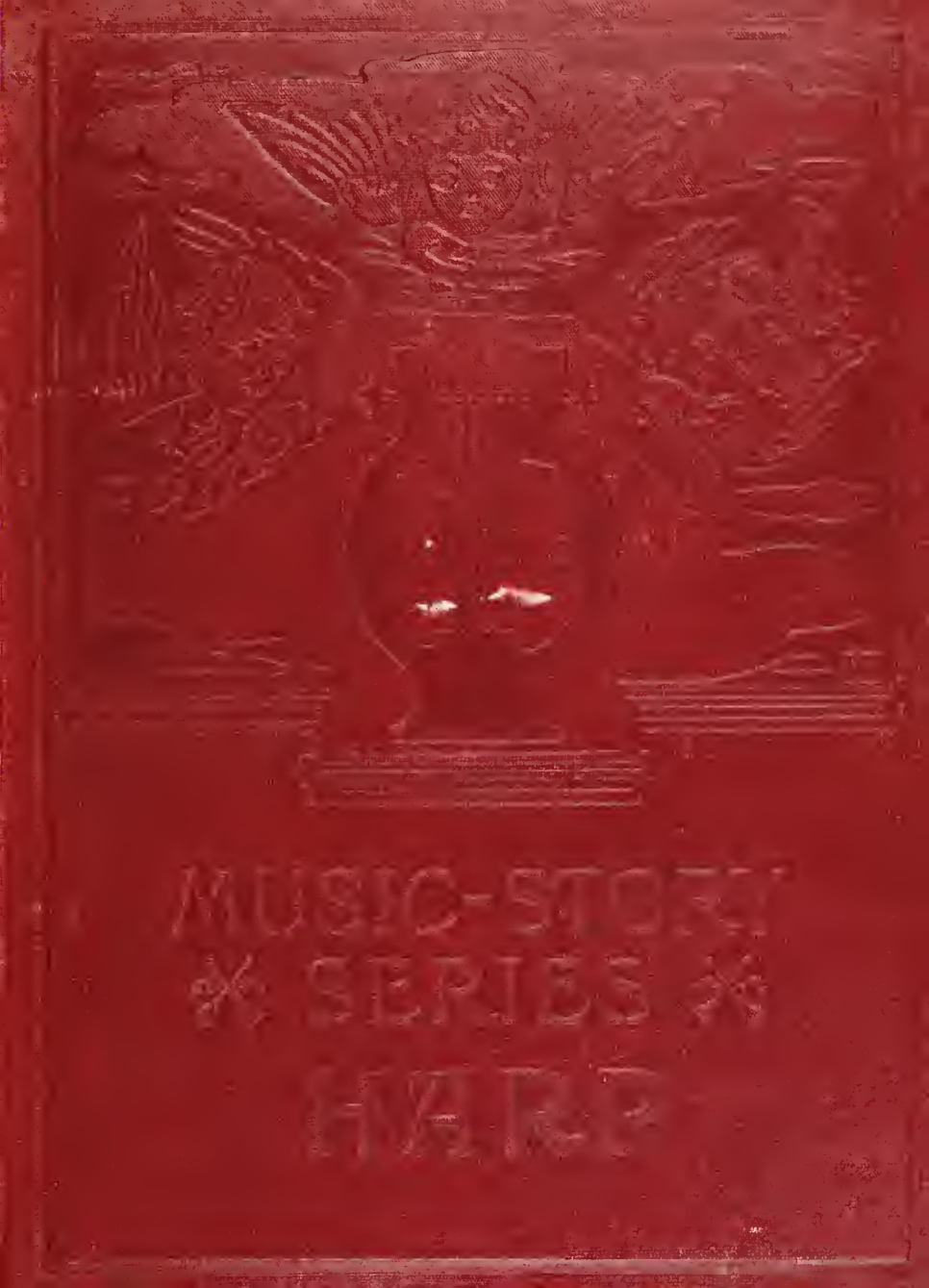
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From Luini's (1470-1530) picture

"The Adoration of the Shepherds" Como Cathedral.

The Story of the Harp

BY

W. H. GRATTAN FLOOD,

Organist of Enniscorthy Cathedral; Author of "History of Irish Music."

London

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MADE AND PRI
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TO

FRANCIS JOSEPH BIGGER, Esq.,

M.R.I.A., F.R.S.A.,

IN RECOGNITION OF HIS EFFORTS

TO PROMOTE THE STUDY

OF THE IRISH HARP.

Preface.

ALTHOUGH the Harp, mainly by reason of the introduction of the pianoforte, has not maintained its prestige in the *salons* of the great, yet it still holds an honoured place in the orchestra, and claims many amateur votaries. Of course there is a professorship of the harp in the principal musical conservatoires; and all the big European and American festivals requisition the instrument either for solo or concerted work.

Apart from the graceful outline of the harp, there is something indefinable in its strains, something ethereal and *sui generis*. The very mention of the instrument recalls to mind the number of allusions to it in the Bible. Who has not read of the myriad harpers harping upon their golden harps in the New Jerusalem? Has not the theme of David playing on his harp been ever popular with mediæval painters? The story of Jubal's lyre has recently been corroborated by a

sculptured tablet in Chaldea, due to the researches of the great American explorer, Mr. St. Chad Boscawen. Year by year archæologists are bringing to light hidden tablets on which harps are depicted. Certain it is that from the earliest period of the world's history a form of harp has existed.

The present little volume does not pretend to be scientific, in the strict acceptance of the term; nor yet is much account taken of conflicting theories as to the most ancient forms of harps, or exact data relative thereto. As is sufficiently indicated by the title, it is only purposed to tell the *story* of the harp from the earliest records to the close of the last century. General accuracy, however, is aimed at, and an endeavour is made to render the narrative alike of interest to the professional as well as the amateur.

In a certain sense, this venture may be regarded as a pioneer work on the harp, as, save for the book by Bruce Armstrong, and the articles in Grove's *Dictionary* and the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, there has not previously been published any special history dealing adequately with this venerable instrument.

No apology is needed for the prominence given to the Irish harp in the following pages. Ireland has been for centuries associated with "The harp that once thro' Tara's halls," and the instrument figures in the

arms and coinage of the kingdom. Dante, as quoted by Vincenzo Galilei, attests that the Italians received the harp from Ireland, and German historians tell of the Irish monks who founded scores of religious houses all over the Continent, bringing with them their harps and bells.

At the same time I have endeavoured to do no injustice to other harp-loving countries, and I have summarised the most recent discoveries in the East in regard to sculptured harps, especially at Crete, Egypt, and Babylonia.

No one is more painfully aware of the shortcomings of the present volume than the writer himself, but the chief object has been to present in a popular form the various evolutions of the harp until its final development by Erard, at the commencement of the nineteenth century, and to furnish a readable account of the leading harpists from mediæval days to our own times; as also to point out the bearing of the harp in the orchestra, and its introduction into the scores of such giants as Wagner, Berlioz, Meyerbeer, and Gounod.

My best acknowledgments are hereby tendered to Francis Joseph Bigger, Esq., M.R.I.A., Belfast, for several of the blocks used for illustrating the subject of the Irish harp; and also to the proprietors of the

Irish Rosary, Dublin, for the use of blocks of the Ullard Harp, Brian Boru Harp, Dalway Harp, Hempson Harp, and M'Fall "Tara" Harp.

WM. H. GRATTAN FLOOD.

ENNISCORTHY,
July, 1905.

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CHAPTER I.

ANTIQUITY OF THE HARP.

Early Egyptian harps—Their origin to be traced in the three-stringed lyre—Harps in Assyria, Babylonia, Uganda, and Persia—Aethicus of Istria—Heccatæus—Harps in pagan Ireland—Affinity between the Egyptian and Irish harp—The Ullard harp—The *timpan* and *ocht-tedach*—Greek and Roman harps—The name "harp" of English origin—How the harp was evolved from the hunter's bow—High artistic quality of early Egyptian music.

It is a commonplace of musical history that Egyptian harps have been discovered whose date goes back, to at least, three thousand years ago. The statements of Bruce and Wilkinson were at one time regarded as more or less apocryphal, in regard to the very advanced state of musical culture possessed by the ancient Egyptians, as illustrated in the representations of harps from the Temple of Ammon at Medinet-Abou, near Thebes. Pocock and Norden were the first to

announce the ancient drawings of harps at Thebes, but it was reserved for Bruce to accurately sketch two harps from the fresco panels in Egypt. Recent researches have amply confirmed the authenticity of the drawings made by Bruce, and therefore there is no longer question as to the great antiquity of the harp among the Egyptians. The instrument was fully developed under King Rameses III., *circ.* B.C. 1260, as may be demonstrated by a reference to the drawings given by Sir G. Wilkinson, especially the magnificent harp from the tomb of Rameses here illustrated.

Early Egyptian Harps

FIG. 1.—EGYPTIAN HARP.

The harps of the royal minstrels in ancient Egypt were magnificently ornamented, and were embellished with the head of the monarch himself. Herodotus tells us that the favourite song of the ancient Egyptians was a dirge, "The Lay

of the Harper," which is beautifully translated in *Ancient Egypt*, by Rawlinson.

One striking peculiarity of this old-world instrument is the absence of a fore-pillar. Many writers have remarked that the Egyptian harps must, of necessity, have been of very low pitch, inasmuch as the tension was perforce weak, owing to the want of a fore-pillar, or harmonic curved bar. This, however, is a fallacy, as, owing to the artistic construction of the harps, a sufficiently high tension was obtained. The strings were invariably of gut, and the number varied from seven to twenty-one, although, in general, thirteen was the normal number. Under King Thothmes III., B.C. 1470, harps of fourteen strings were in use.

Absence of a Fore-pillar

In height the harps were about six feet, and were elaborately ornamented, lotus flowers being much in evidence. The rows of pegs sufficiently attest the method of tuning, whilst the slits at the back were sound holes, as in the harps of our own days. Bruce regarded the Theban harps as "affording incontestable proof that every art necessary to the construction, ornament, and use of this instrument was in the highest perfection."

Exquisite Construction

This highly-finished instrument was undoubtedly the evolution of the three-stringed lyre, as depicted on the mast of Queen Hatashu's ship, which vessel she sent to the land of Punt, identified as the south coast of Arabia. The traveller to-day can gaze upon the wonderful temple that Queen Hatashu built in honour of Amen, King of the Gods of Thebes, and can see on monumental stone the carvings describing, as in a panorama, the voyage of the five ships. Prominently displayed on the mast of one of these ships is the three-stringed lyre. Here is an illustration of such lyres, but with five strings. There is scarcely a shadow of doubt that the harp was the final stage of the tightly-strung bow of primitive man, when by accident the stretched string emitted a musical sound on being plucked by the hunter. From one string to three strings was an easy transition, and the form of the hunter's bow was retained. In the course of years the number of strings was increased, as in the accompanying illustrations Figs. 3 and 4.

Derived from the Three-stringed Lyre

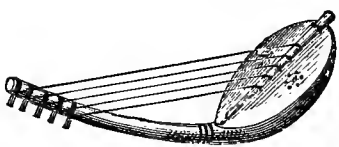


FIG. 2.—A STRINGED INSTRUMENT, SOMETHING BETWEEN A HARP AND A LUTE.

Assyria and Babylonia were famed for music from

the very earliest period, and the harp figured prominently in their social life. The Assyrian harp—like the Egyptian and old Irish—had no front pillar, but the sound body was *uppermost,* whereas in the Egyptian instrument it was always at the base. The Assyrians appear to have used a plectrum.

Assyria and Babylonia

FIG. 3.—EASTERN HARP.

Of all ancient peoples Babylonia can claim pride of place. From the plains of Babylonia came the most advanced culture, as may be evidenced by the bas-reliefs at the British Museum. A slab was discovered two years ago at Tello, or Scipurra, which Mr. St. Chad Boscawen dates as B.C. 2500. This remarkable "find," due to the American

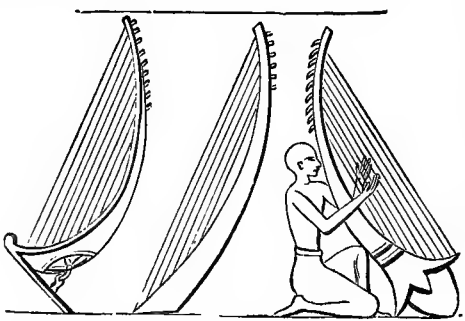


FIG. 4.—ANCIENT HARPS.

explorers in Babylonia, is a sculptured tablet representing musicians, one of whom is seated playing on a harp of eleven strings.[1]

It is not surprising that a people like the Babylonians, who were fully acquainted with the arch in architecture, should be so advanced in the art of music.

The Sumerian Plain identical with the Garden of Eden

The Sumerian Plain is regarded by the most recent authorities as the land of Eden mentioned in the Book of Genesis, and etymologists are agreed that "Eden" means the "Plain"; that is, the alluvial plain of Sumeria. Moreover, a hymn of the Sumerians alludes to the "magical tree of life" growing in Eden, analogous to what is mentioned in the Bible.

Sargon, B.C. 700, founded a library at Sippara, and the student at the British Museum can feast his eyes on hundreds of tablets, all testifying to a high degree of culture. In the Assyrian Room of the British Museum are some of the sculptured stones brought from the mound of Kouyunjik, the acropolis of Nineveh, by Layard. Musicians are seen performing on dulcimers, striking the strings with rods, that

[1] On a terra-cotta fresco—also due to the American explorers—there is a representation of a lyre, the date of which is about B.C. 3000.

instrument being attached to the waist by a string or ornamental tassel.[1]

In Uganda, as is recorded by Sir Harry Johnston, the natives still play on a primitive form of harp of eight strings. An older form of harp, or rather a one-stringed bowed lyre, is also described by this African explorer, the performer holding the string between his teeth, and plucking it, somewhat after the manner of the trump or Jews' harp.

Uganda Harps

The Persians, too, had harps, as is attested by some sculptures on an arch near Kermanshah, north-east of Bagdad.[2] An Irish traveller, who sketched the drawings in 1807, says that "the strings of the harp [*chang*] were completely visible and the figures were in perfect preservation." As far as can be judged from the drawings, which date from about the sixth century, the size of the instrument was small, and only had eight to ten strings. It may be

The Harp in Persia

[1] Some valuable finds have resulted from the recent (1905) exploration of this mound by Mr. R. C. Thompson, of the British Museum.

[2] These sculptures are on a stupendous rock, called Tackt-i-Bostan, and are said to have been executed during the lifetime of the Persian monarch, Khosroo Purviz. They form the ornaments of two lofty arches, and consist of representations of field sports and aquatic amusements.

added that from Persia a bowed instrument called the rebab came to Arabia—a form of violin.[1]

Pre-Christian Ireland certainly had harps, and a remarkable fact is that these harps were apparently modelled on those of the Egyptians—that is, having no fore-pillar. All Celticists are agreed that the pagan Irish were a most cultured people, and had the use of letters long before the advent of St. Patrick. Aethicus of Istria, a Christian philosopher of about the year 300, made a tour to Ireland from Spain, and describes in his Cosmography[2] that he had examined the Irish writings or sagas.

Pre-Christian Ireland

Aethicus of Istria

The old Irish name for the harp was *crott* or *cruit*. Originally a small instrument of three or four strings, plucked with the fingers, it is mentioned by an Irish poet who flourished about four hundred years before Christ. Subsequently this Irish *cruit* was played with a plectrum, or bow, and is justly regarded as the progenitor of the crotta (chrotta) and the Italian *rota*, also of the English *crowd* and the Welsh *crwth*. St. Venantius

The Irish Crott or Cruit

[1] See the *Story of the Violin*, pp. 24 and 31.

[2] *Cosmographia Aethici Istrii*, as summarised by Wuttke, at Leipzig, in 1854. Portion of this work is quoted as early as A.D. 420 by Orosius.

Fortunatus, about the year 604, thus alludes to the *cruit*:—

"Græcus achilliaca, *chrotta* Britanna canat."

Confusion of Name with Crwth

This *chrotta* or *cruit* was the name for the oldest form of Irish harp, and it is a mistake to confound it with the modern Welsh *crwth*. Much ingenuity has been expended on explaining the above line of St. Venantius Fortunatus, but it is certain that, originally, the *cruit* was the small Irish harp, called *crowd* by the English and *crwth* by the Welsh. In early mediæval times this equation of terms was observed; but somehow or other a quite different instrument in Wales was given the same name, just as the *cornet* of the Middle Ages is quite a different instrument from that of to-day. Long before the coming of St. Patrick allusion is made in some of the romantic tales to the *crott*, and also the *crott-bolg* or harp-bag, whilst the harper was invariably known as *cruitire*, or performer on the *cruit*.

Gerbert's Description of the Chrotta

We learn from Gerbert that the *chrotta* was an oblong-shaped instrument, with a neck and finger-board, having six strings, of which four were placed on the finger-board, and two outside it—the two open strings representing treble G with its lower octave. In fact it was a small harp played with a bow,

generally placed resting on the knee, or on a table before the performer.

Carl Engel's view seems correct that the original *crwth* was not a bowed instrument but a small harp —in fact, the Irish *crott*, which in the course of centuries was adapted as a fiddle-harp. An illustration of the three-stringed *crwth* is also to be found in a manuscript in the National Library, Paris, formerly belonging to the Abbey of St. Martial de Limoges. This manuscript dates from the eleventh century, and the subjoined illustration will give the reader an idea of the instrument.

Carl Engel's View

FIG. 5.—THREE-STRINGED CRWTH.

A very early authority for the *cruit* in Ireland is Heccatæus, the Egyptian historian, who gives a short description of Ireland, about the year B.C. 500. From Booth's translation the following brief extract will be of interest:—"They say that Latona was born here, and, therefore, that they worshipped Apollo above all other gods. . . . That there

Heccatæus on Irish Harpers, B.C. 500

is a city likewise consecrated to this god, *whose citizens are most of them harpers, who, playing upon the harp,* chant sacred hymns to Apollo in the temple."

From another ancient writer, B.C. 200, we learn that the Irish children imagined the spirit of song to have had its abode *among the trembling strings of the cruit;* and, in the *vision of Cahir Mor* (A.D. 100), allusion is made to the "sweet music of the harp." Again, in the *Dinnseanchus,* attributed to Amergin mac Amhalgaid, *circ.* A.D. 540, we read *à propos* of the reign of Geide, monarch of Ireland (A.M. 3143), that the people "deemed each other's voices *sweeter than the warbling of the melodious harp.*"

Harp Tuning-key in Fifth Century

The perfected state of the small Irish harp (*cruit*) in the fifth century may be gleaned from a reference to the tuning-key in the Brehon Laws.[1] No authority can be higher than the wonderful code of laws known as the *Seanchus Mor* (published by the Record Office in six volumes), compiled in the fifth century, and a special legislation was formulated in the case of the non-return

[1] The professional harper in pagan Ireland was highly esteemed; and in social life, as appears from the Brehon Laws, he was regarded as on an equality with a freeholder or *boaire* (cow-chief). According to these same laws he was the only performer on musical instruments, or musician, that could claim "honour price."

of a harp or a harp key. The term *crann-glésa* literally means "tuning wood," and in case the tuning-key of the cruit was lent and not returned, a smart penalty was inflicted.[1]

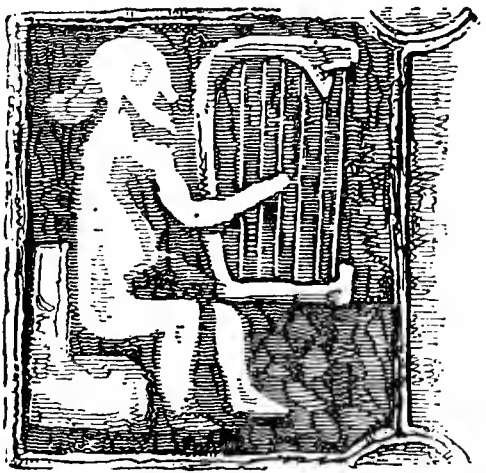


FIG. 6.—THE ULLARD HARP (A.D. 845).

The Ullard Harp

Perhaps the strongest proof of the affinity between the Egyptian and Irish harp is the still preserved sculptured harp on the stone cross at Ullard, Co. Kilkenny—wherein the fore-pillar is absent. Petrie dates the Ullard harp (which I myself

[1] O'Curry's *Manners and Customs*, vol. ii. p. 256.

examined in 1888) as of the ninth century, and was of opinion that the Irish harp was a form of the *cithara*, derived from an Egyptian source, thus corroborating the bardic tradition of the Milesians, as, according to the Irish annalists, "the Milesians in their expedition from Spain to Ireland *were accompanied by a harper.*"

The Irish Timpan

Closely allied to the three-stringed lyre is the Irish *timpan,* which was played with a plectrum or bow, deriving its name from the fact of the belly being *drum-shaped*. Hundreds of references to this small instrument are to be met with in the Irish sagas. The music of it was called a "dump," and it continued popular until the close of the seventeenth century. In mediæval days the plectrum was superseded by a bow, and the brass strings were replaced by those of gut. It is referred to by Giraldus Cambiensis in the twelfth century.

The Ocht-tedach or Eight-stringed Harp

A further development of the three-stringed harp was the *ocht-tedach*—that is, the eight-stringed harp. In a passage of the *Book of Lecan*, relative to a King of Cashel in the eighth century, we read:—"On a certain day when King Felim was in Cashel, there came to him the abbot of a church, *who took his little eight-stringed harp* (*ocht-tedach*) *from his girdle, and played sweet music, and sang a poem to it.*" This passage

makes it appear that the *ocht-tedach* was attached to the girdle of the performer (as was the custom of the Egyptians), and it also shows the then prevailing custom of singing to the accompaniment of the harp.

FIGS. 7, 8.—ANCIENT HARP.

The Greek and Roman harps were also due to an Egyptian origin, or from an Asiatic source by way of Egypt. There were several forms of the Grecian lyre, and, of course, similarly with the harp. Visitors to the British Museum are acquainted with the beautiful representations of Greek lyres to be seen in that vast storehouse of knowledge. The Greeks, too, had a *trigon,* or three-cornered (triangular-shaped) harp, of which a good specimen is on an Etruscan vase at Munich, as here given. Terpander, who flourished B.C. 670, is said to have increased the number of strings of the lyre from four to seven. The late Roman *harps* would appear to have the harmonic curve, containing the harp pegs below (instead of being uppermost), whilst the sound box—as in the Assyrian harps—was above. The *Kissar*, known also as the *Kisirka*, or Ethiopian

Greek and Roman Harps

lyre, is the parent of the cithara and lyre. In the very fine examples belonging to the late Mr. T. W. Taphouse, M.A., of Oxford, the strings are of camel gut. The Kissar was plucked with the fingers, or else with a horn plectrum, and, as in the case of the harp, there was much diversity in regard to the number of strings—the general number being seven.[1]

The Kissar, or Ethiopian Lyre

FIG. 9.—ANCIENT HARP, COPIED FROM A GREEK VASE.

And last, but not least, a

[1] The specimen at Berlin has thirteen strings.

or processional music, we may fairly assume the general character of the music to be slow and solemn, such as described by St. Augustine of Hippo, in the fourth century, in regard to early Christian psalmody.

CHAPTER II.

THE HARP IN THE BIBLE.

"The cherubic host in thousand quires
Touch their immortal harps of golden wires."
—MILTON.

Jubal's harp—Egyptian influence—The *kinnor* and *nebel*—The harp associated with prophesying—Harps in Solomon's Temple—Jewish instruments—The New Jerusalem—Early Christian worship—Music school at Rome under St. Leo.

THE "music of the spheres," as understood by the pagan philosophers, finds its analogue in that beautiful passage from the Book of Job, wherein we read that "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." In the fourth chapter of the Book of Genesis it is stated that Jubal, son of Lamech (seventh in descent from, yet contemporaneous with, Adam), was "the father of them that play upon the *harp* (kinnor) and the *organ* (ugab)." Whilst the Lutheran version reads "fiddlers and pipers," the Revised Version more correctly gives "harp and pipe."

Jubal's Harp

Story of the Harp

About the year B.C. 1730 there is mention made of serenading distinguished visitors "with joy, and with songs, and with timbrels (*toph*), and with harps (*kinnor*)," as is recorded in Genesis (xxx. 27). The *kinnor* (said to have been the prototype of the *trigon* or *trigonon*) has been equated with *cithara* or harp, and had from eight to ten strings, resembling the Irish *cruit*, or *ocht-tedach*. Although Josephus says that the *kinnor* was played with a plectrum, the Bible credits David with playing on it "with his hand" (1 Kings xvi. 23). One of the most pathetic passages in the Old Testament is the description of the Israelites by the waters of Babylon hanging their harps on the willow-trees. They could not tune their *kinnors*, nor could they sing the songs of Israel in a strange land.

The Kinnor

Played with the Hand

Some authorities equate the *nebel*, or *nebelazor*, of the Bible with a form of harp, but it is more probable that it was a psaltery. At the same time, it is only right to add that strong arguments have been adduced to prove the *nebel* to have been a large form of the *kinnor*, somewhat like the *clairseach*.

The Nebelazor

De Sola gives us what purports to be the veritable melody which was sung by Miriam and her com-

panions (Exodus xv. 21, 22), but it is agreed by most scholars that this antiphon, rendered as it was by two millions of voices in unison, to the accompaniment of timbrels and dances, was more or less an adaptation of Egyptian music.

Miriam's Song.

It is natural to suppose that the intercourse for four hundred years in Egypt materially influenced the music of the Israelites. Music in Egypt was so intimately bound up with the temple that it was almost exclusively a sacred art, for, as is testified by Ranke, religion dominated over all, and there was little of the secular element permitted. Presided over by the priests, the sacred songs and melodies were most jealously guarded, and no innovations were allowed, as can be gathered from Plato. However, the wanderings of the Children of Israel through the desert, and the succeeding five hundred years of strife with neighbouring nations, left the chosen people in a rather primitive condition as regards music.

Music in Egypt

There seems to have been a most intimate connection between the harp and the gift of prophecy. We read that the company of prophets whom Saul met "coming down from the high place with a psaltery, and a timbrel, and a pipe, and a *harp* before them," were found prophesying; and that Saul himself, smitten with

The Harp Associated with Prophesying

the same spirit, prophesied among them (1 Kings x. 5-10). Again, the prophet Elias, fairly excited with holy zeal, ordered a musician to be brought to calm his soul; and "when the minstrel played, the hand of the Lord came upon him, and he obtained favours in abundance" (4 Kings iii. 13-15). The royal prophet, too, illustrates the intimate connection between music and prophecy when he says, "I will open my dark saying upon the *harp*" (Psalms xlix. 4).

David, before his death, gave the most minute directions to Solomon regarding the building of the Temple and its adornment, with special reference to the musical arrangements. He himself is known to have played on the psaltery and the harp.

Solomon's Temple

In Solomon's Temple the music was on a most colossal scale, and even the Albert Hall choirs pale into insignificance before the monster choral services associated with this glorious building. Foreign workmen were employed for the finer and more delicate portions, as well as to make special instruments: "And the King made of the thyme trees [almug-trees, or sandal-wood] the rails of the house of the Lord, and of the King's house, and *citterns and harps for singers*" (3 Kings x. 12). It almost reads like a legend what is told of the Temple services, and of the

Colossal Musical Services

200,000 priests, with trumpets, and 40,000 harps and psalteries. Not only were there 4000 Levites to sing praises to the Lord with instrumental accompaniment, but we read that there were 288 trained singers, who sang beside the altar to the harp and other instruments.

The dedication of the wall of Jerusalem took place, as Nehemiah tells us, "with singing, and with cymbals and psalteries and harps." In fact, music was as essential to religious celebrations with the Jews as with the Egyptians. But, alas! very little is actually known of even the shape of the Jewish instruments, as not a single bas-relief exists by which we can accurately judge. We can only assume that the Hebrews used the same instruments as the Egyptians and Assyrians and Chaldeans, from whom they derived their musical system. Herod rebuilt the Temple, B.C. 25, but it was utterly razed under Titus, when the harp was ever after silent.

Jewish Instruments

In the Book of Revelation St. John tells us that the mighty choral praise of the elect in the New Jerusalem will have a grand accompaniment of multitudinous harps, for ever proclaiming the greatness of Him whose mercy endureth for ever.[1]

The New Jerusalem

[1] In the orchestra sculptured in high relief in the Portico della Gloria of Santiago de Compostela, in Spain, there are twenty-four life-size

Story of the Harp

Early Christian Worship

For the first four centuries of the Christian era there could have been no ornate musical services, owing to the persecutions. It is now agreed that the early Christian music was an amalgam of simple melodies with the adapted psalmody and sacred songs from the Temple of Jerusalem. It is reasonable to believe that the harp was for a time used by the converted Jews, as it was the policy of the early Church to allow a free hand in matters of discipline, and, of course, the traditions of the Temple were very dear, especially the antiphonal chanting of the psalms. Greek art, of necessity, was a factor in the liturgic chants, as also Roman art, and so the evolution of sacred music proceeded, culminating in the foundation of a music school at Rome, by Pope St. Leo, in the year 460.

figures, representing the twenty-four elders seen by St. John in the Apocalypse. As these figures were executed in 1188 (as stated on the inscribed lintel), they are specially interesting, and there are harps, psalteries, cruits, and viols in evidence.

CHAPTER III.

THE IRISH HARP.

Singing to the harp in ancient Ireland—The last *Feis* of Tara—St. Columcille—The *ceis*—*Clarisech* and *fidil* in the seventh century—Irish monasteries in England—"Glastonbury of the Irish"—Sculptured Irish harps of the ninth century—A band of harps—The Irish monks of St. Gall—Alfred the Great—St. Dunstan's Æolian harp—Ilbrechtach the Harper.

As early as the sixth century Irish ecclesiastics were wont to sing psalms and hymns to the accompaniment of the *cruit* or small harp. This custom continued for seven centuries, as Giraldus Cambrensis (as late as 1190) tells of the bishops and abbots "who travelled about with their harps," utilising their instrumental powers as a means of gaining converts.[1] Giraldus also alludes to St. Kevin's (sixth century) harp.

In the same century we read of a famous *Feis* (gathering) at which over a thousand bards were present. All readers have heard of "Tara's halls," but it is not

[1] Cambrensis, *Topog. Hib. Dist.*, c. xii.

as generally known that the great *Feis*, or Parliament of Tara, was held triennially (O'Donovan says septennially) by the chief monarch of Ireland. The Feis of Tara, Co. Meath, was a representative assemblage of the men of Erin, who met on the third day before the feast of Samhain —the first of November—and ended the third day after it. When the business of each day was concluded there was minstrelsy in the banquet hall. The last Feis of Tara was in 560, under the presidency of Dermot mac Fergus, Head King of Ireland, the founder of Clonmacnoise. In that year it was cursed by St. Ruadhan of Lorrha, and never more was the harp heard in Tara's halls.

The last Feis of Tara

There is an interesting reference to the *cruit* in the Life of St. Columcille, by St. Eunan (Adamnan), as follows:—"On one occasion as St. Columcille was seated with some disciples on the banks of Loch Cé [near Boyle, Co. Roscommon], a bard came up to him and entered into conversation with the little band of monks. When the poet-minstrel had departed, the disciples of St. Columcille asked: 'Why did you not ask the bard Cronan to *sing a song for us to the accompaniment of his harp* [cruit], *as poets are wont to do?*'"

St. Columcille

In an ancient eulogy of St. Columcille, who died in

596, we read of a "song of the *cruit* without the *ceis*"; that is, a harp-melody without the harp-fastener (*ceis*), or an air played on an untuned harp. About this time the *cruit* had a formidable rival in a larger form of harp called the *clairsech*, the festive or heroic harp of mediæval Erin.

The Ceis or Harp-fastener

For centuries the general name of the harp in Ireland has been *clairsech*, and the Irish brought the instrument to Scotland at the close of the sixth century, where it has ever since been known by the same name. It is remarkable that the parent of the modern violin also hails from Ireland. Certain it is that the *fidil*, or fiddle, is alluded to in an authentic Irish manuscript of the seventh century, known as the "Fair of Carman." *Fidil*, in Irish, means a little bent rod, or bow, from the root *fid* = a rod, and the instrument was certainly in use in Ireland in 650—that is, two hundred years before the time of Ottfried von Weissenburg, O.S.B.[1]

The Clairsech and Fidil

The *Annals of Ulster*, under date of the year 634, chronicle the death of Ailill the Harper, son of Aedh Slaine, Ard Righ (Head King) of Ireland. Other entries during the same century point to the popularity of the

[1] This Benedictine monk, in his *Liber Evangeliorum* (850), names a lyre, fiddle, harp, and crwth as forming part of the Heavenly Concert.

cruit, the *clairsech,* and the *timpan,* as also the *fidil.* According to an Irish saga of the seventh century, nine Irish harpers are described as having "grey winding cloaks, with brooches of gold, circlets of pearls round their heads, rings of gold around their thumbs, torques of gold around their ears, torques of silver around their throats," etc.[1]

It is tolerably certain that the Irish missionaries of the fifth and sixth centuries introduced the harp into England. Lindisfarne, Ripon, Durham, Lichfield, Tilbury, Dunwich, Burgcastle, Bosham, etc., were all Irish foundations. St. Mailduff was a skilled harper, and he was succeeded as Abbot of Mailduffsburgh (Malmesbury) by his pupil, St. Aldhelm, in 675, who was also a performer on the harp.

Glastonbury of the Irish

The great monastery of Glastonbury was known as "Glastonbury of the Irish," and Ina, King of the West Saxons, in 709, endowed the monastic church, at the suggestion of St. Aldhelm, then Bishop of Sherborne. No stronger confirmation of the Irish origin of Glastonbury need be cited than the dedication of the abbey church to St. Mary and St. Patrick, whilst a chapel was dedicated to St. Brigid. St. Dunstan's biographer says that the future Archbishop of Canterbury was so

[1] *Bruidhean da Derga,* quoted by Dr. Douglas Hyde.

learned in all the arts and sciences that his enemies advanced the plea that "he had been trained to necromancy by his Irish teachers in the island of Avalon."

Irrespective of the Ullard Harp (*circ.* 845), there are half-a-dozen harps sculptured on the magnificent high crosses of Ireland, dating from the years 860-990. They are reproduced in Colonel Wood-Martin's *Pagan Ireland*, and in Miss Stokes's *High Crosses of Castledermot and Durrow*. One of the figures on the Durrow Cross is playing on a six-stringed *cruit*, with a bridge and a bow.[1] This, as has previously been stated, was a developed stage of the *cruit*, as the distinctive Irish instrument of that name, popular in pagan and early Christian days, was only in size from twenty to thirty inches, and easily carried about, being generally attached to the girdle of the performer.

Sculptured Irish Harps of the Ninth Century

At the close of the seventh century there is unquestionable evidence as to performances by a "band of harps." Dallan Forgaill, in his *Amra*, or Elegy, on St. Columcille, alludes to "the small harp which is used as *an accompaniment to a large harp in concerted playing*." The term *cóm-*

A Band of Harps

[1] In a thirteenth-century window in the Cathedral of Troyes, King David is represented as playing on a rotta. Other mediæval artists depict the Psalmist as playing on a psaltery—the forerunner of the pianoforte.

seinm, derived from *cóm* = together, and *seinm* = playing, can only be understood of a band of harps, or an instrumental combination of harps. This explanation is fully brought out by Stokes in the *Revue Celtique* (xx. 165). Nor is it so surprising that the Irish of the eighth century had a band of harps, because, as Professor Wooldridge admits, in the *Oxford History of Music*, they were then so advanced in the art of music that they were fully acquainted with the free organum of the fourth, or of the *diatesseron*. In fact, John Scotus Erigina, the Irish philosopher, is the first to allude to discant or organum, in 860. This he does in his tract *De Divisione Naturæ*. (See Note page 32.)

The Irish Monks of St. Gall

Many of the Irish monks of St. Gall were skilled harpers, and it is on record that Tuathal (Tutilo), headmaster of the music school at that famous abbey, delighted in the *cruit* and the psaltery. Many of his compositions have survived—including "Hodie Cantandus" and "Omnipotens Genitor," as we learn from Schubiger. He died in extreme old age, on April 27th, 915.

The Anglo-Saxons were not slow to cultivate the Irish *cruit*, which, as we have seen, was called *hearpe* by them. St. Bede attests the popularity of this instrument in his time, and that it was a custom to pass it from one to another at all feasts. The beautiful drawing of a *cruit*

in a tenth-century manuscript in the British Museum (Vitellius, F. XI.) is of Irish origin, as Professor Westwood admits, and is styled "an Irish crotta," by Carl Engel. All readers of English history are familiar with the story of Alfred the Great (871-901) and his disguise as a harper whilst in the Isle of Athelney. Even assuming that the story is mythical, the harp must have been very popular with the Anglo-Saxons.

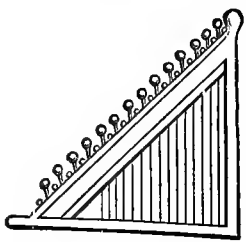


FIG. 13.—TRIANGULAR SAXON HARP (NINTH CENTURY).

Alfred the Great

St. Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury (d. 988), stands out pre-eminently in connection with the harp. Even allowing for the traditional romance attaching to his history, St. Dunstan must have been a proficient on the *hearpe*. The charge of sorcery brought against him was owing to the mysterious sounds of his Æolian harp:—

St. Dunstan's Æolian Harp

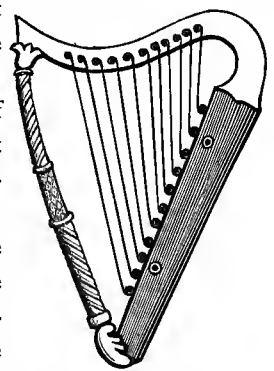


FIG. 14.—HARP OF NINTH CENTURY.

"By the desultory breeze caressed
It pours forth sweet upbraiding."

His biographer tells us that the saint placed his harp in a certain position, with the result that the wind, as it wafted along the strings, caused the most delightful music.[1] Nor are we left to mere references as regards the cultivation of the harp in pre-Norman days. In the British Museum and the University Library of Cambridge, there are illustrations of tenth-century harps.

Among the distinguished Irish bards of the tenth century, Flann mac Lonain was celebrated, and some of his poems are still preserved; in one of which he describes a harper called Ilbrechtach, of Slieve Aughty, near Kinalehin, Co. Galway. This harper is said to have travelled with Mac Liag, the poet and historiographer of Brian Boru, who was incensed at the minstrel's praise of his predecessor Mac Lonain.

Ilbrechtach the Harper

Let us now turn our attention to Wales, which claims a chapter all to itself.

[1] For an account of the Æolian harp see Appendix A.

Note to p. 30.—On the shrine of St. Moedhoc, which dates from the ninth century, there is a representation of a harp, apparently of eight strings. It rests on the knee of the performer and against his left shoulder, denoting that the left hand played the treble, and the right was for the bass.

CHAPTER IV.

THE WELSH HARP.

Ancient "British" music—"Morva Rhuddlan"—The Telyn, or Welsh harp—Derivation of name—Eisteddfodau in the twelfth century—Giraldus Cambrensis—The name *Telyn* used in Brittany and Cornwall—Compass of early Welsh harps—The *crwth trithant*—Tunings of the *crwth*.

FROM the third to the tenth century there was constant intercourse between Wales and Ireland. Irish immigrants popularised Celtic minstrelsy and developed a love of music among the Welsh. Warton in his *History of English Poetry* says:—"There is sufficient evidence to prove that the Welsh bards were early connected with the Irish. Even so late as the eleventh century the practice continued among the Welsh bards of receiving instruction in the bardic profession (music and poetry) from Ireland."

We can dismiss as quasi-fabulous the legends of the pre-Christian Welsh harpers, and the "British" songs sung at the Court of King Arthur, etc. The credulity of eighteenth-century Welsh writers as to some of their melodies going back to the sixth or seventh century is

simply marvellous. For example, the melody known as "Morva Rhuddlan," said to have been composed by the bard of Caradoc, after the battle of Rhuddlan in 795, is an Irish air of the seventeenth century, adapted by Moore to "Avenging and Bright."

"Morva Rhuddlan"

We have previously treated of the Welsh *crwth*, quite a different instrument from the Irish *cruit*. One of the earliest references to the *crwth* is in the Anomalous Laws, dating from the twelfth century, but the typical harp of Wales was known as the *Telyn*. In all authentic Welsh documents the harp is invariably given under the name *Telyn*. O'Curry derives this name from the buzzing sound of the hair-strung harp. From the Welsh laws it appears that the ordinary or lower-grade harpers of Wales in the twelfth century were wont to play on harps strung with horse-hair, and that the chief harper was entitled to a fine of twenty-four pence from each minstrel who exchanged his hair-strung harp (telyn) for a gut-string one.

The Telyn, or Welsh Harp

Several entries in the Irish annals—from 950 to 1090—testify to the exodus of Irish harpers to Wales, whilst it is absolutely certain that Griffith ap Cynan was born of an Irish mother in Ireland in 1065. At the Eisteddfod of Caerwys, in 1100, Welsh music was

codified under the direction of Malachy the Gwyddilian (the Irishman), and twenty-four musical canons were adopted. One most convincing fact adduced by Bunting, in 1809, is that the names of the twenty-four measures of Welsh music, said to date from the time of Prince Griffith ap Cynan, are written in *Irish*—a fact hinted at by Jones.[1]

In Dowling's *Annals of Ireland* is recorded the death of Prince Griffith, in 1137. It is said of him that "he led back with him from Ireland harps, timpans, cruits, cytharæ, and harpers." His son, Cadwallader ap Griffith, also went over to Ireland, and brought back with him harpers.

Griffyd ap Cynan

Following on the Eisteddfod at Caerwys (1100), there was another held by Cadogan, Prince of Powis, in the Castle of Cardigan, at Christmastide of the year 1107. Of the successive meetings during half a century, there are but scant particulars. However, in 1176, a famous Eisteddfod, somewhat on the lines

Eisteddfodau in the Twelfth Century

[1] In the royal letter of King Henry VIII. for granting the holding of an Eisteddfod at Caerwys on July 20th, 1523, reference is made to this Welsh prince. The summons alludes to the instituting of good government among the "professors of poetry and music," according to *the old statute* of Gruffyd ab Cynan, Prince of Aberfraw.

of the Irish *Feis,* was celebrated in Cardigan Castle by Rhys ap Griffith, when harp competitions were a feature.

Giraldus Cambrensis

Giraldus Cambrensis, in the twelfth century, writes as follows:—"Scotland and Wales, the former by reason of her derivation, the latter from intercourse and affinity, *seek with emulous endeavours to imitate Ireland in music."* It is very remarkable that Giraldus Cambrensis does not refer to the Welsh *crwth* in his enumeration of instruments, though he notices its counterpart, the *timpan,* in Ireland. His account makes it certain that the *telyn* and the *cruit* were identical. He also adds that "the Irish were wont to use *brass wires* for their harps in preference to those of gut," implying, of course, that his own Welsh harp had hair or gut. It is interesting, too, to note that the Britons also call the harp *telyn,* as likewise do the Cornish.

Compass of Early Welsh Harps

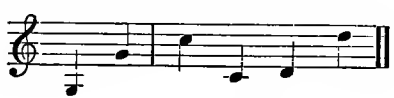
Again, as a further proof of the Irish origin of the Welsh harp, we learn from Pennant that the *telyn* was a small instrument, with only *nine* strings, and only one row. He adds that the single row of strings continued till after the Middle Ages, when a double row succeeded. The learned Selden, in his notes to Drayton's *Polyolbion,* agrees to the view that Wales derived her

minstrelsy from Ireland. In the fourteenth century, when the Irish *clairsech,* or large harp, was all the fashion, the Welsh harps were made on the same lines. Jones describes a sixteenth-century "Welsh" harp which had only one row of thirty-three strings, and measured four feet nine inches in height; but, as Bunting observes, it may well be called an "Irish" harp, to which, he assures us, "it exactly answers in size and number of strings."

Thus, Wales, as late as the fourteenth century, had no distinctive harp save the *telyn,* which was in reality an Irish harp. The older *crwth,* similar to the Irish *cruit,* was at this date transformed into the instrument as described by the Hon. Daines Barrington, in 1776, which he heard played by John Morgan in the Isle of Anglesey. What was known as the *crwth trithant,* as pictured in manuscripts of the eleventh century, was merely the three-stringed lyre. The post-Reformation *crwth* was played as late as 1801, as stated by Bingley in 1814, but we are in the dark as to the exact method of tuning it.

The Crwth Trithant

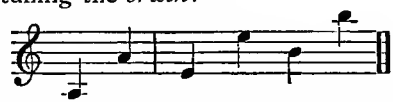
According to Edward Jones (1752-1824), the later form of *crwth* was tuned as follows:—



Tunings of the Crwth

He explains that the two outlying strings, plucked with the thumb of the left hand, were *G* and *g*, while the four strings on the finger-board, and played with the bow, were tuned *c* to *C* and *D* to *d*, as printed above.

Bingley, in his *Biographical Dictionary of Musicians*, published in 1814, gives the following as the traditional method of tuning the *crwth*:—



In size, the *crwth* was from 20 to 22½ inches long, the width being from 10 inches at the tail-piece to 8½ inches at the top, and the height of the sides two inches. The sound-holes were round, having a diameter of a little over an inch. Bunting says that the sculptured harp in Melrose Abbey (Scotland), dating from the fourteenth century, is probably a *crwth*. For further information as to the eighteenth-century *crwth* the reader is referred to Carl Engel's treatise, of which an excellent summary is given by Mr. Paul Stoeving, in his *Story of the Violin*.

Enactment against Welsh Minstrels

At the close of the fourteenth century the minstrels helped to fan the spirit of resistance to English rule, and so powerful were they in 1402 that an enactment was passed forbidding any one to maintain rimers or minstrels.[1]

[1] *Rolls of Parliament*, III. p. 508, A.D. 1402.

CHAPTER V.

"BRIAN BORU'S" HARP.

Outline of the "Brian Boru" legend—Examination of claims in the light of history—Description of the O'Brien harp—Clue to the real story — Probable date — Its wanderings — Restrung in the eighteenth century—Presented to Trinity College, Dublin—Cast of it in South Kensington Museum.

ALL visitors to Trinity College, Dublin, are shown "Brian Boru's" harp, it being supposed that this venerable instrument really belonged to King Brian the hero of Clontarf. Perhaps it may be necessary to explain that Brian Boru, *recte* Brian Borūmha, was supreme monarch of Ireland from 1003 to 1014. On April 23rd, 1014, he gave an overwhelming defeat to the Danes at Clontarf, near Dublin, but was, unfortunately, slain in the hour of victory. His harp and jewels were, as the story goes, taken by his son Donogh, who, however, did not succeed to the sovereignty of Ireland, Malachi, the former monarch, having resumed the government.

Donogh O'Brien, after Clontarf, returned to his palace at Kincora, but his right to the kingship of

Thomond was disputed by his elder brother, Tadhg. For years a fratricidal war continued, which only ended with the death of Tadhg in 1023, whereupon Donogh was acknowledged King of Munster. He had a troubled reign, and at length was defeated, in 1061, at Slieve Crot, Co. Tipperary, by Dermot mac Maelnambo, King of Leinster. After this, misfortune followed on misfortune, and, in 1062, King Donogh, then over seventy years of age, made a pilgrimage to Rome, and presented his crown and sceptre to Pope Alexander II. Not alone did Donogh O'Brien (whose wife was Driella, sister of Harold II., King of England) bring his father's crown and regalia to Rome, but, as is said, also brought his father's harp, which he bequeathed to the Pope. Anyhow, he died, "after the victory of penance," at the monastery of St. Stephen, in Rome, in 1064, and the harp is said to have remained as one of the treasures of the Vatican till 1521. In the latter year it was given by Pope Leo X. to King Henry VIII. of England, at the same time that the Pontiff conferred on the English monarch the title "Fidei Defensor" (F.D. = Defender of the Faith), in recognition of his Defence of the Seven Sacraments. Finally, in 1543, when Henry VIII. conferred the title of Earl of Clanrickarde on MacWilliam (Ulick) de Burgo, he presented the Earl with this Irish

Outline of the Brian Boru Legend

harp, said to have belonged to Brian Borūmha. Vallancey says that the harp, after a time, reverted to O'Brien, Earl of Thomond, and eventually became the property of Ralph Ouseley of Limerick.

The above is a summary of the story as generally told; but there is another version, written by Ralph Ouseley above mentioned, dated October 22nd, 1783, to be found among the Egerton Manuscripts in the British Museum:—[1]

Ouseley's Version of the Legend

"This harp lay in the Vatican till Innocent XI., in 1678, sent it as a token of his goodwill to Charles II., who had it deposited in the Tower. Soon after this, the Earl of Clanrickarde, seeing it among the curiosities, mentioned to the King that he knew an Irish nobleman that would probably give a limb of his estate for it (meaning the Earl of Thomond), on which his Majesty immediately replied: 'I make you a present of it; dispose of it as you please.' Lord Clanrickarde brought it to Ireland, and Lord Thomond, being on his travels, never was possessed of it. Some years after, it was purchased by Lady Huxley for twenty rams and as many swine of English breed, and bestowed by her on her son-in-law, Henry MacMahon of Clenagh, in the County of Clare, who, about the year 1756, bestowed it

[1] *Bibl. Egerton*, Brit. Mus., No. 74, p. 351.

to Matt. MacNamara, of Limerick, Esq., Counsellor-at-Law, and some years Recorder of that city, a most worthy, honoured, polite, and hospitable gentleman. When given to Counsellor MacNamara, it had *silver strings* and some more ornaments of plate than are now to be seen; they were stolen or destroyed by the servants, or idle people fiddling withal, as was also a letter from Mr. MacMahon, giving a full and particular history of the said harp. It was left as a token of esteem by Counsellor MacNamara, who died in 1774, to Ralph Ouseley, of Dublin, an admirer of antiquity, and by him presented, in 1781, to the Right Hon. W. Conyngham, whose taste for the fine arts . . . deserves the highest encomiums."

Examination of Claims in the Light of History

The latter account looks very circumstantial, but the only part that can be accepted without hesitation is the history of the instrument from about the year 1720, when it came into the possession of Henry MacMahon. Let us now briefly examine the claims. We may at once state that an examination of the harp itself is conclusive as against the supposed date of 1014. The workmanship is thirteenth century, though Petrie inclined to the view that it was not made before the second half of the fourteenth century.

There is no documentary evidence that Donogh

O'Brien brought any harp with him to Rome; nor yet has any one of the Irish annalists alluded to King Brian Borūmha as a harpist, although they *do* tell us that he was a skilled chess-player. Again, there is no proof that Pope Innocent XI., in 1678, sent any Irish harp to King Charles II. Here let us give Dr. Petrie's admirable description of the "Brian Boru" harp:—

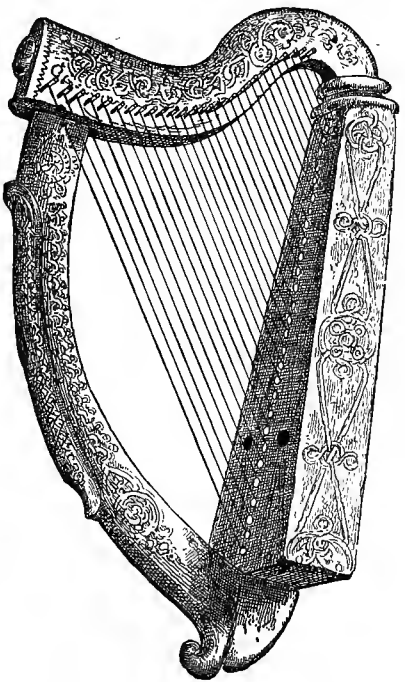


FIG. 15.—BRIAN BORU'S HARP.

"From recent [1838] examination, it appears that this harp had but one row of strings; that these were 30 in number, not 28, as was formerly supposed, 30 being the number of brass tuning-pins and of corresponding string-holes. It is

32 inches high, and of exquisite workmanship; the upright pillar is of oak, and the sound-board of red sallow; the extremity of the fore-arm, or harmonic curved bar, is capped in part with silver, extremely well wrought and chiselled. It also contains a large crystal set in silver, under which was another stone, now lost. The buttons [bosses], or ornamental knobs, at the side of the curved bar are of silver. The string-holes of the sound-board are neatly ornamented with escutcheons of bears [? lions] carved and gilt. The four sounding-holes have also had ornaments, probably of silver, as they have been the object of theft. The bottom which it rests upon is a little broken, and the wood very much decayed. The whole bears evidence of having been the work of a very expert artist."

Description of the O'Brien Harp

Before adding any comment on this excellent description, it may be well to quote an incident of the year 1216, which furnishes a clue to the real origin of the "Brian Boru" harp.

Clue to the Real Story

In 1216 Finn O'Bradley, steward of the Prince of Tyrconnell (Donal *mor* O'Donnell), was sent to collect tribute, but was slain, in a fit of anger, by Muiredach O'Daly of Lisadil, Co. Sligo, a famous Irish minstrel, who fled to Scotland, where he remained from 1217 to 1222. Whilst in Scotland, he wrote three celebrated

poems to O'Donnell, who allowed him to return to his native country, and took him back into friendship. Meantime, Donnohadh Caribre O'Brien, King of Thomond, *sent his own harp*—"the jewel of the O'Briens"—as a pledge to Scotland for the ransom of the bard O'Daly. Accordingly, the Irish minstrel was allowed to return home, but the harp was detained in Scotland, where it remained for over eighty years.

Thus we can trace the history of *a rare harp of the O'Briens*, sent to Scotland about the year 1221, as a pledge, by the valiant King of Thomond, whose death took place on March 8th, 1243.

O'Daly's Irish poems are preserved in Scotland in the Dean of Lismore's Book, the editor of which work says that O'Daly "was the ancestor of the MacVurricks, bards to the MacDonalds of Clanranald"—the bard himself being known in Ireland as *albanach*—that is, "the Scotchman"—from his seven years' residence in Scotland.

The O'Brien harp may fairly be dated as from about the year 1220, and it was sent to Scotland in 1222. In 1228 or 1229, Gillabride MacConmidhe, a famous Ulster bard, was commissioned by King O'Brien to endeavour to ransom the much-prized instrument. In response to this request, the bard composed the well-known "Ransom Song,"

Probable Date

but, alas! the lovely O'Brien harp would not be restored for "whole flocks of sheep," and so, as O'Curry remarks, it remained in Scotland until King Edward I. took it with him to Westminster in 1307.

Its various Owners

It lay at Westminster from 1307 until July 1st, 1543, when Henry VIII. presented it to the first Earl of Clanrickarde, who, at his death in 1547, bequeathed it to his son Richard, second Earl, husband of Margaret, daughter of O'Brien, Earl of Thomond. Thus the harp reverted to its old owners about the middle of the sixteenth century, as Lady Clanrickarde presented it to Conor, Earl of Thomond.

Historical Allusion to it in 1570

In 1570 there was an Irish poem written in praise of the "O'Brien Harp," which had, during the enforced absence of its owner, Conor, Earl of Thomond, been in temporary possession of a certain O'Gilligan, a famous harper. The Irish bard describes it as "a musical, fine-pointed [curved], speckled [ornamented] harp," and it is added: "though sweet in the hands of O'Gilligan, it was *sweeter far in the halls of O'Brien.*"

By intermarriage, we find the O'Brien Harp in possession of Henry MacMahon of Clenagh, Co. Clare, in 1750, who, in 1756, presented it to Matthew MacNamara, Recorder of Limerick.

"Restored" by Dr. Robert Ball

Arthur O'Neill, the harpist, tells us that when he visited Limerick in 1760, he had the honour of playing on the "Brian Boru" harp, restored for the occasion at the cost of Mr. MacNamara. On the death of the latter gentleman in 1774, the harp was bequeathed to Ralph Ouseley, a musical amateur (grandfather of Sir Frederick Gore Ouseley, Bart., Mus. Doc.), and a noted antiquarian, who, in 1781, as before stated, presented it to the Right Hon. William Burton Conyngham, P.C.

Conyngham (who died in 1796) presented the O'Brien Harp to Trinity College, where it has ever since remained. When deposited in the College Museum it was in a deplorable condition, as the harmonic curved bar was broken and fastened over the sound-box. Dr. Robert Ball made a very careful restoration of the instrument, supplying the lost portions from analogy, and lent it "as the oldest known specimen of Irish harp" to the committee of the Dublin Exhibition, in 1853.

Presented to Trinity College, Dublin

Curiously enough, one of the escutcheons, or silvered-bronze badges, which Petrie describes as having been stolen, was found in the Phœnix Park, Dublin, in 1876. From the armorial bearings Petrie was led to believe that the harp belonged to an ecclesiastic of the O'Neill family, and he dated the

instrument as from the close of the fourteenth century, but O'Curry's view is convincing in favour of the harp having belonged to Donnchadh Caribre O'Brien, King of Thomond, in 1218.

Although the original harp of O'Brien is in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, there is a good cast of it in the South Kensington Museum, and a description of it is furnished by Carl Engel in his admirable Catalogue. However, by far the most accurate drawings of this venerable instrument will be found in Mr. R. Bruce Armstrong's magnificent monograph on the Irish and Highland Harps, a sumptuous quarto, issued in 1904, but now withdrawn from circulation. Only 180 copies were printed. Mr. Armstrong enters into the most minute particulars as to the harp itself and its Irish ornamentation.[1]

A Cast of it in South Kensington Museum

[1] I take this opportunity of acknowledging the courtesy of Mr. Armstrong, who presented me with a copy of his valuable book.

CHAPTER VI.

MEDIÆVAL HARPS AND HARPERS.

Norman harps—The Cruit—Two noted Irish harpers—John of Salisbury and Brompton—Giraldus Cambrensis on the school of Irish harpers—English harpers—Grosteste, Bishop of Lincoln—Prince Edward's harper—Arms and coinage of Ireland—Higden and De Fordun—Italian harps derived from Ireland—Entries from the State Papers as to English and Irish harpers—O'Carroll, chief harper ot Ireland—French and German minstrels—The *Citole.*

In the Church of St. George, Boscherville, in Normandy, there is a fine bas-relief exhibiting an eleventh-century concert. It forms the capital of a pillar in this old abbey-church, and the reader can best judge of the mediæval instruments from the subjoined illustration.

Sir Samuel Ferguson refers to the appearance of a harp on the cover of an Irish manuscript in the Stowe Library, which harp is a *cruit*, having a fore-pillar and sounding board. There is also a drawing of a harp of twenty-nine strings on a relic-case containing the *Fiacail Phadraig*

The Cruit

FIG. 16.—MEDIÆVAL ORCHESTRA (ELEVENTH CENTURY).

(tooth of St. Patrick), dated 1350, formerly belonging to Sir Valentine Blake of Galway.

Two Noted Irish Harpers

Under date of A.D. 1100, the *Annals of Ulster* (Rolls Series) chronicle the death of Ferdomnach the Blind, Lector of Kildare, who is described as a *Cruiterechta*, or "Master of Harping." Some years later—namely, in 1119—there is a record of the death of Dermod O'Boylan, "Chief Music Master of Ireland."

John of Salisbury

John of Salisbury, about the year 1168, declares that in the Crusade of Godfrey of Bouillon, in 1099, there would have been no music at all had it not been for the Irish harp, or, as Fuller says, "the consort of Christendom could have made no musick if the Irish harp had been wanting."

FIG. 16.—MEDIÆVAL ORCHESTRA (ELEVENTH CENTURY).

Brompton on Irish Harpers

Brompton, writing in the reign of Henry II., praises the skill of Irish musicians, especially the performers on the cruit, timpan, and bag-pipe. Above all, he was astonished at the superior playing of the Irish harpers, their "animated execution, sweet and pleasing harmony, quivering notes, and intricate modulations," etc.

Giraldus Cambrensis on the School of Irish Harpers

But even Brompton is eclipsed in eulogy by that strenuous Welsh ecclesiastic known as Giraldus Cambrensis, or Gerald Barry, Archdeacon and Bishop-elect of St. David's, who came over to Ireland in 1183. He thus writes of the School of Irish Harpers:—

"They are incomparably more skilful than any other nation I have ever seen. For their manner of playing on these instruments [*cruit*,

clarsech, and *timpan*], unlike that of the Britons, to which I am accustomed, is not slow and harsh, but lively and rapid, while the melody is both sweet and pleasing. It is astonishing that in such a complex and rapid movement of the fingers the musical proportions [as to rhythm] can be preserved, and that throughout the difficult modulations on their various instruments the harmony —notwithstanding shakes and slurs, and variously intertwined *organising*—is completely observed."

The Latinity of Giraldus is not easy to give in an English dress, but he evidently wishes to display his knowledge of musical technicalities as then in vogue. He describes "the striking together of the chords of the *diatesseron* [the fourth degree of the scale] and *diapente* [the fifth] introducing B flat," and "the tinkling of the small strings coalescing charmingly with the deep notes of the bass." He concludes as follows:—"They delight with so much delicacy, and soothe so softly, that the excellence of their art seems to lie in concealing it."[1]

New Method of Tuning

In 1225, the *Annals of Loch Cé*, in an obituary of Aedh O'Sochlann, Vicar of Cong, described him as "a master of vocal music and harp-making, and *the inventor of a new method of tuning*." This entry is important as showing that this clerical harper had devised a new harp as

[1] *Top. Hib.*, Disp. III. cap. xi.

well as a new plan of tuning the national instrument. The pity of it is that no particulars are given as to the new method of tuning.

During the twelfth century, in England, there are some references to harps and harpers. Passing over

English Harpers

Blondel, the minstrel of Richard I., we find in Madox's *History of the Exchequer* that, in 1183, Geoffrey the Harper had a pension from the Benedictine monks of Hyde, near Winchester. Again, Abbot Samson, of Bury St. Edmunds, entertained harpers and minstrels; and, in 1242, there is a record of a payment ordered to Richard the Harper, and a pipe of wine to Beatrice, the wife of the said Richard.

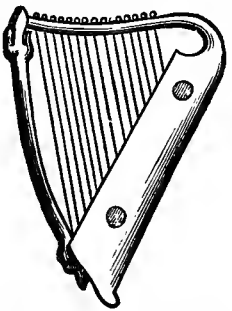


FIG. 17.—FIFTEEN-STRINGED HARP (TWELFTH CENTURY).

Burney says that "all the most ancient poems, whatever was their length, were sung to the harp on Sundays and on public festivals." He adds that Robert de Brun (1303) sings thus of Grosteste, Bishop of Lincoln (1235-1253):—

Grosteste, Bishop of Lincoln

"He loved much to hear the harp,
For man's wit it maketh sharp;

Next his chamber, beside his study
His harper's chamber was fast the by.
Many times by nights and days
He had solace of notes and lays."

Prince Edward (afterwards King Edward I.) took his harper Robert with him to the Holy Land, in 1270, who, when his royal master was wounded at Ptolemais, "rushed into the apartment during the struggle and killed the assassin." Certain it is that in the State Papers of the fifth of Edward I. (1276), a payment is entered on the Exchequer Rolls for Robert, the King's harper.

Prince Edward's Harper

There is an illustration of a king playing on a small portable harp in *Strutt's Dresses of the English People.* This figure of the thirteenth century is represented as having the harp resting on his knees, and the number of strings may be taken as fourteen. From the illustration it is evident that this instrument is a replica of the *cruit*, a small Irish harp, and it is beautifully ornamented.

Not so long ago it was generally believed that the inclusion of the harp in the arms and coinage of Ireland dated only from the reign of Henry VIII., but the fact is that the national instrument appears on coins issued by King John and Edward I.; and, in 1251, we read that "the new coinage was stamped in Dublin with the

The Harp in the Arms and Coinage of Ireland

impression of the King's head *in a triangular harp.*" A harp was originally the peculiar device of the arms of the Leinster province, and it was subsequently applied to the whole kingdom of Ireland—namely, in heraldic language, "on a field *vert,* a harp *or,* stringed *argent.*"

Ralph Higden, a distinguished historiographer at the beginning of the fourteenth century, describes the music of the Irish harp as "musica peritissima;" and John de Fordun, a Scottish priest, who wrote in the same century, says that Ireland "was the fountain of music in his time, whence it then began to flow into Scotland and Wales."

Higden and De Fordun

The European fame of the Irish harp was well maintained at the close of the thirteenth century, as is attested by the following quotation from Vincenzo Galilei, who gives Dante (1265-1321) as his authority:—

"This most ancient instrument was brought to us from Ireland (as Dante says), where they are excellently made, and in great numbers, the inhabitants of that island having practised on it for many and many a century. Nay, they place it in the arms of the kingdom, and paint it on their public buildings, and stamp it on their coinage, giving as a reason their being descended from the royal prophet David. The harps which these people use are considerably larger than ours, and have generally

Italian Harps derived from Ireland

the strings of brass, and a few of steel for the highest notes, as in the clavichord. The musicians who perform on it keep the nails of their fingers long, forming them with care in the shape of the quills which strike the strings of the spinet."[1]

Some Irish minstrels and harpers accompanied King Edward I. in his expedition to Scotland, in 1301, and again in 1303.

Let us now turn to England. The future King Edward II. wrote, as Prince of Wales, to the Abbot of Shrewsbury, "asking that a famous fiddler in the Abbot's household should teach the prince's rhymer the minstrelsy of the *crowdy*, and that the rhymer might be housed at the convent whilst he was learning."[2]

Harpers referred to in the State Papers

In 1309, harpers attended the installation ceremony of Ralph, Abbot of St. Augustine's, Canterbury; and in 1310, Robert, harper to King Edward II., was present with other minstrels at York, when a sum of forty marks was distributed among the musicians.

On April 14th, 1311, Edward II. granted a safe conduct under privy seal in favour of Raymond Cousin, "the King's minstrel," who was going on a pilgrimage to Santiago. In 1329, there is allusion to Thomas

[1] Dialogo di Vincenzo Galilei, A.D. 1589.

[2] Bateson's *Mediæval England* (Story of the Nations).

Morsel, the harper, whilst another entry has reference to Alexander Williamson, the bishop's harper.

At the battle of Bragganstown, near Ardee (Co. Louth), on June 10th, 1329, was slain Maelrooney O'Carroll, Chief Harper of Ireland. The *Irish Annals* describe him as pre-eminent in his art, and he is said to have played on a double harp. One contemporary chronicler styles him a timpanist as well as harper, and "the inventor of chord music," whilst the annalist of Clonmacnoise adds that "no man in any age ever heard or shall hereafter hear a better harper."

O'Carroll, Chief Harper of Ireland

Among the Records of the Guildhall of London there is a document to the effect that, about the year 1334, minstrels were wont to be employed by the London Corporation at their entertainments. It is well, however, to point out that *jongleurs*, or minstrels, must not be confounded with harpers. The latter body looked down on the minstrels, who, as a rule, were Bohemians of a not too savoury character. At the same time it must be borne in mind that the French minstrels, in 1331, built the Church of St. Julien des Menestriers.[1] The Germans,

French and German Minstrels

[1] Those interested in the subject of the French *jongleurs*, or minstrels, will find ample material in Vidal's *La Chapelle St. Julien des Menestriers* (Paris, 1878). It may, however, be added that the Parisian minstrels,

too, had their minstrels: the *minnesingers* were highly-cultivated amateur musicians, whilst the *meistersingers* were the professional minstrels.

The Citole

In the well-known advice to a jongleur by De Colenson, who died in 1211, it is mentioned that a skilful jongleur should play on the *citole* as well as on the mandore and monochord. Chaucer, in his *Knight's Tale* (1375), alludes to "a citole" in the hands of a fair dame; whilst Wicklif writes of "harpes and *sitols*, and timpans." (2 Samuel vi.)

The citole was a form of *cruit,* and the name seems derived from *cithara,* although it may be more immediately from *cither.* Strangely enough the late Mr. Hipkins gives it as from *cistella* = a small box, meaning a box-shaped psaltery, although he admits that the name probably indicates the *rota.* It continued in use as late as 1545, and may be regarded as a high-class *crowd* or *crotta.* Edward III. had a *citoler* in his band of musick, as also a *fidler;* and in the *Squyr of Lowe Degre*, written *circ.* 1480, it is alluded to under the name of *sytolphe,* whilst among instruments of the harp genus are mentioned the *getron, santry, rote,* and *ribible.*

in 1401, got a renewal of their charter, but it was merely a fillip to a moribund fraternity.

CHAPTER VII.

ENGLISH, SCOTCH, AND IRISH HARPERS.

Tutbury Court of Minstrels—Thomas of Elmham—Henry V. as a harpist—London-made harps—The King's minstrel—Incorporation of the Musicians' Company of the City of London—The Lamont arp—"Eibhlin a Ruin"—Carrol O'Daly—The Statute of Kilkenny—Irish harpers—Visits to the Scottish Court—Richard III. and Henry VII.—London minstrels—Thierry and John Major on Irish minstrels—Music printing.

UNDER King Richard II., in 1380, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, erected a court of minstrels at Tutbury, in Staffordshire, and granted a charter empowering the minstrels to elect annually a "King of the Minstrels," as also four assistants, "to preside over the institution in Staffordshire, Derby, Nottingham, Leicester, and Warwick."[1]

Tutbury Court of Minstrels

Thomas of Elmham gives an account of the coronation of King Henry V., at Westminster, in 1413, and he mentions that "the harmony of the *harpers* drawn from their instruments, struck with the rapidest touch of the fingers, note against

Thomas of Elmham

[1] Hawkins's *History of Music.*

note, and the soft angelic whisperings of their modulations, were gratifying to the ears of the guests." According to this author, the orchestra consisted of "a prodigious number of harps in the hall"—no other instrument being mentioned.

Henry V. as a Harpist

Henry V. was undoubtedly a great patron of music, and was himself a harpist and composer. In 1415 he engaged John Cliff and seventeen other minstrels to follow him to Guienne, receiving forty pounds as their wages (RYMER). In October, 1420, he ordered a new harp to be sent over to him to France; and there is an entry in the Exchequer Rolls for £8 13s. 4d.—being the price of *two harps*—paid to John Bore, harp-maker, of London. It is assumed that one of the two harps was for Queen Katherine, whom the English king had married at Troyes, on June 3rd, 1420. We are told by Rymer, in his *Foedera*, that Henry V. expended a hundred shillings annually as payment to twelve minstrels, which amount continued to be paid by his successor. He died at Vincennes, in August 1422, leaving a name inseparably associated with the victory of Agincourt.

London-made Harps

On September 20th, 1467, King Edward IV. granted ten marks yearly to William Eynsham, the King's

Minstrel. In the following year there is allusion to Robert Hanyes, of Little Malvern, *minstrel.* About the same time we find an entry on the Patent Rolls referring to Thomas Briker, *harp-maker,* and to William Dent, of Selby, *harper.* In 1474 John Hawkins was King's Minstrel, and in the succeeding year reference is made to Robert Green, *King's Minstrel.*

The King's Minstrel

Under Edward IV. the Chapel Royal and the King's Band of Musick were put on a secure basis; and on April 24th, 1469, letters patent were granted incorporating the Musicians' Company of the City of London as a perpetual Guild of Minstrels, with Walter Haliday as first Marshal.

The Musicians' Company of the City of London

Among the harps still existing in Scotland is the famous Clarsach Lumanach, or Lamont harp, also called the "Lude" harp, supposed to have been brought from Argyllshire by Lilias Lamont on her marriage into the family of Robertson of Lude. Not improbably this fine instrument belonged to Rory *dall* O'Cahan, a famous Ulster harper, who died in Scotland about the year 1650. Gunn, in 1807, describes it as thirty-eight inches high and furnished with thirty-two strings; and Hudson, in 1840, says that this harp is probably

The Lamont Harp

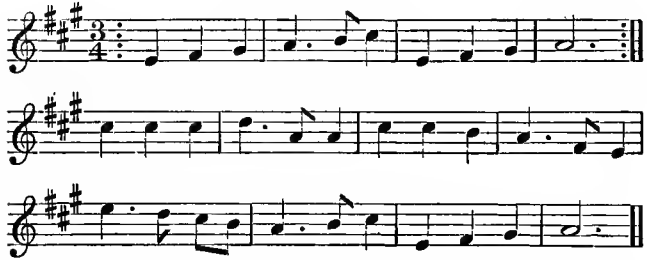
Irish. It certainly has all the well-known Irish characteristics.

One of the loveliest harp melodies at the close of the fourteenth century is the Irish air "Eibhlin a Ruin" (Eileen, my treasure), known also as "Robin Adair." It was composed in 1386 by Carrol O'Daly, a famous Irish harper. Disguised as a minstrel, O'Daly so captivated Eileen Kavanagh, of Polmonty Castle, Co. Carlow, that she eloped with him on the evening of her intended betrothal to a rival lover. In the song, which he

"Eibhlin a Ruin" (Robin Adair)

"EIBHLIN A RUIN."

MS. 1726.



sung with such effect to the accompaniment of the harp, were two expressions rendered immortal by Shakespeare—namely, "ducdame" and "cead mile failte" (a hundred thousand welcomes), whilst the

melody itself—here subjoined—was much admired by Handel during his stay in Ireland.[1]

Carrol O'Daly

Carrol O'Daly, the author and composer of this immortal song, is styled by the Irish annalists as "chief composer of Ireland, and ollav (doctor) in music of the country of Corcomroe" (Co. Clare). His death is chronicled in the year 1405.

The Statute of Kilkenny

By the *Statute of Kilkenny,* in 1367, it was made penal to receive or entertain Irish harpers or minstrels within the English Pale in Ireland. The working of this enactment is evident from a licence on the Patent Rolls of the year 1375 (49 Edw. iii.), granting permission to Donal O'Moghan, an Irish minstrel, to dwell within the Pale. Two famous Irish harpers of this period were John MacEgan and Gilbert O'Barden, both of whom died in the year 1369. Ten years later (1379) is chronicled the death of Gillacuddy O'Carroll, described as "the most delightful minstrel of the Irish."

Irish Harpers

In 1433, the *Irish Annals* place the obit of Aedh O'Corcrain, a remarkable harper; and in 1438 died Seanchan MacCurtin, described as "historian, poet, and musician." An entry on

[1] For an account of this Irish melody see article "Eileen Aroon" in Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (1904).

the Patent Rolls of the year 1435 (15 Henry VI.) shows that the *Statute of Kilkenny* was being disregarded. It is stated that Irish harpers and timpanists (*Clarsaghours* and *Timpanours*) and *crowthers* (performers on the *cruit*) "went amongst the English and exercised their arts and minstrelsies." In consequence, the English monarch, as we read, "finding such laws ineffectual, and his lieges paying *grandia bona et dona* in exchange for Irish music, commissioned his Marshal in Ireland to imprison the harpers; and, in order to stimulate his activity, authorised him to appropriate to his own private use their gold and silver, their horses, harnesses, and instruments of minstrelsy."[1]

Visits to the Scottish Courts

In the second half of the fifteenth century Irish minstrels were frequent visitors to Scotland; and in Dauney's *Scottish Melodies* there are given several items regarding payments made to various musicians at the Scottish Court, *e.g.*

"April 19th, 1490. To Martin, the clairsach player, and the other Irish harper, at ye King's command, 18 shillings.

"May 30th, 1490. To an Irish harper, at ye King's command, 18 shillings."

In the year 1490 there is an entry in the *Annals of Ulster* recording the death of "the son of MacDonnell

[1] Flood's *History of Irish Music*, pp. 78-79.

of Scotland," at the hands of an Irish harper named Dermot O'Carbry. Another annalist says that MacDonald, Lord of Eigg, "was slain in treachery at Inverness by Diarmuit Ua Cairpri." This affords additional evidence as to the constant visits of Irish harpers to Scotland.[1] Five years later Hugh roe O'Donnell, accompanied by his harper, paid a visit to King James IV. of Scotland, "who received the Irish prince with much distinction."

English harpers were also welcomed by King James IV. of Scotland, and in the accounts of the Lords High Treasurers of Scotland there are a few entries in regard to the sums paid to the "Inglis harparis."

King Richard III. was a patron of music, and sanctioned an enactment for the impressing of choirboys and men for the service of the Chapel Royal. He gave much largesse to harpers and minstrels, as did also his successor, Henry VII. (1485-1509). In the Privy Purse expenses for the year 1498 there is an entry of

Richard III. and Henry VII.

[1] There are numerous payments in the Roll of Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland, from 1491 to 1513, proving that Irish harpers were attached to the Scottish Court. In 1513, when Prince O'Donnell visited King James IV., the Scottish monarch presented O'Donnell's Irish harper with £7.

five pounds paid as wages to the "three string minstrels," and of fifteen shillings to "a string minstrel" for one month's wages.

London Minstrels

An interesting side-light on the grievances of the City of London minstrels is to be seen in a petition, of about the year 1499, setting forth their dire poverty owing to the "continual recourse of foreign minstrels," and asking that the Guild might be permitted to levy a fine of three shillings and fourpence on any manner of foreigner playing on any instrument within said city. It would seem that the members of this guild had to confine their teaching to their own apprentices, and these musical apprentices had to serve a term of seven years. It may here be well to give an illustration of the "minstrel's harp" of the fifteenth century.

FIG. 18.—A MENESTREL HARP (FIFTEENTH CENTURY).

The supremacy of the harp was given a rude shock at this epoch by the spread of viols, recorders, lutes, virginals, and clavichords; but, above all, the violin had just come to stay.[1]

[1] For the fullest account of the violin, see Professor Stoeving's *Story of the Violin* in the "Music Story" series.

Irish Minstrels

Still, the harp was very popular, especially in Ireland. Two famous Irish harpers — Florence O'Corcoran and William McGilroy—are particularly noticed in the *Annals of Ulster,* whose deaths are chronicled in 1496 and 1497 respectively. Thierry writes: "Every house preserved two harps, always ready for travellers, and he who could best celebrate the liberties of former times, the glory of patriots, and the grandeur of their cause, was remunerated with a more lavish hospitality." John Major (d. 1525) gives unstinted praise to the Irish harpers, and he sums up his eulogy in one sentence: "Hibernenses qui in illa arte præcipui sunt."

Thierry and John Major praise Irish Minstrels

The art of music-printing from movable types, first introduced by Conrad Fyner, of Esslingen, in 1473, was destined to effect a revolution in every department of music. Yet, it was not until 1495 that De Worde printed, in England, the first book with musical notes; whilst it was in 1502 that Octaviano Petrucci began music-printing at Venice. Later on, in 1530, Wynkyn de Worde issued the first collection of English songs with music.

Music-printing

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HARP IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

An Irish harp dated 1509—Sebastian Virdung—English minstrels—Henry VIII.'s Band of Musick—Irish harpers—Polydore Vergil—Enactments against Irish harpers—English minstrels—Primavera "dell Arpe"—Elizabethan enactments—The "Queen Mary" harp—William Good, S.J.—Distinguished Irish harpers—Vincenzo Galilei—The harpsichord—A harp of a new device—Shakespeare and Bacon—"Ballet Comique de la Royne"—"Orfeo."

MANY entries in the *Irish Annals* testify to the fame of harp-making in Ireland during the first half of the sixteenth century; and Dr. Petrie describes for us a very beautiful harp which bore the date 1509, but which has, unfortunately, disappeared since 1810. "It was small," he writes, "and but simply ornamented, and on the front of the pillar or fore-arm, there was a brass plate on which was inscribed the name of the maker and the date—1509."

An Irish Harp dated 1509

It is not a little remarkable that the drawing of

the harp, or Harffen, given by Sebastian Virdung in his *Musica Getustacht,* printed at Basil, in 1511, is the mediæval harp of Ireland as generally represented.[1]

Sebastian Virdung

The English minstrels had fallen into disrepute at the beginning of the sixteenth century, as the following extract from Brandt's "Ship of Fools," written in 1494, serves to prove:—

English Minstrels

> "The Furies fearfully sprong of the floudes of hell,
> Bereft these vagabonds in their mindes so
> That by no meane can they abide ne dwell
> Within their houses, but out they nede must go;
> More wildly wandering than either buck or doe.
> *Some with their harpes*, another with their lute,
> Another with his bagpipe, or a foolish flute."

In 1515, the King's Minstrels, for having to journey to Cambridge to perform there, were given seven shillings; and a similar payment was given them a few years later. Henry VIII. was a musician and composer, and, in 1526, his Band of Musick consisted of: a harp, two viols, a fife, three lutes, four drumslades, three rebecs, three taborets, ten sackbuts, and fifteen trumpets. In 1530 there was a slight change in the con-

Henry VIII.'s Band of Musick

[1] Virdung describes a tablature for the lute invented by Conrad Paulmann, *circ.* 1460.

stitution of this band, as a virginal and three minstrels were added. Under Edward VI., in 1547, a bagpipe was included, whilst the number of viols was increased to seven, and we also find a Welsh minstrel.

Polydore Vergil, in his *History of England,* in 1534, writes thus of Irish harpers:—"Cujus musicæ peritissimi sunt; canunt enim *tum voce tum fidibus eleganter,* sed vehementi quodam impetu, sic ut mirabile sit in tanta vocis linguæque *atque digitorum velocitate,* posse artis numeros servari, id quod illi ad unguem facuint."[1] This passage fully confirms the unrivalled skill of the Irish harpers, especially in the difficult matter of accompaniment. Vergil marvels at the "wonderful sympathy between voice and strings," notwithstanding "the surprising rapidity of execution by the fingers;" but, as he adds, "this the Irish harpers do to a nicety."

Irish Harpers

Polydore Vergil

About this time it was enacted: "That noe Irish minstralls, rymers, ne bardes, be messengers to desire any goods of any man dwelling within the English Pale," upon pain of "forfeiture of all their goods, and their bodies to be imprisoned at the King's will." In 1537, Robert Cowley, Collector of Customs in

Enactments against Irish Harpers

[1] *Angliæ Hist.*, lib. xiii.

Ireland, wrote to Secretary Cromwell that "*harpers*, rhymers, Irish chroniclers, bards, etc., commonly go with praises [elegies] to gentlemen in the English Pale, praising in rhymes," etc. The two most famous Irish harpers of this period were Bryan O'Keenan and Edmond O'Flynn, whose deaths are duly chronicled in 1537 and 1553 respectively.

English Minstrels

Foreigners were again a trouble to the musicians of the city of London in 1555, and, accordingly, a decree was issued forbidding "foreign minstrels" to exercise their art within the city, under a penalty of 3s. 4d.

Primavera "dell Arpe"

About this time flourished a celebrated Neapolitan harpist and composer, Giovanni Leonardo Primavera, known as "dell Arpe," from his extraordinary skill on the harp. He published several volumes of madrigals and canzonets between the years 1560 and 1573, printed at Venice.

Elizabethan Enactments

In 1563 we meet with the first Elizabethan enactments against harpers in Ireland, the reason alleged being that "under pretence of visiting, they carry about privy intelligence between the malefactors in the disturbed districts." Ten years later, a Westmeath harper, Richard O'Malone, was pardoned, as appears from the Fiants of Elizabeth.

Very different was the attitude of the Queen towards

Welsh harpers. We read that by a commission, dated May 26th, 1567, an Eisteddfod on a grand scale was held at Caerwys, at which twenty harpers assisted.

The "Queen Mary" Harp

The oldest specimen of a harp connected with Scotland is the celebrated "Queen Mary" harp, said to have belonged to Mary Queen of Scots, and to have been presented by her to Beatrix Gardyn, of Banchory, in 1563. Whatever opinion may be formed as to the exact date of this instrument, it is almost certainly of Irish origin, and has all the characteristics of an Irish harp of the sixteenth century. It is 30 inches high, and measures 18 inches from back to front, being furnished with twenty-nine brass strings, subsequently increased to thirty. As became a royal harp, it was richly ornamented, being embellished with the portrait of the unfortunate Scottish Queen, and with the royal arms, which, however, were stolen in 1745. On March 12th, 1904, this harp was sold by auction in Edinburgh, and was acquired for eight hundred and fifty guineas by the Antiquarian Museum of that city.

William Good, S.J.

An English Jesuit, William Good, who taught a school at Limerick in 1564, thus writes of the Irish people:—"They love music mightily, and, of all instruments, are particularly taken with *the harp, which, being strung*

with brass wire and beaten with crooked nails, is very melodious."

Between the years 1570 and 1576 various commissions were issued by Queen Elizabeth in Ireland to "banish all Irish harpers," etc.; and, in 1576, the Privy Council issued stringent orders against "rhymers, *harpers,* and other Irishmen" within the English Pale. Four distinguished harpers of this period were Donogh MacCreedan, Thady Creedan, Bryan MacMahon, and James O'Harrigan. A little later flourished Donal MacNamara and Donal O'Heffernan. However, one harper is especially lauded by Stanihurst in 1580—namely, Richard Cruise:—

Distinguished Irish Harpers

"In these days lived Cruise, the most remarkable harper within the memory of man. He carefully avoids that jarring sound which arises from unstretched and untuned strings; and, moreover, by *a certain method of tuning and modulating,* he preserves an exquisite concord, which has a surprising effect upon the ears of hearers, such that one would regard him rather as the *only,* than the *greatest,* harper."[1]

From Derricks' *Image of Ireland,* "made and devised *anno* 1578," dedicated to Sir Philip Sidney, we

[1] Stanihurst's *De Rebus in Hib. Gestis.* Antwerp, 1584.

can form an idea of the ordinary wandering Irish harper of the period.

FIG 19.—CROWNED HARP BADGE OF IRELAND ON THE GREAT SEAL OF QUEEN ELIZABETH.

The instrument somewhat resembles that seen on the crowned harp badge of Ireland on the great seal of Queen Elizabeth.[1]

In 1581, pardon was granted to three harpers — namely, Mac Loughlin *roe* O'Brennan, Walter Brenagh (Walsh), and Donogh O'Creedan, as recorded in the Fiants of Elizabeth.

Vincenzo Galilei on the Italian Harp

Vincenzo Galilei, writing in 1583, says:—"I had an opportunity, a few months since (by the civility of an *Irish* gentleman), of seeing an Irish harp, and after having minutely examined the arrangement of its strings, I found it was the same which, with double the number, was introduced into Italy a few years ago, though some people here, against every shadow of reason, pretend *they* have invented it, and endeavour to make the ignorant believe that none but themselves knew how to tune and play on it." He goes on to say that the compass of the harp is fifty-eight strings, comprehending four octaves and one

[1] On some of the Elizabethan coinage *three harps* are impressed.

tone, in the manner of keyed instruments—the lowest string being "double C in the bass, and the highest D in alt." Unfortunately, he then goes in for a method of tuning on the Pythagorean system, and attacks Zarlino very caustically. This attack he follows up in a second edition of his *Dialogo*, published at Florence, in 1602.

The Harpsichord derived from the Harp

Galilei definitely states that from the harp is derived the harpsichord, and this "by reason of the resemblance in name, in form, and in the numbers, disposition, and materials of its strings." The English name "harpsichord" is the self-same as "Arpicordo," with the introduction of the sibilant. An examination of the two oldest dated harpsichords (of the years 1521 and 1531) proves them to be, as Galilei describes, merely variants of the "Arpa giacenti," or "horizontally-placed harp," and were of about four octaves in compass. This view is also held by Kircher.

A Harp of a New Device

About the year 1585, William Bathe, a young Dublin student at Oxford (author of the first standard *English* work on the Art of Music), presented Queen Elizabeth with "a harp of new device," as is recorded in the State Papers. Strange to say, notwithstanding the Queen's enactment against harpers, she herself kept an Irish harper named

Donal, and had harps in her Band of Musick. From the Cecil manuscripts we learn that on September 4th, 1597, the Countess of Desmond presented Sir Robert Cecil with an Irish harp.

Sir Robert Cecil

As may be expected, Shakespeare makes some allusions to the harp. Ophelia's song in *Hamlet* was originally sung to a harp, as is evident from the fact that the two bars of symphony are now sung to the words: "Twang, lang, dillo dee."

Shakespeare and Bacon

Bacon, in his *Sylva Sylvarum* says: "The harp hath the concave not *along* the strings but *across* the strings; and *no harp hath the sound so melting and prolonged as the Irish harp.*" Again, he refers to the Irish harp: "And so, likewise, in that music which we call broken music or consort music, some consorts of instruments are sweeter than others—a thing not sufficiently yet observed: as, *the Irish harp and bass viol agree well;* but the virginals and the lute, or the Welsh harp and the Irish harp, or the voice and pipes alone, agree not so well."

As an instance of an "orchestra" at this epoch, it may be well to mention that in the "Ballet Comique de la Royne," performed at the Château de Montiers, in 1581, on the occasion of the wedding of the Duc de Joyeuse and Margaret of Lorraine, the following instruments were

"Ballet Comique de la Royne"

included: "Harps, lutes, hautboys, flutes, cornets, trombones, viole di gamba, ten violins, and a flageolet." However, no combination of these instruments was attempted, as we read that "the performers were divided into ten bands," and, for particular scenes, violins played alone, whilst in another scene harps and lutes played.[1] What may be regarded as the first commencement in the history of the modern orchestra, was the band or concert at a double royal wedding, at Ferrara, in 1598, when the music consisted of a combination of lutes, *double harps*, and viols.

It is remarkable that although the harp is not scored for in *Euridice*, nor yet in *La Rappresentazione dell' Anima ed il Corpo*—both produced in the same year (1600)—this omission was supplied, a few years later, in *Orfeo.* Monteverde, in this opera, employed the large Irish double harp for the chorus of nymphs. In all, he scored for thirty-six instruments, a veritable Wagner *in posse;* and his Prelude is an embryo of the Introduction to the *Rheingold.*

"Orfeo"

[1] The libretto and music of this ballet (arranged by Baltasar de Beaujoyeulx) was published by Le Roy, in 1582, and the engravings are very fine. One of the Tritons is represented as playing on a harp.

CHAPTER IX.

THE IRISH HARP UNDER KING JAMES I.

Captain Barnaby Rich—Rory *dall* O'Cahan—"Rory *dall's* Port"—"The Lame Yellow Beggar"—The *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book*—"Callino Custurame"—The "Dalway" harp—Famous harpers—Improvements in the Irish harp—The Great Seal of James I.—The Irish harp in the royal arms.

DURING the year 1601 ten Irish harpers were pardoned, as was also a famous harp-maker, Tadhg O'Dermody, whose son, Donal, was the maker of the still preserved "Dalway" harp. In the following year nine harpers were received into favour, as appears from the Fiants of 1601 and 1602. Two notable harpers, who were also composers—John and Harry Scott—flourished at this date, of whom Bunting makes mention.

Captain Barnaby Rich

Captain Barnaby Rich, in his *New Description of Ireland*, in 1610, says:—"The Irish have harpers, and those are so reverenced among them that in the time of rebellion they will forbear to hurt either their persons or their goods; . . . and every great man in the country hath his rhymer and his harper."

Rory dall O'Cahan

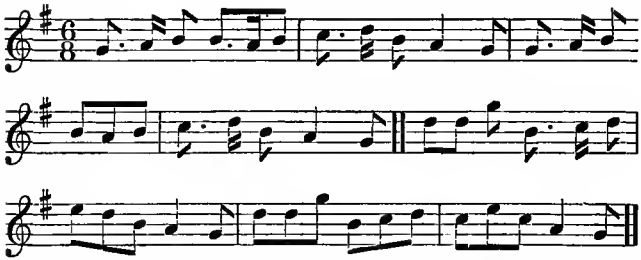
The greatest harper under King James was Rory *dall* O'Cahan, who spent most of his life in Scotland, between the years 1601 and 1645. In 1603, in proof of his reconciliation with Lady Eglinton, he composed the lovely air, "Tabhair dham do lamh" ("Oh, give me your hand"), which is also known by its Latinised title of "Da mihi manum." It has been printed by Bunting and Dr. Crotch. So popular did this air become, that King James sent for the composer to play it for the Scottish court.

Rory dall O'Cahan

He is best known as the composer of numerous *puirts* or *ports*—that is, lessons or airs for the harp, *e.g.* "Port Gordon," "Port Athol," "Port Lennox," etc., generally named after the persons for whom they were composed. In the Straloch MS. (dated 1627-29) appears "Rory dall's Port," but there is a different air of the same name in Playford's *Dancing Master*. The late Mr. John Glen, in his *Early Scottish Melodies* (1900), dismisses the Irish origin of this air thus: "It is a matter of indifference who Rory *dall* was, or who composed the tune. We have not found it earlier than the two sources named"—that is, Oswald and Walsh, in 1757. The real fact is that "Rory *dall's* Port" was in print in 1670, and it was undoubtedly composed by the Irish harper. Subjoined is the harp-melody:—

"Rory dall's Port"

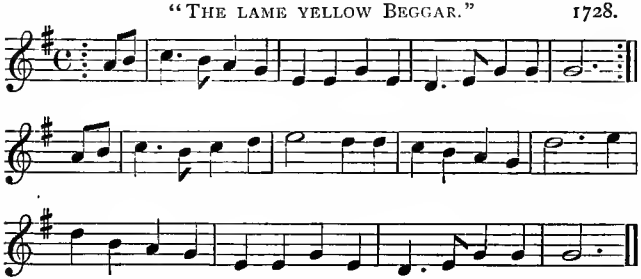
"RORY DALL'S PORT." *Playford*, 1670.



Rory *dall* is also credited with the composition of the air, "Lady Catherine Ogle," but he certainly composed the exquisite harp-melody known as "An bacach buidhe," or "The Lame Yellow Beggar." We here give the music of this tune, which was introduced by Charles Coffey, of Dublin, into his *Beggars' Wedding*, in 1728:—

"The Lame Yellow Beggar"

"THE LAME YELLOW BEGGAR." 1728.



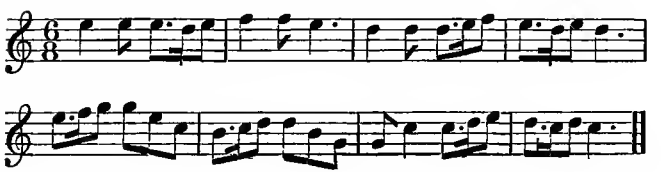
He died at the house of Lord Macdonald, leaving that nobleman his harp and tuning-key. Dr. Johnson,

in his *Tour to the Hebrides* (1773), tells us that a valuable harp key, finely ornamented with gold and silver, and with a precious stone, worth eighty to a hundred guineas, was then in possession of Lord Macdonald, who presented it to Echlin O'Cahan. It is worth noting that Sir Walter Scott introduces Rory *dall* as the musical preceptor of Annot Lyle, in his *Legend of Montrose*.

The "Fitzwilliam Virginal Book"

In the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* are some Irish airs, including two harp-melodies, not later than the year 1570. One of these, "Cailin og a stuair me," derives an added interest from the fact that it is quoted by Shakespeare in *Henry the Fifth* (Act ii. Sc. 4); and the song to which it was sung was printed in *A Handful of Pleasant Delites*, in 1584. The air is in William Ballet's Lute Book, a valuable musical manuscript, *circ.* 1590, now in Trinity College, Dublin. We subjoin the version of it as given in the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* (of about the year 1610), arranged for the virginals by William Byrde, one of the greatest of English musicians:—

"CALLINO CASTURAME." *Circ.* 1610.



As a proof of the estimation in which Irish harps were held at this time, there is an entry in the State papers, under date of March 8th, 1606-7, in which Sir John Egerton, son of the Lord Chancellor of England, writes to Sir John Davies, Attorney-General for Ireland, "reminding him of his Irish harp."

The Dalway Harp

There is still preserved a splendid Irish harp, dated 1621, of which a cast is in the South Kensington collection. This harp was made for Sir John Fitzgerald, of Cloyne, Co. Cork, but is generally known as the "Dalway" harp, as the instrument has been for two centuries in possession of the Dalway family of Bellahill, near Carrickfergus, Co. Antrim. Bunting gives a long account of it in his second volume of ancient Irish music (1809), but he fails to identify the maker, whose name appears as "Donatus filius Thadei." The harp-maker is none other than Donnchadh mac Tadhg O'Dermody, whose father received pardon in 1601, as previously mentioned.

Of a surety, the Fitzgerald (Dalway) harp deserves the title of "queen of harps," which is engraved on it in Latin: "Ego sum Regina cithararum." The arms of the owner (Sir John FitzEdmund Fitzgerald) are elaborately chased on the front pillar, and, as Bunting adds, "every part of the instrument is

The Dalway Harp

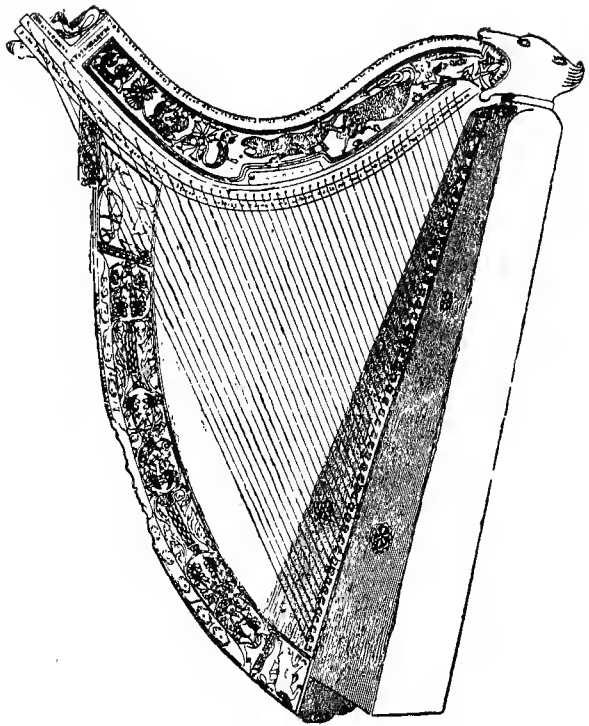


FIG. 20.—THE DALWAY HARP.

covered with inscriptions in Latin and in the Irish character."

"By the pins, which remain almost entire, it is found to have contained in the row forty-five strings, besides seven in the centre, probably for unisons to others, making in all fifty-two, and exceeding the common Irish harp by twenty-two strings. In consequence of the sound-board being lost, different attempts to ascertain its scale have been unsuccessful. It contained twenty-four [*recte* twenty-two] strings more than the noted harp called Brian Boromha's, and, in point of workmanship, is beyond comparison superior to it, both for the elegance of its crowded ornaments, and for the general execution of those parts on which the correctness of a musical instrument depends. The opposite side is equally beautiful with that of which the delineation is given; the fore-pillar appears to be of sallow, the harmonic curve of yew."

Though the original sound-board is missing, a restoration has been effected, and a cast of the restored instrument, as above given, is in the National Museum, Dublin. One of the inscriptions on the harmonic curve has thus been translated from the Irish by O'Curry:—"Giollapatrick MacCreedan was my Musician and Harmonist; and if I could have found a better, him should I have, and Dermot MacCreedan along with him,

two highly accomplished men, whom I had to nurse me. And on every one of these, may God have mercy on them all."

In 1614, there is reference to a harper, Tadhg O'Coffy, who was in the service of Dr. Geoffrey Keating, author of the *Forus Feasa ar Eirinn* (History of Ireland), and to whom Keating addressed a beautiful Irish poem of nine stanzas. About the same time we find William FitzEdward Barry, a blind harper, as a retainer of Lord Barrymore; and in 1620, Daniel O'Cahill was harper to Viscount Buttevant.

Famous Harpers

Between the years 1622 and 1625 Father Robert Nugent, S.J., made considerable improvements in the Irish harp. This accomplished Jesuit was a cousin of Elizabeth, Countess of Kildare, who, in 1634, gave him Kilkea Castle, Co. Kildare, for a novitiate of his order. His improvements mainly consisted in having a double row of strings extended along the framework of the harp, giving two strings to each sound, which produced a rich and sonorous quality of tone. He also succeeded in affording increased facilities for the uninterrupted progression of the passages with either hand. The full Latin text detailing these improvements is in Lynch's *Cambrensis Eversus*.

Improvements in the Irish Harp

On the great seal of King James I., as will be seen from the subjoined illustration, the Irish harp appears upon the third quarter of the royal shield, as well as on the reverse, as a badge, crowned. The type of harp is almost the self-same as that of the "O'Brien" harp.

The Great Seal of James I.

FIG. 21.—QUARTERING FOR IRELAND ON THE ROYAL SHIELD ON THE GREAT SEAL OF KING JAMES I.

It was in the reign of King James, too, that the Irish harp was quartered in the royal arms—that is, a *gold* harp, with *silver* strings, on a *blue* ground. The Deputy Earl Marshal of England was not enthusiastic over the matter of having the Irish harp quartered in the royal arms, and he quaintly observed that "the best reason for the adoption of the harp was that it resembled Ireland itself in being such an instrument that it required more cost to keep it in tune than it was worth."

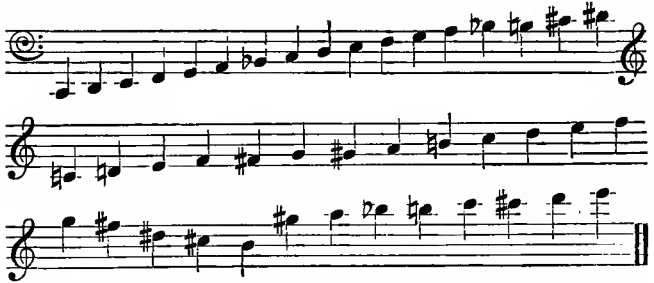
The Irish Harp in the Royal Arms

In the King's Band of Musick, in 1628, we find one harp employed, in union with eleven

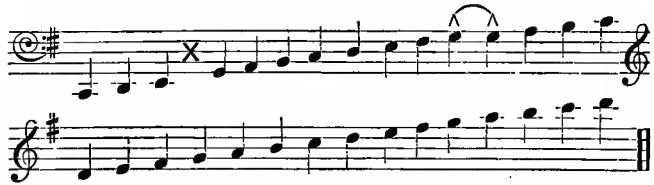
violins, evidencing the growing popularity of the violin.[1]

SCALE OF THE IRISH HARP WITH FORTY-THREE STRINGS.

Prætorius, 1619.



BUNTING'S SCALE FOR THE HARP OF THIRTY STRINGS.[2]



[1] Prætorius, who published his book in 1619, gives a fairly good drawing of an Irish harp. He also gives the scale of the harp with forty-three strings.

[2] There was no F sharp, but bass G was lowered if necessary, thus indicating a pentatonic character. The "Sisters,"  , corresponding to the G or fourth string on the Violin, were first tuned in unison, and were so designated from the Irish word *comhluighe*, or "lying together."

CHAPTER X.

THE WELSH TRIPLE HARP.

Père Mersenne's description—Evolution of the Irish double harp—Carew, the Welsh harper—Sad end of Evans, told by Pepys—Welsh triple harp described.

EARLY in the seventeenth century the Welsh triple harp assumed its developed stage. Père Mersenne, in 1632, describes this form of harp, and assigns it a compass of four octaves, with seventy-five strings.[1] Subsequently we find the Welsh harp comprising ninety-seven strings—namely, thirty-six bass strings, twenty-six treble strings, and thirty-five middle strings, tuned from double C in the bass to C in alto. However, Bingley in his *History of North Wales* says that the three rows contain ninety-eight strings, divided as follows:—Thirty-seven on the right, or bass; twenty-seven on the left, or treble; and thirty-four in the middle, for the semitones.

Père Mersenne's Description

[1] *L'Harmonie Universelle* (1636).

Carew, the Welsh Harper

As the two outer rows are diatonic and are tuned in unison, it will be seen that the Welsh triple harp is merely an evolution of the Irish double harp.

Evolution of the Irish Double Harp

According to Vincenzo Galilei (1589) the Italian "arpa doppia" was introduced from Ireland, and the only difference between the Irish double harp and the Italian was that the latter instrument was furnished with catgut strings instead of brass. The comparatively modern Welsh triple harp has a third or middle row of strings containing the sharps and flats—thus rendering the instrument available for the diatonic and chromatic scales.

In *Evelyn's Diary,* under date of June 13th, 1649, we get a glimpse of a Welsh harper named Carew. The diarist writes as follows:—"I dined with my worthy friend, Sir John Owen, newly freed from sentence of death, among the lords that suffered. With him came one Carew, who played incomparably well on the *Welsh harp.*"

Carew, the Welsh Harper

From Pepys, the better-known diarist, we learn of the sad end of Evans, the Welsh harper of the Restoration epoch. Writing on December 19th, 1666, he says:—"Talked of the King's family with Mr. Hingston, the organist. He says many of the musique (King's Band of Musick) are ready to starve, they being five years behind-

Sad End of Evans, as told by Pepys

hand for their wages: nay, Evans, the famous man upon the harp, *having not his equal in the world,* did the other day die for mere want, and was fain to be buried at the alms of the parish, and carried to his grave in the dark at night without one link (torch), but that Mr. Hingston met it by chance, and did give twelve pence to buy two or three links."

FIG. 22.—WELSH TRIPLE HARP.

The subjoined illustration will give the reader a good idea of the Welsh triple harp.

Welsh Triple Harp Described

We have stated that the Welsh harp has a triple row of strings, the inner row being for the accidentals. But it is rather a difficult instrument to handle. First of all, as the strings on the right-hand side are for the bass, the tuning has to be effected with the left hand, and, for the same reason, the instrument has to be held on the left shoulder, and performed on with the left hand in the treble; secondly, it is not easy to play accidentals on the middle or inner row of strings, especially in allegro movements, or passages that require to be played with rapidity. As Thomas says, "it is the only instrument

of its kind that has ever been known with the strings on the right side of the comb," one reason being that otherwise the player would not have a full view of the strings.

It is remarkable that the first published Tutor for the Welsh triple-string harp appeared only three years ago (November 1902). Mr. Parry, of 78 Granby Street, Liverpool, after a search of fourteen years discovered the long-lost MS. prepared by Ellis Roberts (Eos Meirion), harpist to the Prince of Wales, who died in London, December 6th, 1873. Its publication is due to the Hon. Augusta Herbert, of Llanover (Gwenyneu Gwent yr Ail), under the editorship of Dr. Charles Vincent, and the hope is expressed "that as there exists no longer the excuse of having no book of instruction for the playing of the 'Delyn Dair-Rhes,' that great and rapid progress will be made in the use of the unique national instrument of our country (Wales)." Following the preface is a long quotation from Edward Jones (1794), the important feature of which is the arrangement of the ninety-eight strings. It may be added that the triple harp is tuned in the key of G of the treble clef, proceeding by fifths and octaves alternately. The present compass of the instrument extends to five octaves and one note.

CHAPTER XI.

CROMWELL AND THE IRISH HARP.

Archdeacon Lynch's testimony—Deliberate system of harp-breaking—Pierce Ferriter—Harp ornamentation—Evelyn on the Irish harp—"I'll never love thee more."

UNDER King Charles I., the Irish harp was even more fashionable than in the preceding reign, and no better proof of this need be adduced than the publication of a book of motets, in London, in 1630, by Martin Pierson, Mus. Bac., Master of the Children of St. Paul's Cathedral—remarkable as being the first printed work in which tunes were arranged for the Irish harp.

There is a letter from the Earl of Cork, Lord Justice of Ireland, dated October 14th, 1632, sending an "Irish harpe" as a present to the Lord Keeper, accompanied by a "runlett of mild Irish whiskey."[1]

M. Boullaye le Gouz, writing in 1644, says that "the Irish are very fond of the harp, *on which nearly all play,* as the English do on the fiddle." This popu-

[1] *Cal. S. P.* (*Ireland*), 1625-32, p. 674.

larity of the harp continued during the Confederate period—that is, from 1644 to 1648. It is worthy of note that Archbishop Laud (who was executed in January 1645) had an Irish harp, which he bequeathed to John Cobbe, the organist.

Archdeacon Lynch's Testimony

According to the testimony of Archdeacon Lynch, in his *Cambrensis Eversus,* the Cromwellians in Ireland not only destroyed organs, but also harps. As to organs, there is ample evidence of their destruction by the Puritans in Dublin, Cork, Waterford, Cashel, and elsewhere. But their rage seemed specially directed against the national instrument. "They broke all the harps they could find throughout Ireland;" and so violently did they act in the matter of *harp-breaking* that Lynch was of opinion that "within a short time scarce a single instrument would be left in Ireland."

Deliberate System of Harp-breaking

Lynch (who is a contemporary witness) was so impressed with the idea that not a harp would survive the universal destruction of the national instrument in Ireland at the hands of the Cromwellians, that he entered into the minutest details regarding the harp, believing that nothing but a merciful Providence could avert the complete annihilation of the *clairsech.* "The barbarous marauders," he writes, "vent their vandal

fury on every harp which they meet, and break it in pieces."

Here it is interesting to give an illustration of the Arms of Ireland in the time of Cromwell. In the Great Seal of the Lord Protector we find an elaborately-designed Irish harp, having the family arms of Cromwell, as here given.

FIG. 23.—ARMS OF IRELAND ON THE GREAT SEAL OF CROMWELL—FOR IRELAND (BEARING THE FAMILY ARMS OF THE LORD PROTECTOR).

One of the most famous Irish harpers of the Puritan *régime* was Pierce Ferriter, of Ferriter's Castle, Co. Kerry, popularly known as the "gentleman harper." He headed a band of troops to defend his property, but surrendered on condition of quarter for his men and himself. Notwithstanding this, he was executed at Killarney in 1652. One of his most prized possessions was an exquisite harp which had been given him by Edmond *mac an daill,* of Moylurg, Co. Roscommon, on which he wrote an Irish poem in twenty-six stanzas, describing the *corr* (harmonic curve or cross-tree), the *lamhchrann* (front pillar), and the *com* (sound-board), with the names of the designer, maker, and decorator.

Pierce Ferriter

Evelyn on the Irish Harp

From Ferriter's poem on the harp we can quite understand the importance attached to the construction of the instrument, but he specially dwells on the wealth of ornamentation wont to be lavished on good harps. His pet harp was decorated with gold by Partholan *mor* MacCathaill, and was "bound and emblazoned" by Benglann.

Harp Ornamentation

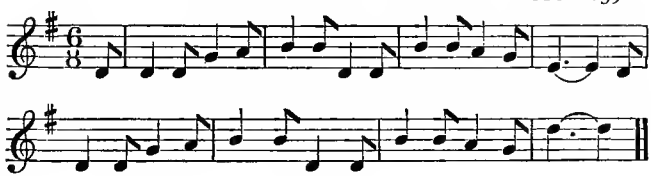
Under date of January 25th, 1654, Evelyn writes:—"Came to see my old acquaintance and incomparable player on the Irish harp, Mr. Clarke. He is an excellent musician. Such music before or since did I never hear, the *Irish harp being neglected for its extraordinary difficulty;* but, in my judgment, it is far superior to the lute itself, or whatever speaks with strings."

Evelyn on the Irish Harp

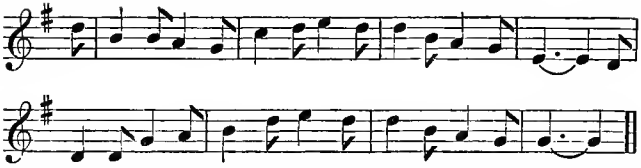
This chapter may fittingly conclude with a pretty Irish harp-melody, popular in pre-Restoration days, adapted to the song, "I'll never Love Thee more," and was found in John Gamble's MS., dated 1659:—

"I'LL NEVER LOVE THEE MORE."

MS. 1659.



Story of the Harp



CHAPTER XII.

THE HARP UNDER CHARLES II.

Sir Edward Sutton—The Queen's "Portugal musiq"—Rev. James Clifford—Moreland's new harp—The Great Seal of Charles II.—The "Kildare" harp—The "Fogarty" harp—Three Irish harpers—Dr. Narcissus Marsh—The chromatic harp—Defects of the "hook" system.

As is well known, at the Restoration, the gloom of Puritanism was dispelled, and Charles II. requisitioned twenty-four instrumentalists at the Chapel Royal, with Thomas Baltzar as leader. The harp was still popular, though being steadily ousted by the violin and spinet. Some of the greatest scholars took up the Irish harp as a serious study, and Dr. Narcissus Marsh, Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford, in 1662, was wont to have "a weekly consort of instrumental musick, and sometimes vocal, in his chamber, on Wednesdays in the afternoon, and then on Thursdays, as long as he lived in Oxford." He wrote a work on the harp, the manuscript of which is now in Marsh's Library, Dublin.

Evelyn, under date of November 17th, 1668, thus

writes:—"I heard Sir Edward Sutton play excellently upon the Irish harp. He performs genteelly, but not approaching my worthy friend Mr. Clarke, who makes it execute lute, viol, and all the harmony an instrument is capable of. *Pity it is that it is not more in use;* but, indeed, to play well takes up the whole man, as Mr. Clarke has assured me, who, though a gentleman of quality and parts, was yet brought up to that instrument from five years old, as I remember he told me."

Sir Edward Sutton

We can form a tolerable idea of the "orchestra" of the Restoration period from an entry in *Evelyn's Diary* in regard to the Portuguese band of music that accompanied Catherine of Braganza, Queen of Charles II., in 1662. He thus writes:—"I heard the Queen's Portugal musiq, consisting of pipes, harps, and very ill voices." But we must not be so surprised at this, for even Alessandro Scarlatti, in his oratorio of *St. John the Baptist,* in 1676, employed two solo violins and violoncello, *del concertino,* and a large body of ripieni violins, tenors, and basses, *del concerto grosso,* for his *double* orchestra.[1]

The Queen's "Portugal Musiq"

[1] Chamber music may be said to date from 1670, as appears from the excellent work on the subject by Mr. N. Kilburn (*Story of Chamber Music* in "The Music Story Series").

FIG. 23A.—HARP, SECOND HALF OF SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. CARVED AND GILDED WITH FOLIAGE AND CHILDREN. SAID TO HAVE BELONGED TO CHARLES II.

Crowned-Harp Badge

In 1664 appeared a volume of *Services and Anthems* by Rev. James Clifford, having a frontispiece, in which King David is represented playing on a six-stringed harp. The following lines are printed beneath the picture of the Royal Psalmist:—

Rev. James Clifford

> "See here the sacred harp with well-tun'd string,
> Skilfully touched by a most pious king;
> Of whose great actions after God's own heart:
> This is recorded too, he played his part."

It would seem that about this time Sir Samuel Moreland invented a new form of harp, but no particulars have survived, save for the entry by Evelyn, in 1667, who mentions Moreland's invention of "a new harp." To this same philosopher-musician must be credited the speaking-trumpet, and a mechanical harpsichord, worked on the principle of "a wheel and a zone of parchment," thus anticipating the Angelus, Cecilian, Pianola, etc.

Moreland's New Harp

The crowned-harp badge of Ireland, on the Great Seal of King Charles II., is the development of the symbolic angel form of harp; and, as may be seen in the accompanying illustration, is the same as still used in the arms of Ireland.

The Great Seal of Charles II.

A fine Irish harp is still preserved, known as

the "Kildare" harp, inscribed "R. F. G., 1672." This beautiful instrument, still preserved at Kilkea Castle, Co. Kildare, was formerly the property of Robert FitzGerald, second son of George, sixteenth Earl of Kildare, hence the name. Apparently it was manufactured for this nobleman in 1672, and his death is chronicled in January 1698.

The "Kildare" Harp

FIG. 24. — CROWNED HARP BADGE OF IRELAND ON THE GREAT SEAL OF CHARLES II.

This love of the harp by the Irish nobility of the Stuart period is alluded to in a description of Ireland, printed in London in 1673, as follows:—"The Irish gentry are musically disposed, and, therefore, many of them play singular well upon the Irish harp." Seven years later, Dineley, in his *Tour of Ireland*, says: "The Irish are at this day much addicted on holydays, after the bagpipe, Irish Harp, or Jew's Harp, to dance after their country fashion—that is, the Long Dance."

There is another beautiful Irish harp of this period, known as the "Fogarty" harp, having belonged to Cornelius O'Fogarty, of Castle Fogarty, in 1684. An unsatisfactory drawing of it appeared in the *Dublin Penny Journal*, in 1838, and it was stated as then in the

The "Fogarty" Harp

possession of James Lenigan, Esq., of Castle Fogarty. It contains thirty-five strings, and is now the property of Lieut.-Col. J. V. Ryan-Lenigan, of Castle Fogarty, near Thurles, Co. Tipperary.

Among the Irish harpers of the period 1660-85, the most celebrated were Myles O'Reilly, Thomas Connellan, and Laurence Connellan. Thomas Connellan was a composer as well as a performer, and a number of his harp-melodies are still popular. He lived over twenty years in Scotland, a worthy successor to Rory *dall* O'Cahan, and many of his airs have been claimed as Scotch. He returned to Ireland in 1689, and died in 1698.

Three Irish Harpers

Dr. Narcissus Marsh (of whom I have previously made mention) was appointed Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, in 1678, and he introduced the custom of "a weekly consort of musick" in Dublin University—the harp being in evidence. Marsh played the harp very well, but he also practised the bass viol. In a remarkable paper on "Acoustics," which he read before the Dublin Philosophical Society in 1683, he suggested, *inter alia*, the term Microphone.

Dr. Narcissus Marsh

It must not be forgotten that the great composer, Scarlatti, was known as a harpist in his early years—that is to say, from 1673-83.

Alessandro Scarlatti

The ingenious device of a Tyrolese, at this epoch, was destined to revolutionise the art of harp-playing. This device consisted of little hooks, or crooks of metal, screwed into the neck of the harp, which, being turned down, produced the required semitones.

The Chromatic Harp

The disadvantage under which even the most accomplished player on the harp laboured, by reason of the diatonic nature of the instrument, suggested to a musical son of the Tyrol a plan whereby chromatic intervals could be played.

There were two notable defects in the "hook" system. The first was that one hand was temporarily lost to the performer when engaged in placing or releasing the crook. A second defect was owing to the fact that only one string (and not its octave) was affected by the mechanical arrangement. Still, the hooks paved the way for the pedal harp.

Defects of the "Hook" System

CHAPTER XIII.

TURLOGH O'CAROLAN.

Early years—Becomes a wandering minstrel—"Once I had a Sweetheart"—"The Arethusa"—Praised by Geminiani—Beethoven's tribute—"Carolan's Concerto"—His death—Adaptation of his tunes by Tom Moore—Some noted contemporary harpers—Irish harps.

TURLOGH O'CAROLAN occupies a very high place among Irish harpers, and his name has been immortalised by Goldsmith.

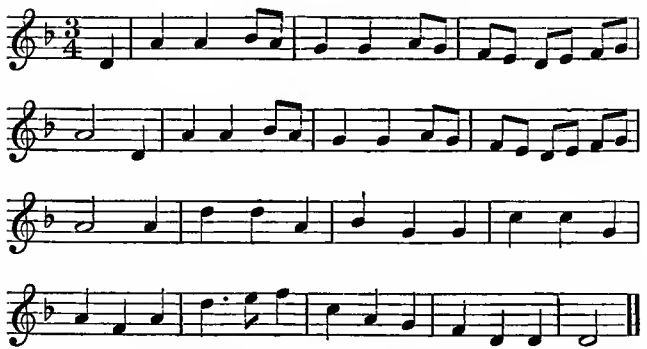
Born at Newtown, Co. Meath, in 1670, he became blind in his twenty-second year, and having displayed much proficiency on the harp, he was provided with a horse and an attendant by his patroness, Madame MacDermot of Alderford House, Co. Roscommon. Thus equipped, he began the rôle of professional harper in 1693, and made his début at the hospitable mansion of George Reynolds, Esq., of Letterfyan, where he composed the words and music of "The Fairy Queen." This was followed by "Planxty Reynolds" and "Grace Nugent."

Early Years

Becomes a Wandering Minstrel

From 1694 to 1737 O'Carolan frequented the houses of the nobles and county families, and composed over 200 airs, most of which were of a Pindaric nature, and addressed to his patrons. He was at the zenith of his fame in 1725, and in 1726 some of his airs were printed in Dublin. In Daniel Wright's *Arva di Camera,* published in London in 1727, there are several airs by O'Carolan, including "Grace Nugent" and "The Irish Tune." Two years later a lovely melody of his was included in Charles Coffey's *Beggars' Wedding*, adapted to a song entitled "Once I had a Sweetheart." We subjoin the melody:—[1]

"ONCE I HAD A SWEETHEART."



[1] Mr. Kidson imagined that this was an *English* tune, and he could find no earlier source than Wright's *Flute Tutor*, in 1735, apparently unaware that Charles Coffey had utilised it in Dublin in 1728.

O'Carolan's "Arethusa"

There is no need to print the harp-melody, composed by O'Carolan as "The Princess Royal," which was printed in 1727, and again in 1730 and 1735. It was so admired by Shield, the friend of John O'Keefe, that he re-christened it *The Arethusa,* and arranged it as one of the songs in his *Lock and Key* (1796). Hence it has come to be regarded as an *English* air, though Mr. Kidson points out properly that Shield never claimed it—which, of course, he could scarcely have done, seeing it was printed twenty-one years before he was born. Quite a dozen of O'Carolan's airs were introduced into the ballad operas and musical plays that were in vogue from 1728 to 1748.

"The Arethusa"

It is remarkable that O'Carolan was the first Irish composer to break away from the traditional tune-structure, and from 1725 to 1737 the influence of Corelli, Vivaldi, and Geminiani is very evident. Geminiani (who lived many years in Dublin, and died there, in 1762, whilst on a visit to Dubourg) pronounced O'Carolan as endowed with *il genio vero della musica.*

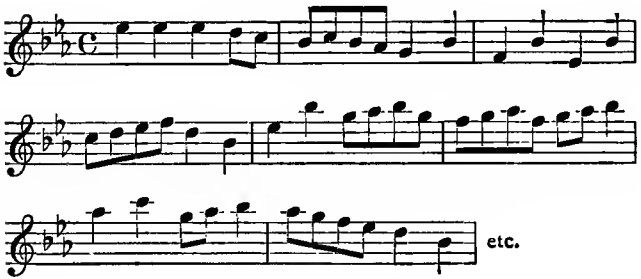
Praised by Geminiani

Beethoven, in a characteristic letter to Thomson, the Scottish publisher, says that had O'Carolan got a Continental musical training, he would have been the greatest ornament of the school of Irish music.

Beethoven's Tribute

As a specimen of his work when he came under the influence of the Italian masters, we give here eight bars of his favourite concerto:—

O'CAROLAN'S CONCERTO.



On one memorable occasion, on Christmas Eve of the year 1726, he led a band of harps at midnight Mass in the oratory of O'Conor at Belanagare, when the Mass was sung by Bishop O'Rourke, O.F.M. His "Resurrection" was composed for a Mass on Easter Sunday at Belanagare. Some of his airs appear in the early Methodist hymn-books.

But, though a master of all styles, he shone particularly as the writer and composer of bacchanalian songs. The best-known examples of this class are his "O'Rourke's Noble Feast" (English words by Dean Swift) and "Bumpers, Squire Jones." His "Ode to

FIG. 25.—ERECTED BY THE DESIRE OF SVDNEY LADY MORGAN TO THE MEMORY OF CAROLAN, THE LAST OF THE IRISH BARDS.

OBIIT

A.D. MDCCXXXVIII · AETATIS · SVAE · AN · LXVIII.

Whisky" and "Receipt for Drinking" are incomparable of their class.

O'Carolan died at the house of his old patroness, Madame MacDermot, at Alderford, near Boyle, Co. Roscommon, on March 25th, 1738, and was buried five days later at the east end of the old church of Kilronan, overlooking Lough Meelagh. He bequeathed his favourite harp to Madame MacDermot, and it is now (1905) in the possession of the O'Conor Don, P.C., at Clonalis, near Castlerea. Another of his harps was taken to London by his son, who, in 1747, published an indifferent volume of his father's compositions. Although no monument was erected over his remains, Lady Louisa Tenison got the cemetery enclosed, and had the following inscription engraved on the arch of the Irish-designed gateway:—"Within this churchyard lie the remains of Carolan, the last of the Irish bards, who departed this life March 25th, 1738. R.I.P." **His Death**

Lady Morgan presented a splendid bas-relief of O'Carolan to St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, which is placed in the north aisle, and which we have reproduced.

Many of O'Carolan's airs were adapted by Tom Moore for his *Irish Melodies*, *e.g.* "Planxty Peyton"

("The Young May Moon"), "Planxty Kelly" ("Fly not yet"), "Planxty Irwin" ("Oh! banquet not"), "Planxty Tyrrell" ("Oh! blame not the bard"), "Planxty Sudley" ("Oh! the sight entrancing"), and "Planxty O'Reilly" ("The Wandering Bard"), better known in Lover's setting as "Molly Carew."[1]

Adaptation of his Tunes by Tom Moore

Other famous Irish harpers, who were contemporaries of O'Carolan, are MacCabe, MacCuarta (Courtney), Lyons, Heffernan, and Murphy. Lyons was domestic harper to the Earl of Antrim, and composed some folk melodies, as well as variations for the harp. Heffernan resided in London from 1695 to 1725, and was in much request as a harpist. John Murphy travelled on the Continent from 1708 to 1719, and had the honour of playing for Louis XIV. At a special performance, at Smock Alley Theatre, Dublin, on February 14th, 1738, Murphy was one of the attractions as a harp-soloist. He played for some seasons at Mallow, and died after the year 1753.

Some Noted Contemporary Harpers

In addition to O'Carolan's harp, there are four other

[1] Several of O'Carolan's harp-melodies were utilised by Charles Wesley, in his *Collection of Hymns and Sacred Poems*, published in Dublin, in 1749, arranged by J. F. Lampe, then resident in the Irish metropolis.

Remarkable Harps

Irish harps of this epoch still preserved. These four instruments are respectively dated 1702, 1707, 1726, and 1734—viz., "Hempson's" harp, the "Castle Otway" harp, the "Hehir" harp, and the "Bunworth" harp.

Irish Harps

The "Hempson" harp was made by Cormac O'Kelly, of Ballynascreen (Draperstown), Co. Derry, as is evident from the inscription on it:—

> "In the time of Noah I was green;
> After his flood I have not been seen;
> Until seventeen hundred and two I was found
> By Cormac Kelly under ground;
> He raised me up to that degree,
> Queen of Music ye may call me."

The workmanship of the harp is not equal to the "Dalway" harp, and the instrument passed through many vicissitudes in Hempson's hands. On the next page is an illustration of it.

The "Castle Otway" harp was also made by Cormac O'Kelly, and is now at Castle Otway, Co. Tipperary. John Kelly made the "Hehir" harp in 1726. It had thirty-three strings, and was made of red sally, and is said to have been five feet high. Walker gives an illustration of it, drawn by William Ouseley (father of Sir Frederick Gore Ouseley, Bart., Mus. Doc.), the

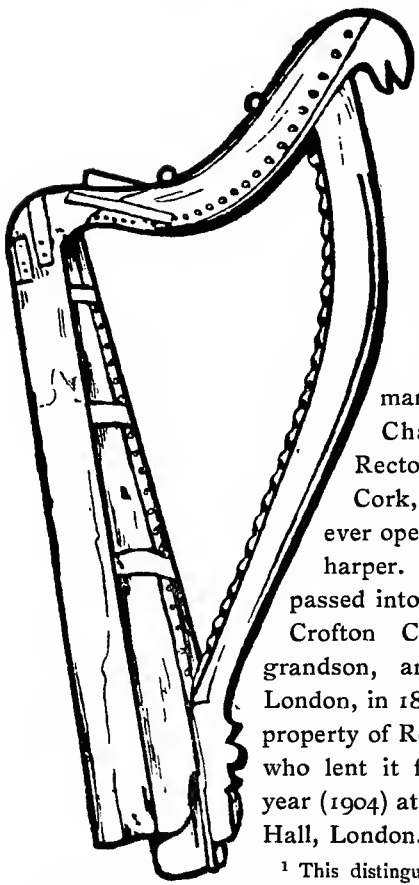


FIG. 26.—"HEMPSON" HARP.

original instrument being then (1786) the property of Jonathan Hehir.

A very fine harp is that known as the "Bunworth," made by John Kelly in 1734. It was expressly manufactured for Rev. Charles Bunworth, Rector of Buttevant, Co. Cork, whose house was ever open to the wandering harper. After his death, it passed into the possession of Crofton Croker, his great grandson, and was sold, in London, in 1854. It is now the property of Rev. F. W. Galpin,[1] who lent it for exhibition last year (1904) at the Fishmongers' Hall, London.

[1] This distinguished musical amateur also exhibited an Irish harp dated 1750.

CHAPTER XIV.

INVENTION OF THE PEDAL HARP.

Hochbrucker's device—Defect of the pedal—Improvements by th Cousineaus *père et fils*—The double-action harp—Meyer's improvements—Prince Oginski—His tribute to Irish harpers.

WE have seen, in a previous chapter, that the system of hooks or crooks, defective as it was, suggested further improvements in the mechanism of the harp. The most serious defect arose from the fact that, whenever a semitone had to be formed, the left hand was temporarily lost to the performer when engaged on turning the hooks. However, the first decade of the eighteenth century passed over without any change. At length, about the year 1720, it fell to the lot of Herr Hochbrucker, a native of Danauworth, in Bavaria, to invent the pedal harp.

Hochbrucker's Device

At once it was evident that this mechanical device was a vast improvement on the hooks. The pedal, acting mechanically through the pedestal of the harp, regulated the "stopping," each note being affected in all its octaves, and the player was enabled

to raise the pitch of each string a semitone, an advantage of the utmost importance, as the hands were given full play. By means of Hochbrucker's invention, it became possible to play in eight major scales and five minor scales complete, and the harp was tuned in the key of E flat.

However, there was one weak spot in the new invention—and that a very serious defect. This was the disarranging of the fingering, as well as an unpleasant jarring sound, whenever a string —acted on by the pedal—was removed by the crook from the plane of the open strings. The crooks, of course, were made to grip the strings by the pedal, thus obviating the necessity for using the left hand, as had previously been done.

Defect of the Pedal

Another fault was owing to the fact that the mechanism was adjusted to the wooden neck, which did not permit of a proper curvature.

At length, about the year 1752, two French harpers named Cousineau, father and son, improved on Hochbrucker's invention. The Cousineaus, dispensing with the old-fashioned crooks, devised a plan of passing each string between two small plates of metal (*béquilles*), placed under the bridge-pin. By the action of the pedal these metal plates were made to

Improvements by the Cousineaus, père et fils

grip the string, thus shortening it for the required interval. They also invented a slide, by means of which the bridge-pin could be raised or lowered, thus regulating the length of the string.

Finally, in 1780, the Cousineaus doubled the pedals, and the mechanism connected therewith, the pedals being arranged in two rows—thus originating the idea of the modern double-action harp. They also altered the tuning of the harp from E flat to C flat, and it became possible to play in fifteen keys, as previously only eight major scales could be compassed.

The Double-action Harp

It must be added that, in 1760, P. Meyer, of Strasburg, suggested some improvements in Hochbrucker's pedal harp. This occurred during his stay in Paris, and his suggestions were adopted by Naderman *père*.

Meyer's Improvements

But so little was really thought of Hochbrucker's and Cousineau's improvements as far as Great Britain and Ireland were concerned, that we find Burney writing as follows :—"The pedal harp is a modern improvement of the Continent by Simon, a man who resided about sixty years ago at Brussels. It contains thirty-three strings, and the natural notes are in the diatoned scale; the rest are made by the feet; its compass is from double B flat to F in alto."

Prince Oginski

Prince Michael Casimir Oginski, about the year 1762, is said to have added pedals to the harp, anticipating the improvements subsequently effected by Cousineau. He was a very distinguished amateur musician, and kept an orchestra of his own at Slonim, in Lithuania. In 1764 he resided for a time in St. Petersburg, where he astonished all by his performances on the clarinet. He wrote the article *Harpe* in the first French Encyclopædia, and thus eulogises the Irish harpers: "Les Irlandais sont entre tous les peuples ceux qui passent pour jouer *le mieux* de cet instrument." His death took place at Warsaw, in 1803.

Tribute to Irish Harpers

CHAPTER XV

THE HARP AS AN ORCHESTRAL INSTRUMENT.

Handel scores for the harp—Florian Gassman—J. B. Krumpholz—Louis Adam—Mozart—Dussek—P. Meyer—Daniel Steibelt.

ALL along through the ages the harp has been associated with the human voice as an accompaniment, but it was not until the year 1719 that it began to be seriously considered in the light of an orchestral instrument. Of course, as has been mentioned in a previous chapter, Monteverde, in his *Orfeo*, produced in 1608, employed a double harp, whilst the Portuguese Band that came with Catherine of Braganza to London, in 1662, consisted of pipes and harps.

Early in the eighteenth century, we read of the harp being employed as a chamber instrument, as distinct from an accompaniment to the voice. Such a thing as an independent part for the harp was as yet undreamed of, as the instrument merely played in unison with the singer, just as in the case of the violin. Imperfect as was the invention of hooks or crooks, it certainly opened

up immense possibilities for the harp, and so, from the year 1701 attempts were made by various composers to elevate this instrument to the dignity of an honoured place in the orchestra.

Handel Scores for the Harp

Among the great masters of the first half of the eighteenth century, Handel deserves the gratitude of all harpists for the introduction of the harp into his orchestra scores. In his great oratorio of *Esther,* produced at Canons for the Duke of Chandos, in 1720, and performed in public, with stage accessories, at the Haymarket, on May 2nd, 1732, Handel employs the harp with much effect. A glance at the score reveals the fact that the composer uses the harp in combination with the theorbo-lute, as an accompaniment to the song: "Breathe soft, ye winds."

Florian Gassman

Passing over some minor composers who scored for the harp towards the middle of the eighteenth century, Florian Leopold Gassman (born in 1723), chapel-master at Vienna, must not be forgotten. Gassman was a good harpist, and composed some works of more than average merit for his instrument. Becoming proficient on the pedal harp, he wrote some music for it (and also four instrumental quartets) in which the harp passages are skilfully treated. He is best known as the teacher of Salieri, and died at Vienna in 1774.

Krumpholz

J. B. Krumpholz, of Prague, the friend of Haydn and Beethoven, was not only a remarkable Hungarian harpist, but was also a harp-maker and composer for his instrument. His improvements in the harp were very considerable, and, in 1785, he designed a harp for Naderman the elder, at Paris. His efforts to improve the harp culminated in a new form of instrument with swell pedal, which was approved of by the Académie, in 1787. He taught at Paris from 1769 to 1773, and was in much request as a teacher. His death occurred in 1790, the unfortunate man having drowned himself in the Seine, driven to madness by the infidelity of his wife.

Johann Baptist Krumpholz

However, it is as a writer for his instrument that we wish to arrest the reader's attention. Gerber gives a long list of his compositions, some of which are still occasionally heard. They comprise six grand concertos, thirty-two sonatas with violin accompaniment, duets for two harps, a quartet for harp and strings, and symphonies for harp and small orchestra—also harp variations on an andante by Haydn.

Louis Adam (born in Alsace, December 3rd, 1758) electrified Paris in 1776 by his two symphonies—concertantes for the harp, piano, and violin—the first of their kind that had appeared. These compositions were given at the Con-

Louis Adam

certs Spirituels, and were marvellous for a boy of seventeen. Adam may be said to have given the harp an assured place in the orchestra by these two symphonies. After many years of teaching and composing, he was appointed professor at the Conservatoire, in 1797; and he was also a most successful teacher of the piano.

His pupils included Kalkbrenner, De la Moine, Herold *père et fils,* Chaulien, etc.; and in 1802 he published an excellent *Méthode Nouvelle pour le Piano.* After forty-six years as professor, he retired in 1843, and died in Paris, on April 11th, 1848, leaving a son, Adolphe Charles (1803-56), who was even more famous—best remembered as the composer of the rollicking opera *Le Postillon de Longjumeau.*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

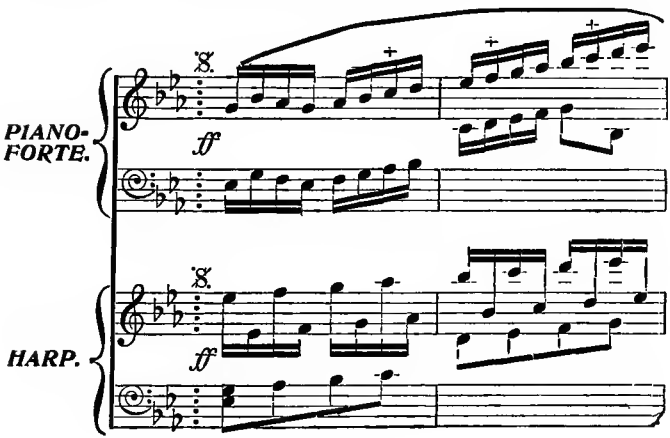
The great Mozart recognised the value of the harp as a factor in the orchestra. In May 1778 he composed a Concerto for Flute and Harp, specially written for the Duc de Guisnes and his daughter, the former being "a respectable player on the flute," as Mozart himself wrote, and his daughter a splendid harpist. This Concerto is only of moderate difficulty, but is sparkling, and might well be revived by some of our musical societies.

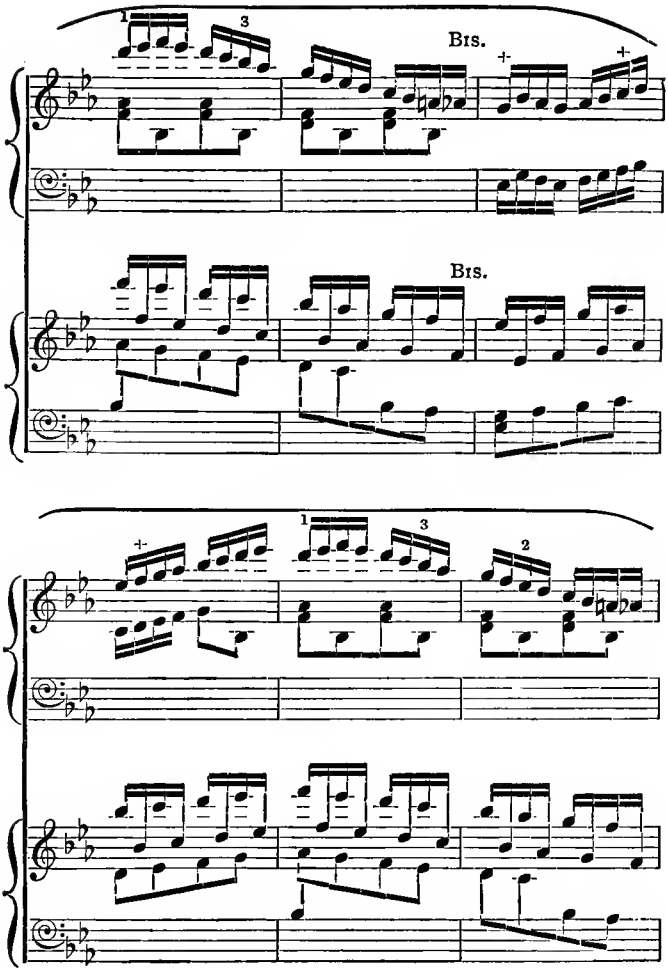
Dussek's compositions for the harp derive an added interest from the fact that he played the harp very well.

Curiously enough, he scored for the Harmonica (a form of musical glasses invented by an Irishman, Richard Pockrich), as did also Mozart. However, unlike Mozart, he loved the harp, and taught it to his wife, Sophia Corri. He came to London in 1790, and settled down as a teacher and composer.

J. L. Dussek

Among his many compositions for the harp are numerous sonatas and sonatinas, many of them being set with violin and violoncello accompaniment. He also wrote several harp duets as well as duets for harp and pianoforte. By way of illustration, the following extract from his "Grand Concerto for the Pedal Harp," op. 30, will be of interest:—

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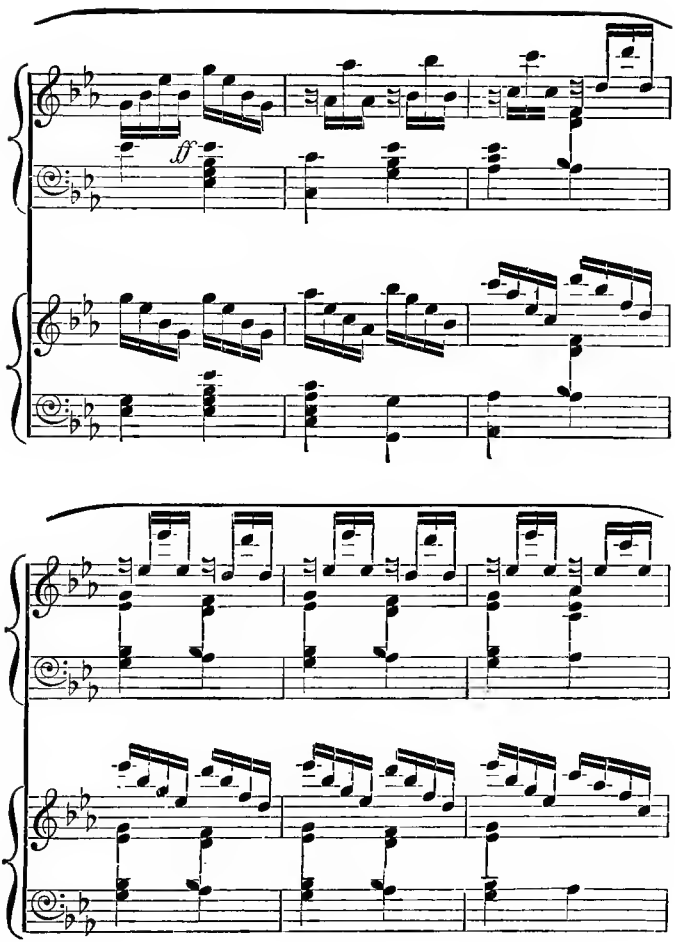
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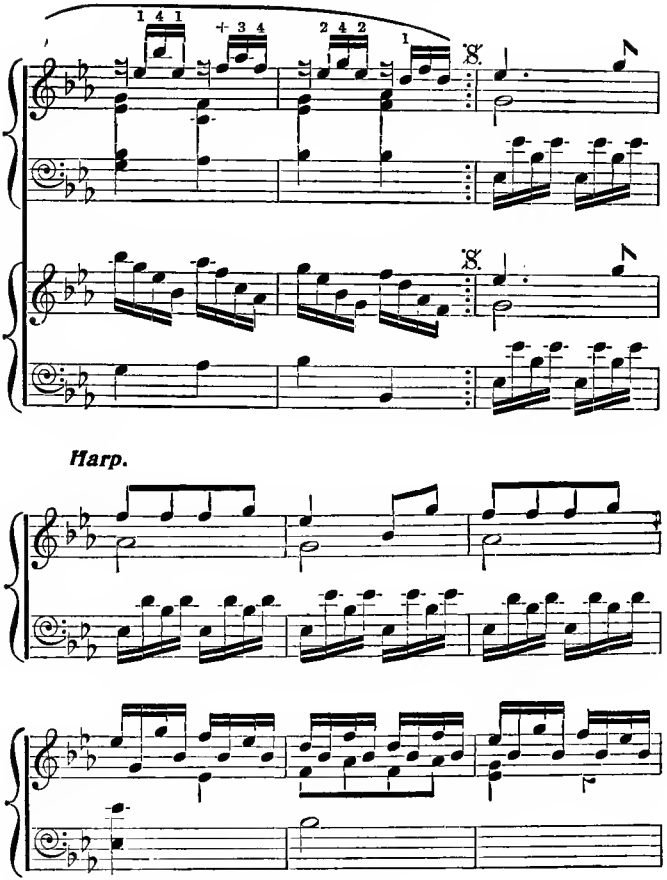

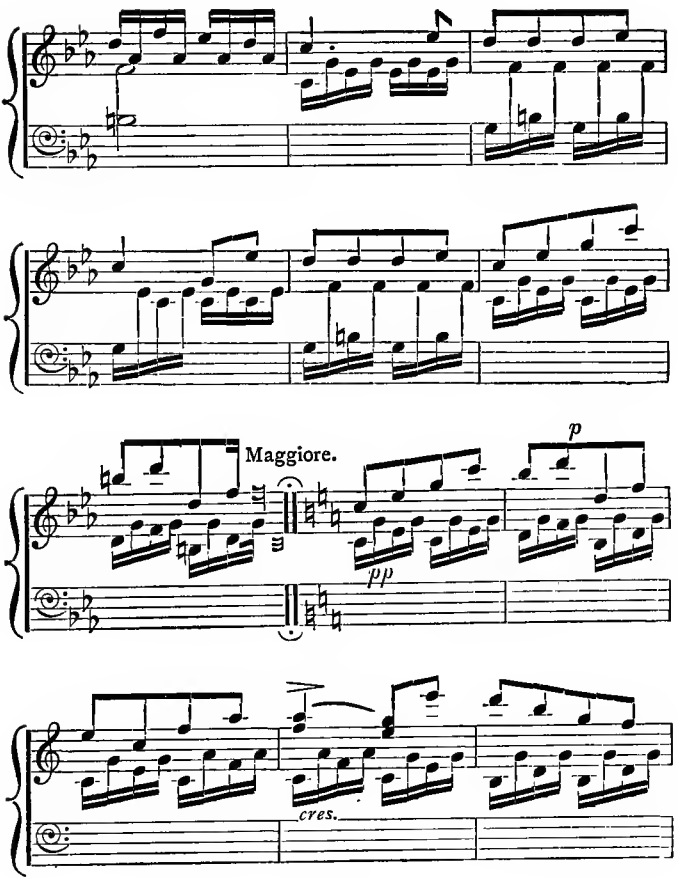
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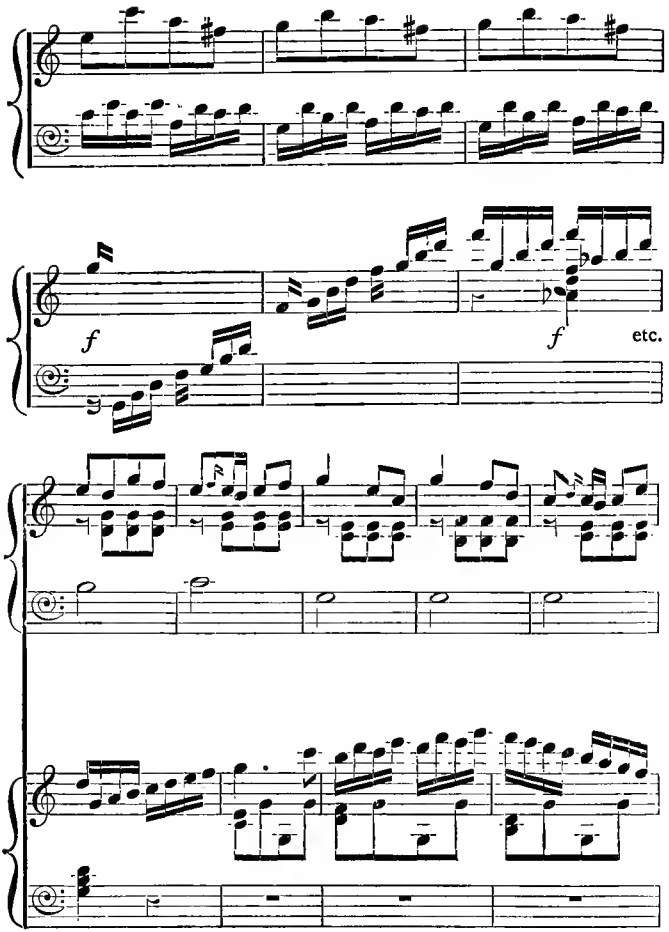

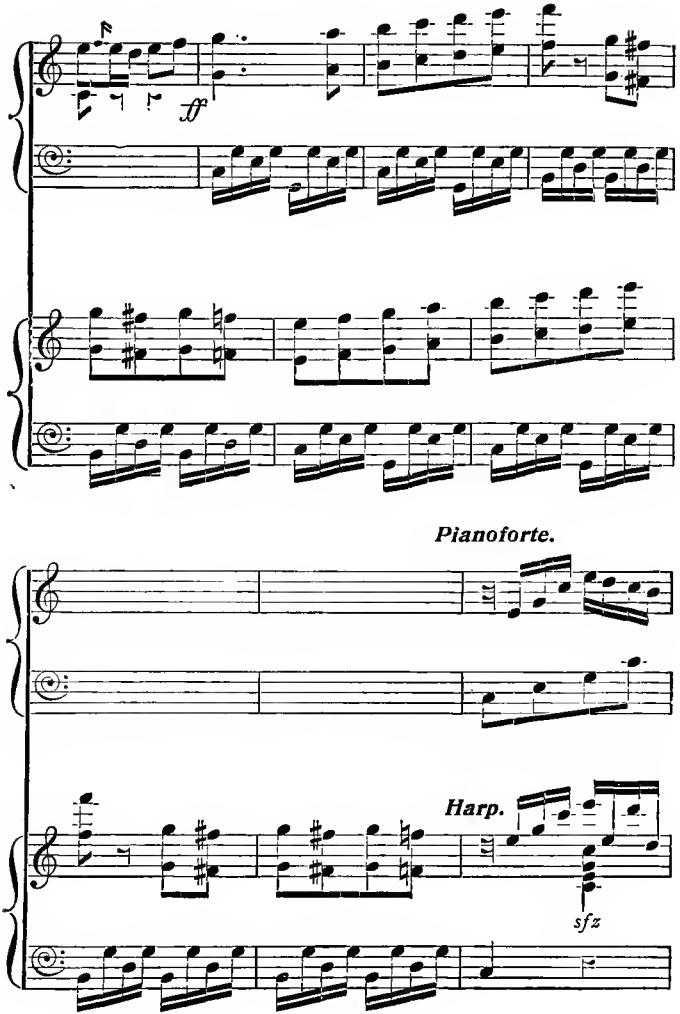
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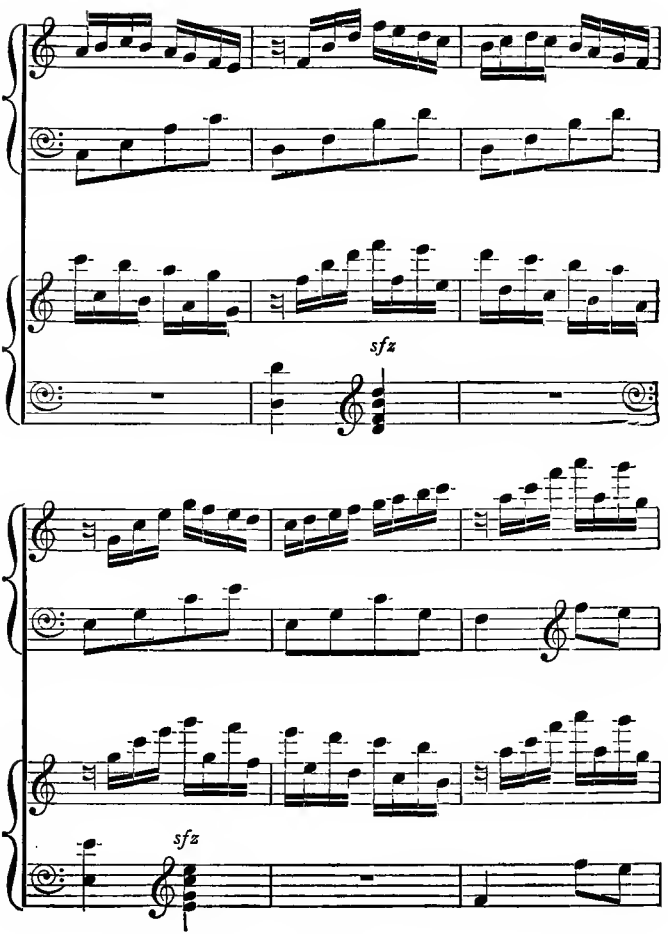
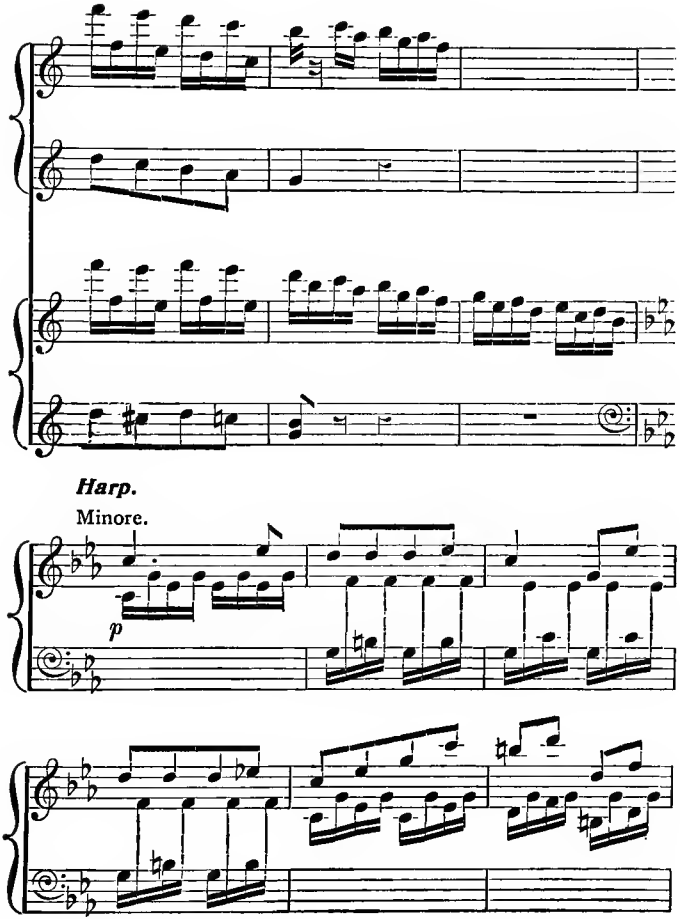
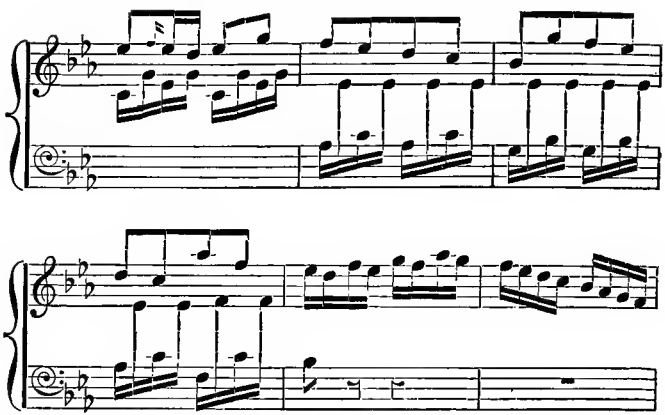
Story of the Harp




Harp.
Minore.
p



Although P. Meyer of Strasburg (born in 1737) is principally remembered for his improvements in the harp, as previously alluded to, he also composed for the instrument. From his close study of the capabilities of the pedal harp, he was able to further its development by some clever compositions. He was one of the earliest to publish the first principles of the instrument, in his *Méthode de la Harpe,* a work which held its ground for over half a century—based as it was on scientific rules. His sonatas for the harp are of more than average merit, whilst his concertos are also well written. He was the first to write fugues for the harp—anticipating De Marin.

P. Meyer

P. Meyer

Urged by some English acquaintances in Paris to visit London, he came over to England in 1771, and was in such demand as a teacher of the pedal harp—an instrument not long introduced to London society—that he settled down there for five years. Owing to the American War he returned to Paris, but found himself eclipsed by Krumpholz. He then turned his attention to composing operas, but with indifferent success, and he returned to London in 1784. Having given up the rôle of virtuoso on the harp, he established a good teaching connection, and died in London in 1819, aged eighty-two. His two sons, Philippe and Frederick, were also skilled performers on the harp, and composed much ephemeral music for that instrument.

Stay in London

Steibelt composed some acceptable sonatas and duos for the harp, and a Turkish rondo for harp, with violin and tambourine *ad lib.* He was in London from December 1796 to 1799, and died at St. Petersburg, in September 1823. His Grand Concerto for the Harp, with orchestral accompaniment, was once very popular.

Daniel Steibelt

Nägeli (1768-1836) arranged many of his popular songs for harp and harpsichord—including the well-known "Life let us cherish," published at Zurich in 1794.

Johann Georg Nägeli

CHAPTER XVI.

IRISH HARPERS OF THE MID-EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

Maguire the harper—Hugh Kelly—Jerome Duigenan—Dominick Mongan—Denis O'Hampsey—The Jacobite period.

SOME years before the death of O'Carolan, bardic conventions were held, due to the patriotic zeal of the Rev. Charles Bunworth, previously alluded to. Though partaking more of the nature of a literary than a musical assembly, these "bardic sessions" were attended by a number of harpers. Meetings were held at Charleville, Co. Cork, at the house of John *claragh* MacDonnell, the Irish poet, but the principal place of meeting was at Bruree, Co. Limerick. These conventions of bardic minstrelsy served to keep alive the language and music of ancient Ireland.

Maguire the Harper

Early in the eighteenth century, an Irish harper named Maguire, of Co. Fermanagh, settled in London, and, like his contemporary Heffernan, kept a tavern. From 1725 to 1756 Maguire's tavern was most popular, and was the

rendezvous of many of the Ministry, including the Duke of Newcastle. Finding himself neglected in 1756, owing to his patriotic views, he died broken-hearted a short time afterwards. A brother-harper had the following distich engraven on Maguire's harp:

"Cur Lyra funestas edit percussa sonores?
Sicut omissun sors Diadema gemit!"

About the same time, or a little later, flourished Hugh Kelly, a yeoman-harper, who, though blind, was a splendid player. Being related to Count Taaffe, he was treated more as a friend and companion than as a professional visitor by the nobility of Connacht. Among his many pupils, Arthur O'Neill may be numbered. He died of fever, whilst still in the prime of life, and, at his own request, was buried in the tomb of O'Carolan.

Hugh Kelly

Jerome Duigenan, born in 1715, was a native of Leitrim, and was not only an accomplished performer on the harp, but also a good classical scholar. His patron, Colonel Jones, M.P., in 1740, backed him for a trial of skill against a Welsh harper on their respective instruments. This harp contest came off on the floor of the Irish House of Commons, in Dublin, and the decision was

Jerome Duigenan

unanimously given in favour of Duigenan, who accordingly was handed over the stakes. He died in 1775.

Dominick Mongan

Dominick Mongan, like Hugh O'Neill, was a "gentleman harper," and was blind from his infancy. Born in County Tyrone in 1715, he was not only an able performer on the harp, but an all-round musician, being thoroughly conversant with the works of Corelli, Handel, Geminiani, and other masters. Some of his melodies are sung to the present day. His son, Charles Mongan, became Protestant Dean of Clonmacnoise, and subsequently Bishop of Limerick, but changed his name to Warburton.

Denis O'Hampsey

More remarkable than any of these was Denis O'Hampsey, who lived to be an ultra-centenarian. Born near Garvagh, Co. Derry, in 1697, he studied the harp under Bridget O'Cahan, John C. Garragher, Loughlin Fanning, and Patrick O'Connor. During ten years, commencing in 1715 (when he was presented with a valuable harp, made by Cormac O'Kelly in 1702), O'Hampsey travelled through Ireland and Scotland. In 1745 he made a second journey to Scotland, and played at Edinburgh for Prince Charlie. During his many years' residence in that country, he popularised many *Irish* airs, which were subsequently claimed as *Scotch*, notably "Robin Adair." He played at the Belfast Harp Festival in

Denis O'Hampsey

FIG. 27.—DENIS O'HAMPSEY (1697-1807), THE LAST JACOBITE HARPER.

1792, and Bunting tells us that the aged minstrel plucked the strings of his harp in the old style, with long nails, and that his rapid execution was unapproached. He died in 1807, aged 110. The foregoing illustration is that of his "travelling" harp, as O'Hampsey reserved his O'Kelly harp for special occasions. It is copied from the engraving which appears as the frontispiece of Bunting's second volume, published in 1809.

Charles Byrne and Daniel Black were also famous harpers in 1750, and both appeared at the Belfast Harp Meeting in 1792. Patrick Quin was of a slightly later date, and his favourite harp—known as the "Castle Otway" harp—is still preserved.

The Jacobite Period

As was to be expected, the Jacobite period furnished hundreds of harp tunes, set to songs in praise of the Old and the Young Pretenders. "The Blackbird" is still very popular, the name symbolising James III., and so are "Roisin dubh," "Graine Maol," "Caitilin ni hual-lachain," "Druimfhionn donn dilis." Of the seven men of Moidart, four of the seven were Irish. It was only in 1765, when James Charles died in Rome, that the Stuart cause was regarded as hopeless, and the end came in January 1788, with the death of Prince Charlie.

CHAPTER XVII.

SOME OLD-TIME VIRTUOSI.

Madame Krumpholz—Louis Cardon—De Marin—Madame Dussek—Moralt—Guillaume Gatayes—Naderman *fils*—Thomas Billington—Jean Elouis—Minor artists.

MADAME KRUMPHOLZ, wife of Johann Baptist Krumpholz, was a most distinguished harpist, even excelling her husband. Born at Metz, about the year 1755, she became a pupil of her future husband, whom she married in 1780. However, in 1788, she eloped with another man to London, where she made her début, at Hanover Square Rooms, on June 2nd, 1788, afterwards appearing at various concerts, including Haydn's benefit, and at Drury Lane. Her execution on the harp was surprising, and it is said that "she made the instrument sound almost like an Æolian harp." From 1790 to 1800 she was in much request at concerts, and often performed with Dussek his beautiful *duos concertantes* for harp and pianoforte. She retired in 1803.

Madame Krumpholz

Louis Cardon, born at Paris in 1747, was an esteemed

harpist, and published a method for the harp in 1785. He settled down to teaching in 1786, but, on the outbreak of the French Revolution, fled to Russia. His *Art de jouer la Harpe* appeared in 1805, and he died the following year.

Louis Cardon

Marie Martin Martel, Viscomte de Marin, born at St. Jean de Luz, near Bayonne, in 1768, studied music under his father, and had violin lessons from Nardini. His harp-master was Hochbrucker, but he very soon surpassed that ingenious harpist. At Rome, in 1783, he astonished all by his fugue extempore playing, and by performing Bach's and Jommelli's fugues at first sight on the harp. Although he entered the army in 1784, he quitted it two years later as captain of dragoons. In London, for many seasons between the years 1790 and 1805, his harp performances were much esteemed, and Clementi arranged some of his solos for the pianoforte.

De Marin

Madame Dussek (Sophia Corri) was born at Edinburgh, in 1775, and made her début as a vocalist in London in 1788. In 1792, she married J. L. Dussek, who taught her the harp and piano. From 1795 to 1800 she performed with her husband at the principal music meetings. After her husband's death, in 1812, she took unto herself a second husband, John Alvis Moralt, and devoted herself

Madame Dussek

mainly to teaching, appearing occasionally as a harpist. Madame Dussek-Moralt composed some agreeable pieces for the harp, which at one time had a certain vogue. One of her best-known pupils was her daughter, Olivia Dussek (born in London, in 1797), who was alike a good executant on pianoforte and harp—making her first appearance at the Argyle Rooms in 1809, at the age of twelve. She also wrote a few pieces for harp and piano, as well as some songs. After her marriage to Mr. Buckley, she was appointed organist of Kensington Parish Church, and died in 1847.

Guillaume Gatayes

Guillaume Pierre Antoine Gatayes was born at Paris, in 1774, and was a distinguished harpist as well as composer. His playing was of a high order of merit, and his harp studies and fantasies (1799-1826) were once popular. He died at Paris in 1846.

F. J. Naderman, Fils

Hereditary genius was manifest in the case of Naderman *fils*, who was born at Paris, in 1780. Like his father, he early evinced an interest in the harp, and in time became a skilled harpist. He composed numerous concertos, duos, and fantasies for the harp, including a very popular Trio for three harps, or two harps and piano, op. 57. His younger brother, Henri, was also a harpist, and composed some

music for his instrument. F. J. Naderman *fils* died in 1835.

Thomas Billington

Among English harpists of this epoch, Thomas Billington held a high place. Born at Exeter, in 1754, he studied the harp and piano with such success that in 1780 he entered on the musical profession in London. As early as 1778 he published some pieces for the harp and piano, but was seen to better advantage in his songs and ballads. He died at Tunis, in 1832.

Jean Elouis

Jean Elouis was much in evidence as a virtuoso on the harp between the years 1790-1812. He belonged to the French school, and published many pieces for his instrument. In 1808 he came to London, and toured a great deal in the provinces, exhibiting the powers of Erard's grand double-action harp. One of his pupils was Henri Horn, who accompanied him to Scotland and Ireland. On June 29th, 1810, Elouis scored a great success in Dublin, being assisted by Paul Alday, Dr. Cogan, Spray, Logier, and Willman. He settled as harp teacher in Edinburgh.

Minor Artists

Kirchoff enjoyed much popularity at this epoch in Denmark and Russia. Other artists were Petouart, David, Budd, Vernier, Ragan, Steil, Seybold, Labarre, the Misses Ashe, and the Misses Sharp.

CHAPTER XVIII.

WELSH HARPERS OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

David Owen (Davydd y Gareg-wen)—John Parry of Ruabon—Evans the harper—Edward Jones of Llanderfel—Thomas Jones—John Randles—Revival of the Eisteddfod—Richard Roberts—John Parry of Denbigh.

David Owen

WELSH writers tell of the fame of David Owen (Davydd y Gareg-wen), who was highly esteemed as a harper and composer in the years 1720-52. The popular air "The Rising of the Lark" is attributed to him.

John Parry of Ruabon

Among the Welsh harpers of the mid-eighteenth century, John Parry of Ruabon was a typical specimen of the old school. He was bard to Sir Watkin W. Wynne, of Wynnstay, and in addition to being an excellent performer, was a composer and a collector of old airs. It is said that Handel admired his playing very much, and that his appearance in London suggested to Gray the finale of his poem "The Bard."

Parry's local fame was very great, and he roamed about a good deal in search of old Welsh airs. His first publication was entitled, *Ancient British Music*, which appeared in 1741. He subsequently issued some music for the harpsichord. However, his best-known work is *British Harmony: being a Collection of Antient Welsh Airs,* published in 1781. He died at Ruabon, October 7th, 1782.

Evans the Harper

A contemporary of Parry's was Evans the harper, as he was generally known. It is worthy of note that Nancy Storace's first appearance was at a concert given by Evans, at the Haymarket Theatre, on April 15th, 1774, she being then but eight years of age.

Edward Jones of Llanderfel

Edward Jones was even more celebrated than Parry or Evans. He was of a bardic family, and was born at Llanderfel, Merionethshire, on Easter Sunday of the year 1752. Having studied the harp under his father, he came to London in 1775, and was appointed chief bard to the Prince of Wales in 1783. His performance on the Welsh harp was in the traditional style, and, like Parry, he determined to rescue from oblivion many of the folk-melodies of Wales. Accordingly, his *Musical and Poetical Relics of the Welsh Bards* was published in two parts in 1784 and 1789, of which improved versions

appeared in 1794; and in 1802 a new edition was published, under the title of *The Bardic Museum*. His *Musical Trifles*, for the harp, attained considerable popularity; and he also published a collection of Cheshire melodies in 1803. His death occurred at London on April 18th, 1824.

Another harper of the Jones family—Thomas Jones, was a harpist and composer. He was generally known as "Jones of Gaddesdon," and, in 1788, published *Ten New Country Dances for the Harp*, followed by other ephemeral pieces for the Welsh harp at intervals between the years 1790 and 1802.

Thomas Jones

John Randles, the blind harper and organist, was born in 1760, and studied under John Parry of Ruabon. His fame was very great throughout North Wales, and he is mentioned in Miss Seward's poem of "Llangollen Vale." He is best remembered, however, as the father of Elizabeth Randles, the "Cambrian Prodigy," who performed a duet with her father at the age of four, before King George III. Between the years 1805 and 1808, Randles and his daughter and John Parry made a tour of the provinces. He died in the autumn of 1823, and his daughter survived him only a few years.

John Randles

Meantime, a movement had been initiated to foster

the language and music of Wales. This was the Gwyneddigion, a society founded in London, in 1771, which promoted, or rather revived, the ancient Eisteddfod. This was inaugurated at Corwen, in 1789; followed by another Eisteddfod at St. Asaph, in 1790; and at Caerwys, in 1798. At length, through the efforts of the Cambrian Society, an epoch-making Eisteddfod was held at Carmarthen, under the presidency of the Bishop of St. David's in 1819. In the following year, on September 13th and 14th, an equally successful Eisteddfod took place at Wrexham, when Richard Roberts, of Carnarvon, who was both blind and lame, won the silver harp. This Roberts, popularly known as the "blind minstrel of Carnarvon," was an excellent performer on the harp, and made many profitable concert tours. He resided for a time in Dublin, where he published, in 1829, a work entitled *Cambrian Harmony*, a collection of Welsh airs. In 1832 he played the harp for the late Queen (then Princess) Victoria, at Beaumaris; and he died in June 1855.

Revival of the Eisteddfod

Richard Roberts

John Parry of Denbigh, "Bardd Alaw," was born at Denbigh, February 18th, 1776, and was bandmaster of the Denbigh Militia from 1797-1807. He published sonatas for the harp, as well as *An Account of the Rise and Progress of the*

John Parry of Denbigh

Harp, and a collection of Welsh airs for the harp; and was alike a master of the harp, violin, piano, clarinet, and double flageolet. In 1820 he conducted the Eisteddfod held at Wrexham; and in 1821 at a Gorsedd, he was given the degree of *Bardd Alaw*, or Master of Melody. At Brecon, in 1822, he was responsible for the musical arrangements, and the Cambrian Society accorded him a benefit concert at Freemasons' Hall, London, on May 14th, 1826. He conducted the Eisteddfod held at Denbigh in 1828, at which the Duke of Sussex was present; and, in 1831, was appointed Treasurer of the Royal Society of Musicians. At his farewell concert, given in June 1837, he sang his own song, "Jenny Jones" (introduced to the public a year previously by Charles Mathews), accompanied on the harp by his son, John Orlando Parry. His *Welsh Harper* was issued in two volumes (1839-48), being a revised and enlarged edition of Jones's *Relics*. Parry died April 8th, 1851.

Since the year 1858 the Eisteddfodau are an annual institution in Wales, and admirably serve to keep alive Welsh music, although their distinctive *national* character has for some years past been more or less obsessed by the commercial spirit pervading the choral competitions, and by the selection of works that cannot be classed as Welsh.

CHAPTER XIX.

REVIVAL OF THE IRISH HARP.

The Granard Festivals—The Belfast Harp Meeting—Edward Bunting—Arthur O'Neill—The Belfast Harp Society—The Dublin Harp Society—Revival of the Belfast Harp Society—The Irish Harp as a fashion—The Drogheda Harp Society—The modern Irish Harp—Method of tuning.

BETWEEN the years 1750 and 1780 the Irish harp, owing to causes which it is unnecessary to mention, was becoming moribund. At length, through the generosity of an Irish exile at Copenhagen, James Dungan, a harp festival was organised at Granard, Co. Longford, in 1781. Seven harpers competed, including a lady, Rose Mooney. At the second Granard Festival, on March 2nd, 1782, nine candidates presented themselves—that is to say, the seven of the previous year, and two others, Catherine Martin and Edward McDermot Roe. Eleven harpers performed at the third meeting, in 1783, at

The Granard Festivals

which Dungan himself was present, and a similar number competed in 1784.

The fifth and last Granard Festival came off in August, 1785, attended by upwards of a thousand persons. Premiums of seven, five, three, and two guineas were offered. Arthur O'Neill, in his account of these harp meetings, adds:—"In consequence of the harpers who obtained no premiums having been neglected on the former occasions, I hinted a subscription, which was well received and performed [*sic*]; and, indeed, on distributing the collection, their proportions exceeded our premiums."

Six years later, the great Belfast Harp Meeting was held in the Old Exchange, on July 11th, 12th, 13th, and 14th, 1792. Ten harpers competed—namely, Denis Hampson, Arthur O'Neill, Charles Fanning, Daniel Black, Charles Byrne, Hugh Higgins, Patrick Quin, William Carr, Rose Mooney, and James Duncan. The first prize (ten guineas) was awarded to Charles Fanning, for his playing of *Au Cuilfhionn* (The Coolin); whilst Arthur O'Neill got second prize (eight guineas), for "The Green Woods of Truagh" and "Madame Crofton."

The Belfast Harp Meeting

In all, some forty tunes (thirty of which were the compositions of O'Carolan) were played by the ten

harpers during the four days' festival, and Edward Bunting, assistant organist to William Ware, of St. Anne's Church, Belfast, was commissioned to note down the airs. This was the origin of Bunting's first volume of ancient Irish music, published in 1796, towards the publication of which the Belfast Library (still flourishing) contributed a sum of £50.

Edward Bunting

Arthur O'Neill deserves more than a passing notice as the last of the old school of Irish harp-players. Born near Dungannon, Co. Tyrone, in 1726, he was blind from the age of eight, and was, in 1742, placed under the tuition of Owen Keenan, and, subsequently, of Hugh O'Neill, with a view of becoming a professional harper. Early in 1750 he began his career as a wandering minstrel, and during ten years made a circuit of Ireland, visiting the chief families in each county. As an incident of his visit to the hospitable mansion of Mr. James Irwin, of Streamstown, in 1759, he thus writes in his *Memoirs*:—

Arthur O'Neill

"This gentleman [Mr. Irwin] had an ample fortune, and was passionately fond of music. He had four sons and three daughters, who were all proficients; no instrument was unknown to them. There was at one time a meeting in his house of forty-six musicians, who played in the following order:—The three Miss Irwins

FIG. 28.—ARTHUR O'NEILL, FIRST MASTER OF THE BELFAST HARP SOCIETY.

at the piano [harpsichord]; myself at harp; six gentlemen, flutes; two gentlemen, violoncellos; ten common pipers; twenty gentlemen, fiddlers; four gentlemen, clarionets."

O'Neill played on the "O'Brien" harp in Limerick in 1760. He ceased his wanderings in 1778, and became harp teacher to the family of Dr. James M'Donnell, in Belfast. His ancestral home at Glenarb, near Caledon, was burned during the troubles of '98, and he resumed his avocation of minstrel. From 1808 to 1813 he was teacher of the harp to the Belfast Harp Society, and he died at Maydown, Co. Armagh, on October 29th, 1816, aged ninety years. His harp is now in the museum of the Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society.

The accompanying illustration is a reproduction of that by Thomas Smyth of Belfast, similar to that which was specially drawn for Bunting's second volume (1809).

The Belfast Harp Society

On March 17th (St. Patrick's Day), 1808, the Belfast Harp Society was formally inaugurated at Linn's Hotel, Castle Street, the subscribers cherishing the idea that such an institution would perpetuate the old school of harpers so praised in the twelfth century by Cambrensis. The original subscribers numbered 191, and the total annual subscriptions amounted to £300. Arthur O'Neill was

appointed first teacher, and the classes opened with eight boy-pupils and a girl. Harps were supplied by White, M'Clenaghan, and M'Cabe, of Belfast, at a cost of ten guineas each. All went well for three years, but in 1812 the society was in difficulties, and in 1813 it collapsed, having expended during the six years of its existence about £955.

The Dublin Harp Society

In Dublin, a revival of the Irish harp began in 1803, in which year John Egan started a harp factory. In 1805 Lady Morgan[1] purchased an Irish harp, and this set the fashion in Dublin, which extended to Dublin Castle and Viceregal circles. In fact, from 1805 to 1845, the pianoforte was temporarily obscured by the Irish harp, and many of Eblana's fair daughters affected a weakness for Erin's national instrument. The Dublin Harp Society—due to the exertions of the unfortunate John Bernard Trotter, ex-secretary to Charles James Fox—was inaugurated on July 13th, 1809, and Patrick Quin, the famous blind harper of Portadown, was appointed teacher. The list of subscribers included "noblemen, gentlemen, and professors," and the names of Sir Walter Scott, Sir Henry Wilkinson, Tom Moore, Joseph

[1] Lady Morgan published a small volume of old Irish airs in 1806, and in 1808 appeared the first two numbers of Moore's immortal *Irish Melodies*.

Patrick Quin

FIG. 29.—PATRICK QUIN (1745-1812), HARPER TO THE IRISH HARP SOCIETY.

Cooper Walker, and other literary personages appear as generous donors. Trotter himself subsidised the society to the extent of £200, and the Bishop of Kildare gave his house at Glasnevin for an academy. The only tangible work accomplished by this society was the giving of a Carolan Commemoration at the Private Theatre, Fishamble Street, on September 20th, 1809, which was repeated on the 27th of the same month. These performances realised £215, and Sir John Stevenson, Logier, Willman, Dr. Spray, Tom Cooke, Miss Cheese, and Dr. Weyman assisted, with harp solos by Patrick Quin.

The Rules and Regulations of the Dublin Harp Society were printed in 1810, at which date Patrick Quin had four blind boys under instruction. Alas! the society became defunct in 1812, and poor Trotter died a pauper, in Cork, in 1818.

The Belfast Harp Society was re-established in 1819, as the result of a meeting held to administer a fund of £1200, forwarded by some Irish exiles in India, "to revive the harp and ancient music of Ireland." Classes were again started, and a small number of harps was procured, the pupils being selected from "the blind and the helpless."

Revival of the Belfast Harp Society

This benevolent scheme lingered on for almost twenty

years, regarding which Petrie writes as follows:—"The effort of the people of the North to perpetuate the existence of the harp in Ireland, by trying to give a harper's skill to a number of poor blind boys, was at once a benevolent and a patriotic one; but it was a delusion. The harp at the time was virtually dead, and such effort could give it for a while only a sort of galvanised vitality. The selection of blind boys, without any greater regard for their musical capacities than the possession of the organ of hearing, for a calling which doomed them to a wandering life, was not a well-considered benevolence, and should never have had any fair hope of success."[1]

The Irish Harp as a Fashion

In 1809 Irish harps were purchased by many titled dames in Ireland, and the fashion survived till 1835. John Egan's harps were in much request, as is evident from the following extract of a letter written by the Marchioness of Abercorn to Lady Morgan:—"Your harp is arrived, and, for the honour of Ireland, I must tell you, it is very much admired and quite beautiful. Lady Aberdeen played on it for an hour, and thought it very good, almost as good as a French harp. . . . Pray tell poor Egan I shall show it off to the best advantage, and I sincerely hope he will have many orders in consequence."

[1] O'Curry's *Manners and Customs*, vol. iii. p. 298.

In 1822 Charles Egan published a *Harp Primer*, which was reprinted in 1829; and he also issued, in 1827, the *Royal Harp Director*. So extensive was his trade in the matter of Irish harps that he had two shops in Dublin. However, after the year 1835, the "fad" went out, and Egan's Irish harp factory disappeared.[1]

The Drogheda Harp Society

A new Harp Society was established at Drogheda on January 15th, 1842, owing to the patriotic zeal of the Rev. T. V. Burke, a Dominican friar of that town. The first year's report showed a class of fifteen pupils, with Hugh Fraser as teacher. Twelve new harps were procured, Drogheda manufacture, at a cost of three guineas each.

From the printed programme of the first public concert of the Drogheda Harp Society, on Monday, February 24th, 1844, it appears that Mr. Fraser had taught sixteen pupils. At this concert the harpers were assisted by Miss Flynn, Mr. Halpin, Mr. Dowdall, and Mr. M'Entaggart. The second concert was given in 1848, after which the society collapsed. Then came the famine, and the gradual disappearance of the old harpers. After this, the Irish harp was neglected till

[1] Egan, on the pillar of his better class of harps, had a number of ivory thumb pedals, corresponding to the octaves, and by pressing one of these a change of key was effected.

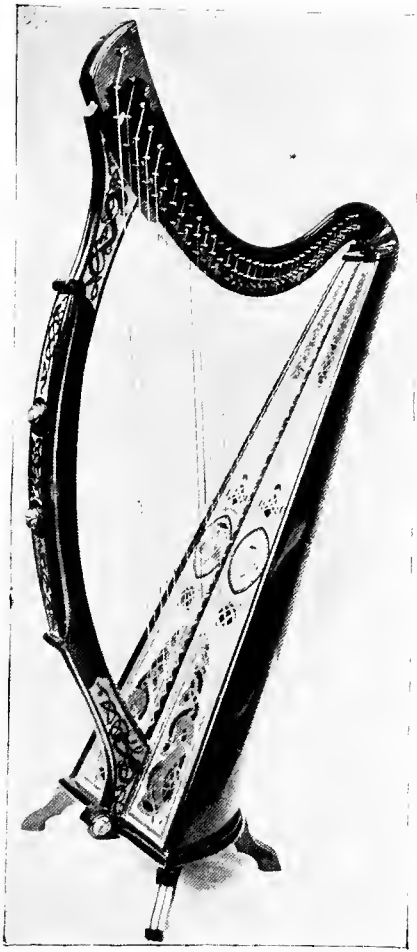


FIG. 30.—THE M'FALL "TARA" HARP, AS MADE FOR CARDINAL LOGUE IN 1902.

the Irish Ireland Movement, inaugurated by William Rooney and the *United Irishman*, and fostered by the Gaelic League, Celtic Literary Society, and kindred associations, again galvanised the national instrument into life. From 1897 the Oireachtas and Feis Ceoil have had harp competitions, but the feeling is irresistibly borne on the impartial observer that, save as a matter of sentiment, the Irish harp has been ousted in popular circles by the pianoforte and violin. All the same, there is something so essentially characteristic about the Irish harp that, as a national instrument, it must be kept alive.

Perhaps the best proof of the demand for the Irish harp is that there are two harp factories in Belfast, and the instruments are really very fine, especially those made by Mr. James M'Fall.

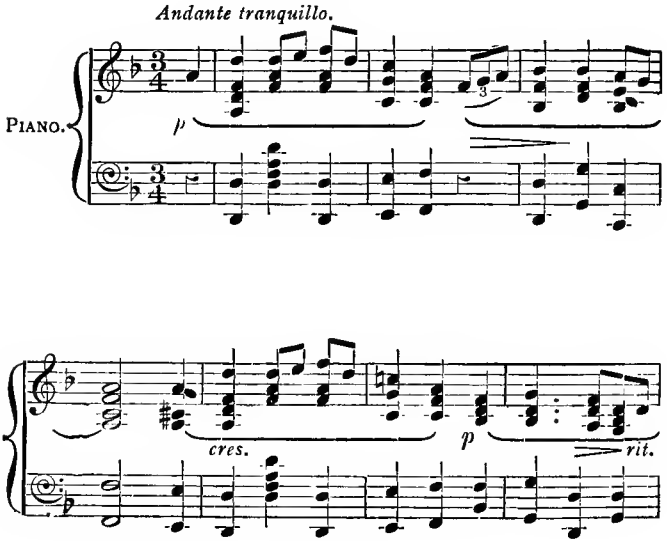
The Modern Irish Harp

The compass of the Irish harp is about four octaves, from C to G in alt, and the strings are of catgut—the C's being coloured *red*, and the F's *blue*. It is tuned by fifths and octaves, and the performers can prove the tuning by other consonant intervals. Though mostly tuned in the key of C, some harpists prefer that of E flat. Each string can be raised a semitone by turning a peg, a quarter turn being sufficient for the purpose, and thus, in the key of G major, it is only

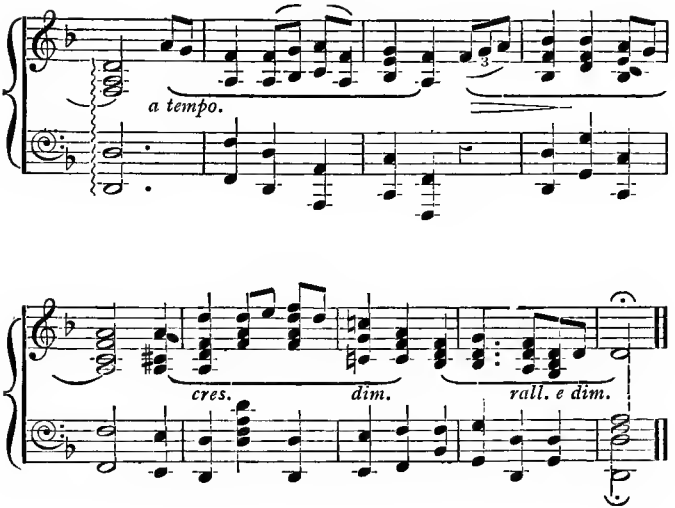
Method of Tuning

necessary to raise the pegs of the F string. In 1903 there was published an excellent *Tutor for the Irish Harp*, by Sister M. Attracta Coffey, followed by two books of Irish melodies. From this latter work we quote the following arrangement of Moore's "Come Rest in this Bosom," adapted to the old harp-melody of "Lough Sheeling":—

"LOUGH SHEELING."



"Lough Sheeling"



CHAPTER XX.

THE DOUBLE-ACTION HARP.

Marie Antoinette harp—Sebastian Erard—Improved single-action harp of 1792—Double-action harp of 1810—Advantages of the double-action harp—Appreciation by John Thomas—The "Grecian" harp of 1815—The Gothic harp.

It has been seen that the Cousineaus, *père et fils*, had improved on Hochbrucker's invention in regard to the pedal, by the use of small metal plates (*béquilles*), enclosing the strings, and by the introduction of a slide for raising or lowering the bridge-pin, thus regulating the length of the string. But, above all, they doubled the pedals and the mechanism connected therewith, and just fell short of the honour of inventing the double-action harp—the work of that famous mechanician Sebastian Erard, a name identified not only with the harp, but with the pianoforte.

Marie Antoinette Harp

Naderman's improvements have also been alluded to. The lovely harp which he made for Marie Antoinette in 1780 is now in the South Kensington Museum.[1]

[1] Another harp, said to have belonged to Marie Antoinette in 1792, is now in Brooklyn, U.S.A., being the property of Miss Dagnar

Erard's Single-action Harp

To Sebastian Erard is undoubtedly due the deserved position which the harp holds to-day, whether in the orchestra or as a solo instrument. It was in 1786 that this remarkable man (born at Strasburg, on April 5th, 1752) commenced a series of patient investigations which resulted in the magnificent double-action harp of to-day.

Sebastian Erard

In 1792 Erard took out a patent in London for an improved pedal-action harp, and returned to Paris in 1796, having started a successful piano and harp factory in the English metropolis. This improved harp was still only single-action, but with the immense advantage of the fork mechanism—that is to say, the disc containing the two studs, which, in its revolution by the action of the pedal, gripped the string without drawing it from the level of the other strings, as was previously the case. Some of these improved single-action harps, by Erard, are still to be seen, and their general style of decoration was marked by a ram's head carved at the top of the pillar.

Improved Single-action Harp of 1792

Between the years 1801 and 1805 Erard worked at

Langenberg. It was secreted after the Queen's execution by a family named Flauzuet, living at Asnières, near Paris, and kept by them in a garret till 1804, when they sold it to a Swedish count, Ulrich von Cronstedt, who brought it with him to Sweden in 1819.

models of a harp with a double movement, and in 1809 he patented his first idea of the double-action harp. His first effort in that direction was only partially double, as the double-movement only extended to the notes A and D. At length, in 1810, Erard's genius triumphed over all obstacles, and he was able to employ the double-action fully—the instrument being generally known as the "Grecian" harp. He took out a patent for the double-action harp in the same year.

Double-action Harp of 1810

Erard employed seven pedals only, as in the single-action harp; but developed the cranks and levers acted on by the pillar-rods so as to operate on the discs. Instead of the cumbrous and numerous plates employed by Cousineau, Erard only used two brass ones, forming the comb, and he got rid of the antiquated plan of building up the sound-board with staves.

As Erard's double-action harp is tuned in C flat, by using the seven pedals successively the performer can readily play in the keys of G♭, D♭, A♭, E♭, B♭, F, and C♮. A further action of the pedal raises the pitch another semitone, thus effecting a change of a whole tone, and makes the instrument capable of being played on in the keys of G, D, A, E, B, F♯, and C♯. As a result, Erard succeeded in doing away with all complications of

Advantages of the Double-action Harp

fingering for the various scales and keys—a difficulty not unknown to learners on the piano,—as by his remarkable invention, the fingering on the double-action harp is the same in all keys.

John Thomas thus writes of Erard's invention:—"The pedal-harp is an immense improvement, in a musical sense, upon any former invention, as it admits of the most rapid modulation into every key, and enables the performer to execute passages and combinations that would not have been dreamed of previously. In the double-action harp, as perfected by Erard, each note has its flat, natural, and sharp, which is not the case with any other stringed instrument; and this enables the modern harpist to produce those beautiful enharmonic effects which are peculiar to the instrument. Another remarkable advantage is the reduction in the number of strings to *one* row, which enables the performer not only to keep the instrument in better tune, but to use a thicker string, and thus attain a quality of tone, which, for mellowness and richness may be advantageously compared with that of any other instrument."

Appreciation by John Thomas

Sebastian Erard, who took out a patent for his perfected repetition grand piano action, in London, in 1821, died at Paris, August 5th, 1831, and was suc-

ceeded by his nephew, Pierre Erard. From 1810 to 1835 the "Grecian" model held the field; but, in 1836, Pierre Erard patented the "Gothic" harp, which soon superseded the "Grecian."

The Gothic Harp

The Gothic Harp was not only a larger instrument, but one of a much more powerful tone.

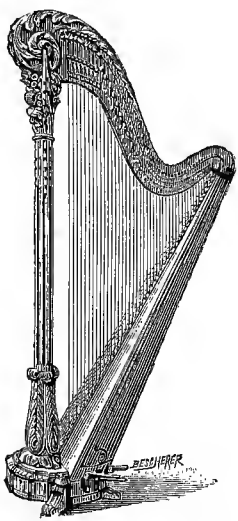


FIG. 31.—ERARD'S GOTHIC HARP, STYLE OF LOUIS XVI.

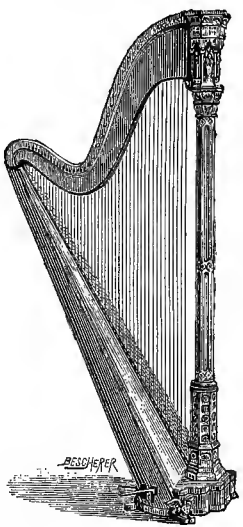


FIG. 32.—ERARD'S GOTHIC HARP, ORDINARY MODEL.

The action was practically unchanged, but Pierre Erard effected several improvements, notably such as were

afforded by a greater space between the strings and a broader sounding board. He died at the Château de la Muette, Passy, near Paris, on August 18th, 1855.

The illustrations on the preceding page represent the latest forms of Gothic Harp made by the famous house of Erard.

CHAPTER XXI.

VIRTUOSI OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

Madame Spohr—Dizi—Henry Horn—C. A. Baur—Neville Butler Challoner—Thomas Paul Chipp—Bochsa—Parish Alvars—J. B. Chatterton—Eulenstein—A. Prumier—Charles Oberthür—John Thomas—Aptommas—John Cheshire.

AMONG the virtuosi on the harp whose playing attracted considerable attention during the early years of the nineteenth century, Madame Spohr was conspicuous. She accompanied her husband in his tours, and performed many pieces for violin and harp, as well as some charming solos specially composed for her by Spohr. She appeared as a harpist for the last time in London at Spohr's farewell concert, in 1820, and her playing elicited the warmest plaudits. Two years later she retired, owing to ill-health, and died in 1834.

Madame Spohr

Dizi was for many years resident in London, and displayed much ability in his fourfold capacity as harpist, teacher, composer, and inventor. In the season of 1820 he was the leader of the band

F. Dizi

of harps—twelve in number—employed by Sir Henry Bishop at Covent Garden oratorios. Among his harp compositions were sonatas, fantasias, and romances.

As an inventor Dizi must be credited with a praiseworthy effort to improve the volume of tone of the harp. His "perpendicular harp" was built on the principle that the tension of the strings acting on a centre parallel to the centre of the column as well as to that of the sonorous body required strong metal plates; and the column supporting the mechanism took the pressure on the centre. The name "perpendicular" was given by Dizi to his improved harp, as the strings were placed vertically, making no angle. He also substituted a damper pedal (invented by William Southwell, of Dublin, in 1804) for the swell, by means of which the *sous étouffées* were produced, thus differing from the prevailing method—by the hand.

Henry Horn (born in 1789) was a Parisian, who studied under Meyer and Elouis; and, in 1812, he settled in London, having the year previously introduced Erard's double-action harp at Bath. Both as a teacher and a player he was extensively patronised, and he published numerous pieces for his instrument, including an *Instruction Book for the Single and Double-Movement Harp*. After the year 1817 his fame as a performer was eclipsed by that of Bochsa.

Henry Horn

Another distinguished harpist who settled in London was Charles Alexis Baur. Born at Tours, in 1789, he inherited his musical talent from both his father and mother, who were teachers of the piano and harp. In 1805 he proceeded to Paris, where he perfected his knowledge of the harp under Naderman. Between the years 1820 and 1825 he had a large *clientèle* in London, and composed a variety of pieces for the harp, as well as some arrangements for the harp and flute.

Charles Alexis Baur

Neville Butler Challoner, born in London, in 1784, was a violinist in his early days; but, in 1803, took up the study of the harp and became a brilliant player. He was appointed harpist at the Opera House in 1809, and continued in that position till 1829. He published a large quantity of music, including *A Method of the Harp* (1806), duos concertantes, romances, polaccas, fantasias, etc.

Neville Butler Challoner

Thomas Paul Chipp deserves notice as a remarkable English harpist. He first saw the light in London, in 1793, and studied the harp when quite a child. In 1720 he was appointed harpist to Covent Garden Theatre, and published some pieces for his instrument. He is better remembered as the player of the "Tower drums," and as father of the

Thomas Paul Chipp

late Dr. E. T. Chipp. His death occurred on June 19th, 1870, four years after his retirement.

Incomparably greater than any of these was Robert Nicholas Charles Bochsa, the son of a flute and clarinet player, born at Montmedy in the department of the Meuse, on August 9th, 1789. Under his father's tuition he became very proficient, and at eleven years of age played a flute concerto of his own composition. In 1805 he composed an oratorio, followed by an opera, and in 1806 took seriously to the study of the harp. Having studied under Catel, Mehul, Naderman, and Marin, he laboured continually to produce new effects from his instrument, and in a short time raised the harp to a position in the orchestra hitherto undreamed of.

Robert N. C. Bochsa

Bochsa was appointed harpist to the Emperor Napoleon in 1813, and, on the restoration of Louis XVIII., in 1815, was commanded to compose an opera (*Les Héritiers Mechaux*), followed by his appointment as royal harpist in 1816. Unfortunately, owing to certain tampering with figures, he was obliged to seek a friendly haven in England in 1817, and, in his absence, was formally tried and condemned to undergo a heavy sentence, in addition to a fine of four thousand francs.

It is a commonplace of musical history that Bochsa succeeded in giving a tremendous vogue to the study of

the harp in London, reckoning amongst his pupils many subsequently famous harpists, like Parish Alvars and Chatterton. As an illustration of the harp craze at this epoch, it may be mentioned that at the Covent Garden "oratorios" of 1821, whilst Sir Henry Bishop employed twelve harps, headed by Dizi, Sir George Smart, at Drury Lane, had thirteen harps, with Bochsa as leader.

Bochsa as Conductor at the King's Theatre

In 1823 Bochsa was Professor of the Harp at the Royal Academy of Music, and leader of the Lenten oratorios; and in 1826 he replaced Costa as conductor at the King's Theatre—a position which he held till 1832. From 1817 to 1837 he gave annual concerts, the programmes of which invariably contained novelties by himself.

His last Concert Tour

Sad to relate, his irregularities were so notorious that he was dismissed from the Royal Academy of Music in 1827, and at the close of the year 1839 he eloped with the wife of Sir Henry Bishop. For sixteen years he had successful concert tours in every quarter of the globe, save France. His reception in America was very cordial, whilst in Ireland he created a perfect *furore*. During his visit to Dublin, in 1837, Bochsa carefully examined the "O'Brien" harp, and expressed his wonder at such

a venerable instrument. At length, in Australia, he was stricken with a fatal attack of dropsy, to which he succumbed, at Sydney, on January 6th, 1856.

Though regarded as a charlatan by many writers, there is no gainsaying the fact that Bochsa stands forth as one of the greatest virtuosi of the nineteenth century. Had he been less prolific as a composer, he would also rank among the foremost writers for the harp. Several hundred compositions of all kinds appeared from his fertile pen, but not half-a-dozen were of a perennial value. His last composition was a Requiem, which was performed at his own obsequies. His *Harp Method* is still used.

His Harp Compositions

Elias Parish Alvars was born of Jewish ancestry, at Teignmouth, on February 28th, 1808. Having studied the harp under Dizi, Labarre, and Bochsa, his fame as a harpist began to be recognised in 1824. Between the years 1831 and 1836 he was almost continuously on the Continent, giving harp performances in Germany, Italy, and Austria, with the utmost success. During the season 1836-37 he was back again in London; but from 1838 to 1841 he journeyed in the East, availing of the tour to collect Oriental tunes, especially those of Turkey and Asia Minor.

Elias Parish Alvars

Parish Alvars was at Leipzig in 1842, and at Berlin, Frankfort, Dresden, and Prague in the following year; subsequently appearing at Naples, where his playing was much admired. During the year 1846 he foregathered with Mendelssohn at Leipzig, and finally settled down at Vienna in 1847, having been appointed chamber harpist to the Emperor. His death occurred at Vienna, January 25th, 1849, aged 41.

Meets Mendelssohn at Leipzig

His playing was that of a true artist, and he continually aimed at securing fresh effects. His compositions number about a hundred, including four concertos for harp and orchestra, also fantasias, transcriptions, romances, and melodies for harp and piano, many of which are still in request. His collection of Eastern melodies was published as *Voyage d'un Harpiste en Orient.*

Harp Composer

John Balsir Chatterton, born at Portsmouth, in 1802, evinced a taste for the harp at an early age, and was placed for instruction under Bochsa and Labarre. His first public appearance was at a concert given by the boy-pianist, George Aspull, in London, in 1824. Three years later he was appointed Professor of the Harp at the Royal Academy

John Balsir Chatterton

of Music, in succession to Bochsa, and in 1842 was honoured by the appointment as harpist to Queen Victoria.

Not alone was Chatterton a distinguished performer on the harp, but he was a composer of numerous transcriptions from the operas, and of songs with harp accompaniment. For the long period of almost forty-four years he taught at the Royal Academy of Music, and formed the style of hundreds of harpists. He died in London, April 9th, 1871.

Although the Jews' harp cannot rightly be regarded as a serious instrument, yet, in the season of 1877-78, London went wildly enthusiastic over the performance of Charles Eulenstein, a native of Würtemberg, on sixteen Jews' harps. For years this extraordinary genius had applied himself to the best method of producing novel effects from this primitive instrument, and he succeeded admirably. In later years he became a teacher of the guitar at Bath, and in 1870 returned to Germany, ending his days in Styria, in 1890, aged 88.

Charles Eulenstein

Antoine Prumier, an eminent Parisian harpist, was born July 28th, 1794, and, after a preliminary course of lessons from his mother, entered the Conservatoire in 1810, obtaining the second harmony prize in 1812. In 1818 he

Antoine Prumier

became harpist in the orchestra of the Italiens, and in 1835 took up a similar position at the Opera Comique.

In November 1835, on the death of Naderman, Prumier was appointed Professor of the Harp at the Conservatoire, which post he held till 1867, when he resigned in favour of Theodore Labarre. Meantime, on his retirement, in 1840, from the Opera Comique, he was succeeded by his son Conrad, an eminent harpist, born in 1820.

Prumier's greatest triumph was in 1865, when he received the Legion of Honour. Of his numerous concertos, fantasies, rondos, and airs varies, few have survived, though many of them were very popular forty years ago. He died suddenly on January 21st, 1868, leaving a son, Conrad, who inherited to the full the ability of a true harp lover. Conrad Prumier was so remarkable as a harpist that, on the death of Labarre (April 1870), he was appointed professor of the instrument at the Conservatoire. He died at Paris, in 1884.

Ellis Roberts

As an ardent exponent of the Welsh triple harp Ellis Roberts was famous even outside the Principality. Born at Dolgelly in 1819, he was appointed harpist to the Prince of Wales in 1866, and died in London, December 6th, 1873. He

will be best remembered as author of the only Tutor published for the Welsh harp.

Charles Oberthür shone both as a virtuoso on the harp and as a composer. Born at Munich, on March 4th, 1819, he studied under Elise Brauchle and G. V. Röder, and in 1837 was engaged as harpist to the Zurich theatre. In 1840 we find him at Wiesbaden, and in 1842 he took a position at Mannheim. At length, attracted by the promises of influential English friends, he determined to visit London, the Mecca of most virtuosi.

Charles Oberthür

Oberthür settled in London in October 1844, and at once found favour both as a teacher and performer, but excelled as a popular composer. For a time he was harpist at the Italian Opera, but his other engagements prevented him from continuing in the position.

Settles in London

In addition to his numerous solos, duos, trios, and concertinos for the harp, Oberthür composed an opera, *Floris de Namur* (produced at Wiesbaden), and a fine Mass in honour of St. Philip Neri, as also Overtures to *Macbeth* and *Rübezahl.* He died at London in 1895.

John Thomas, better known in the Principality as "Pencerdd Gwalia," has had a world-wide fame both as a harpist and composer. He first saw the light

at Bridgend (Glamorganshire), on St. David's Day (March 1st), 1826, and at the age of eleven performed at the Eisteddfod held at Abergavenny, winning a silver harp. Entering the Royal Academy of Music in 1840, he had the advantage of J. B. Chatterton's tuition on the harp; whilst he studied compositions under Charles Lucas and Cipriani Potter, and the piano under C. J. Read. For eight years he availed fully of the teaching given at the Academy, and composed an opera entitled *Alfred the Great,* a symphony, some overtures, a harp concerto, quartets, etc.

John Thomas, "Pencerdd Gwalia"

In 1850 he was appointed harpist in the orchestra of Her Majesty's Opera, and in 1851 he had a successful concert tour on the Continent, playing at the Leipzig Gewandhaus Concerts on October 3rd, 1852. From 1851 to 1861 he journeyed every winter to the big musical centres of Europe, and played to delighted audiences in France, Germany, Russia, Austria, and Italy, appearing for the second time at Leipzig in January 1861.

At the Aberdare Eisteddfod of 1861, Mr. Thomas was conferred the title of "Pencerdd Gwalia," or "chief of the Welsh minstrels"; and on July 4th, 1862, he gave his first concert of Welsh music at St. James's Hall, London,[1] employing a chorus of four hundred, and a

[1] St. James's Hall (opened in 1858) disappeared in February, 1905.

band of twenty harps. This performance gave a tremendous fillip to harp-playing, and adequately proved the capabilities of the Erard double-action harp as an orchestral instrument. For thirty years Thomas gave an annual harp concert in London, which afforded an opportunity of bringing forward some of his own compositions.

Thomas as Composer

At the Swansea Eisteddfod of 1863 his dramatic cantata *Llewelyn* was performed; and he conducted his most ambitious work, *The Bride of Neath Valley,* at the Chester Eisteddfod of 1866, on which occasion he was given a presentation of five hundred guineas, in acknowledgment of his invaluable services in the cause of Welsh music. A fine harp concerto of his was performed at the Philharmonic (London) in 1852. However, he is better known by his harp transcriptions of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Handel, and Schubert.

Endows a Scholarship

On the death of Chatterton, in 1871, Thomas was appointed Professor of the Harp at the Royal Academy of Music, and harpist to Queen Victoria. In the same year he was conductor of the Welsh Choral Union, a body which popularised Welsh music by its concerts, carried on for six years. So great was his enthusiasm in the development of music in Wales, that he collected a sum sufficient to

endow a scholarship for natives of the Principality at the Royal Academy of Music in 1883, which scholarship bears his name.

American readers need scarcely be reminded that Thomas acted as adjudicator at the Eisteddfod at Chicago Exposition, in 1893. On September 6th of that year his *Llewelyn* was produced with marked success, and on September 18th his harp concert was even a greater triumph.

American Visit

At the Cardiff (Wales) Conference of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, in January, 1897, Thomas read a researchful paper on the "Music of Wales," on which subject he was a prime authority. Of more permanent value is his collection of Welsh melodies for voice, with harp accompaniment, in four volumes.

Thomas Thomas, a younger brother of the preceding harpist (better known as Aptommas), is an excellent performer and teacher, though his fame has been overshadowed by that of John Thomas. Born at Bridgend, in 1829, he studied the harp from his early years, and gave many successful concerts both at home and on the Continent, between the years 1851-67. His *History of the Harp*, issued in 1859, contains much useful information, though not altogether trustworthy.

Thomas Thomas (Aptommas)

Aptommas, on January 18th, 1872, performed at the

Gewandhaus Concerts, Leipzig, and his playing was much admired. His success in America is too well known to be dwelt on, and as recently as January 16th, 1905, he gave a very fine concert at the Carnegie Hall, New York. As a teacher he is deservedly in high repute, and one of his best-known pupils is Owen Lloyd, the great Irish harpist.

Success in America

Among the virtuosi of the last century John Cheshire claims a high place, and he also has distinguished himself as a composer. He was born at Birmingham on March 28th, 1839, and took to the harp when quite a child. His harp studies were made under the direction of Chatterton at the Royal Academy of Music from 1852 to 1855, and he completed his musical training under Macfarren. In 1855 he was appointed harpist in the orchestra of the Royal Italian Opera, and, ten years later, was given the post of principal harpist at Her Majesty's Theatre. His cantata, *The King and the Maiden*, was produced at St. James's Hall, London, on April 20th, 1865.

John Cheshire

Cheshire's concert tours, between the years 1858 and 1879, embraced South America (where he produced his opera *Diana*), Norway, Sweden, and other centres, and his harp playing was everywhere much admired. In 1880 he led a band of harps at the Belfast Musical

Festival, organised by the late Walter Newport. In 1886, his cantata, *The Buccaneers*, was published, and he also issued numerous pieces for the harp, including six romances.

Like other harpists, Cheshire was tempted to cater for the growing taste in favour of the harp in America, and accordingly, in 1887, he settled in that country, becoming harpist to the National Opera Company in 1888. He secured a good teaching connection in Brooklyn, in 1890, where he resided for some years. Mr. Cheshire, it should be added, was harpist to H.R.H. the late Duke of Edinburgh.

Settles in America

CHAPTER XXII.

THE HARP IN THE ORCHESTRA.

Louis Spohr—Giacomo Meyerbeer—Hector Berlioz—The ideal orchestra—*L'Enfance du Christ*—Franz Liszt—Michael William Balfe—Richard Wagner—*The Rheingold*—*Die Walküre*—Charles Gounod—Franz Lachner—Charles Oberthür—A strange combination—Dom Perosi—The future of the harp.

Louis Spohr

Louis Spohr (1784-1859), as before stated, scored very successfully for the harp, doubtless due to the fact that his accomplished wife—Dorette Scheidler—was an excellent harpist. In Messrs. Breitkopf and Hartel's catalogue of Spohr's works there are enumerated seven compositions for the harp—namely, Nos. 16, 35, 36, 113, 114, 115, and 118, of which his Sonate Concertante for Harp and Violin, and his Fantasia for Harp and Violin are well known.

Giacomo Meyerbeer

Meyerbeer (1791-1864), a very Titan in his way, made a distinct advance on Spohr as far as the orchestral use of the harp is concerned; in fact, he may be said to be the first great modern composer who utilised the double-action harp in

orchestra proper, and, in this respect, was the forerunner of Wagner. He employs two harps most effectively in *Robert le Diable*.

Hector Berlioz

Berlioz (1803-69), the colossus of the orchestra, fully appreciated the advantage of the harp in orchestral work, as may be evidenced from his sketch of the ideal orchestra: 142 strings, four of which are tuned an octave below the double basses; 30 grand pianofortes, 30 harps, etc.

The Ideal Orchestra

Even abstracting from the eccentric ideals of this marvellously gifted king of the orchestra, there is no doubt but that his employment of the harp in the orchestra, whether for opera, oratorio, cantata, or symphony, has rendered the instrument absolutely indispensable in the expression of certain effects. No other instrument—or combination of instruments—in the orchestra can give the desired tone-colour to certain passages, such as those illustrative of angelic choirs, etc. In his autobiography he says: "Shut me up in a room with one or two Erard harps, and I am perfectly happy."

"L'Enfance du Christ"

It is not generally known that it was to the inspiration of his Irish wife—Henrietta Smithson, of Ennis, Co. Clare—that Berlioz composed his *Irlande*, an arrangement of nine Irish melodies as set by Tom Moore. One

of the most charming pieces in his exquisite *L'Enfance du Christ* (originally written under the title of *Fuite en Egypte*)—his one oratorio, composed between the years 1850-54—is a trio for two flutes and a harp.

Liszt (1811-86), even more than Berlioz, utilised the harp for his orchestral settings. His beautiful "Hymn de l'Enfant à son Réveil" is arranged for female chorus, organ, and harp; whilst his "St. Cecilia" is scored for mezzo-soprano, chorus, piano, harp, and harmonium. It is interesting to add that, as a result of the scoring of Meyerbeer, Berlioz, and Liszt, the orchestra of the Grand Opera of Paris, in 1854, had twenty 1st violins, twenty 2nd violins, four harps, etc. The Bayreuth orchestra of 1876 had six harps—a final triumph for the double-action harp.

Franz Liszt

It was only natural that Balfe (1808-70) should utilise Erin's national instrument, and, therefore, we are not surprised to find him employing the harp in his operas. He uses a remarkable combination—viz., the cornet, harp, and corni, to accompany "The Light of Other Days" in his *Maid of Artois*.

Michael William Balfe

Wagner (1813-83), in the highest degree, has definitely fixed the place of the harp in the modern

orchestra, although Berlioz had, in a sense, forestalled him; indeed, Wagner himself admits that as early as 1840 he profited greatly by a study of Berlioz's instrumentation.

Richard Wagner

What can be more beautiful than the exquisite music assigned the harp in *The Rheingold?* When, at the finale, the valley of the Rhine is glorified with a rainbow, and the gods pass across the chasm to the German Valhalla, Wagner uses six harps, scoring independent parts for each, as a glorious accompaniment for the scene. A duo or trio of harps would be thin by contrast with the full orchestral colouring in this glittering pageant, but the Bayreuth master employs six harps, which, being scored for separately, produce an ethereal effect. And be it remembered that this use of the harp in the orchestra was portion of the well-considered plan of guiding themes, and appropriate tone-colouring for his wonderful dramas, for Wagner did nothing at haphazard.

"The Rheingold"

Again, in the third act of *Die Walküre,* the score of which is a perfect maze of guiding themes in a gorgeously-coloured web of delightful orchestration, harps are employed in the first scene with peculiarly fine effect.

"Die Walküre"

Another great master, Charles Gounod (1818-93),

scored judiciously for the harp in his operas, masses, and motets; in fact, he has been accused of writing too sensuously, and, on that account, some of his sacred pieces have been vigorously denounced by the purists in art.

Charles Gounod

Franz Lachner (1804-90), conductor of the Opera at Mannheim, and Hofkapellmeister at Munich, wrote several pieces for the harp, including two Concertos for harp and bassoon, and some Trios.

Franz Lachner

Charles Oberthür, whose powers as a virtuoso have been previously alluded to, composed *Lorely,* a legend for harp and orchestra; as also some Trios for harp, violin, and violoncello, and a Quartet for four harps.

Charles Oberthür

In his excellent work on *Chamber Music,* Mr. N. Kilburn mentions a very unusual combination—namely, an Octett (op. 32) by a Russian composer, Liadoffin (1855), scored for piccolo, two flutes, three clarinets, harp, and bells.

A Strange Combination

Passing over a number of other composers who have made use of the harp in the orchestra, the present Maestro at the Vatican, Dom Perosi, has most effectively employed harps in his latest cantata, produced in Rome in December 1904, in

Dom Perosi

honour of the Jubilee of the Immaculate Conception. Perosi has increased his reputation by this cantata, and the critics are unanimous in praising the skilful manner in which he has introduced a band of harps in the orchestral scoring.

Thus, the future of the harp, as an instrument of the orchestra, is tolerably secure, although it is a matter of regret that, as a domestic instrument, it has been displaced by the pianoforte and violin. On national and sentimental grounds the harp will always be associated with Celtic gatherings, whether Irish, Scotch, Welsh, Breton, Cornish, or Manx. Of a certainty, the Irish harp will not be allowed to die, especially as Irish harps are comparatively inexpensive, and not over difficult to play. Moreover, just as the harpsichord can only give the true old-world flavour to pieces written for that instrument, so also the harp-melodies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are best performed on the Irish harp.

The Future of the Harp

But, in general, the vogue of the double-action harp, as a solo instrument, and as an appanage of the average drawing-room, has almost disappeared, the chief reason being its prohibitive price (£120 to £200), and the difficulty of becoming a good performer. And it must be added that the advent of the cycle and the motor has

had not a little influence in contributing to the comparative neglect of the queen instrument of the salon.

However, as we have seen, the harp is now an indispensable instrument of all large orchestras, and its resources have been amply utilised by all the great masters of music for the past fifty years. Perhaps some future composer will make its position even more prominent, and thus bring about a more general study of this most graceful of instruments.

In the hands of a Thomas, a Zamara, a Barber, a Schüecker, a Cheshire, or of any great virtuoso, what wonderful effects are produced! And when the celestial strains of the harp are heard in grand opera, as in the *Rheingold,* or *Die Walküre,* then, indeed, comes back the old glamour of the instrument whose history is as old as the earth itself, the story of which we have endeavoured, however inadequately, to tell in the preceding pages.

EPILOGUE.

THERE are many phases of the harp that the keen critic may perhaps feel surprised at no reference to—*e.g.* harp mechanism, harp ornamentation, harp legends, etc.; but these did not exactly come within the scope of the present volume. Nor did we enter into the construction of the instrument from a technical point of view, the aim of the series being to present in a popular way a connected story of the particular phase of musical art dealt with. We have also omitted any notices of twentieth-century composers or virtuosi, for the sufficient reason that an unbiassed judgment can scarcely be found of the musical happenings of the past five years. However, we have endeavoured to put before the reader, in simple language, the essential features of the history of the harp from prehistoric times to the close of the last century.

Going back into the misty past, the harp has been associated with the most ancient peoples. Pretermitting the numerous allusions in the Bible, the discoveries of the past ten years have amply confirmed

previous views as to early existence of harps among the Cretans, Babylonians, Egyptians, and other nations. Petrie, Evans, and Boscawen have unearthed vases, tablets, and seals with pictorial representations of harps, of a date at least three thousand years before Christ. Beautiful Apollo lyres, too, have recently been discovered in Greece, and the visitor of to-day may feast his eyes on the beautiful instruments depicted on marble in the National Museum at Athens. Mr. Boscawen is inclined to believe that one of the Chaldæan sculptures, dating from over four thousand years before Christ, depicts the harp and pipes as attributed to Jubal.

It is truly marvellous that the harp, which seemed threatened with extinction at the close of the seventeenth century, should have received a new lease of life early in the succeeding century. Not alone was there a revival of the instrument, but, as we have seen, the harp began to take its place in the orchestra ere the close of the eighteenth century. The improvements of Hochbrucker, Cousineau, and Erard have elevated the minstrel's harp almost to the plane of the violin, and most of the great masters of the nineteenth century have recognised the value of the double-action harp.

In ancient Ireland there are numerous legends in which the harp plays no unimportant part. Similarly,

in England, Scotland, and Wales, there are innumerable legends of harps and harpers; but these belong to the regions of romance, and cannot hope for a place in a sober historical narrative.

Notwithstanding the very advanced state of modern orchestration and its influence on the accompaniment of even simple ballads, it is a hopeful sign of the times to observe the rising enthusiasm in favour of old folk tunes and songs. Within the past eight years the once despised folk melodies of the olden time are become things to be desired, and whether in Germany, America, England, or Ireland, there is an undoubted tendency to ferret out and cultivate old folk tunes.

And just as a love for the melodies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has grown up, having been introduced into all our primary and secondary schools, so also a revival of the harp has taken place. In Ireland, the Feis Ceoil and Oireachtas; in Wales, the Eisteddfod; and in Scotland, the Mod—all contribute their quota towards the popularising of the harp. Thus, the harp lives on, ever and anon reminding the listener of days that are gone, conjuring up memories of old-time artists, whether in Babylonia, Persia, Greece, Ireland, Judæa, Britain, Egypt, and Chaldea; acquiring a new lease of life in the hands of Bochsa, Oberthür, and Thomas; and finally taking

its place in the orchestral scores of Wagner, Berlioz, Liszt, Gounod, Perosi. Who knows but that in some mysterious and as yet inscrutable way the harp may again become the instrument of fashion? One thing is certain, that the harp has a charm all its own, whilst it can point to traditions of the remotest antiquity.

Appendices.

A. The Æolian Harp.

B. Epochs in the History of Harp-making.

C. Principal Sources for a Bibliography of the Harp.

Appendix A.

The Æolian Harp.

REFERENCE has previously been made to the Æolian harp in connection with St. Dunstan. Perhaps the earliest record of this quaint instrument (which is named from Æolus, the mythological deity who presides over the wind) is a traditional account from a Rabbinical source that the royal prophet David had his *kinnor*, or small harp, suspended over the couch where he lay at night. When the wind swept over the strings in the silence of the night, the musical sounds emitted seemed to be as if the chords were struck by some supernatural agency. However, there is scarcely any need to tell the real agency to modern readers, who have long been accustomed to the sounds from the telegraph wires rendered audible through the posts, which practically act as sound-boards.

Another ancient reference to the Æolian harp is to be found in a Hindu poem, mentioned by the distinguished Oriental antiquary, Sir William Jones. A third allusion is in an old Irish poem, wherein we read of the delightful music produced by the wind on the strings of a *cruit* or *crott*. Even at the present day the Malays employ a primitive form of Æolian harp, made of split bamboo-canes.

The first writer to treat scientifically of this instrument was the learned Jesuit, Athanasius Kircher, in his extraordinary work entitled *Musurgia Universalis sive ars magna consoni et*

dissoni, published in two volumes, at Rome, in 1650. He enters minutely into a description of the instrument and the method of making it, describing the peculiar qualities of the sound emitted as resembling neither the music of strings nor of wind instruments, but a pleasing combination of both.

In general, it may be stated that the Æolian harp is constructed on the principle of the Monochord, a single string stretched on a sound-board with two bridges. When this string is tuned at a moderately low pitch and allowed to be acted on by a current of air, a series of harmonics is produced, the varying force of the wind or current of air resulting in various overtones. Of course, in the case of two strings tuned in unison, the pressure would act variously, as the two strings would divide into varying vibrating membranes, and increase the variety of the harmonics. And when the number is increased to five or six, these equally-tuned strings would be divided into still more varying segments, according to the manner in which the wind pressure was directed, producing wonderful harmonic effects, whether of consonances or dissonances.

Although Kircher was the first to direct general attention to the Æolian harp, it was reserved for an Irishman, Matthew Young, Protestant Bishop of Clonfert, to enter fully into the whole subject, dealing in a special manner with the principle of the instrument, and suggesting a theory for the strangely beautiful consonant and dissonant chords emitted from the strings. He treats the subject lucidly in his *Enquiry into the Principal Phenomena of Sounds and Musical Strings*, published in 1784. Some years later, a description of the Æolian harp was printed in the *Göttingen Pocket Calendar* for 1792, and thus the instrument was popularised for a time. Though the number of strings has varied, the Æolian harps of the last hundred years have been furnished with twelve strings. A good specimen was exhibited by Rev. F. W. Galpin at the Loan Exhibition of

Musical Instruments at Fishmongers' Hall, London, in June 1904.

I cannot do better than quote the following description of the instrument, as written by the late Mr. A. J. Hipkins, which appears in Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, edited by Fuller Maitland (1904):—

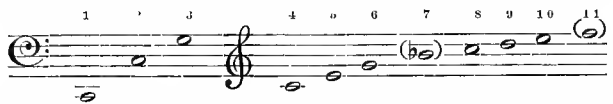
"An Æolian harp is usually about three feet long, five inches broad, and three inches deep; of pine wood, with beech ends for insertion of the tuning and hitch pins, and with two narrow bridges of hard wood, over which a dozen catgut strings are stretched. These are tuned in the most exact unison possible, or the beats caused by their difference would be disagreeable. The direction sometimes attached to tune by intervals of fourths and fifths is only misleading. The tension should be low; in other words, the strings [should] be rather slack, the fundamental note not being noticeable when the instrument sounds. There are usually two sound-holes in the sound-board. The ends are raised above the strings about an inch, and support another pine board, between which and the sound-board the draught of air is directed.

"To hear the Æolian harp it should be placed across a window sufficiently opened to admit of its introduction, and situated obliquely to the direction of the wind. The sounds are so pure and perfectly in tune that no tuning we might accomplish could rival it. For we have here not tempered intervals, but the natural tones of the strings, the half or octave, the third or interval of the twelfth, and so on, in an arithmetical progression, up to the sixth division, the whole vibrating length being taken as the first—we are listening to full and perfect harmony. But the next, the seventh, still in consonance with the lowest note, in effect not unlike the dull, sad minor sixth, but still more mournful, is to our ears transcendental, as our musical system does not know it: and it would be too much out

of tune with other intervals consonant to the key-note for admission to our scales.

"We are impressed with it as by a wail—in the words of Coleridge, 'a sweet upbraiding' ("The Æolian Harp," *Poems*, i. 190)—to be followed as the wind-pressure increases by more and more angry notes as we mount to those dissonances in the next higher octave, especially the eleventh and thirteenth overtones that alternate and seem to shriek and howl until the abating gust of wind suffers the lower beautiful harmonies to predominate again."

There is no difficulty in constructing an Æolian harp. The length, generally of three feet, must be made to fit the window, and when the instrument is placed so as to fill the opening, the sash of the window must be drawn down on it, a window being selected that is oblique to the direction of the wind. The weird effect of the wind playing on the strings, as if by an unseen spirit-hand, may be considerably heightened if the door of the room be opened. Assuming that the twelve strings are tuned in perfect unison, the harmonic series of overtones on C as a fundamental will be as follows in musical notation:—



These numbers, 1, 2, 3, 4, etc., are in the ratios of the vibration numbers of the notes as here given; but it is to be observed, as mentioned before in regard to the seventh division, that B flat cannot be regarded as strictly representing the natural interval of the series—the seventh being in reality flatter than B flat: and, similarly, the eleventh is neither F nor F sharp, but somewhat midway between the two. And, of course, the series extends considerably farther, until the sounds die away in an expiring breath.

Appendix B.

Epochs in the History of Harp-making.

A.D.

1218.—First recorded improvement in the construction of the harp by Aedh O'Sochlann, Vicar of Cong (Ireland).

1220.—The "Brian Boru" harp.

1418.—John Bore, of London, harp-maker to King Henry V.

1585.—William Bathe constructs a harp "of a new device" which he presents to Queen Elizabeth.

1621.—The "Dalway" harp, made by Donnchadh MacTadhg O'Dermody.

1623.—Invention of a new double-string harp by F. Robert Nugent, S.J.

1661.—A new form of harp invented by Sir Samuel Moreland.

1685.—Invention of the Chromatic harp.

1710.—Improvements in the Welsh harp.

1720.—Invention of the pedal harp by Hochbrucker.

1752.—Improvements in the pedal harp by the Cousineaus, *père et fils.*

1780.—Cousineau doubles the pedals, thus originating the idea of the modern double-action harp.

1785.—Krumpholz improves the single-action harp.

Story of the Harp

A.D.

1792.—Sebastian Erard takes out a patent in London or an improved pedal harp—single-action.

1809.—Partial double-action harp patented by Erard.

1819.—Erard's double-action harp patented.

1836.—Pierre Erard, nephew of Sebastian Erard, patented the "Gothic" harp, which superseded the "Grecian" harp.

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THE END.

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