, Antonio and Gonzalo off. In Act III, "Full fathom five" is allotted to Miranda, and the whole work ends with a sort of Masque, in which Neptune, Amphitrite, Oceanus and Triton appear in a chariot drawn by sea-horses; Status descends; winds "from the four corners" appear; there follows "a symphony of Musick, Six Trumpets, to which four Tritons dance," and after further singing and dancing, the "scene changes to the Rising Sun, and a number of Aerial Spirits in the Air, Ariel flying from the Sun, advances towards the Pit" and "Ariel and the rest" sing "Where the bee sucks," "Song ended, Ariel speaks, hovering in the Air."

The interesting question arises as to how far it would be possible to reconstruct the musical setting of Shadwell's operatic "Tempest." As to the purely instrumental music, part of it—composed by Matthew Locke—was printed in 1878 in "The English Opera: or the Vocal Musick in *Psyche*. . . . To which is Adjoined the Instrumental Musick in the *Tempest*." In the preface to this work, Locke states that the *Instrumental Musick before and between the Acts, and the Entries in the Acts of Psyche* are omitted by the consent of their Author, Scipione Cha. Baptista Dragoni.<sup>1</sup> The *Tunes of the Entries and Dances in the Tempest* (the Dances being chang'd) are omitted for the same reason.

"Psyche" (the words of which are by Shadwell) was produced in 1678, and it is clear that Dragoni wrote the dance-music for both that work and for "The Tempest," though what the expression "the dances being chang'd" means, seems obscure. That Dragoni's dances will ever be recovered is unlikely, but the preservation of Locke's music is very valuable. It consists of First and Second Music (played while the audience was assembling), Curtain Tune (or Overture), four Act Tunes and a Conclusion. The First Music comprises an Introduction, Galliard and Gavotte, the Second Music a Saraband and "Lull" (a term which is defined in no dictionary); the Curtain Tune evidently attempts to depict the storm with which the play opens; the First Act Tune is a Rattle Air; the Second a Minuet; the Third a Corant; the Fourth a Martial Jig, and the Conclusion (probably played as the audience was dispersing) a Canon, 4 in 2. The Curtain Tune and the Lull were reprinted in 1838 in Vol. I of Stafford Smith's 'Masque Antiqua.'

Somewhere about the same time as the publication of "Psyche," there appeared a small collection headed "The Ariel's Songs in the Play call'd the Tempest," which contains music by John Banister for 'Come unto these yellow sands,' 'Dry these eyes,' 'Go thy way' and 'Full fathom five'; by Pelham Humphrey for 'Where the bee sucks,' and by James Hart for 'Adieu to the pleasures'—a song which does not occur in any of the Quartos. This publication offers a very puzzling bibliographical problem. Barnhart (in Grove's Dictionary) says that Banister, jointly with Pelham Humphrey, wrote the music to 'The Tempest,' performed in 1677, some of the songs in which were published in the first book of "Choice Ayres" in 1678, while the Dictionary of National Biography makes matters worse by saying that Banister and Humphrey wrote music for "The Tempest" in 1678—two years after

<sup>1</sup>By an extraordinary mistake Grove's Dictionary (I, 191) states that Dragoni published in 1878 the Act-tunes and some other instrumental music for *Psyche*!

the date of Humphrey's death. According to Hask (*Grove's Dictionary*, II, p. 448) the "misc. separately pag'd sheet" containing the 'Ariel's Song' is to be found inserted in some copies of the 1876 edition of "Choice Ayres." The British Museum contains copies of both the 1876 and 1878 editions of the book, but neither contains any "Tempest" music, though the latter does print Hart's song, but without any indication that it belongs to "The Tempest." The Museum also possesses a copy of 'The Ariel's Songs,' without date, pagination or imprint, and in a very fragmentary copy of some edition of "Choice Ayres" which is preserved in the Royal College of Music, there is another copy, in which the 'Ariel's Songs' are pag'd 77-86, with the register signature Tv, but followed by a second page 77. This imperfect copy wants the title-page, but from p. 69 on differs entirely from the 1876 edition, which is considerably longer. It is very difficult to say from this evidence which is the earliest edition of the 'Ariel's Songs.' The discovery of a perfect copy agreeing with the Royal College book would settle the question, but provisionally it may be surmised that it represents a second edition of the 1876 book, and that, previous to its issue, the 'Ariel's Songs' were printed without pagination and then included (with pagination) in the book after it was ready for publication. Why they were omitted from the 1876 edition seems inexplicable. Anyway, it is pretty certain that the printed 'Ariel's Songs' do not date from before 1876, and the general assumption that they represent the musical settings used in the D'Avenant-Dryden version of 1667 falls to the ground, while on the other hand, it is practically certain that they form part of the Shadwell production.

In this respect the presence of Hart's song is important. The title 'Dorinda lamenting the loss of her Ancestor' (there is no Ancestor in either version) points to its having been introduced—probably in the fourth or fifth Act, where Dorinda thinks that Hippolyta has been killed by Ferdinand—and that it forms no part of D'Avenant's, Dryden's, or Shadwell's alterations.

James Hart was born at York in 1647 and was a bass-singer in the Master's choir until 1676, when he was appointed a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal. It has already been shown in the extract from the Lord Chamberlain's accounts, that he was one of the singers in the 1674 Shadwell production, and it is safe to conclude that his song was introduced either then or at some subsequent revival. Anyway it could not have been written for the 1667 D'Avenant-Dryden version, when he was still living at York. Moreover, William Humphrey only returned from

studying abroad in October, 1667, and it is not very probable that he would at once have been employed to set 'Whence the bee sucks?' for the D'Arment-Drayden version, which Pepys seems to have seen performed on the 7th November, 1667. In 1674 Humphrey was Master of the Children, Band-leader of the King's Band, Locke Composer in Ordinary to the King and Draygl probably organist to Catherine of Braganza, so that the musical setting of Shadwell's 'Tempest' was entrusted to the most prominent musicians of the day. If the view that the 'Arioso Songs' really belong to 1674 and not to 1667 is correct, they furnish an important addition to the instrumental music of Locke. Caliban's songs, and 'The master, the swabber, the gunner and L.' were probably not set to music, but sung by the actors to any *improvisata* strain. The missing vocal music has now been supplied by Miss. Percy's fortunate discovery in the library of the Paris Conservatoire.

It consists of fourteen pages of manuscript, written on a staff of six lines, and was acquired at the Lillo Sale in 1858. To judge by the careful copy which Miss. Percy has kindly had made, the manuscript contains a good many errors, though not such as may not be easily corrected. It is headed "The Vocal Music in the Tempest by Mr. Felix Humphrey," and contains (in the following order) 'The song of the Three Divells,' The Masque, and the song 'Arioso, ye subterranean winds'; thus supplying the lacuna in Locke's publication and in the 'Arioso Songs,' so that (with the exception of Draygl's dance-tunes) the whole of the musical setting of Shadwell's "Tempest" can now be reconstructed. The position of 'Arioso, ye subterranean winds' in the Conservatoire manuscript is noticeable, for in the play the song occurs in Act II and not after the Masque. It is also the only part of the music which has a figured bass. The explanation of this is that the setting is not by Humphrey, but by Pietro Reggic; it will be found in the rare "Songs set by Signior Pietro Reggic" published at London in 1666 and its presence in the manuscript thus confirms the surmise that it was written for the 1674 performance. It is much to be wished that a work of so much historical interest as the music to Shadwell's "Tempest" could be published. Humphrey's share in it is especially interesting, as he is generally credited with having introduced into England the style of declamatory recitative which originated in Italy and was developed in France by Lully, with whom Humphrey is said to have studied. Though it was supplanted for stage purposes by Purcell's music, the "Tempest" of Locke, Humphrey and Barletta has an important place among the incomparable of operas in England.

It is in cases like these that the need of an English publication on the lines of the German "Denkmäler" is so much felt. Locke's "Psyche," the Shadwell "Tempest" music, Eccles' "Macbeth" and "Samson," the operas of Daniel Purcell and Godfrey Finger, the "Macbeth" music before it was tinkered by Boyce—these ought all to be available to students of the history of English music. But a country which owns Purcell and yet has not succeeded in completing the edition of his works begun forty-five years ago cannot be expected to take any interest in the music of its minor composers.



Scene from the  
Masque "The Tempest"

Words by Leonid Andreev

Polina Semakova

*Andante*

My land, great sea-isles, for my man, sit

the bright ones - - by all - - y' - - s'ides, And for the rest all -

the good ones - - of the - - Let's have our all - - stand for will,

Let us - see a - day my will, Let us see how from you have made by

long in the dark we were and we were, Let us see how from you have made by

long. Till then we were up on that night for them.

Repeat

I - see a - day my will - let - us see

That an ex-cess of love I can de-scribe

The first system of musical notation for the song 'Trout'. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The vocal line begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are: "That an ex-cess of love I can de-scribe".

Per-haps an ex-cess will come, O - ver - and -

The second system of musical notation. The vocal line continues with the lyrics: "Per-haps an ex-cess will come, O - ver - and -". The piano accompaniment features a flowing eighth-note pattern.

will - then in his love, Let your ex-cess not make up -

The third system of musical notation. The vocal line continues with the lyrics: "will - then in his love, Let your ex-cess not make up -".

your de-vice, to make and your de-vice.

The fourth and final system of musical notation. The vocal line concludes with the lyrics: "your de-vice, to make and your de-vice." The piano accompaniment ends with a final cadence. The word "Finis" is written above the final notes of the piano part.

## Andante

Be - side, ye great pe - trels of the flocks and the springs, where rock  
 Bays  
 Be - side, ye great pe - trels of the flocks and the springs, where rock

Be - side and Tel - lus plays, ser - vice, and sleep Be  
 Be - side and Tel - lus plays, ser - vice, and sleep Be

side, ye great pe - trels of the flocks and the springs, where rock  
 side, ye great pe - trels of the flocks and the springs, where rock

Be - side and Tel - lus plays, ser - vice, and sleep  
 Be - side and Tel - lus plays, ser - vice, and sleep

## Sonata

Gathering every eye, and we witness thy grandeur by

## March of Follies and Fancies

The up the white and we'll a - lay, Up on the birds we'll

The up the white and we'll a - lay, Up on the birds we'll

The up the white and we'll a - lay, Up on the birds we'll

sing and play, And out - a - break us Hal - cyon day

sing and play, And out - a - break us Hal - cyon day

sing and play, And out - a - break us Hal - cyon day

The up the White and well n - day, By - on the Green well

The up the White and well n - day, By - on the Green well

The up the White and well n - day, By - on the Green well

sing and play, And out - a - larks in the - open day

sing and play, And out - a - larks in the - open day

sing and play, And out - a - larks in the - open day

## NAPOLEON, MUSIC AND MUSICIANS

By J.-G. PRODYHOMME

**A** CENTURY has gone by since Napoleon died at Saint Helena. On May 5, 1821, the man who had made the world tremble, who had cast down and set up thrones, who had essayed to found a dynasty and, in cut-and-out modern times, achieved an epic which bears comparison with the most prodigious ones whose memory is preserved in general history, disappeared from earth.

When we speak Napoleon's name, we awake one of the most extraordinary as well as the most widely discussed geniuses known to humanity at large, one of those who give the world an impulsion whose repercussions make themselves felt across the centuries. The hero whom Beethoven wished to honor was not only a warrior genius, he was also a legislator whose universal spirit of organization embraced every manifestation of human activity, whether scientific, literary or artistic, military or political. To discuss Napoleon the art-lover, Napoleon the musician, is to endeavor to uncover one of the facets, and by no means the least interesting, of his multiple personality: it allows us to father his sensibility, always wide-awake and on the alert, and also to show in him the philosopher presenting in a few lines, a few true and conclusive words, his cosmological ideas with regard to Art.

And when we consider Napoleon in his relations to music and musicians, we recall, in addition, an aspect which at a distance is revealed to us with certain sharply-defined characteristics, as apparent in the music as in the other developments of the human mind and intelligence during the fifteen years of the Consulate and the Empire. Finally, it recalls a source of inspiration to which musicians—though in a far less degree than other artists or writers—have had recourse on occasion.

Thanks to the documents, private and official, the papers and journals, the memoirs entering the Napoleonic era which we possess in such numbers, we are able to present this survey of Napoleon in his relations to music in the pages which follow.

\* \* \*

When young Napoleon Bonaparte went to France, to prepare himself for a military career in the school at Brienne, and first of

all at the College of Anjou (where he learned French in three months), he was ten years old. It is possible that he brought with him some musical recollections of his island, some folk-tunes, some (cradle songs), serenades, ballads, noëls, lamenti, nocivi or pophèlic, heard in town or in the country. Corsican folk-lore, recently studied by M. Anasta de Cresco (*Chants populaires de la Corse*, 1914) without being exuberantly luxuriant, at that time still had preserved a large number of traditional airs, which have not yet vanished in our own day. And to this anonymous music there should no doubt be added some songs or selections brought from the Continent, Italy in particular, by travellers.

After having spent three months at Anjou (January 1 to May 15, 1794), he remained for five and a half years at Brienne (up to October of 1799). In this monarchical academy, where young gentlemen were educated for the king's service, they were not only instructed in the sciences and humanities, but were also given some idea of the arts which might enable them, later on, to play a part in society; in addition to fencing, an art with which no soldier and no gentleman could dispense, and drawing, the students at Brienne were given dancing—and music lessons. The names of the professors who taught these branches are known: they were markedly speaking, artists quite obscure, Poldiotti, Mostet and Gagenberg, the first and last probably of German or Austrian origin. They taught both vocal and instrumental music, and the officers of the future, in their annual public exercises, gave examples of their musical aptitudes. Thus, in 1784, fifteen students performed an "air for grand orchestra," two others played a duet, and still others a quartet, and the "Hautbois Moutet." Yet the year following, the course in music was suppressed, and its place taken by another course in living languages, regarded as a more useful study.

There is no record of the young Napoleon—"not very strong as regards the *amusements* and *Latin*," to quote one of his reports—having taken part in the public musical exercises already mentioned. We know, however, that under the direction of an "academicien" by name of Javillon (there was a dancer of this name at the Paris Opéra from 1791 to 1793) Napoleon was one of the thirty-seven students who "took lessons in walking and bowing," as well as one of the seventeen who "executed the steps of the quadrille together, and with their evolutions in group made a pretty sight for the pleasure of the colonels," at the exercises of 1783.

<sup>14</sup> Choquet, *La Jeunesse de Napoléon*, Tome I.



Later on, at Malmaison and the Tuileries, the First Consul and Emperor showed that he had not forgotten the principles he had acquired at Brno: Above all, he enjoyed dancing to the old airs which recalled to him his youth, such as *La Marseillaise*, which he always called for "as being the easiest, and the air to which he danced least badly." (*Unbradeau, Mémoire sur le Césaire*.)

"What do you think of my dancing?" the Emperor one day asked Countess Potocka. "Sir," she replied, "for a great man you dance perfectly!"

As regards music, he could remember only comic-opera arias and choruses, which he sang with a voice as much out of tune as that of Louis XV.

Tragically it was in the morning (says his valet Constant), that these little reminiscences cropped up. He would regale me with them while he was being dressed. The air which I most frequently heard him execute was the *Marseillaise*. At times too, the Emperor would whistle, but not loudly. The tone of Marlborough, when the Emperor whistled, represented for me his positive announcement of a speedy departure for the army. I remember that he never whistled so much, and that he was never more gay than when the moment came for him to leave for the Russian campaign.

And during the campaign itself he hummed the same air after the passage of the Niemen, at Theres, in the June of 1812:

The officers on duty who were resting about his apartment, were staggered at hearing him sing at the top of his voice an air appropriate to the circumstances, one of those revolutionary melodies which had so often carried the French along the road to victory, the first strains of the *Chant de départ*.\*

Six months later, on November 14, between Smolensk and Krasnoie, the faithful Constant once more draws a picture of the Emperor, surrounded by the Old Guard, passing across the firing-line of the battle:

The band played the air: *Où peut-on être mieux qu'en son sein de roi?* (Where could one be better off than in the bosom of his family?) Napoleon stopped it, crying: "Play rather: *Franchise ou salut de l'Empire!*" (March over the safety of the Empire. It would be hard to imagine anything more inspiring!)

\**Chant Triad, Napoleone, Mémoire*.

\*These two original airs were taken from the same source: the first is the Russian general Jean-Baptiste Drouot, the second, as we have Drouot's *Journal d'Armée*, was provided with new words at the time of the Revolution.

The Baron de Meneval, one of his secretaries, tells us:

When he grew weary of reading poetry, he would begin to sing loudly, but out of tune. When nothing veiled him, or when he was perturbed with the subject-matter of his meditations, the fact was reflected in his choice of songs. One of his favorite episodes had for its subject a young girl whose lover came her of the bite of some winged insect. It was a kind of Anacreontic ode with but a single stanza. It ended with the line:

*Un bon coup de fusil en fait le malin*  
 (A bon shot her lips was the cure he used.)

When he was in a more serious frame of mind, he would sing verses of lyrics or of the revolutionary mystics, such as the *Chant de l'olymp*, *Yslande au salut de l'empire*, or he would recite the two lines:

*Qu'on s'occupe d'armes*  
*Et s'occupe peu de pain*  
 (He who would the world reborn  
 With his own country should begin.)

He would at times pass over to a less serious strain, as, for example, when having finished his work, he went to the apartments of the Emperor

*Ah! c'est en vain, je me sème*  
 (Ah! now 'tis done and I will seed.)

or else:

*Nou, nou j'd en responsable*  
*D'aucun plus sensible aspect*  
 (No, no, 'tis quite impossible  
 A kinder viewpoint to possess.)

From the standpoint of another of his contemporaries, Armand (Sommeire d'un compositeur),

in his case the song was nothing else than the expression of his *déjà faire*. During his moments of ennui, walking about with his hands behind his back, he would hum, as much as possible off the key, *Ah! c'est fait, je me sème*. Everyone knew what this signified: "If you have some favor to ask of the general, do not ask it at this moment; he is singing," *Juste* said to me.

According to this same Armand, who followed him to Egypt, Bonaparte, like all soldiers, preferred "a popular song, arranged for the oboe, the flute, the trumpet and the clarinet, to the compositions of one of the greatest geniuses who ever existed" (Mikhail). At the time he considered Della Maria, a Frenchman naturalized in Italy, whose graceful and spontaneous gifts had been revealed the preceding winter in *de Frisouvier*,<sup>1</sup> as the greatest of all composers.

<sup>1</sup>A comic opera presented at the Opéra Theatre, January 26, 1792.

We shall see, in the following pages, how his preferences, although they underwent some modification, in the course of years, remained faithful to Italian music.



After visits to Corsica, and after having taken Toulon, Napoleon, placed on the retired list, comes to Paris the possessor of a certain already established reputation. He frequents the theatres as less than political circles, and it is at this time, with the prodigious facility for assimilation which characterizes him, that he is able to educate himself musically at the Opéra, the Opéra-Comique and the Feytaud, up to the moment when he is appointed commander-in-chief of the Army of Italy (1796). And while preparing his plans of campaign, he does not forget to occupy himself with civilian affairs, with letters, science and the arts. Thus it is that, in 1797, together with Subscott, the executive commissary of the Directory with the armies, he issues a decree "to make certain, by reliable means, of such monuments of science and art as may be found in the cities conquered by the armies, and have them sent to France." Nor was music forgotten, as is so often the case in similar circumstances; and while Jean-Pierre Tineo, an artist of the Tuscan Legion, is attached to the army in the character of an agent "charged to gather up in the conquered territories the paintings, master-pieces and other monuments of antiquity which are adjudged worthy of being sent to Paris," Rodolphe Kreutzer, then professor of violin at the Conservatoire, accompanies the army or is sent to join it, and is similarly active, nominally, from the year V to the year VIII (1800). For nearly two years Kreutzer remains in Italy, having copies made of numerous manuscripts, and sending all those "treasures of the valor of the French arms" (as a memorial he addressed to the ministry in 1808 puts it) to the library of the Paris Conservatoire. Then, when peace was signed at Campo-Formio, he undertook a concert-tour through central Europe. He was in Vienna with Beethoven, at the beginning of the year 1799, and there made the acquaintance of Beethoven, to whom he is said to have suggested the idea of the Eroica Symphony. Beethoven, on the other hand, a long time after, dedicated the famous Sonata for violin and piano to him.

Alluding to this mission of Kreutzer's, the poet Arndt, in his book of travels (*Reise*, Vol. I, p. 343), wrote at the time in question:

The celebrated Kreutzer of Paris came here recently (he visited), saying that the French had collected and carried away all the ancient music by the masters long since dead, and which could only be heard and studied in Italy. Hence, as regards music, for the moment there is no one able to draw off young Europe's horns.

In a letter by Bonaparte, actually written from grand general headquarters in Milan, the 8th Thermidor of the Year V (July 28, 1797), to the inspectors of the Conservatoire at Paris, we find a few interesting lines relating to music:

Among all the fine arts (writes the young commander-in-chief), music is the one which exercises the greatest influence upon the passions, and is the one which the legislator should most encourage. A musical composition created by a master-hand makes an unwilling appeal to the feelings, and exerts a far greater influence than a good work in words, which convinces our reason without affecting our habits.

Here we already find Bonaparte thinking as a legislator, and as a general who has observed the effect of music on his men, rather than as an amateur. His reading or his reflections had inspired this very accurate thought regarding music. In a similar manner he considers music from the standpoint of social utility when, three months later, he writes to the minister of the interior the 86th Vendémiaire of the Year VI (October 27, 1797):

I beg you, citizen minister, to inform the musicians of the Cisalpine Republic (that is to say, of Northern Italy), that I offer for competition, to whosoever writes the best piece having for its subject the death of General Hoche, a prize and a medal to the value of one hundred sequins. You will be kind enough to appoint three artists who will act as judges to allocate this prize.

Bonaparte.

Poets and composers at once set to work, and while in Paris, on the tenth Vendémiaire (October 2), they sang an impetuous lament inspired by the death of the young general of the Republic, Cherubini's *Morceau funèbre*—one of the finest compositions of the revolutionary period, set to words by M.-J. Chénier and completed in eight days—Paisiello, then *maître de chapelle* of the King of the Two Sicilies, was working on a *Musica funèbre all' occasione della morte del fu Generale Hoche, crociati del Sign. General in Capo Buonaparte* . . . . . Naples, November 11, 1797.

It was thus that Bonaparte endeavored to rally to the cause of the French Republic the scholars and artists of the conquered lands. And this fact may have been partly responsible for the great and almost exclusive admiration the First Consul showed for Paisiello. Napoleon himself carried the letter's score to Paris

and deposited it in the Conservatoire. It is inscribed, in his own hand-writing "Given to the Conservatory of Music by the Citizen Bonaparte."

Not long after, the Conservatoire, wishing to please its future master—"Napoleon was already shoving through the Bonaparte," as Victor Hugo said—had this hymn performed in his presence. But at the same time it was unthinkingly inspired to give a performance of Cherubini's work as well. When the ceremony had terminated, Bonaparte, addressing himself to Cherubini in a dissatisfied manner, told him that Paisiello was the greatest of contemporary composers, and that Zingarelli came next. Dividing the tastes of the great man at a word, Méhul, Gossec, Grétry and Lesueur, who were present, bowed deferentially, but Cherubini whose spine was less flexible, showed less patience and presence of mind and murmured: "Paisiello might pass at a pinch, but Zingarelli . . ." We shall see later on how he soon managed to earn the displeasure of the master of France.

His stay in Milan, where music played an important part, finally and completely turned Napoleon's taste in the direction of Italian musical art, which he had recently enjoyed in Paris, side by side with operas in Gluck's style, dramas by Lesueur and Cherubini, and French comic-operas. Nevertheless, his ideas changed more or less with the years and with circumstances, notably after his marriage to Marie-Louise, an Austrian princess, whose musical education had been quite different from that of Josephine, the former Madame de Beauharnais.

Returning to Paris on December 3, 1797, Bonaparte remained there for exactly six months, until his departure for Egypt (May 9, 1798). He brought back the Treaty of Campo-Formio, and solemnly turned it over to the Directory, in session at the Luxembourg Palace, on December 18. This solemnity gave the authors of the *Chœur du Départ*, M. J. Chénier and Méhul, an opportunity of presenting their *Chœur du Retour*, which was performed at the Conservatoire in honor of the Army of Italy, and to celebrate a peace which none thought as ephemeral as it turned out to be.

In his preparations for the Egyptian campaign, as in those for the campaign of Italy, Bonaparte developed tremendous activity. Not only did he occupy himself with military plans, but his spirit of organization extended to the sciences, to literature, and the arts, no less than to questions of civil administration. He appointed a large commission, which was given the name of the "Egyptian Institute," and included representatives of every branch of human knowledge. The result of their labors has been

embodied in a monumental publication known under the name of the "Description of Egypt," whose twenty volumes in folio were published at intervals from 1809 to 1828. Instead of Méhul as the singer Lays, whom Napoleon had first had in mind, it was Guillaume-André Villoteau, musician and singer, who, in the "Egyptian Institute" became the representative of music. Villoteau has left four manuscripts on ancient and modern Egyptian music, and on the music of the Orientals, which have been inserted in the "Description."

We might here cite the following order of the day, given by the general-in-chief at his headquarters in Cairo on the 1st Nivose of the Year VII (December 21, 1797):

Every day at noon, in the square adjoining the hospitals, the bands of the different corps will play various tunes calculated to make the sick feel cheerful and to recall to them the glorious moments of their past campaigns.

Bonaparte.

\* \* \*

With the Consulate, the musical life of the Revolution, whose hymns had been liturgical in character, little by little became exclusively military festivals. However, on July 14, 1800, the *Chœur de 25 Muses*, at a "song" of quite grandiose proportions, was given at the *Jacobins* (Temple of Mars), and Méhul assembled for its performance three choruses and three orchestras. Later, the life of the 1st Vendémiaire (September 29), celebrated with a hymn by Lesueur, also sang at the *Jacobins*, and employing four orchestras, concludes the era of the Revolutionary life.

From that time forward the only music given the people will be that of the regiments making victorious entry into the capital, or defiling on parade at the Tuileries, where the First Consul established himself after the grand stroke of Brumaire (November, 1799).

The routine of daily life, after an interruption of ten years, is gradually resumed in the ancient habitation of the kings of France, whose protocols Bonaparte always to revive. The First Consul shows himself quite frequently at the *Opéra*, situated in the *rue de Richelieu* (now *rue de la Loi*), and which at the time is still known as the *Théâtre des Arts*. His visits are marked by two historical events, two attempts at assassination which are associated with the two most recent revolutions then presented on the great lyric stage. On the 18th Vendémiaire (October 10), the first performance of an opera which had had but little success, is

*Borace*, by Perti, was to be given, when, the evening before, the police were notified that a conspiracy had been formed against Bonaparte. During the course of the performance it had been planned to seize the person of the First Consul and, perhaps, kill him, improving the opportunity offered by the pause the conspirators intended to create in the hall. One of the latter, however, overcome by remorse, it is said, told all that he knew to the police, who made their arrangements and arrested all the conspirators while the performance was in progress, without the public being aware of it. The matter was not disclosed until some days afterward, by the newspapers, which, he it said, showed great discretion. One of the heads of this conspiracy was the Corsican *Arbent*; another was the sculptor *Crochi*, who had formerly modelled the bust of Bonaparte in Milan, and had gone to Paris in the hope of disposing of it for 18,000 francs. The opera *de Borace* is rescued from obscurity only by reason of this political occurrence connected with it. Bonaparte, incidentally, was soon to return to the *Opéra*, holding his own against the opposition, notably on October 27 and November 4, at the same time as the ministers of Austria and Prussia.

The 2d Nivose (December 24) following, to quote *Thérèseau*,

the First Consul set out for the *Opéra* at eight o'clock in the evening, with a packet of guards, having with him as his coach General *Bohmer*, *Langer* and his *adjutant* *Laurent*. When they had reached the rue *Saint-Nicolas* they found a wretched cart, in which a small horse was harnessed, placed in such a manner as to block the thoroughfare. The coachman was stupid enough to avoid it in passing, though he was driving very speedily. A few moments later a terrible explosion shattered the panels of the coach, wounded the last man of the escort, killed eight persons, and more or less seriously injured twenty-eight others, as well as inflicting damages estimated at 200,000 francs to forty-six buildings in the vicinity. The First Consul continued on his way, and arrived at the *Opéra*. There they were singing *Bayle's* "Création."

The performance of an oratorio, by two hundred and fifty musicians and singers, on Christmas Eve at the *Opéra*, was a sign of the times. The following year, the first of the new century, had not as yet come to an end before peace with the church was accomplished: first the Concordance with the Pope being signed on September 17. The cathedral of *Notre-Dame*, restored to the Faith, celebrated the great event at Easter 1806, with a *Te Deum* by *Palisella*, whose error was then officially confirmed. And somewhat later, at the Camp at *Bologna*, the *Chant de Départ* was sung for the last time by more than twelve hundred

persons. The two occurrences point out the direction taken by the new revolution, the successor to the first.

Or, rather than a new revolution, the old social order, little by little, was once more raising its head, and a new social order came into being which prudently borrowed some of the institutions of the ancien régime. Here, too, music played a part in the life and political activities of the First Consul. Under the title of "the band of the Consul," Bonaparte had already established a military band by Blasius. But now he wished to have a band of his own, a "band of the First Consul," just as formerly there had been the body known as "the king's music." The Baron de Trémost, in an unpublished notice on Rodolphe:

This musical beginning was not known as an 'orchestra,' and was made up of only a few of the best instrumental players of Paris. Malmaison was the only summer residence which Napoleon and his family had. And any knowledge of music deserving of honor was so foreign to the prejudices of Malmaison that the first time the artists were assembled in the chateau, the Consul having been compelled to absent himself, no one knew what to do with the musicians. Then Napoleon's sisters and sisters-in-law, younger and gayer than when they became queens, thought that it would be a good opportunity to have some dancing and, without any idea of giving offence, they asked the artists whether they could not play some square dances for them. The latter replied that they were totally incapable of so doing, and the foolish request was not repeated.

The musical evenings, the little family concerts at Malmaison, little by little, brought about the reestablishment of the music choir. Eight singers and a body of twenty-seven symphonic players under the direction of Paschelle formed a corps of musicians large enough for the place in which they did their duty. The chapel having been destroyed, divine service was performed in the hall of the Council of State, where there was room for no more than the singers and a piano. Arranged in two rows behind the singers, the violins played in a little gallery facing the altar, while the basses and wind instruments were relegated to an adjoining room. The musicians had a good deal of difficulty in maneuvering on a field so disadvantageous for concerted work. On each preceding evening the room had to be stripped of its furniture, chairs, tables and desks, in order to make an entirety of it for Sunday use, and all the furniture had to be returned again on Monday, so that the Council of State might meet there. Napoleon, when he became Emperor, had a new chapel added to the Tuileries, on the foundation of the Hall of the Conventions, in which, during the Revolution, the Concerts spirituels had taken





Angelia Carolina

place. It was inaugurated on February 8, 1806, with a solemn high mass.

Under the supreme direction of Paisiello, with Lesueur as second conductor, the imperial chapel-orchestra was made up of a master of music, two accompanying pianist-organists, sixty-four singers and chorists, and fifty instrumentalists (1810); numbering 89 persons in all, in 1815. Its budget, from 80,000 francs in the Year VIII (1801), had mounted to nearly 121,000 by 1802. (See G. Servières's *Épisodes d'histoire musicale*.)

It was not until 1806, after having heard the music of the Court of Saxony, at Dresden, that the Emperor began to think that he, too, would like to have a musical establishment of a kind not exclusively religious. He engaged Paër "to conduct the music of the concerts and theatrical representations at Court, and to compose all the musical compositions he would be ordered to furnish by command of His Imperial Majesty," with a stipend of 25,000 francs per annum, and three months' leave of absence every year. The contract was signed at Warsaw on January 14, 1807. This "special music of the Emperor" at first included a pianist-accompanist, Rigel, a secretary, Godeaux, five women singers (Mmes. Grassini, Paër, d'Elhou, Albert-Hyman, Giacomelli) and two male singers (Crescentini and Bruni). Later on, however, it included Mmes. Barilli, Fonta, Senti, Camporelli; the tenors Crivello, Tachinardi, and Nourai; the bass Barilli, the cellist Dupret, etc. The orchestra was that of the imperial chapel.

All artists of distinction who arrived in Paris were invited to sing or play at the Emperor's concerts, on the express condition that they would accept, in silver, some honorable recompense, proportionate to their merit. The virtuoses, the women in particular, invariably refused their honorarium in the hope that some jewel would accrue to them as their share, even though its value might be less than the sum offered. A present from Napoleon represented the object of their desire, the goal of their ambition. Mme. Catalani herself was not accorded this favor, yet she was recompensed in princely fashion. Five thousand francs down, a pension of 1000 francs, and the loan of the hall of the Opéra, all expenses paid, for two concerts, whose receipts came to 26,000 francs, such was the price the Emperor offered the diva in question for having sung at Saint-Cloud on May 8 and 11, 1805. (Cuvill-Braz.)

The Emperor at the time, so the singer Blangini tells us in his *Souvenirs* "was undergoing an attack of urgent musical need, I might almost say, was in a state of musical frenzy." Every evening, at Fontainebleau, after the theatrical representation, "His Majesty would repair to the Empress's saloon, where he (Napoleon) would listen to more music up to one o'clock in the

morning." According to the same writer, the compositions of Paisiello, Engelwolf, Haydn, Martini and Lussier made up almost the whole of the repertory of the imperial orchestra.

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The theatres, which had enjoyed the strictest freedom from control under the Revolution, according to the decree of 1791, were none the more prosperous because of the fact, the Opéra in particular whose budget, under the old régime had always shown a deficit. The migration of the nobles had caused it to lose its wealthy patrons, and the works inspired by the Revolutionary government were not calculated to fill its coffers. The Consulat introduced a little order into the affairs of the *Théâtre des Arts*, and a decree of the 8th Pléniere of the Year VII provided it with a director and a responsible administration. Besides, the First Consul decided that all the boxes were to be paid for by those who occupied them. The same course was adopted as regards the Opéra-Comique, which was raised to the rank of an official theatre, and in 1799 we see "Citizen Bonaparte", with one stroke of the pen settle amounts of payment amounting to 3,000 livres, for the rent of boxes at the theatre in question. The grand political stroke of Brumaire had been made, and Bonaparte's sense of order had begun to show itself here as it did everywhere.

Dating from the same time was the interdiction by the prefect of police, of works dealing with the coup d'État, and on the 22d Germinal of the Year VIII (April 12, 1800), the minister of the interior arrogated to himself the right to authorize all such works as might be represented. This amounted to the re-establishment of the preventive censure. At the Opéra "without the public's paying any attention to the fact, or showing any interest, the use of the words "théâtre," "king" and "queen" were introduced in Gluck's "Alceste." A consular decree allowed the theatre a subvention of 10,000 livres per month, and did away with free admissions.

Under the Empire a series of decrees revived the pension system, included the re-establishment of new theatres, determined the kind and variety of those already in existence, and gave the Opéra the exclusive right to perform "those works which are altogether musical and ballets in the noble and graceful style;

<sup>1</sup> See my study "The Emperor and His Own Opéra" (1895-1910), in the "Musical Quarterly" of October, 1911.



View of the Station de l'Épave  
(about 1935)

such as those whose subjects are derived from mythology and history, and whose principal characters are gods, kings and heroes." Finally, there appeared the decree of July 18, 1807, reducing the number of theatres in Paris to eight. Twenty or more others had to close their doors before August 15, the date of the Emperor's *fiat*, and that without receiving any indemnity. The Emperor, who had already assigned a very definite type of representation to each theatre, the bounds of which it could not overstep, on November 1, 1807 created the office of superintendent of the great theatres. Three stages were dedicated to music: that of the *Opéra*, which had become the Imperial Academy of Music, the *Opéra-Comique* and the *Opéra-Buffe*—the last as a species of annex to the *Opéra-Comique*, under the name of "Emperor's Theatre," with a monthly subvention of 10,000 francs.

In 1811 a new decree, dated August 13, reestablished in favor of the *Opéra*—already richly endowed with an annual subvention of 750,000 francs—the unique privilege of levying on all other theatrical performances days or less, which at times reached the figure of 600,000 francs per year. Since not a concert could be given "without the day having been set by the superintendent of our theatres, after consultation with the director of our Imperial Academy of Music," it was impossible that the musical life of the capital, save as regards dramatic music, could develop. The "musicians" of the pupils of the Conservatoire alone could supply almost to surfeit the interest of lovers of symphonic music.

As to the *Opéra-Comique*, merged with the lyric theatre of the *vue Feytaud* in 1803, the Emperor allowed it to take its place among the official theatres in 1804. Sometimes in the *Salle Favart*, at others in the *Salle Feytaud*, it continued to represent Métral, Grétry, Monsigny, Dauz, Plüschel, Nicolo, Barton, etc., composers who were later joined by the young Bérthelin.

The Conservatoire, a child of the Revolution, was also the object of the master's solicitude. It was endowed with a new concert-hall, and with a library. On the other hand the *Académie*, beginning with 1802, sent a musician to Rome every year, in company with the laureates, painters, sculptors, and architects who had been going there since the time of Louis XIV. All in all, after a dozen years of instability, of dissensions and crises, Bonaparte, then Napoleon, had regularized and blossomed the musical institutions of France, just as he had all the branches of his administration.

<sup>1</sup>See *Revue de France*, "History and Glory of the Concert-Hall of the Paris Conservatory," in the "Musical Quarterly," April, 1911.

Let us now examine into his personal relations with the artists of his period.

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According to one of the modern biographers meet at home with the intimate life of Napoleon, M. Fédéric Mazon, the former was very sensitive to music, and was particularly fond of vocal music.

Among all the arts music is the only one for which he shows a special and personal liking. As to the others, he justifies them from motives of policy, because of his passion for the grandiose, and the thought of immortality, but music he really and fully enjoys, in fond of it for its own sake, and because of the sensations it gives him. It calms his nerves, it revivifies his senses, it charms his melancholy moments, it fires his heart. What matter if he does sing out of tune, if he have a poor memory for a melody, and if he does not know his notes? Music comes him to the point of military hero of his self-control, it drives him to offer the order of the iron cross of Lombardy to the soprano Constant, and this shows that he feels it more deeply than many of those who believe themselves capable of reaching it. (Napoleon at his dinner)

All kinds of music did not affect the Emperor with equal intensity. As we have already said, he instinctively preferred Italian music, especially that of Paisiello, and when he heard Lenoir, whose cathartes, if anything, are opposed to those of the Italians, one may even question whether he was as sincere as when he allowed himself to be captivated by the charms of his favorite Paisiello also: the finale from the *Le Tendre*, the duo from *La Mollière* (*Pol l'indietro e la furina*), or *Wini's* air (*Aplais toi mille poudres*). It appears most probable that the pompous operas of Lenoir, Spontini and their imitators, the creations of the "Empire style" in music, rather him as a sovereign rather than mere him as a music lover.

Paisiello had come to Paris in 1801 to conduct the Consular orchestra, or, according to Reichardt (*Fortranis Briefe aus Paris*, I, p. 52) to write a great French opera.

He receives 2,000 livres per month, and is provided with lodgings, service and an equipage free of charge. In return, he composes and directs music of the Consul. He still bears the title of maître de chapelle to the King of Naples, and is warmly enjoying a leave of absence. He was first given a poem by Lemercier to set to music, but Paisiello refused it, and knowing how to make the shadow who played the principal part in it sing in an interesting manner been dead to flesh. Meanwhile,

an old piece of Quinault's, *Proserpine*, arranged by Guilford, is being prepared for his use in the style of Massenet, and let it at present wait upon the concertist. (Letter of November 18, 1808.)

While awaiting the completion of *Proserpine*, the *Opéra-Buffa* presented in *Motivora*, before an empty auditory, as Reichardt adds: the singer Stimmannelli filled the principal rôle very poorly indeed, though it was one she had formerly sung in Prague and in Leipzig. *Proserpine*, an opera by "the first conductor and composer in the service of H. M. the King of Naples, for the moment employed to compose and direct the private orchestra of the FIRST CONSUL," to quote the libretto—was at last given on the 8th Germinal of the Year XI (March 29, 1808), and had but slight success. Fifteen performances sufficed to satisfy the extraordinary curiosity which the announcement of its premiere had awakened months before. Bonaparte, incidentally, did not grace either the rehearsal nor the first performance with his presence, nor did the English Ambassador, a declaration of war between France and Great Britain was imminent, says Reichardt, and, in fact, hostilities were resumed in the month of May.

After this misadventure, Paisiello, pretending that the climate of Paris did not agree with his wife, asked permission to return to Naples. Bonaparte had consulted him with regard to the choice of his successor, but having read in the *Journal de Paris* that it was expected that Méhul would be nominated to fill the vacancy, he immediately ordered Duros to inform Lescœur of his nomination to the directorship of the orchestra. And when, that very day, Paisiello presented his colleague to the First Consul, the latter said: "I hope that you will still remain with us for a time, in the meanwhile, M. Lescœur will have to content himself with the second place." Lescœur replied: "General, I am already taking the first place when I follow in the footsteps of such a master as the illustrious Paisiello." This bit of repartee greatly pleased Bonaparte, and from that moment on the new director enjoyed the honor which was shown him to the end of the Empire—and even later.

The year following, on July 10, the teacher of Berlin presented at the *Opéra*, which had just assumed the title of "Imperial Academy of Music," his opera *Götter an der Arden*, whose subject-matter gave great pleasure to the master of France, an enthusiast as regards Gothic poetry, then very much the fashion. During the course of the second performance, which he attended, Napoleon sent for the composer to come to his box and addressed him as follows: "Monsieur Lescœur, I salute you! Share in your triumph!

Your last two acts are beautiful, but your third is quite inaccessible." And he made him sit down beside the Emperor, in the front of the box, amid the acclamation of all those present. The following day Lesueur received a golden snuff-box with the inscription: "The Emperor of the French to the composer *les Bardes*." The snuff-box contained the cross of the Legion of Honor, together with six bank-notes, each for a thousand francs.

After the *Bardes*, Lesueur contributed for the imperial coronation at Notre-Dame (December 2) a march and several pieces, though the mass which he conducted was by Paisiello; then, at the Opéra, in conjunction with Ponsard, he gave *L'Incorporation du Temple de la Victoire* (January 2, 1807), the *Triomphe de Trajan* (October 25) and in *Moët d'Adam* (March 21, 1809), while in 1813 he composed a religious cantata for the wedding of Napoleon and Marie-Louise.

For the chapel of the Tuilleries, Lesueur composed little antonies which he interpolated in the service. These scores undoubtedly pleased the Emperor, for one day, wishing to reward Lesueur, who had just written his antonies *Delorsk*, whose military subject pleased Napoleon better than such subjects as *Rath* or *Rechel*, for instance, he said:

Your music is grand, elevated, well adapted to its subject, it is solemn, it is devotional. It is what I feel that the organ of the church should be. Have you composed other antonies? "You say, the one to which Your Majesty has been listening is my eighteenth." Then you have blackened a good deal of manuscript. That is an expense in itself, and one for which I wish to pay. Monsieur Lesueur, I grant you a pension of 2,400 francs to pay for the manuscript you have used to such good effect. It is only to pay for the paper, you understand, for such a word as "publication" should not be mentioned to an artist of your rank. (Alapine.)

The other great French musicians of the time, Grétry, for example, never enjoyed the same measure of favor accorded Lesueur. One evening at Fontainebleau—Zéaire at Amu was being sung—the Emperor had Grétry sit down beside him and, as Roilly tells us, he "experienced the freakest emotion while listening to the admirable tale of the magic picture and said, the words escaping from him as though against his will. "It is divine! It is perfect! I am very fond of that music." "Then you are not disgusted," replied Grétry, with his malicious smile and his observing glance. Napoleon smiled, and pressed the musician's hand. Yet, not long after, at a reception, he affected not to recognize Grétry, and asked him to recall his name to his memory. "Sir, it is still Grétry," was the reply. This witty retort was



not to the master's liking, however, and he turned his back on the composer.

With Méhul, who had been appointed a chevalier of the Legion of Honor when the order was first founded, Napoleon had been acquainted for some time, through Mme. Beauharnais. He had considered taking him to Egypt with him, but left him to remain "in charge at his Conservatory, and, still more important, at his theatre. These are his true roads to glory." Méhul, as we have seen, celebrated the fame of the conqueror of Italy, in 1800, at the Temple of Mars. Either after his performance, or at a later date, the Council said to him: "Your music, perhaps, is even more learned and harmonious; yet that of Pachelbel and Cimarosa has greater charm for us." These words suggested to Méhul the idea of composing an *opéra-buffe* in the Italian style. Metastasio gave him the book of *Frasca*, or *L'Espositi* (The Hot-Head) which was presented in the Salle Favart on February 17, 1801, at Carnival-time, and purported to come from the pen of a Signor Fiorillo. Its success was very marked and the First Council himself enjoyed it greatly. It has been said that Méhul wished to mystify him in the imitating the Italian, but this is not very likely. Bonaparte had no patience with plagiarists, and Méhul might have had to repent his daring. It is more probable that the deception practiced upon the public had, on the contrary, been arranged in concert with Bonaparte himself: "No Frenchman could ever have written music like this," said the latter. According to Elwart, he also told the composer: "See that you deceive me often this way!" Be this as it may, Méhul dedicated the score of *Frasca* to Bonaparte, in the following terms:

General Council

Your conversations regarding music having inspired me with the desire to compose some works less severe in style than those which I have hitherto produced, I chose *Frasca*. My tentative having succeeded, it is my duty to dedicate it to you.

With respectful good wishes,

Méhul.

An annotation which follows this dedication contains a declaration of the composer's principles, in which he informs the public that "it not happen to boast of his conversion," and further on plainly affirms: "I know that the general taste is more inclined to be attracted by music which is purely pleasing, yet good taste never insists that truth be sacrificed to mere grace in music."

Two years after the production of *les Berles*, Méhul, too, presented an *Opéra*, *Uthal*, which the Emperor had per-

formed at Saint-CLOUD. And then came Joseph, his master-work and one of the master-works of the imperial epoch.

Napoleon's relations to Cherubini were more strained. As we have already remarked, Cherubini had invited the antipathy of the First Consul by exhibiting his musical tastes without sufficient discretion. "Faiselle's music is sweet and beneficent in its effects," Bonaparte one day remarked to him, "but your instrumentation is too heavy, and while Faiselle calms me in an agreeable manner, your compositions demand too much attention on the part of the audience." Cherubini answered with animation—with too great animation—that one might be a good general and yet know nothing about harmony.<sup>1</sup>

It can be easily understood that with such opinions Cherubini was not a favorite at Court. Hence he made no difficulties about accepting the hospitality of Austria, toward the year 1806. It is possible that he might have remained long in Vienna, had not the chances of war taken Napoleon himself there in November 1806. "Always he, everywhere!" as Victor Hugo said. . . . At the time Cherubini was commanded by Napoleon to organize a dozen concerts at Schobesau, after which he returned to France. In 1808, however, he withdrew to the Ardennes, to the chateau of Chimay, where the former Miss Taffier resided with the title of princess.

The misunderstanding between the Emperor and Cherubini did not come to an end until the period of the "Hundred Days," when the composer was made a member of the Institute and received the cross of the Legion of Honor. But then it was too late, and it was to the Restoration that Cherubini owed his official position as director of the Conservatoire.

Spontini was more fortunate. Having gone to France to seek his fortune there at the time when the effervescence of the Revolution was on the decline, at the moment when, together with Cherubini, an art which shared certain novel features had intruded itself upon the lyric stage, he dedicated his "Médée," produced November 27, 1804, to the Empress Josephine. Not without some difficulty did he obtain from Jéty an opera book on one of those subjects drawn from the antique which were the fashion of the day, in Fétis's era when Cherubini and Méhul had already refused to set. Two or three years of effort of application of retouching were necessary before an actual performance of this master-piece of the "Empire" style could take place.

<sup>1</sup>See the "Mémorial" of the Baron de Tresselt, "The Musical Quarterly," July 1888, pp. 354, 356.

Having become director of the Emperor's music, Spontini owed it to the sovereign's protection that he could at length see his opera represented on December 17, 1807—after fourteen months of rehearsal, and following the *Triomphe de Trajan*, by Lescaur and Furnia (October 16) which, for the Emperor, had a more immediate interest than an antique opera. According to Castil-Blanc, Napoleon had had the principal numbers of Spontini's score performed at the Tuileries as early as February, and following their audition had expressed his admiration for the maestro in the warmest terms:

Your opera abounds in new motives. Its declamation is elegant and in accordance with musical feeling. There are fine airs, and whose effect is certain, a finale which carries away the listener: The march to the scaffold seems admirable to me. . . . Monsieur Spontini, I can now tell you that you will obtain a great success. And you will have merited it!

If we praise some of the embellishments which Castil-Blanc includes on all his accounts, there may be some truth in these words, yet it should be remembered that the Emperor never supported Spontini's opera before its production, and showed his preference for the *Triomphe de Trajan*, which flattered him personally, and Lescaur's in *Mont d'Adam*.<sup>1</sup>

Yet he was obliged to recognize that with his *le Fatale* Spontini had created the "Emperor style" in music. Therefore, at the beginning of 1809, the Count de Béruais, superintendent of theatres, informed the director of the Opéra, Fourné, that the Emperor had decided to stage Fernand Cortes, Spontini's new opera, the book by Foxy and Kérissard. This time the rehearsal did not drag; on the contrary it was necessary to urge on Spontini. Its premiere, with an extraordinary display of scenic means, took place November 25, 1809, and a brilliant success crowned music, action, artists and—Frasconi's cavalry, fourteen horses mounted by the Frasconi Brothers and their groom! Fernand Cortes, already a forecast of the Meyerbeerian spectacular opera, held its place in the repertory until 1839. Yet, for reasons which are unknown, the performances were stopped after the thirteenth, and it was not brought forward again until ten years later. Then *le Fatale* did not leave the boards, however, and in 1819 carried off the Grand-prix prize of 10,000 francs (only awarded once), decreed a musical work.

<sup>1</sup> When Saint-Claude de Voisins wrote to M. de Lamoignon on August 22 '71 de not wish to have the *Fatale* given. "I think it would be better to give *le Mont d'Adam*, since it is ready." The *Mont d'Adam* was not performed until March, 1808.

Appointed assistant-director of the Emperor's Theatre that same year of 1810, Spontini, despite the official favour which he enjoyed, was dismissed by M. de Beauvau in 1818, and replaced by Fétis, who accepted the appointment on condition that he be not required to give up his functions at Court.

Before taking up Napoleon's relations with individual singers, male and female, of his time, some mention should be made of Zingarelli, his other favourite composer. Zingarelli was choir-master at St. Peter's in Rome when, having refused to have a *Te Deum* sung for the birth of the "King of Rome," in 1811, he was arrested and brought to Paris, incidentally, he it said, with every consideration. There he remained for a few weeks at the home of his friend Göttry, terrified, according to Castil-Blanc, but he he asked to compose a *Te Deum* which he had finally decided not to write when, one day (it was the first of January) he was ordered to write a mass, to be performed on the twelfth, and, later, a *Stabat Mater*. This last was sung at the Elysée on Good Friday, by Crescentini, Lays, Nourrit, Mmes. Bouchet and Armand. Crescentini accomplished marvels in the veriest Field mass *dehors notes*, which a gesture from the Emperor had him repeat.

After this success nothing further was demanded of the Master. One day, weary of inaction, Zingarelli ventured to ask whether he might be allowed to go back to Rome, whither his obligations as choir-master summoned him. The answer he received was:

Tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, to-day even, if that be your wish. M. Zingarelli is entirely at liberty. It is true that his sphere in Paris has been a piece of good fortune to us, but His Majesty would be annoyed were he to neglect his duties.

This reply might be interpreted as a command, and Zingarelli hastened to leave Paris, after having received the tidy little sum of 24,000 francs to console him for his somewhat hasty displacement.

It was while this composer's Rome was being represented at the Tuileries, that the male soprano Crescentini was given the cross of the Iron Crown. The scene has been recounted, as actually witnessed, by Mlle. Avellan, one of the Emperor's ladies-in-waiting:

On the day in question, I could see His Majesty's face perfectly through my loggiette, from the box in which I was seated, while Crescentini was singing the famous *air Quiero adorarle* (*Quiero adorarle*—which, according to Senlis, he himself had interpolated in the song—and, without any exaggeration, it was realized with pleasure. The Emperor moved about in his arm-chair, spoke to the great dignitaries



Madame Grandjeu  
(in the character of Zaira)

of the Empire who surrounded him, and seemed to be trying to make them share in the admiration which he himself felt. The performance was not yet over when he had M. de Massenich called, and it was then that he told him to give Grassini the cross of the order.

"The bestowal of this decoration," Las Cases remarked to Napoleon at Saint-Helena, at a later period, "caused much comment in Paris;" malevolence seized upon it with the greatest joy, and made the most of it. Nevertheless, at one of the brilliant soirees given in the *Faschweg Saint-Germain*, the indignation which it had excited was drowned in a witty retort. ". . . It was an acknowledgment," said one lively speaker, "a homage, a veritable profanation. By what right could a Cross-wielder claim it?" he cried. Upon which the handsome Mme. Grassini, rising majestically from her chair, replied in the most dramatic tones, and with a theatrical gesture: "And his wound, my dear sir, is that he went for nothing!" Whereupon ensued such a hubbub of delight and applause, that poor Grassini was greatly embarrassed by the success of her defence (*Mémoires de Sainte-Hélène*).

The remembrance of "the handsome Grassini" must have recalled to the captive of Saint-Helena the happy days of the second campaign of Italy, and the connection he had formed at the time with the singer, who was then still young. In 1800 Giuseppina Grassini was twenty-seven; in the full splendor of her beauty and talent, equipped with an excellent contralto voice, pure and even throughout its entire range, and admirable in opera of the *semi-serio* style.

Napoleon found her in Milan, the day following on the second day after the battle of Marengo, as M. Fodéris-Masson has already established. Already, two years before, in the same city of Milan, occupied by the French army, she had valiantly endeavored to attract the attention of the young hero, who was then still faithful to Josephine. In 1800 he was not altogether the same; and, incidentally, "in Grassini, it was less the woman who captured his heart than the singer. She, entirely prepared, had been awaiting her opportunity for two years; one may imagine whether she offered a long resistance." The day following her concert at Milan, her departure for Paris had been decided upon, together with that of Marchesi and Mile. Billington.

In Paris, she sang together with Bianchi, two days at the *fête* given on July 18 at the *Jacobins*, preceding Milet's hymn for three choruses. "A fine piece in Italian, with fine Italian music," had been the general's demand. He was given two instead of one.

Desnarts installed the Grassini in a small house in the rue Chaussevine—recently relabeled the rue de la Victoire—not far from the one he himself had occupied before going to the Tuileries. The singer soon grew bored here, for she had dreamed quite another dream in following the victor of Marengo. In search of consolation, she formed an intimacy with Roda, the great violinist. Then she resumed her liberty, after having given two concerts at the Théâtre de la République (March 17 and October 16, 1801). She returned to Paris after the establishment of the imperial choir, of which she remained a member until 1818. At the time she received a fixed salary of 55,000 francs, additional annual gratifications, and a pension of 15,000 francs. Besides this, she enjoyed the proceeds of a benefit concert given every winter at the Opéra or near it.

Stangini declares that the sovereign would permit neither Grassini nor Crescentini to sing in public. He adds:

At the time I was writing several songs, intended for Miss Grassini's lovely voice. One day when she was to sing at the Tuileries before the Emperor, she gave me the words of an air she wished to add to her program, for me to set to music. These words, which she had written herself, read as follows:

*Adieu l'espoir d'être un jour célèbre,  
 Adieu tout ce que me valait la vie.  
 M'a un grand amour, l'abbé Fava.*

"Your motherhood my faithful heart adores  
 I'll be your comrade if you lead to me.  
 Only one willing please my love to please."

In the play, Cleopatra is speaking to Caesar, but on the stage, while she sang, Miss Grassini often turned her glance in the direction in which the Emperor's box was situated. I am unable to say whether, that evening, she received the "winking glance of love."

In 1814, Miss Grassini, like so many others, quickly forgot her imperial successes and lovers. Says Soude:

Always dramatic and always sensible the prima donna could not refrain from singing amorous duettos with Lord Castlemain. In these intimate gatherings, at the residence of the man who had been the principal agent in bringing the coalition against Napoleon, Miss Grassini might be seen draped in the great Indian shawl which she used as a mantle, pompously declaiming the finest passages from the opera she had presented at the theatre of the Tuileries. The Duke of Wellington was not present when this lovely Cleopatra told him:

*Adieu l'espoir d'être un jour célèbre,*

and history even affirm that the Duke of Wellington was not shy when it came to replying to this tender supplication with an equivoal answer.

Mme Catalani, whose contemporaries have praised her sonorous, powerful voice, full of charm, a soprano of prodigious range, which reached the superacute G, preferred British guineas to Napoleons d'or. After her two concerts at Saint-Cloud, which we have already mentioned, the Emperor went to visit her on the stage, and asked "Where are you going?" "To London, Sir!" "Stay in Paris! You shall have 100,000 francs and two months leave of absence. The matter is settled. Adieu, Madame!" Mme Catalani swept him a courtesy and fled to Meritx the following day, whence she made her way to England in spite of the Continental Blockade. She did not dare return to France until 1814, when she obtained the management of the Théâtre Italien. On the return of Napoleon from the Island of Elba, however, she found herself strangely embarrassed, and seized the first opportunity to disappear from Paris a second time, in the expectation of happier days.

Among the singers who won the esteem of Napoleon, at least for a time, must be mentioned Garat, who was the rage during the time of the Directory and Consulat, as a singer and a composer of romances. He was highly prized by Lucien Bonaparte, minister of the interior during 1799 and 1800. One reception day at the ministry, Mme Récamier tells us, when dinner was served, the future emperor rose and led the way to the dining-room, where, without offering his arm to any of the women present, he seated himself at the middle of the table. Everyone sat down round about him as chance might dictate, Mme Laflotte, his mother, at his right, Mme Récamier on the same side, a little further off. Bonaparte who had counted on having this charming lady, whom he had failed to secure, for a table-companion, turned about in annoyance to the guests still standing, and then said to Garat, pointing to the place beside herself: "Well, Garat, sit down there!" After dinner they went to the drawing-room. Bonaparte seated himself, alone, beside the piano, while the women formed a circle facing the musician, the men standing behind them. Garat sang an air by Gluck. After he had sung, several instrumental pieces were played, and at the close of a Sonata played by Jadin, the First Consul commenced to pound the piano violently, crying: "Garat! Garat!" It was an order, Garat returned to the piano, and sang an air from *Olympie* which enchanted all his listeners.



The favor enjoyed by the singer-composer was forfeited, however, before the end of the Empire. Garat frequently sang at the Tuileries. Yet he was not able successfully to conceal his royalist sentiments, very witty and caustic, he gave vent to some hasty sallies which displeased the powers above. Napoleon thought he could discover an allusion to General Moreau in Lemoine's *Athalia*, which Garat sang to music. The singer's romances *Henri IV* at *Cherbourg* and *Boyard*, among others, augmented the imperial resentment, which betrayed itself in a shabby enough fashion by the withholding of Garat's salary as a professor at the Conservatoire, during the fourteen concluding months of the Empire. This, however, had not prevented Napoleon from decorating the singer-composer with the order of the Legion of Honor; yet Garat, though very vain, did all in his power to conceal the fact that he had been decorated. However, if he was by no means a warm partisan of the Emperor, he remained greatly attached to the Empress Josephine, whom he continued to visit upon, after her divorce, in her retreat in Malmaison.

A great violinist, also appreciated by the Empress, was Alexander Boucher, whom we will mention in conclusion, and who was quite as famous for his extraordinary resemblance to the Emperor as for his art. Violinist to the King of Spain, Charles IV, Boucher undertook a journey to Germany in 1806, and managed to win the favor of Franz de Bounbournais (who stood god-mother to his son) and of her niece, Josephine, then at Malmaison. Josephine wished to appoint him her first violinist. Received shortly after at the Tuileries, Boucher made his appearance one day at a Court festival with the Spanish embassy, in the uniform of a colonel, his proper rank as director of the King of Spain's music. Napoleon, having noticed the uniform, asked Duroc who the officer might be. Duroc, having questioned Boucher, told him that he was the generalissimo of the sixteenth notes of all the Spains. "What is his name?" "Alexander Boucher," replied the Empress, "he is the celebrated violinist whom I wished to present to Your Majesty." "Well, he is sufficiently presented," replied Napoleon, "he is here right under my eyes." "I had thought that an artist of his merit," added Josephine. . . "Could not be more happily situated," the Emperor continued her phrase. "Let him return to Madrid; a generalissimo should never leave his army." "Still, if he should prefer Your Majesty's service!" "Do not mention the man to me again," Napoleon said curtly. The Emperor's self-esteem was wounded by the artists' striking resemblance to him. When Charles IV was brought a prisoner

to Fontainebleau. In 1808, Bonaparte did not abandon him, but remained with him in Marselles, until an order of the day coming from the Emperor, who could not suffer a man to resemble him physically, obliged him to leave the sovereign.



It would be easy to add anecdotes to those already given, but we must refrain. We have recalled the most characteristic among them, and those which present musicians famous for various reasons. In general, they show the decisive and authoritative spirit displayed by Napoleon with regard to music as to all else, and the importance he attached to an art which he valued, not only for the pleasure it gave him personally, but also because he had observed its influence on other men as well as on himself, and knew how to make it serve his political ends.

It would be pleasant to be able to affirm that the Napoleonic legend has been able to inspire the musicians with as happy results as it has the poets, novelists and painters of the nineteenth century; yet hardly anything at all has come of it, musically, and it is in the domain of song, more especially, a hero highly prized at all times and under every government, that the French have celebrated their hero. Is it not in their songs that the people have always guarded the memory of the great occurrences of history?

No sooner had he returned from his Italian campaign than complete and well-known are celebrated the praises of the victorious general; then the defeated of Brumaire were sung; and finally, the Empire was proclaimed. Napoleon found his Homer in the person of Béranger (1768-1837), one of whose poems, *le Chag Mau*, or *le Mort de Napoléon*, is the only one, perhaps, which has inspired a truly great composer. Berlioz made a cantata of it for bass voices, which was sung on different occasions, notably on December 13, 1844, two days before the return of Napoleon's ashes to the Invalides. This event itself only brought forth a few resources by obscure musicians, a quadrille by Massard, and a gallop suggested by the frigate *la Belle Peste*.

The government of Louis Philippe had first thought of having Cherubini's *Requiem* sung at the ceremony at the Invalides, but remembering that it had been written for the funeral of Louis XVIII, decided that Massard's would be a more fitting choice. Three hundred musicians were gathered at the Invalides on December 16, and each of the solo parts was sung by four of

the greatest artists in Paris: Massé, Grisi, Danzmann, Fontana and Duran, sopranos; Pauline Garcia, Eugénie Garcia, Albertazzi, and Stolz, contraltos; Balloin, Duprez, Fouchard, Alexis Dupont and Nasset, tenors; and Ludwika Tardifouf, Levasseur, Barabek and Allard, basses. Adolphe Adam, in a letter written December 28, to his Berlin friend Spilke, remarked:

Napier has his master-piece by Mozart been sung with such brilliancy. The dress rehearsal was held at the Opéra, before an immense assembly of people and caused a tremendous sensation. After the mass the three funeral marches composed by Auber, Halévy and myself were played, and on this occasion I had the pleasure of triumphing over my two illustrious rivals. Auber's march made no imposing whatever, that of Halévy was judged to be a fine symphonic composition, lacking the character demanded by the occasion. My own was more dramatic; I had written it in two sections, one funeral, and the other triumphant, and this contrast was perfectly grasped by the public, which understood as well as I did, that this funeral, taking place twenty years after the hero's death, should be a triumph.

The day of the ceremony, together with my two hundred musicians, I went to Neuilly, where Napoleon's ashes was to be distributed, to conduct these marches. Unfortunately, the cold was so excessive that the artists and their instruments were frozen, and the performance was a very deplorable one. During the entire progress of the procession, the musicians played my march and that of Auber. Halévy's march could not be played, because his symphony was too difficult to execute, and not sufficiently rhythmic to allow it to be marched to.

Berlioz, who had been not asked in this ceremony, would not admit that his *Requiem*, sung two years before in that very chapel of the Invalides, had not been required of him. He is even said to have refused to compose a funeral march leaving it to Auber, Halévy and Adam, to "break their necks on his Apostrophe à justice," given during the past summer. "O, my divine Emperor!" he cries, after the ceremony at the Invalides, "What a pitiable reception was accorded you! My tears freeze on my cheeks for shame rather than cold. . . . The Mozart *Requiem* made a sorry enough impression, far despite the fact that it is a master-piece; it was not cast in the proportions which such a ceremony demanded."

There was also in Paris, at this same time, a young German musician, who was present at the funeral of Napoleon, at the moment when the procession entered the Invalides, on that fatal Tuesday afternoon, December 18, 1840.

*Just then a voice is given,  
Faint comes it to us.*

["They fair as they,  
Cold as the tomb,"]

—Victor Hugo

His name was Richard Wagner, and he had just arranged Donizetti's *La Favorite* for the piano, and published a little romance, entitled "A Visit to Beethoven," in the *Genève musicale*; in addition he acted as Paris correspondent for a Swedish periodical. He alludes to the funeral of Napoleon in an article on Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, calling attention to the charming *Parlement* in march of religious music, after having heard Mozart's *Requiem* sung at the *Jacobites*, by Hubert and Mlle. Perleau, and Beethoven composing for them a *Stabat Mater* as far from devotional as possible. It was at this time, too, that Wagner wrote his "Two Granddukes" to Heine's poem, Schumann's setting of which was later to gain the greatest popularity.

Berlin, Wagner, Schumann—Napoleon received the homage of the greatest, after his apotheosis, as, while alive, and unconscious of the fact, he had inspired Beethoven to write his *Eroica* Symphony, "written upon Bonaparte," which remains the most sublime and worthy tribute ever paid the hero.

One can understand that greater musicians have not endeavored to rewrite the *Eroica*, nor measure themselves with Beethoven, whose name will ever be inseparably linked with that of the First Consul, who inspired him.

(Translated by Frederick B. Wessend)

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