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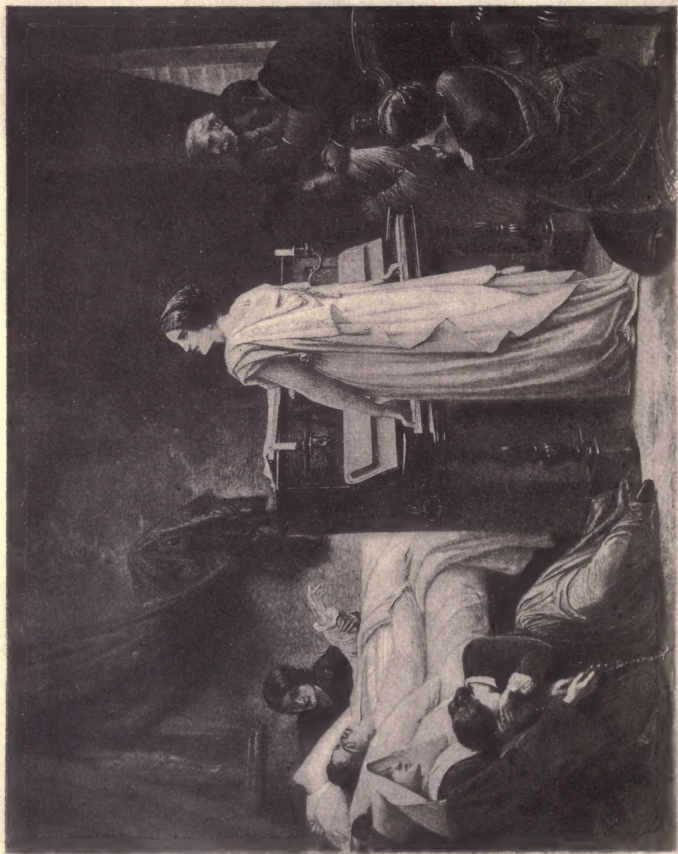
FAMOUS COMPOSERS

BY
NATHAN
H.
DOLE

VOL.
2



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Famous Composers

BY

NATHAN HASKELL DOLE

VOLUME II

WITH PORTRAITS



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New York

THOMAS Y. CROWELL & CO.
PUBLISHERS

THE DEATH OF CHOPIN
Painting by Felix Barrias

THE DEATH OF CHOPIN



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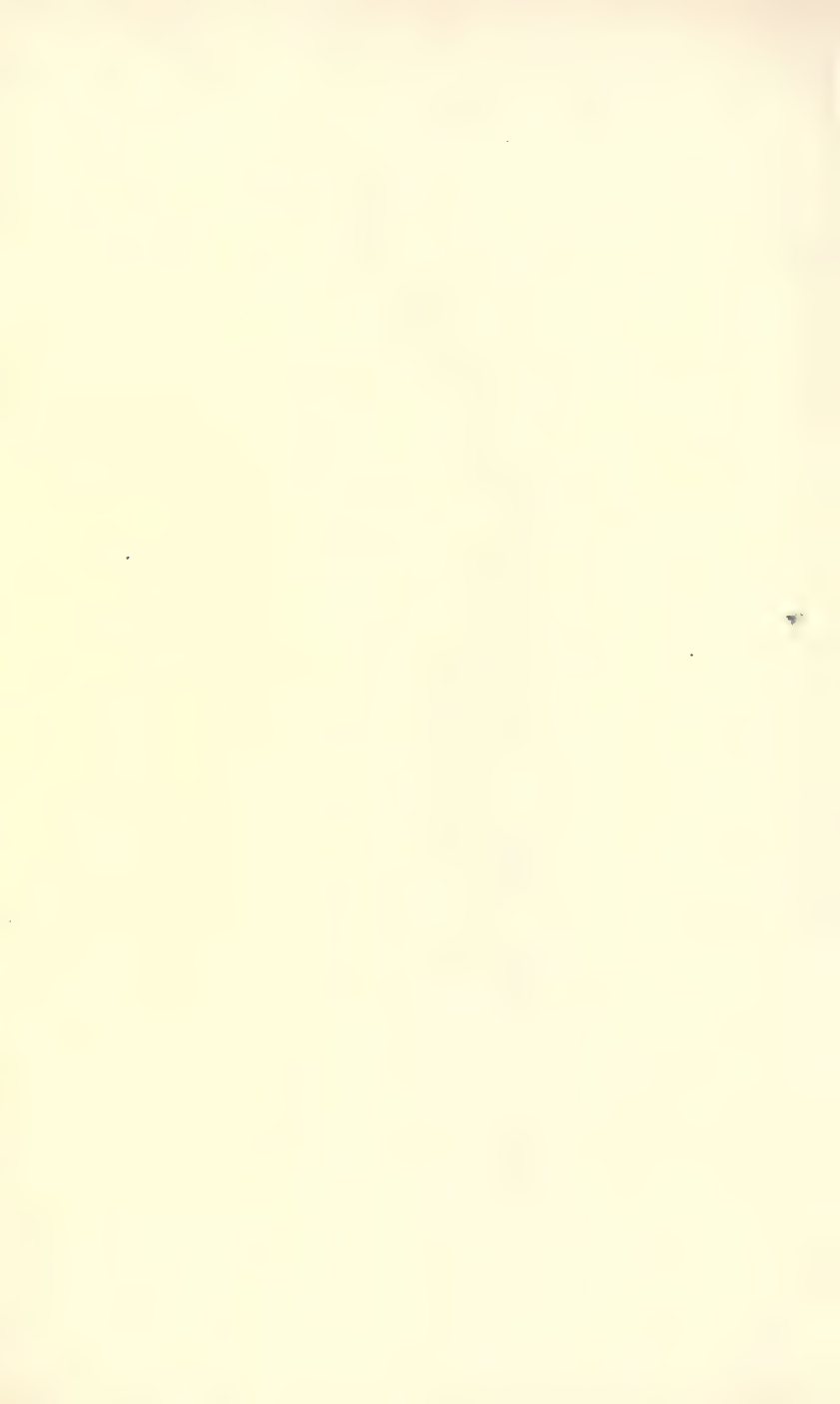
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SCHUBERT.

(1797-1828.)

VIENNA, in the early years of this century, was a cruel and capricious foster-mother to the sons of Art. Mozart came to her from Salzburg, and she allowed him to starve. Beethoven came to her from Bonn, and she allowed him to die in melancholy solitude, deserting him for Rossini.

She was a still more cruel and neglectful mother. Schubert was her one native-born singer. He died before his time, in the very plenitude of his powers, unknown, unappreciated, the victim of privation and sorrow.

Such is the natural and sentimental way of looking at it.

There is a truer and more philosophical point of view. The pity that has been evoked by Mozart's disappointed career is found to be, if not misplaced, at least tempered by a knowledge of how far he himself was responsible for his disappointment. Beethoven's seclusion from the world was self-chosen. "The soothsayer of the innermost world of tones" found consolation in that "far countree." And Schubert's poverty was not only his own fault, but was probably less the cause of suffering than it would have been to a person of finer physical

fibre. What he wasted on strong drink would have procured for him "the common necessities of life," the lack of which, though pitiable, need not make "one's blood boil," as Sir George Grove indignantly exclaims.

Schubert is the Burns of music. Of peasant origin he had a marvellous gift for singing. As W. Müller says, "The German folk-song found in him its highest and finest ennoblement; through him, the genuine German native singer, came the ancient folk-song into life again, purified and transfigured by art." Like Burns, he was most at ease among those of his own station in life; like Burns, he was too fond of gay carousals. Unlike Burns, however, being of mean personal appearance, he cared little for the fair sex, nor did the fair sex care for him. And yet, strangely enough, he had a "nameless personal charm" which always won for him earnest friends.

Franz Peter Schubert was born on the last day of January, 1797, at the house of the Red Crab (*Zum Rothen Krebsen*), in one of the immediate suburbs of Vienna. His father was a schoolmaster, poor, but of sterling character, who, like Beethoven's father, had married a cook. A patriarchal family of nineteen children blessed this and a subsequent union, but only eight grew up.

Little is known of the home-life in the Schubert household, or of the influence and character of his mother.

There are no anecdotes of the musical precocity which must have been shown by the gifted child, so strangely placed. From his father's own words regarding his youthful days, we know merely that at five he was prepared for school, at six he was the leader of his comrades, and always fond of society.



FRANZ SCHUBERT.

After the aquarell of W. A. Rieder (1796-1888).
Property of Dr. G. Granitsch in Vienna.

"In his eighth year," the father continues, "I taught him the rudiments of violin playing, and brought him along far enough to play easy duets tolerably well. Then I sent him to take singing lessons of Mr. Michael Holzer, the parish choir-master, who declared many times, with tears in his eyes, that he never before had such a pupil. 'If I wanted to put anything new before him,' said he, 'I found that he knew it already. So I really gave him no instruction, but simply talked with him and looked at him in silent amazement.'"

His oldest brother Ignaz, who followed his father's calling, gave him lessons in piano playing; but as Sir George Grove says, he soon outstripped these simple teachers. What a pity that he had not a father like Leopold Mozart, capable of guiding wisely such a portentous genius! He lisped in numbers, for the numbers came; but there was no one who dared correct the songs and other compositions which he wrote before he was ten years old. "He has harmony in his little finger," exclaimed the delighted Holzer, who heard him extemporize on a theme that he gave him.

When he was eleven years and eight months old he was examined for the Konvikt, or school for educating the choir-boys for the Imperial Chapel. The other candidates, seeing the fat awkward lad in his light gray suit of homespun, took him for a miller's son, and made sport of him; but they repented of their impertinence when Salieri and the other examiners called him up, and his clear, pure voice rang out in the well-known tunes; for he had already been first soprano in the parish church of Lichtental, where he had also played the violin solos required in the service.

The "miller's" suit was soon exchanged for the gold-

laced uniform of the Konvikt. A boys' school in those days was not a paradise, even when the uniform was decorated with gold lace. Schubert's earliest known letter to his brother Ferdinand, dated November 24, 1812, gives a serio-comic picture of the hardships endured by the lads of the Imperial Chapel:—

"You know from experience that oftentimes a fellow would like to eat a biscuit and a couple of apples, especially when one has to wait for eight and a half hours from a mediocre dinner till a wretched supper. . . . *Nolens volens*," he adds, "I must have a change." And he beseeches his brother to send him two *kreutzers* a month, on the principle that he who hath two coats should give one to the poor.

His father could spare him only two groschen, and those were quickly spent. In winter the practice-room was unheated and icy-cold. In spite of cold and hunger and other discomforts, the love of music flourished.

There was an orchestra, into which Schubert was admitted. The leader of the band, an older lad named Joseph von Spaun, "turned round the first day to see who was playing so cleverly, and found it to be 'a small boy in spectacles, named Franz Schubert.'" The two became great friends, and Spaun was generous enough to provide Schubert with music-paper, which he was too poor himself to buy.

He thus had a chance to become acquainted with the orchestral works of the great composers. During a performance of Mozart's G-minor Symphony he declared he could hear the angels singing. His reverence for Beethoven was deeply ingrained. Soon after he entered the school, when some one said that he could already do a great deal, he shook his head and exclaimed, "I some-



A SCHUBERTIAD AT THE HOUSE OF RITTER VON SPAUN.

Painting by H. Temple.

times have such dreams, but who after Beethoven can do anything?"

It seems strange that so little care was taken to give Schubert a thorough grounding in the foundations of musical composition. The director, Rucziszka, is said to have given him lessons in harmony, but soon found that his pupil knew more than he did, and declared that he had got it "from the dear God." Salieri, when he saw the boy's capacity, exclaimed: "He can do everything! He is a genius. He composes songs, masses, operas, string-quartets, in fact, anything you like."

It was true: between May-Day, 1810, when he finished his four-hand fantasia for piano, and October 28, 1813, when he finished his first symphony, he had composed a quintet overture, seven string-quartets, and many other instrumental pieces, besides a quantity of vocal compositions.

Music occupied him so wholly that after his first year in the school, his general studies, comprising mathematics, history, geography, poetry, writing, drawing, French, Latin, and Italian, were neglected. Many of his compositions were played by the pupils of the Konvikt; and his quartets, as well as those by other composers, were practised on Sundays and holidays at home; his brothers taking the first and second violin, his father the 'cello, and he himself the viola. His ear was quick to detect the slightest false note, and he would say with a modest smile, "Herr Vater, there must be some mistake there."

He also occasionally had a chance to hear an opera by Weigl, Cherubini, Boëldieu, or Gluck. At various concerts during these years, Beethoven's masterpieces, the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Symphonies, and other

works, were given. All such privileges were eagerly seized, and added fuel to his zeal for composition. But at that time he seemed to think that Beethoven united too much "the tragic and the comic, the agreeable and the repulsive, the heroic and the petty, the holiest and a harlequin." "Mozart, immortal Mozart," as he calls him in his diary, was his favorite, and exercised a deeper influence on his compositions.

When his voice changed he might have stayed on in the school on the Merveldt scholarship, had he consented to pass a certain examination. He did not choose to do so, since it involved studying during the summer vacation. It is interesting to know that Schubert's memory was warmly cherished in the school, that the Konvikt orchestra still continued to play his compositions, and that a number of the friends whom he made during his five years' stay, afterwards, when they reached positions of influence, always stood by him in calling public attention to his works.

It speaks volumes for the quality of Schubert's education at the Konvikt, that in order to become his father's assistant he was obliged to study several months at the Normal School of St. Anna, and even then was given only the preparatory classes! Why he should have taken up with a work that was sure to be utter drudgery, is not known. His brother thought that it was to secure his exemption from service in the army. Possibly it was because his father doubted his ability to earn a livelihood by music.

He was a nervous, irritable teacher, and sometimes so severely boxed the ears of the stupid or mischievous little girls under him, that their fathers interfered. Indeed, one such scene is said to have led to his resignation of the position.

The three years of drudgery had been prolific in wonderful music, — a list of upwards of four hundred compositions of every sort and kind. In 1815 he wrote one hundred and thirty-seven songs; some of them his most characteristic, most of them immortal. On the fifteenth of August he wrote eight. Once written he threw them aside, and even forgot sometimes that they were his. The "*Erbkönig*" was written on the spur of the moment, Schubert having just seen Goethe's ballad. He took it the same evening to the Konvikt, to try it over, for there was no piano at the house; but it was not very well received; the extraordinary harmonies and its originality were not understood.

His first mass was composed for the Parish Church, and first performed on Sunday, October 16, 1814. It was repeated ten days later at the Augustine Church. Franz conducted; his brother Ferdinand played the organ. Holzer led the choir, and Therese Grob — with whom it is supposed Schubert may for a short time have been in love — sang the soprano part; and Schubert's father was so proud that he presented the composer with a five-octave piano. Salieri was present, and claimed Schubert as his pupil, — a relation which Beethoven also gladly acknowledged.

A number of operas, composed unfortunately to wretched librettos, fell in this same period. Some of them are now fragmentary, owing to the ravages of a servant-girl, who, in that revolutionary year, 1848, could find no better fuel wherewith to light her fires than those precious but neglected scores.

Salieri is said to have given him many lessons, but to have advised him to avoid Goethe and Schiller's poems. He was wise enough to follow his own counsels. It was

through Goethe, especially, that he was inspired to the highest lyrical flights; and yet, strange to say, Goethe did not appreciate the honor. He neither expressed pleasure at the immortal alliance, nor even acknowledged the receipt of them. Fifteen years afterward, when it was too late, the famous Madame Schröder-Devrient sang to the gray-haired old man, and he suddenly awoke to the beauty of the "*Erlkönig*" music, and confessed that when thus sung he saw its completeness, which before had escaped him.

In 1816 a government school of music was established in connection with the new Normal Institute at Laybach, near Trieste. Schubert applied for the position of director, which carried with it a salary amounting to little over a hundred dollars. He failed to secure it, nor did he ever, in spite of several efforts and applications, hold any public place. It may be reasonably doubted whether, in fact, he was qualified by temperament or training to succeed in any such charge. His life was wholly private. He was not a master upon any instrument. He was a composer, pure and simple; even teaching music was irksome to him, and his pupils were few and far between.

In the autumn of this same year, having forsworn the duty of grounding infants in the mysteries of the German alphabet, we find him lodging in town with a young student of gentle birth, named Franz von Schober. "Fortunate is he who finds a true friend," wrote Schubert in his diary that summer. Schober was that true friend. Knowing Schubert's songs, he was anxious to make the composer's acquaintance, and when he saw how hampered he was by his drudgeries, proposed that they should live together. How happy he was, may be

judged from a letter written to him by his brother Ignaz, who was also a teacher, and never broke loose from the toils :—

“You fortunate man! How you are to be envied! You live in a sweet golden freedom; can give your musical genius free rein, can express your thoughts as you please, are loved, admired, idolized, while the rest of us are devoted, like so many wretched beasts of burden, to all the brutalities of a pack of wild youth, and, moreover, must be subservient to a thankless public, and under the thumb of a stupid priest.”

Another of Schubert's friends was the eccentric, gloomy poet, Mayrhofer, of whom Bauernfeld wrote :—

“Sickly was he, peevish-tempered;
Held aloof from gay companions,
Busied only with his studies,
Found in whist his recreation.
Earnest were his features, stony;
Never even laughed or jested.
Both his learning and behavior
With respect filled all us blackguards.
Little speech he made, but meaning
Weighted all the words he uttered.
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Only music could enchant him
Sometimes from his stony dulness;
And when Schubert's songs were given,
Then his nature grew more cheerful.”

It was a curious companionship between the light-hearted Schubert, fond of practical jokes and all sorts of buffooneries (his favorite amusement was to sing the “*Erlkönig*” through a fine-toothed comb!) and the misanthropic poet whose career was so pathetic. Schubert set more than fifty of his poems to music, else had they been wholly forgotten. The two even lived

together for some time in quarters which Mayrhofer thus describes: —

“It was in a gloomy street. House and room had suffered from the tooth of time; the roof was somewhat sunken, the light cut off by a great building opposite; a played-out piano, a small bookcase — such was the room, which, with the hours that we spent there, can never pass from my memory.”

Still a third of Schubert's new friends was Johann Michael Vogl, a tenor singer of the Vienna opera-house. Spaun, his early friend of the Konvikt, claims to have introduced them, and tells how the awkward, retiring, and blushing Schubert met the famous and rather haughty singer “with a clumsy bow and scrape, and a few disconnected, stammering words.”

Vogl, perfectly at his ease, came into the room, which was littered with music. He picked up some of the songs and hummed them through. Then, when he took his departure, he slapped Schubert on the back, and said: “There is something in you, but you are too little of a player, too little of a charlatan. You squander your beautiful thoughts without bringing them to anything.”

Nevertheless, he came back, and soon found himself under their spell. He was a man of culture and refinement; his hints were of real value to the composer; and as he had the *entrée* to all the great houses of Vienna, and sang many of Schubert's best songs, it was not long before they were well known in society. Vogl, in his diary, speaks of them as “truly divine inspirations,” “utterances of a musical clairvoyance,” exemplifications of the phrases: “speech, poetry in tones,” “words in harmony,” “thoughts clad in music.”

Vogl understood how to enter into the very spirit of

Schubert's songs. The latter wrote his brother Ferdinand: "The way in which Vogl sings and I accompany, the way in which for the moment we seem to be one, is something quite new in the experience of these people."

In 1817 Rossini's music was introduced into Vienna; Schubert was inclined to make fun of it, and even wrote a travesty of the "*Tancredi*" overture, but it decidedly influenced his compositions, as may be noted in his Sixth Symphony. Perhaps it was due to Rossini's all-conquering popularity that the quantity, but not the quality, of his compositions fell off during this and the succeeding year.

How he lived during this time is not known. His friendship with Schober was not broken, but the arrival of Schober's brother deprived him of his lodgings. He had no pupils, and the only money that so far he had earned by his music was only about twenty dollars by the sale of a cantata written and performed some years before.

In the summer of 1818 Schubert became music-teacher in the family of Count Johann Esterhazy. This position gave him a winter home in Vienna, and a summer home at Zelész on the Waag, and an honorarium of two gulden for each lesson that he gave the three children. The whole family was musical, and the great baritone singer, Baron von Schönstein, who afterwards sang many of Schubert's songs with great applause, was a frequent member of their home concerts, at which they sang Haydn's "Seasons," Mozart's "Requiem," and other things, including works by Schubert himself, for he writes his friend Schober that he is "composing like a god."

He doubtless yearned for the freedom and independ-

ence of his humbler life, and in September he writes again, declaring mournfully that "not a soul there has any feeling for true art, unless the Countess be an exception. So I am alone," he adds, "with my beloved, and must hide her in my room, in my piano, in my breast. Although this often makes me sad, on the other hand, it elevates me all the more."

Sir George Grove inclines to think that he was more at home in the servants' quarters than in the Countess's salon. He was there, perhaps, treated with more consideration. He writes: "The cook is rather jolly; the ladies' maid is thirty; the housemaid very pretty, often quite social; the nurse a good old soul; the butler my rival. The two grooms are better suited for the horses than for us. The Count is rather rough; the Countess haughty, yet with a kind heart; the Countesses nice girls. . . . I am good friends with all these people."

It has been surmised that Schubert fell in love with the youngest daughter, Caroline von Esterhazy. There is a story, not well authenticated, that once when she was teasing him because he had never dedicated any of his works to her, he replied, "Why should I, when all I do is consecrated to you?" But the Countess Caroline was only eleven that summer of 1818, and though she played the piano well (Schubert wrote some of his best four-handed pieces for her), any love which he felt would be ideal. But his love must at any rate have been ideal.

He was a little man, not much over five feet tall, with rotund figure, fat arms, and such short fingers that he could not master the technique of his own pieces; his complexion was bad; his nose insignificant; the beauty of his eyes hidden by the spectacles which he wore even

in bed. What hope could such a *peasant* have of winning the love of a lovely Austrian countess of the proud race of Esterhazy!

He longed to get back to "beloved Vienna," where, as he wrote his brother, all that was dear and valuable to him was to be found. It is interesting to know that his stepmother looked out for his comfort. He thanks her "motherly care" for sending him pocket-handkerchiefs, stockings, and cravats.

The following winter was spent in gay companionship with congenial friends. Having brought back from Hungary plenty of money, — his earnings for July alone were two hundred florins, equivalent to about forty dollars, — Schubert was "without anxiety." He was loved by all the circle that gathered at Schober's rooms or some convenient coffee-house. They called him "the Tyrant," because he made Joseph Hüttenbrenner fetch and carry for him; they called him "Kanevas," because when any new man joined them, he always asked, in his quaint Viennese dialect, "Can he do anything?" They called him "Schwammerl" (toadstool) or "Bertl." They were rough and noisy; they indulged in sham fights; they howled and played practical jokes; they drank deep, and staggered home late at night.

Marvellous contradiction! Strange dual nature of man! Even amid these wild orgies what lovely songs were born, as water-lilies, pure and white, grow from the filth and ooze of the pond! Thus once in a beer-garden Schubert picked up a volume of Shakspeare that some literary friend had laid on a table. The song, "Hark! hark, the lark!" met his eye. He exclaimed: "Such a lovely melody has come to me! If only I had some music-paper!"

A few staves were hastily drawn in pencil on the back of a bill-of-fare, and amid such incongruous surroundings one of the most perfect of songs was jotted down. Yet Schubert exclaimed, "My music is the product of my genius and my poverty, and that which I have written in my greatest distress is what the world seems to like the best."

He was naturally shy, free from self-conceit, utterly lacking in jealousy; what he sometimes was in his cups, is shown by a rather comical incident told by his friend Bauernfeld.

It was late at night. Schubert had been drinking a good deal, when two musicians from one of the theatres dropped into the beer-room, and spying the composer, asked him to compose something for their special instruments. Schubert leaped to his feet, drained a last glass of punch, pushed his hat over his ear, and drew up threateningly against the two men, one of whom was a head and shoulders taller: —

"Artists, you?" he cried. "You are musicians, and nothing else. One of you bites the brass mouthpiece of your wooden stick, and the other puffs out his cheeks over his French horn. Call that art? That's a mere trade. . . . You, artists! You are blowers and fiddlers, one and all. *I* am an artist! I, I am Schubert, Franz Schubert, whom everybody knows and names, who has done great and beautiful things above your comprehension, and will do still more beautiful ones: cantatas and quartets, operas and symphonies. For I am not merely a composer of country waltzes [*Ländler*], as it says in the stupid paper, and as stupid fellows prate. I am Schubert, Franz Schubert, I would have you know, and if the word 'art' is spoken, it concerns me, and not you,

worms and insects, who want solo pieces — but I will never write them for you, and I know why, you creeping, gnawing worms which I would crush under foot — the foot of a man who reaches the stars — *Sublime feriam sidera vertice* — translate that! — yes, the stars, I say — while you poor, puffing worms wriggle in the dust!”

The men stared at him in utter amazement at this outburst. When Bauernfeld went to Schubert's room the next morning, he found everything in the direst disorder, an inkstand overturned, and a few aphorisms scratched down on paper.

Schubert tumbled out of bed somewhat shamefaced, and promised to atone for his rudeness by writing the solos for the virtuosos.

It must not be judged by this that he was an habitual sot. His habits were generally regular; his hours of labor arduous. A beautiful poem, or such music as Beethoven's C-sharp minor quartet, threw him almost into paroxysms of excitement. It was like the rock touched by Moses' rod: the fountains gushed forth. The finer fibre in him was hidden, but it was there, ready to vibrate in unison with all harmony. The orgies — which were less culpable at that time — were simply those of good fellowship, and not wanton.

Schubert's earnings at Zelész were sufficient to allow him the next summer to make an excursion into Upper Austria with Vogl, who introduced him into the circle of his family and friends. Several letters dated at Steyr and Linz describe the delights of this excursion: the fascinating scenery, the jovial comradeship, the music and dances. Schubert was famous for his facility in improvising waltzes by the hour when among those

whom he knew well. His stubbed little fingers flew like lightning over the keys. He played with wonderful expression — “like a composer,” said some one who heard him — and made the piano sing like a bird.

In February, 1819, a song of Schubert's was sung for the first time in public. Two years later, after a semi-public performance of the “*Erlkönig*,” a hundred copies were subscribed for, and the great song was engraved and printed “on commission,” no publisher being willing to incur the risk. In nine months eight hundred copies were sold. This was the entering wedge, and it was followed by a succession of eighteen in five numbers, dedicated to men who had been kind to him: Salieri, Count Dietrichstein, the Patriarch of Venice, and other noblemen. The success was so great that the Diabellis were now willing to publish others on their own account. Had Schubert been wise, or his friends looked out for his interests, his future might have been assured. He foolishly sold his first twelve works for eight hundred silver gulden (\$400). One single song in Opus Four — “The Wanderer” — brought its publishers between 1822 and 1861 upwards of \$13,000. Moreover, he mortgaged his future works in the same short-sighted way.

About this time he was offered the position of organist to the Court Chapel; but, much to the distress of his father, he refused it knowing that his erratic and unsystematic habits would not conduce to his success. “Absolute freedom of movement was more necessary to Schubert than to the fish in the water!” exclaims one of his biographers. Perhaps also his attraction to the theatre stood in his way.

His great desire was to write an opera. But, poor fellow! Such wretched librettos he had! He himself,

whom Liszt called "the most poetical musician that ever was," could be inspired by a placard; and his judgment as to the merit of poetry was most unfortunate. Not one of his many operas was successful; some were not heard till years after he died. Such was the case with "*Alfonso and Estrella*," begun during a visit with Schober at the castle of Ochsenburg—where in company with "a princess, two countesses, three baronesses," and other music-loving friends, he spent a delightful time in the autumn of 1821. This opera was resurrected by Liszt in Weimar, twenty-six years later; but not until 1881, with a new libretto in place of the inane and stupid one written by Schober, did it meet with success when given at Karlsruhe.

With this opera is connected a curious story concerning Schubert and Weber. Schubert, like Spohr, could see no reason for Weber's popularity. He declared that "*Euryanthe*" contained not one original melody.

"The '*Freischütz*,'" he said, "was so tender and sincere, it charmed by its liveliness; but in '*Euryanthe*' little sentiment is to be found."

Weber heard of his criticism, and exclaimed, "Let the snob learn something before he judges me."

Schubert, to prove that he knew something, took the score of "*Alfonso and Estrella*" to Weber, who glanced through it, and said slightly, "I tell you, puppies and the first operas are drowned!"

Such was not a very harmonious beginning; but Schubert was good-natured and generous, and the two masters of romantic song parted amicably, and Weber made some attempt to have the new opera played at Dresden.

Another bitter disappointment came in the rejection

of his more ambitious three-act opera "*Fierabras*," — a thousand pages of beautiful music, written in four months, to a wretched libretto. He shows in his letters signs of low spirits. He speaks of his brightest hopes come to naught; of his health broken beyond repair; of being "the most unlucky, the most wretched man in the world;" he declares that he goes to sleep every night hoping never to wake again.

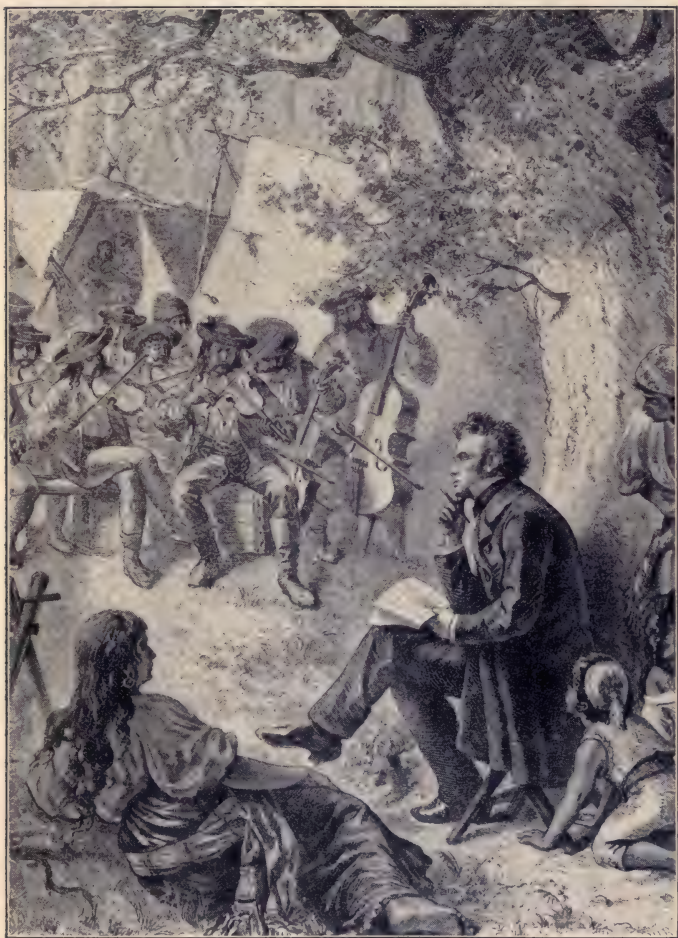
Schubert had been ill: indeed, several of his loveliest songs (*die Schöne Müllerin* series) had been written in the hospital. But in the summer of 1824 he was with the Esterhazys again, among the Hungarian mountains; and the wholesome country life entirely restored his health. While he was with the Esterhazys he became familiar with the fascinating melodies so characteristic of the Hungarian peasantry and which he reproduced with so much originality.

He felt his isolation even more than before, and writes his regret that he had been for a second time enticed into the "deep Hungarian land" where he had not a single man with whom to speak a sensible word.

Yet we find him enjoying walks with Baron Schönstein, and composing splendid piano pieces and songs for the young countesses now in the very bloom of life.

May not the complaints which fill his letters be the outcome of that hopeless love for the Countess Caroline? It seems reasonable.

Renewed health, plenty of money, — wasted in playing the Cræsus for the benefit of his impecunious friends, whom he fed and treated to concerts, — as, for instance, taking Bauernfeld to hear Paganini, "that infernally divine fiddler;" evenings at Bogner's Café, on the Singers' Street, where wine flowed in streams; mornings



FRANZ SCHUBERT IN HUNGARY, LISTENING TO THE WEIRD MELODIES
OF A GYPSY BAND AND TAKING NOTES OF THE MUSIC.

devoted to work; letters from distant publishers inquiring about his terms; and finally five summer months passed with Vogl "in a delightful mixture of music, friends, fine scenery, lovely weather, and absolute ease and comfort," — all this went to make the year 1825 one of the happiest of his life. What good spirits he felt may be judged from his letters, which were more numerous and lengthy that summer than at any other time, — full of odd rhymes and quaint conceits, as well as vivid descriptions and sound common sense.

Early in 1826, in consequence of the death of Salieri, the vice kapellmeistership of the Royal Chapel became vacant. It bore a salary of a thousand gulden, and free lodgings. Schubert applied for it. It was given to Weigl. Schubert said: "I should have liked that place, but since it is given to such a worthy man, I ought to be content."

He failed also to obtain the post of director at the Kärnthnerthor Theatre, owing, as some say, to his obstinacy in refusing to alter his test-piece. Schubert's great fault was a dogged obstinacy, which even his best friends could not overcome. This year six publishers issued over a hundred of Schubert's works, some fairly well paid for, others at incredibly low prices. Often he got only twenty cents apiece for his songs."

Schubert was one of the torch-bearers at Beethoven's funeral. This was right and proper. The younger had long worshipped him from afar. Though they lived in the same city, Schubert rarely met with him personally. The first time he was so confused that he could not write a word on that ever-ready tablet. Beethoven, who cared little for the works of his contemporaries, was pleased however with some variations which Schubert dedicated

to him. On his death-bed he was shown some of Schubert's songs, and was amazed to learn that he had written more than five hundred. "Truly he has the divine fire in him!" he exclaimed; and he often spoke of him, regretting that he had not known him sooner.

At the last Schubert visited the dying man twice, and Beethoven is said to have exclaimed, "Franz has my soul."

On the way back from the funeral, Schubert went into a tavern with several friends, and drank two glasses of wine; one to Beethoven's memory, the other to the one that should follow next. He drank to his own spirit.

Once more Schubert enjoyed an outing with congenial friends at Gratz, — "excursions and picnics by day through a beautiful country, and at night incessant music; good eating and drinking, clever men and pretty women, no fuss, a little romping, a good piano, a sympathetic audience, and no notice taken of him." This was in the autumn of 1827.

The next year he composed "his greatest known symphony, his greatest and longest mass, his first oratorio, his finest piece of chamber music, three noble piano concertos," and a number of splendid songs including the "Swan Song." In March, the anniversary of Beethoven's death, he gave his first and only public concert. It consisted wholly of his own compositions, and netted him over one hundred and fifty dollars, so that "money was as plenty as blackberries" with him. Most of it went to pay his debts. That year he got only thirty florins for a piano quintet, and only twenty-one for his splendid E-flat trio.

When summer came he felt too poor to make a proposed journey to Styrian Gratz. If he had gone, it might

have saved his life. He stayed in hot Vienna; though in October he enjoyed a three-days' walking tour with his brother Ferdinand, with whom he was now living in the Neue Wieden suburb. They visited Haydn's old residence and grave at Eisenstadt, and the out-of-door life did him good. He had been ailing for some time. On his return the bad symptoms reappeared, — giddiness and rush of blood to the head.

Nevertheless, he determined to work on counterpoint, his deficiency in which had been brought to his notice by study of Händel's works. He made arrangements to take lessons of Sechter, an authority on the subject.

The lessons were never begun. On the eleventh of November, he wrote Schober that he had not eaten anything for eleven days. On the fourteenth he took to his bed; on the nineteenth he died. Shortly before his death he tried to raise himself up, and with feeble voice sang that pathetic part of the "*Erlkönig*" where death is mentioned. He died fearlessly, peacefully; his face was calm.

By his own request he was buried near Beethoven, and over his grave was erected a monument bearing an inscription to the effect that "Music had buried a rich treasure, but still fairer hopes."

Schubert and Beethoven now both rest in the great Central Cemetery of Vienna. The reburial of the former took place in September, 1888, with most impressive ceremonies.

He who had left as his sole earthly possessions a few old clothes valued at only fifty florins, and "a quantity of old music" inventoried after his death as worth about ten florins (\$2), — had to wait a generation before his greatness was realized. Schumann was one of the first to discover the buried treasures of his genius.

Now Schubert stands second only to Beethoven, and is by some regarded as by nature greater even than Beethoven. No one finds his "heavenly length" too long. Every scrap that bears his name is prized. His pencil, says Schumann, "was dipped in moonbeams and in the flame of the sun." Richest in fancy, most spontaneous in musical creation, his only fault was lack of proportion.

He himself predicted that he should be in his old age like Goethe's harper, — creeping and begging at the gates. His life was cut short like his great unfinished symphony, and yet such was his fecundity that even now the stream of Schubert publications is still flowing. What inspiration he has been to other musicians, may be seen in the multitude of transcriptions of his songs, the influence which his style has exerted.

Taken all in all, he was certainly the most remarkable composer who ever lived. "There never has been one like him, and there never will be another." He was "the last star that glittered in the musical firmament of Vienna."

LOUIS SPOHR.

(1784-1859.)

"SPOHR," says one of his critics, "was a master who, during a period critical for its individual and national development, led German art with courage and lofty idealism, in the right direction, and preserved it from harm."

The career of Spohr offers a decided contrast to those of most of the great musicians. He found appreciation wherever he went. He was singularly happy in his domestic relations. Success crowned him, and after a long life he died full of honors — almost an autocrat of German music.

His grandfather was a clergyman in the district of Hildesheim, where the famous ever-blossoming roses grew. His father, Karl Heinrich, to escape punishment at school, ran away at the age of sixteen; and, after an adventurous life, succeeded in establishing himself as a physician at Brunswick, where he married the daughter of the pastor of the Aegyptian Church. The young couple resided at the parsonage. Here Louis, or Ludwig, was born on April 5, 1784. Two years later his father became district physician and ultimately *Ober-appellationsgerichtsrat*, or judge of appeals, at Seesen, where four brothers and a sister were born.

Both parents were musical, so that Louis's feeling and love for the art were early awakened. When he was four, a terrific thunderstorm came up. The house grew dark. The rain poured down. The boy sat in a corner troubled and frightened. But soon the clouds lifted; the deep organ tone of the thunder sounded far in the distance; the sun burst forth, and the room was flooded with light. A little bird hanging in the window broke forth in song, and Spohr's young heart was filled with strange emotion. It was the awakening of the spirit of music. This same year he began to sing duets with his mother. His father bought him a violin, on which, without instruction, he tried to "pick out" the melodies that he heard. Soon after, he took lessons from a Mr. Riemenschneider, and was allowed to share in the evening music. With his father and mother he played trios for flute, piano, and violin.

An *émigré*, named Dufour, came to Seesen in 1790, and supported himself by giving music and French lessons. Under his direction Louis wrote some violin duets, which the two executed together to the delight of their friends. His father long preserved these youthful effusions, which were naturally full of musical bad grammar and yet were not wholly formless or unmelodious. As a reward he was presented with a gala-dress, consisting of a crimson jacket with steel buttons, yellow breeches, and laced boots with tassels.

Dufour, astonished at the lad's ability and rapid progress, urged his parents to make him a musician instead of a doctor; and it was decided to send him to Brunswick, where he might receive more thorough instruction.

A difficulty stood in the way. He could not go until he was confirmed, and according to a law in that Duchy



SPOHR.

confirmation could not be granted before the age of fourteen. Accordingly, he was given over to the charge of his grandfather at Woltershausen. The kindly but strict old minister did not approve of the plan ; but he taught his grandson religion and other things, and let him walk throughout the winter twice a week to Alefeld, where the precentor helped him with his music. Halfway stood an old mill, where he often stopped and played to the miller's wife, who liked to treat him to coffee, cake, and fruit.

At Brunswick he boarded in the family of a rich baker, and studied the violin with *Kammermusicus* Kunisch ; and harmony with an old organist named Hartung. "The latter," says Spohr in his autobiography, "corrected his essays in composition so unmercifully, and scratched out so many ideas that to him seemed sublime, that he lost all desire to submit anything further to him."

Lessons in theory were soon ended, owing to Hartung's illness. Henceforth in this department of his art Spohr was left to his own guidance. By reading works on harmony, and studying scores, he learned to write correctly, and even appeared at a Katharine school concert with an original composition for the violin.

Shortly after he was invited to take part at some subscription concerts, and was mightily pleased with his first honorarium as an artist. He also sang soprano in the perambulations of the school chorus through the town.

The best violinist of the Brunswick orchestra was the director Maucourt. With him Spohr studied for nearly a year, until his father, finding the expenses of his growing family too great, determined to send him to Hamburg, for the purpose of giving concerts there.

Provided with several letters of introduction he went "full of hopes and high spirits," ready to conquer the world. But he found that the possession of a great name, or else of considerable means, was necessary to get a hearing in the big, busy city; and, moreover, it was summer, and most of the influential people were at their country residences. All this he learned of Professor Büsching, the head of the commercial college where his father had taught when a youth.

Young Spohr was so discouraged that he packed up his violin and sent it back to Brunswick, whither he himself returned on foot. At first he was cast down by the thought that his enterprising father would reproach him for his lack of energy; then the thought struck him that the Duke of Brunswick had once played the violin, and would perhaps recognize his ability.

He accordingly wrote a petition, and, waiting for a good opportunity, handed it to the Duke in person as he was walking in the palace park. The Duke read it, and asked him a few questions which he answered with characteristic readiness. He was commanded to repair to the palace at eleven the next morning. The groom addressed him in a supercilious manner, but announced him. Spohr was so indignant that he burst forth: "Your serene Highness, your servant insults me. I must protest earnestly against being addressed in such a way!"

The Duke was greatly amused, and assured him that the groom should not offend again.

It was arranged for Spohr to play at the next concert in the Duchess's apartments. The Duchess was more fond of ombre than of music; and usually at her concerts a thick carpet was spread to deaden the sound, and

the orchestra were bidden to play as softly as possible. This time, however, cards were banished, and the Duke himself was present.

Spohr played his best, knowing that his fate depended on it. After he had finished, the Duke patted him on the shoulder, and said, "You have talent; I will take care of you."

Thus in August, 1799, he was appointed kammer-musicus, with a salary of a hundred thalers a year and the duty of playing at court concerts and at the theatre. From that time forth he was enabled to pay his own way, and even to help his brother Ferdinand obtain a musical education.

The Duke kept watch over his progress and was often present at the concerts when he was announced to play some new work. One time when the Duke was not present, and the game of ombre was in full swing, he tried a new violin concerto of his own, and forgot the Duchess's prohibition. While he was playing with the greatest zeal, a lackey suddenly arrested his arm and whispered :

"Her Grace sends me to order you not to scrape away so furiously."

Spohr played louder than ever, which resulted in his receiving a rebuke from the court marshal. He complained to the Duke, who laughed heartily and then asked him which of the great violinists of the day he would prefer as a teacher. Spohr immediately named Viotti, called "the father of modern violin playing," who was then living in London. Viotti, who had discovered that the English liked wine better than music, wrote back that he had become a merchant and could not receive any pupils.

The next application was made to Ferdinand Eck of

Paris; but he too refused to take any pupils, having married a rich countess with whom he lived on the fat of the land. He suggested his brother, Francis Eck, who was then travelling through Germany. Francis Eck came to Brunswick, played at court; and it was arranged for Spohr to accompany him on his artistic tour as a pupil for a year, the Duke paying for the instruction and half of the travelling expenses.

They set forth in April, 1802, and reached St. Petersburg toward the end of December. Spohr's diary and autobiography give interesting pictures of their journey and adventures.

At Hamburg, he lost his heart to a charming Miss Lütgens, who, though only thirteen, was a born coquette. She had curly hair, bright brown eyes, and a dazzling white neck. Spohr, whose allegiance was divided between painting and music, took a miniature likeness of her; but her coquetry for him spoiled all the pleasure of her acquaintance.

At Strelitz, where they spent the summer, he worked assiduously with Eck, who took great pains with him. Their relations were those of friends and comrades, rather than teacher and scholar. Here Spohr finished his first violin concerto. During an illness which overtook Eck, Spohr became acquainted with two beautiful young women, who for a time deceived him as to their real character. It was a romantic and rather pathetic adventure, though it ended without any serious consequences.

Spohr, who was a handsome man of gigantic frame and herculean constitution, was extremely attractive to the fair sex, and his own feelings, though kept under excellent control, were easily excited. He says himself,

"The young artist from his earliest youth was very susceptible to female beauty, and already when a boy he fell in love with every pretty woman."

At Mitava, Spohr played for the first time in the presence of his teacher, and in his place. Eck was requested to accompany a young pianist in one of Beethoven's violin sonatas; but, not being a ready reader, refused.

Spohr offered to take the part, and his skill at sight-reading stood him in good service. They stayed at Mitava till December, and Spohr had then the opportunity of hearing for the first time many of the master-pieces of Mozart and Beethoven.

The journey from Narva, where the governor detained them to play at an evening party, to Petersburg, occupied six days and five nights. The contrast between the magnificent city in all its winter gayety, and the sordid huts which they had seen on their long and monotonous journey, greatly impressed him.

At Petersburg, Eck so pleased the Empress that he was engaged as solo violinist in the Imperial Orchestra, at a salary of thirty-five hundred rubles. Spohr made the acquaintance of all the famous musicians, including the Irishman John Field and the Italian Clementi—who at that time were reaping a golden harvest at the Russian capital. He heard also the strange, crazy violinist Titz, and the forty hornists of the Imperial orchestra, who had each only one note to blow. They played an overture by Gluck "with a rapidity and exactness which would have been hard for stringed instruments." Spohr adds: "The *adagio* of the overture was more effective than the *allegro*, for it must be always unnatural to execute such quick passages with

these living organ pipes, and one could not help thinking of the thrashings which they must have received."

At a performance of Haydn's "Seasons" the orchestra consisted of seventy violins. Spohr was present during the festivities of carnival, "the mad week" as it was called. He describes the snow mountains and the breaking up of the ice in the Neva. He was also in Petersburg at the time of the jubilee commemorating the founding of the city by Peter the Great.

In June, Spohr took leave of his beloved teacher, whom he was destined never to see again, and in company with Leveque, the director of an orchestra of serfs belonging to a Russian noble, set sail for Lübeck. They were greatly buffeted by contrary winds, and the trying voyage lasted three weeks.

Shortly after his return, he played at a concert before the Duke and a numerous audience, and was so overwhelmed with applause that he remembered it always as one of the happiest days of his life. He was appointed first violin with an addition salary of two hundred thalers.

In January, 1804, Spohr started for Paris with his friend Bencke, intending to give concerts there. Just as they were entering Göttingen he discovered that his trunk had been stolen from the back of the carriage. It contained not only his manuscripts, his clothes and linen, and a considerable sum of money, but most precious of all a splendid Guarnerius violin, which one of his admirers had presented to him in Petersburg. It was never recovered. The next day the police found an empty trunk and violin-case in a field. Only the bow remained, clinging to the cover of the case.

Imagine Spohr's despair ! But he was of a sunny and philosophic disposition. He borrowed a Stainer violin of an acquaintance, and gave his first concert outside of Brunswick. The story of the lost violin helped to fill the hall, and he had excellent success ; but he was obliged to give up the "artistic tour." Not even the best violin in Brunswick, which the Duke's munificence enabled him to purchase, could take the place of the perfect instrument which he had lost.

The next autumn he started on a new tour through Germany. At Leipzig, he selected one of Beethoven's new quartets to play at a private party ; but the music was altogether too fine for the audience. Before he left town, however, he was enabled to make the Beethoven quartets really understood and popular.

His concerts at Leipzig established his reputation throughout Germany. The Councillor Rochlitz wrote in his musical journal that Herr Spohr might doubtless take rank among the most eminent violinists of the day.

At Berlin, Spohr first heard the young Meyerbeer, then only thirteen, who was exciting so much attention by his wonderful execution on the pianoforte. Spohr had meantime lost his heart again to the beautiful Rosa Alberghi, who had sung in several of his concerts and even accompanied him with her mother to Berlin. Rosa more than reciprocated his passion ; but though, as he said, "she was an amiable, unspoiled girl, richly endowed by nature," her education had been somewhat neglected, and her bigoted devotion to her own church began to repel him. He therefore avoided a declaration, and when they bade each other farewell, he had so schooled himself that he did not lose his self-control,

while Rosa burst into tears, flung herself into his arms, and pressed into his hands a card with the letter R worked upon it with thread made of her raven black tresses.

When Rosa with her mother afterwards spent a few days with Spohr's parents, and confessed her love for the young musician, they took it for granted that the two were betrothed, and were very indignant at Spohr's letter denying it. His father declared he was a fool to refuse such a charming girl.

She afterwards entered a convent.

In June, 1805, Spohr was invited to Gotha to play at a concert in celebration of the Duchess's birthday. His playing so delighted Baron von Leibnitz, the musical intendant, and the Duchess, that in spite of his youth, he was immediately appointed concert director to the Ducal Court with a salary of about five hundred thalers.

At Gotha, where his engagement opened most auspiciously, he became acquainted with the charming Dorette Scheidler, who was a skilled performer on the harp and piano. She also played the violin, but Spohr was old-fashioned in his notions, and considered it an instrument unbecoming for women. She therefore relinquished the practice of it. He wrote for her a concerted sonata for violin and harp, which they practised together. "They were happy hours," writes Spohr. One day after they had played it before the court, and were driving home, he found courage to say, "Shall we not thus play together for life?"

She burst into tears and sank into his arms. Then he led her to her mother, who gave them her blessing in the proper and conventional manner.

They were married in the Palace Chapel, and thus

began a happy and congenial union which lasted for almost thirty years.

The principal events of this period were connected with the concert tours which they undertook together almost every year, everywhere meeting with brilliant success. Thus in 1812, the same year in which he composed his sacred oratorio, "The Last Judgment," they went to Leipzig, Prague, and Vienna; in 1816 they visited Switzerland, and went to Italy where they spent many months; in 1820 they made their first journey to England, and Mrs. Spohr played for the last time upon the harp. From that time forth she devoted herself to the piano-forte.

In 1813 Spohr was induced by Count Palffy to accept a three-years' engagement as leader and director of the orchestra in the theatre "An der Wien," at a salary more than three times what both he and his wife received at Gotha. Through the Count's munificence he was enabled to engage excellent artists, and soon his orchestra was regarded as the best in Vienna if not in Germany. This position gave him also opportunity to carry out his ambition of writing an opera, — a task which he had already several times attempted, but without satisfying his ideal. The young poet, Theodor Körner, had agreed to furnish him with a libretto, but this plan was interrupted by Körner's sudden departure from Vienna to fight and to die for his country, the victim of patriotism and unrequited love.

A poet by the name of Bernard offered him a version of "Faust," and Spohr composed the music in less than four months. It was immediately accepted by Count Palffy, but owing to later disagreements was not produced in Vienna for some years. It afterwards became

popular throughout Germany, but is now seldom given, having been superseded by Gounod's more poetic work.

One of Spohr's great admirers, Herr von Tost, immediately struck a curious bargain with him which was to last for three years. Herr Tost was anxious to be admitted to the musical society of Vienna. He agreed to pay Spohr thirty ducats for the exclusive possession of any new quartet, and proportional sums for more complicated pieces. At the end of the three years the manuscripts were to be returned to the composer. Spohr was thus enabled to get considerable ready money and furnish his new house luxuriously, and Herr von Tost was soon seen everywhere in Vienna with his portfolio of quartets. Unfortunately he soon lost his money, and the arrangement came to an end.

During Spohr's stay in Vienna he became acquainted with Beethoven, who often visited at his house, and was "very friendly with Dorette and the children." Spohr says that his opinions regarding music were always so decided as to admit of no contradiction. Fond as Spohr was of "the poor deaf maestro's" earlier compositions, he was unable to relish his later works, including even the Fifth (C-minor) Symphony, which he declared "did not form a classic whole." The Ninth Symphony he regarded as so trivial that he could not understand how such a genius could have written it!

Count Palffy proved to be a disagreeable patron, and threw all sorts of difficulties and annoyances in Spohr's way, so he terminated his engagement at the end of the second year. One of his experiences during his stay in Vienna he relates vividly in his autobiography. It was during the great inundation of 1814. His house was situated on the banks of the Wien River, and the water



A PAGANINI CONCERT.
Painting by G. Gatti.

rose almost to the second story. He spent the night composing a song, and occasionally went to the piano. His landlord's family were on the floor above engaged in prayer, and were much disturbed at what they called "the Christless singing and playing of the Lutheran heretic!" Yet both Catholic and heretic escaped, and the world was richer by a song!

The summer following his departure from Vienna, he spent in Silesia at the mansion of Prince von Carolath. It was a very formal but pleasant existence, and when the Prince, who was a devoted Free Mason, though Freemasonry was then against the law, discovered that Spohr also belonged to the order, he almost embarrassed him with attentions.

Spohr describes his Italian tour with much enthusiasm, though he found little to praise in the domain of music. At Venice he met the famous wizard of the violin, the strange and mysterious Paganini. He tried in vain to induce him to play to him alone. Paganini refused, saying his style was calculated for the general public only, which confirmed Spohr in his impression that the other was a trickster. But they met in a public competition in 1816, and Spohr carried off the honors. Spohr himself played in a concert at Milan, and was hailed as one of the first of living violinists, even superior to Paganini himself, — "the first of singers on the violin."

Spohr's expenses in Italy were large, as he had his whole family with him, and they had frequent illnesses, and moreover they indulged in many excursions. At Rome he gave a concert which relieved their pressing necessities; but when they reached Geneva in the spring of 1817 their funds were completely exhausted, and for the first time in his life Spohr found himself compelled

to pawn some of his valuables. Pastor Gerlach, however, came to his aid, and advanced what money he needed, and even refused to take as security a diamond tiara presented to his wife by the Queen of Bavaria.

These meagre days, caused by the prevailing famine, did not last long. Their tour took them even into Holland, where they had abundant receipts. When they reached Amsterdam, Spohr was recalled to Germany by an offer to become director of music at Frankfurt. Here there was unfortunately a yearly deficit, and the directors had to practise economy, but Spohr succeeded in getting his "Faust," for which he wrote a new aria, brought out with good success. He also wrote his opera "Zelmira and Azor," and began one on "The Black Huntsman," which he generously abandoned when he found that Weber was engaged on the same subject. Yet the "*Freischütz*" did not appear till 1820.

Spohr's connection with the Frankfurt theatre was brought to a close in about two years, by the obstinacy and closeness of the president of directors, a merchant named Leers, who put all sorts of obstacles in his way. Spohr was not sorry to be free again, and immediately made arrangements to go to London, where he was already engaged for the concerts of the Philharmonic Society.

In London, which he reached after an extremely boisterous passage, Spohr created a great sensation by appearing in the street in a red waistcoat. It was shortly after the death of George III., and a general mourning had been officially ordered. He narrowly escaped a pelting from the street Arabs.

At the first concert he was exceptionally allowed to play his own compositions. He passed the ordeal tri-

umphantly. At a subsequent concert he was required to direct, and he created another sensation by beating time with a baton instead of leading with violin in hand, as had hitherto been the case. During this visit Spohr laid the foundation for his popularity in England, which was increased by every subsequent visit.

On his way back he made a trip to Paris, where the famous violinist Kreutzer (now remembered only by the fact that Beethoven dedicated a sonata to him!) was enjoying great vogue as a composer of ballet music. During his two months' visit Spohr played much in private, and gave a public concert which was successful, though, on account of his standing on his dignity, and refusing to solicit good notices, the press the next day was inclined to be critical.

In order to complete the musical education of his daughters, Spohr determined to remove to Dresden; but he was scarcely settled in his new apartments before Carl Maria von Weber, who had received an offer to go to Cassel as kapellmeister at the new theatre, and did not care to accept it, offered to recommend him in his place. It is curious to remember that the State revenues of Cassel were largely the result of the sale of the Hessian soldiers to the British during our Revolutionary War!

Thus it was that Spohr became engaged by the new Elector William II., at a life salary of two thousand thalers and certain artistic privileges.

The new engagement began on the first day of January, 1822, and continued with unbroken activity till he was pensioned off by the Elector of Hesse-Cassel in November, 1857.

For the court theatre he wrote his operas of "Jes-sonda" in 1823, "The Mountain Sprite" in 1825,

"Pietro von Albano" in 1827, "The Alchymist" (from the story by Washington Irving) in 1830, and his "Crusaders" in 1844. He was instrumental in founding the Society of St. Cecilia, of which the song-writer Curschman was one of the leading lights. For this society, though at the invitation of Rochlitz of Leipzig who sent him the text, Spohr wrote his oratorio "The Last Judgment," which afterwards entirely supplanted the earlier oratorio on the same subject. It was sung on Good Friday, 1826, with great success, before an audience of over two thousand persons, and it was shortly after given at the Rhenish festival at Düsseldorf, where it had to be repeated.

In February, 1831, Spohr celebrated his silver wedding with interesting music performed in a new music-room which he had built on his suburban place near the Cologne Gate. The same year he finished his great treatise on the study of the violin (*Die Violin-Schule*), by which it was thought at the time he would "insure eternal celebrity and add a new and beautiful leaf to the laurel wreath that encircled his brow."

The following year began a series of petty annoyances by the new Elector of Hesse-Cassel, who at first tried to close the theatre and dismiss all the singers, actors, and musicians. Spohr insisted on his rights, and in this he was supported by most of his colleagues and succeeded in maintaining their position. The Prince afterward seemed to take pleasure in opposing Spohr's interests, and utterly refused to give him leave of absence even when his application was indorsed by the royal house of England. These were mere minor annoyances, however.

In 1834 Mrs. Spohr died; but the gallant composer, while he still thought "with bitter sadness of the mo-

ment when he pressed the last kiss on her brow," within two years married Marianne, the eldest daughter of Councillor Pfeiffer of Cassel, who proved to be a partner such as he desired — "one capable of taking an interest in his musical labors." The Prince, who bore Pfeiffer ill-will owing to the part he had played in the first Hessian parliament, tried to interfere with the marriage, and only gave his consent at the last moment, at the same time requiring her to give a bond waiving all claim to a pension.

The year after his marriage he proposed to give a great music festival at Cassel, and perform among other things Mendelssohn's oratorio of "St. Paul" and his own oratorio of "The Last Judgment." After nearly all arrangements had been made, the Prince refused to allow it to take place during Whitsuntide, nor would he permit any scaffolding to be erected in the church, "as it would be unbecoming in the vicinity of the burial-vaults of the Electoral family!"

Neither would he permit "St. Paul" to be given on Whitsunday for the benefit of a relief fund. Consequently the whole scheme fell through. Afterwards, when he had practised the choruses of Bach's "Passion Music" for long months, and had it all ready for performance on Good Friday, the Prince again refused his permission, and yielded only when a clergyman certified that the music was "perfectly fitted for the church and the day."

He was so annoyed by such vexations as these that he almost decided to accept an appointment offered him as director of the Prague Conservatory. Owing to his wife's grief at leaving her friends, he resisted the temptation.

Strange as it may seem, Spohr was at first a great ad-

mirer of Wagner, and Wagner, on his side, was delighted with "the honorable, genuine old man," as he called him. He brought out "The Flying Dutchman," and wrote that he considered Wagner "the most gifted of all the dramatic composers of the day." What he would have thought of Wagner's later innovations, is a question. He himself was to a certain extent an innovator, and liked to try new inventions and give odd titles, though he could never disguise his own musical physiognomy. Robert Schumann, speaking of his so-called Historic Symphony, said: "Napoleon once went to a masked ball, but before he had been in the room a few moments, he folded his arms in his well-known attitude. 'The Emperor! The Emperor!' ran through the assembly. Just so, through the disguises of the symphony, one kept hearing 'Spohr! Spohr!' spoken in every corner of the room."

In 1843 Spohr was invited to England to conduct his new oratorio "The Fall of Babylon," at the Norwich festival. The Prince refused his consent in spite of the application of Lord Aberdeen and the Duke of Cambridge, who asked it as a personal favor, while the inhabitants of Norwich sent an immense petition. During his vacation, however, he went to London, and conducted it there with great success. The whole audience rose spontaneously from their seats to salute him. The Queen received him, and Prince Albert and the King of the Belgians were very polite to him. At a Sunday concert given in his honor, all the works performed were by him, and included his three double quartets, — the only ones at that time that had ever been written.

In 1844, Spohr, who had been the recipient of distinguished honors at Paris and at his native town of Bruns-

wick (where he conducted his "Fall of Babylon" in the church in which he had been baptized sixty years before), was invited to a great musical festival in New York City. His daughter Emily had already come to this country, and he would have been glad to accept, but the journey was too long and hazardous for a man of his age.

In 1847 occurred the twenty-fifth anniversary of Spohr's directorship of the Cassel theatre, and the day was celebrated with extraordinary festivities: serenades, congratulatory addresses, musical performances, and the presentation of laurel crowns and costly gifts.¹ Even the Prince who had just forbidden him to direct his oratorio at Vienna, though the request was countersigned by Metternich, gave him a higher official position.

The same year Mendelssohn's death occurred, and Spohr commemorated it by a festival in which the St. Cecilia Society sang twelve characteristic choruses by Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Hauptmann, Mendelssohn, and Spohr.

The year 1848, as every one knows, was full of revolutionary excitement. Spohr felt its influence. The excitement of politics was not favorable for composition, yet he wrote his great sextet significant of "the glorious uprising of the nations, for the liberty, unity, and grandeur of Germany."

The following year, during his convalescence from a severe fall on the ice, he wrote his ninth symphony, called the "Seasons," and later his seventh string-quintet.

In the summer of 1852 he started on his vacation tour through Italy without leave of absence. He

¹ This occasion gave rise to Spohr's autobiography, which he brought down to 1838.

arrived at Cassel before his vacation was over but was fined five hundred and fifty thalers for "the bold stroke," on which his friends had congratulated him so warmly. Such was the treatment which a man of Spohr's fame received from a petty prince who is known now only for having had Spohr in his employ.

In 1856 Spohr wrote his thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth quartets, but they did not satisfy him, and he would not allow them to be published; it was the same with a new symphony, which seemed to him unworthy of his reputation.

The year that Spohr was pensioned, and retired to private life, he had the misfortune to fall and break his left arm. Though the bone knit remarkably well, he had no more strength to play his beloved Stradivarius, and it was laid aside forever. He tried in vain to compose a requiem. The fountain of harmony was sealed to him, but he succeeded in composing music to one of Goethe's loveliest songs. This was his last composition.

He kept up to the end his generous instruction of talented young pupils, for which, like Liszt later, he would receive no compensation. No less than one hundred and eighty-seven pupils, many of whom became famous, called him master.

Toward the end of his life he still undertook short trips, and enjoyed as always natural scenery and the friendly intercourse with kindred spirits; but he began to find the excitement too much for him.

On the twenty-second of October, 1859, this "elegiac soul," as he has been called, quietly breathed his last, surrounded by his children and nephews to whom he had been such a loving friend.

Few men were ever more honored in life, few more

successful in all that they undertook. He found appreciation for every form of musical composition: songs, stringed and concerted music, operas, and oratorios. He was one of the greatest virtuosi that ever lived. He was a member of more than thirty musical societies. But his fame reached its climax in his own lifetime. Melodious and clear, sweet, graceful, as his compositions were, they have not the strength of immortality. They are too full of restless enharmonic changes, they show more talent than genius, and most of them are already forgotten.

Personally, his character was beyond reproach. Some people got the impression that he was coarse and churlish in his manners. Chorley, an English critic, speaks of his "bovine self-conceit." Never was reproach more unjust.

So independent was he, that he never in all his life dedicated one of his compositions to a prince; and on one occasion when, being invited to some court festivity, he had to appear in full dress, he wore a heavy overcoat though it was hot weather, so as not to display the orders on his coat. Independence, uprightness, honesty, were his characteristics. We cannot fail to agree with the eloquent words of Wagner, who at the news of his death wrote: —

"I let the whole world of music measure what freshness of power, what noble productiveness, vanished with the master's departure from life. He has ever impressed me as the last of that long list of noble, earnest musicians, whose youth was immediately irradiated by Mozart's brilliant sun, who with touching fidelity cherished the light put into their hands, like vestal virgins guarding the pure flame, and kept it against all the storms and tempests of life on the chaste altar. This beautiful service kept the man pure and noble; and if it be permitted me to express in one stroke what Spohr with inextinguishable clearness meant to me, I declare that he was an earnest, honest master in his art; the keynote of his life was faith

in his art, and his deepest inspiration sprang from the power of this faith. This earnest faith freed him from all personal pettiness; what he failed to comprehend, he put to one side without attacking it or persecuting it. This explains the coolness or bluntness so often ascribed to him. What he understood,—and a deep fine feeling for all that was beautiful was to be expected in the author of ‘*Jessonda*,’—that he loved and prized candidly and jealously, so soon as he recognized one thing in it; earnestness, serious treatment of art.”

With such beautiful words one master bids another hail and farewell.

MEYERBEER.

(1791 [4?]-1863.)

ACCORDING to the Sunday-school question-books, Tubal Cain was the first musician ; but, famous as were many of the sweet singers of Israel, from the time when the captive Hebrews hung their harps on the willows near the waters of Babylon down to the present century, the Jew has been an unknown quantity in the modern history of music.

With good reason, indeed, he left his harp still hanging on the willows. He had little cause to make music for the world.

But with the entrance of the Jew as an important factor into politics and finance, a change came about. It was discovered that there was some reason in Shylock's questions : —

“Hath not a Jew eyes ? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions ? Fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as a Christian is ? If you prick us, do we not bleed ? if you tickle us, do we not laugh ? if you poison us, do we not die ?”

The Jew grew rich, became a banker, was raised into the nobility ; once again Daniel stood behind the throne of the Pharaohs as prime minister to the king. What

wonder that under the warming sun of prosperity and social recognition, the Jew should again strike up the harp of his father David? Was not "liberty, equality, fraternity," the watchword of the day? And the Jew at last was admitted, grudgingly perhaps still, into the privileges of the Revolution.

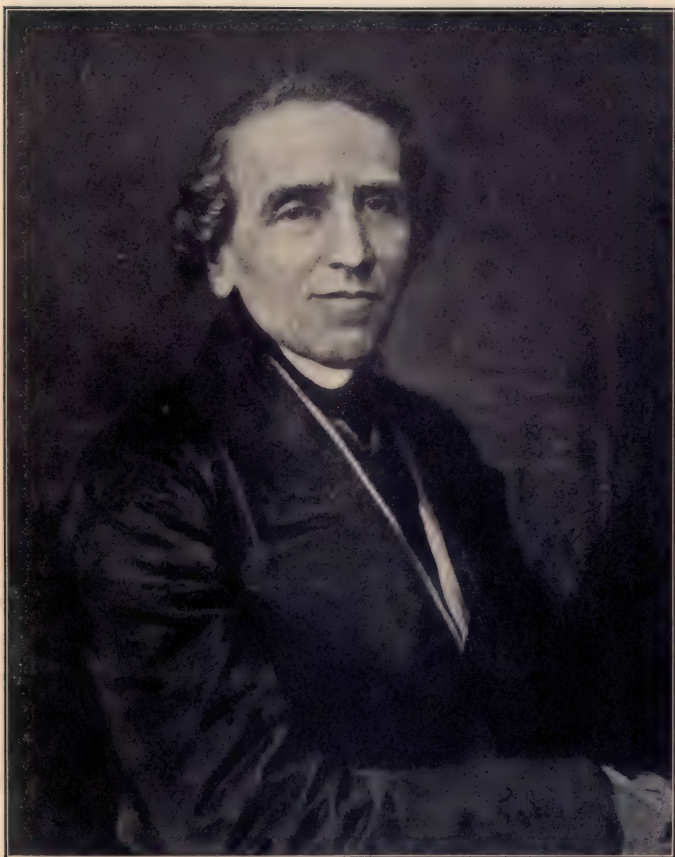
Yet how typical of the modern Jew was Meyerbeer as we see him born and educated a German, and transformed successively into an Italian of the Italians, and a Gaul of the Gauls!

Jakob Liebmann Beer was born at Berlin, on the fifth of September, 1791 — the year of Mozart's death.¹ His father laid the foundation of a large fortune in a sugar-refining establishment, and notably increased it by engaging in banking. He was a man of fine culture, and his house was a generous meeting-ground for poets, composers, artists, and scientists.

His mother, Amalie Wulf, daughter of the so-called Cræsus of Berlin, was beautiful, gentle, and gracious. Heinrich Heine, the sarcastic, scoffing poet, said of her: "Not a day passes without her helping some poor soul. Verily it seems as if she could not go to bed unless she had first done some noble deed. So she lavishes her gifts on people of all denominations, — Jews, Christians, Turks, and even on the wretchedest sorts of unbelievers. She is unwearied in well-doing, and seems to look upon this as her highest vocation."

Jakob was the oldest son. There were three others:

¹ Afterwards, to please a relative, and insure an inheritance, he adopted the name Meyer instead of Liebmann or Lipmann, and ultimately united the two names into the one by which he is known to the world, with the Italian for Jakob, or James, Giacomo Meyerbeer. The date of his birth rests in doubt. There is official basis for 1791; but some of his later biographers claim that it was really 1794.



MEYERBEER.

Painting from life by Gustav Richter.

Wilhelm became a famous astronomer; Michael's career as a poet was cut short by his untimely death in 1833.

Jakob very early showed his talent for music. He would catch any tune, and try to play it again on the piano, making up instinctively an accompaniment with his left hand. When he was four, he organized a little band of playmates with drums, fifes, and cymbals. People were amazed to see how cleverly he conducted from a sheet of paper on which he had scratched an imaginary score. His parents were delighted; and when he was five they intrusted him to the well-known Bohemian teacher and composer Franz Ignaz Lauska, under whom he made astonishing progress. When he was nine he played for the first time in public in one of the concerts which for many years the piano teacher Johann August Patzig had been in the habit of giving in his beautiful hall decorated with portraits of the old masters. The boy played Mozart's D-minor Concerto with brilliant success. From that time he was regarded as the best pianist in Berlin. His relations were justly proud of him, and one of them remarked one night, on returning from a lecture on astronomy, —

“Just think, our Beer has been already placed among the constellations. Our professor showed us one which in his honor was called *the little Beer!*”

His parents had a full-length portrait of the boy painted as a memorial of the occasion. The next year he was in demand as a concert pianist, and won great applause. The papers of the day printed poems in his honor, and the Abbé Vogler, who had been giving some organ recitals in Berlin on his way back from a tour to Denmark, heard him play at Tausch's concert, in February, 1801, was amazed, and predicted that the young

artist would become a great musician. This prophecy had great weight in Berlin. Though he practised seven or eight hours a day, his general education was not neglected. A resident tutor taught him French, Italian, and Latin.

In 1802 the famous Muzio Clementi, author of the *Gradus ad Parnassum* and so many studies that it was jokingly asserted, recently, that the commission established to count them had not yet reached the end of them, came to Berlin with his pupil, the gifted young Irishman John Field, on their way to Russia. They were guests at the Beers'. Clementi had given up teaching, but he was so delighted with the little musician that he offered to instruct him during his stay.

His teacher in harmony was the stern and strict Zelter, the friend and correspondent of Goethe. Zelter had a singing-school which Jakob and his brother Heinrich attended, thus gaining familiarity with the masterpieces of song. But it is said Zelter was too rough and coarse in his treatment of the delicately organized young genius, who after some time was transferred to the care of Bernard Anselm Weber, the royal kapellmeister, an excellent composer but an easy-going, negligent teacher. Under him Meyerbeer composed a number of cantatas and other pieces for family festivals, but they are all lost.

Musical knowledge is based on counterpoint. The test of counterpoint is ability to write correct fugues. Kapellmeister Weber was so pleased with a fugue brought him by his pupil, that he sent it to Vogler.

It was long before an answer came, but not from neglect. The Abbé, not content with merely acknowledging the production, took time and pains to write a treatise

on fugues in general. Then he analyzed Meyerbeer's work, picking it to pieces ruthlessly. Finally he took the original themes, and wrote the fugue as it should be, or as he thought it should be. The treatise was published after his death, but unfortunately critics discover that the so-called "Master's Fugue" is not so very far superior to the scholar's.

Meyerbeer was not discouraged. Adopting Vogler's principles, he wrote a new fugue, and sent it to him. This was the Abbé's grandiloquent reply: "*Art opens to you a great future. Come to me at Darmstadt. You shall be treated as a son, and at the very fountain-head you shall quench your thirst for musical knowledge.*"

Meyerbeer could not resist this appeal. His family objected at first, but he persuaded them, and at the age of nineteen went to Darmstadt, where he became an inmate of the Abbé Vogler's house.

Vogler, who had hitherto been a sort of meteor in the firmament of art, darting about Europe to the amazement of men, and dazzling them by his brilliant though superficial qualities, had at last, at the age of fifty-eight, settled down as the bright particular planet in the music-loving court of the Elector Karl Theodor, who paid him a handsome salary, gave him a title, and put him over his newly organized chapel.

He was a man who dabbled in all sorts of arts, wrote books, concocted systems, invented instruments,¹ always strove after originality. It has been said of him that he "was a modern spirit who unfortunately still wore the eighteenth-century wig." In other words, he was born too early and too late. Though he is generally looked

¹ Read Browning's beautiful poem entitled "Abt Vogler," after he has been extemporizing upon the musical instrument of his invention.

down upon as a typical musical charlatan, Weber had a high opinion of his rare psychical development, his honorable character, and his skill in making the most of young composers, and fully intended to write his life.

It was Vogler's greatest glory that he had as pupils two such men as Weber and Meyerbeer. He exclaimed more than once, "Oh, how sorry I should have been if I had died before I formed these two!"

Meyerbeer found Weber already studying with Vogler, and they became firm friends. Meyerbeer lodged with Vogler, Weber and his friend Gänsbacher had rooms near by. During the day the abbé made them work: practice on the organ and piano, rigorous exercises in composition, frequent cantatas and fugues, corrected and criticised, made up the round of their duties. They met at mass, then they spent some time improvising on the two chapel organs. Their evenings were devoted to music. Occasionally they made excursions together to Mannheim and Heidelberg. Often they had jolly feasts at Meyerbeer's rooms, when a box would arrive from his Berlin home containing Russian caviar, Pommeranian ducks, and choice wine.

Meyerbeer's first important work was a cantata entitled "God and Nature," performed in the presence of the Grand Duke of Hesse, who was so pleased with it that he appointed him composer to his court. About the same time he wrote music for seven of Klopstock's sacred odes. The cantata was given in Berlin in May, 1811, by the Singakademie assisted by solo singers and members of the Royal Chapel. The composer, accompanied by his friend Weber, went home for the occasion, and had a perfect ovation. Weber was received like a son in the charming mansion of the Beers. The

critic of the evening paper, none other than Weber himself, declared, that the work manifested "glowing life, genuine loveliness, and above all the perfect power of burning genius," and predicted that if the composer went on with equal diligence and discretion he would confer rich fruit upon art.

On his return to Darmstadt, Vogler said he had nothing more to teach him. Consequently, having completed an opera "*Jephtha's Vow*," — his first unless the anonymous one entitled "*The Fisher and the Milk Maid*" be considered his, — he went to Munich where the new work was to be performed. It fell flat. But the composer won much praise for his skill as a pianist.

At Munich he obtained a new libretto entitled "*Alimalek, Host and Guest, or A Jest Becoming Serious*." This was first performed at Stuttgart, with sufficient success to justify its request for the Kärntnerthor Theatre in Vienna.

To Vienna he therefore went, and on the very evening of his arrival heard the renowned pianist, Nepomuk Hummel, who so impressed him with the delicacy and beauty of his touch, that he went into a sort of voluntary retirement and only at the end of ten months of incessant practice made his first appearance as a concert virtuoso. It was at the time of the Congress of 1813, and Vienna was crowded with notabilities, whose high favor he instantly won. Even the well-liked Moscheles scarcely dared to enter the field against such a rival.

At this time he wrote a number of piano and instrumental compositions, — a polonaise with orchestral accompaniment, two piano concertos, many variations, marches, and duets for harp and clarinet. Most of these works still exist in manuscript, but have never been published.

His opera produced under the name of "The Two Califs" the following November made a fiasco. It was considered dull. The music was too finely shaded and too difficult. Nevertheless, Weber brought it out under more favorable auspices at Prague, where it caused considerable enthusiasm.

Meyerbeer was discouraged by this second failure. He was almost tempted to renounce dramatic composition, but Salieri, who must have seen some merit in the work, advised him to go to Italy, and there study the art of writing for the voice.

This advice was followed. He went first to Paris, where he remained long enough to make many acquaintances, and also to compose two operas. Neither of them was played, but the one — "Robert and Elise" — is interesting as the foreshadowing of his greater "Robert."

In Italy he reaped precisely such laurels as had fallen to the lot of Gluck and Mozart. To be sure, he was not granted the title of Chevalier, but Dom Pedro of Brazil made him a Knight of the Order of the Southern Star. When he first reached Venice, in 1816, Rossini's "Tancred" was on the top wave of popularity, a popularity which, in spite of its violating all the sound canons of true dramatic and musical art, it has once more won at Rome during the late Rossini revival there.

It was not difficult for Meyerbeer to catch the trick of this light, graceful, soulless melody. Forty years later he wrote to a friend: —

"All Italy was then revelling in a sweet delirium of rapture. It seemed as if the whole nation had at last found its Lost Paradise, and nothing further for its happiness was needed than Rossini's music. I was involuntarily drawn into the delicious maze of tones and bewitched in a magic garden from which I could not and would

not escape. All my feelings became Italian; all my thoughts became Italian. After I had lived a year there it seemed to me that I was an Italian born. I was completely acclimated to the splendid glory of nature, art, and the gay congenial life, and could therefore enter into the thoughts, feelings, and sensibilities of the Italians. Of course such a complete re-tuning of my spiritual life had an immediate effect upon my methods of composition. I was loath to imitate Rossini, and write in the Italian style, but I had to compose as I did because my inmost being compelled me to it."

His first Italian opera ("*Romilda e Costanza*") was produced in June, 1818, at Turin, and was so successful that it immediately brought him orders for works at Turin, Venice, and other cities. His success was all the greater for being won in direct rivalry with Rossini himself. But to a man of Meyerbeer's training and nature, such fruits of fame were apples of Sodom. As the poet Heine said:—

"Such intoxication of the senses as he experienced in Italy could not long satisfy a German nature. A certain yearning for the earnestness of his fatherland awoke in him. While he found his ease amid the Italian myrtles, the mysterious murmur of the German oaks recurred to him. While Southern zephyrs caressed him he thought of the sombre chorals of the north wind."

His operas travelled to Germany, and his best friends who heard them not only felt that he was serving false gods, but had the courage to tell him so. Weber wrote: "It makes my heart bleed to see a German composer of creative power stoop to become a mere imitator in order to curry favor with the crowd." He asked him if it was so hard to despise the applause of the moment, or look upon it as something not the highest. In his public critique on "*Emma di Resburgo*," which reached Berlin early in 1820, he wrote:—

"I believe the composer has deliberately chosen to *make a descent* in order to show that he can rule and reign as lord and master over all forms." But he expressed the wish that Meyerbeer would return to Germany and join the few earnest ones whose hearts were set on building up a genuine national opera.

This was not to be. Perhaps it was just as well that a Hebrew should have found a more cosmopolitan field in what has been called "the world-opera."

He still retained his friendship for Weber, and the protests of the earnest Germans evidently made an impression upon him. He afterwards called these Italian works his "wild oats." The last and most successful of them, the only one of this period that is still occasionally heard (*"Il Crociato in Egitto,"* written for Venice), is said to show a decided advance upon the earlier ones; as though he had tried to show that he might combine both methods—the light Italian and the earnest German. It was heard everywhere in Europe, even in St. Petersburg. And an Italian company sang it in Rio di Janeiro.

Meyerbeer's mother had come on to Italy to share in his triumphs, and see him crowned upon the stage. In company with her he visited the chief cities: Rome, where Baini showed him the treasures of the Sistine Chapel; Florence, where again he found delightful hospitality in the house of Lord Westmoreland, the English minister to the Tuscan Court.

Shortly after his return to Berlin he lost his father but found consolation in his love for his cousin Minna Mosson, whom he married in 1827. Meantime he saw that Paris was the place for him, and he took up his residence there, where amid the intellectual ferment of

the time his mind found wonderful stimulus. He formed friendly relations with Cherubini, Boïeldieu, Auber, Habeneck, Halévy, and Adam ; and he and Rossini, in spite of all their rivalries, were the warmest of friends. Yet Rossini once said, "Meyerbeer and I can never agree;" and when some one in surprise asked why, he replied, "Meyerbeer likes sauerkraut better than he does macaroni!"

Several years passed, and nothing of consequence came from his pen. Yet he was secretly hard at work. The able French poet Scribe had furnished him with a libretto, but the composer was morbidly sensitive. He could never tire of polishing and filing. He could never say, "It is finished."

Other circumstances delayed the production of this work: his marriage, the death of a child, the July revolution, the uncertainty as to the management of the theatre. But at last Dr. Véron, the new royal director, agreed to bring it out, and the rehearsals began. They lasted nearly five months, and only on the 22d of November, 1831, was "*Robert le Diable*" given for the first time. Scenic effects, striking contrasts, novel and brilliant instrumentation, fascinating melody, dramatic force, all appealed to the public.

Mendel says, "To the flowing melody of the Italians and the solid harmony of the Germans he united the pathetic declamation and the varied piquant rhythm of the French."

Mendelssohn found no pleasure in it. He called it a cold calculated work of imagination, without heart or effect. So thought many of the Germans. Ambros declared that Meyerbeer's music was "banker's music," — luxury music for *la haute finance*, — and deserved the fate that befell the money-changers in the temple.

Yet this opera made the fortune of the theatre. In 1858 it had brought in upwards of four million francs. It was given 333 times in twenty years. In 1883 it was given in Vienna for the 401st time in fifty years. Louis Philippe nominated the composer as a member of the Legion of Honor, and shortly after he was elected a member of the Institute of France.

In 1836 appeared his second French opera, "*Les Huguenots*," the libretto of which was also furnished by Scribe. A date had been set for its completion, but Meyerbeer failed to have it ready, and paid the stipulated forfeit of thirty thousand francs. No one else could be found to undertake the work, so the management of the theatre refunded the money, and the work was put upon the stage. At first it was not so successful as "*Robert*," but the public soon learned to appreciate its beauties. Berlioz called it a musical encyclopædia, with enough material for twenty ordinary operas. It has been compared to a cathedral; it has been called "an evangel of religion and love." It has been said to be "the most vivid chapter of French history ever penned."

On the other hand, the German critics were even more severe upon it than they had been upon "*Robert*." Schumann could see nothing in it but falsity and trickery. All of Meyerbeer's operas repelled him, and he declared that they might be calmly left to their fate.

Meyerbeer's next great undertaking was suggested by a German novel that had pleased him. He consulted with Scribe, and the libretto was quickly in his hands. He found fault with it. Scribe changed it again and again, but failed to please the composer; anxious for his royalties, he threatened a lawsuit if the work were not brought out. Meyerbeer avoided the dilemma by going back to

Berlin, and when he returned to Paris Scribe was in Rome. Thus the great opera, "*L'Africaine*," remained only an unfulfilled project. For a long time it lay in embryo, wrapped up in white paper, labelled "*Vecchia Africana*," — "The Old African Woman." He never lived to see it put upon the stage, though it from time to time occupied his attention until the very end.

Meantime King Friedrich Wilhelm IV. enrolled him in the newly founded order — *Pour le Mérite* — of Arts and Sciences, and appointed him royal director of music. Honors thick and fast showered upon him. The King of the Netherlands gave him the order of the Oak Crown. The Royal Academy of London elected him one of its associates. Spontini resigned his position in Berlin, and Meyerbeer was appointed kapellmeister in his place, with a salary of three thousand thalers, which he distributed among the orchestra and members of the chapel.

He came to live in Berlin, and was indefatigable in his labors. He wrote a number of cantatas, psalms, motets for the chapel, which he enlarged and strengthened. Marches and his famous "*Fackeltänzen*," so-called, were produced for the weddings of the Crown Prince Max and others. His only original opera for Berlin was entitled "*Ein Feldlager in Schlesien*." It was produced for the first time in December, 1844, to celebrate the opening of the new opera-house. It was given a number of times with great success, especially the following year, when his *protégée*, the young Swedish singer, Jenny Lind,¹ made her German *début* in the part of

¹ Herr Josephson, who attended the rehearsals, thus speaks in his diary of meeting the composer: "He is a most polite man; something of the courtier; something of the man of genius; something of the man of the world, and has, in addition, something fidgety about his whole being. Before reproducing the opera with Jenny Lind he called upon her, to the best of my belief,

"*Vielka*." She won still greater glory in Vienna, when the opera was given under the name of "*Vielka*," and a medal was struck in honor of the composer.

In February, 1845, he brought out "*Euryanthe*" for the benefit of the Weber monument, and thus added six thousand thalers to the fund. In July of the same year, he had Spohr's "*Crusaders*" performed, and with his own hand crowned the gray-haired composer with a laurel wreath.

Meyerbeer was often criticised for his niggardly manner of life in Paris. It has been said that he almost starved himself. On the other hand he was charged with spending a fortune in bribing the critics to be favorable to his work, for he was morbidly sensitive to blame.

Yet he was not lacking in generous sentiments. He brought it about that composers for the royal opera-house should be assured of ten per centum of the receipts, and that three new works by living German musicians should be brought out each year. After the death of Lortzing, author of "*Tsar and Carpenter*," he helped raise a fund of sixteen thousand dollars for his family. He assisted an aged widow, — a descendant of Gluck, — not only with his own funds, but with certain proceeds arising from the performance of Gluck's operas in Paris. He also contributed to the relief of the family of the great French composer Rameau.

He found the labors at Berlin too exacting. He was not a good conductor, as he himself confessed, and he was anxious to be released. At first he was granted only leave of absence ; he went to Paris and then received the

at least a hundred times, to consult about this, that, or the other. He alters incessantly, curtails here, dovetails there, and thus, by his eagerness and anxiety, prevents the spontaneous growth of the work, and imparts a fragmentary character to its beauty."

libretto of "*Le Prophète*" from Scribe, still in Rome. While engaged with enthusiasm upon this, he composed, at the request of the Princess of Prussia, and in the brief time of six weeks, the music for his brother Michael's melodrama "*Struensee*," which was performed with great success in the royal theatre. The overture is considered one of his highest achievements in sustained instrumental composition.

The same year, he went to London with Jenny Lind, where they shared in a reception almost unequalled for its enthusiasm. On his return to Berlin, he brought out Richard Wagner's "*Rienzi*." Meyerbeer had already befriended Wagner, whom he had found living in poverty in Paris. He was rewarded by an ingratitude which even Wagner's admirers found it hard to explain away.

Probably Wagner was jealous because some of his pet reforms were carried out by a man who did not believe in his principles. Wagner compared him to one, who, catching the first syllable of another's speech, screams out the whole sentence in a breath without really waiting to know what was meant. He called him a "most miserable music-maker," a Jew banker, who tried to compose. And in 1850, over the name of "R. Freigedank," he wrote his famous article on the Jew in Music, for the *New Journal of Music*, in which he declared that the Jew was incapable of any kind of artistic manifestation, and while attacking the whole race, vented his spleen equally on Meyerbeer and Mendelssohn.

After endless polishing and changing of details, "*Le Prophète*" was at last ready for its first production in Paris. Rehearsals began in January, 1849; and, as the eventful April day drew nigh, excitement ran boundless. Expectation was indeed pitched too high, and in spite of

the efforts of a Garcia and a Costellan, there was a general feeling of disappointment. Its greatness was nevertheless appreciated, and in spite of a fearfully hot summer and the prevalence of cholera, it kept the boards and soon reached its hundredth performance.

Meyerbeer was made commander of the Legion of Honor. The University of Jena gave him the degree of Doctor of Music. The year 1850 he spent in Berlin, working from early morning till into the afternoon in his room overlooking the Thiergarten Park. After three o'clock he received calls, and usually spent the evening at the theatre or went to a concert. The King ordered his portrait to be painted for the Gallery of Famous Contemporaries.

He was invited to St. Petersburg by the Emperor of Russia to direct the music of "*Struensee*" for the fifty-years' jubilee of the Philharmonic Society, but his failing health obliged him to decline. Berlioz and Spohr were also asked, but were unable to accept.

In February, 1853, he composed his splendid Ninety-first Psalm for solo and eight-part chorus. It was in honor of his mother's eighty-seventh birthday. It was sung as her requiem when she died, the following year, mourned by the whole nation.

For the first time in its history the Opéra Comique opened its doors to a foreigner. Meyerbeer was allowed to write for that world-famous stage, and his first work was "*L'Étoile du Nord*." Owing to the outbreak of war with Russia, the censorship nearly forbade its presentation; but owing to the personal influence of Napoleon III., it was permitted after a few textual changes were made, such as eliminating the expression "*Vive la Russie*," and changing the word *tsar* to *ciel*.



SCENE FROM THE PROPHET.
Act V., Sc. III.

It was performed in February, 1854, and almost every number was re-demanded. Within a year it had been performed a hundred times.

His next comic opera was produced in April, 1859, under the title "Dinorah," or "*Le Pardon de Ploermel*." The five years intervening had been occupied with various work, — with journeys to Italy and to watering-places; with compositions of comparatively small interest, unless the fourth *Fackeltanz* for the marriage of the Princess Victoria of England be excepted.

The latter years of Meyerbeer's life, though cheered by many distinguished honors, — gifts from kings and emperors, homage from many societies, — were also saddened by the death of many friends: Spohr and Lord Westmoreland, his French and German librettists, Scribe and Rellstab, and others, and by his own ill-health and trouble with his eyes. A Swedish editor, who visited him about the time of his fiftieth birthday, described him as "a little, benevolent old man, with an expression of power and keenness in his bearing, and with a delicate and yet simple behavior. His strongly-marked countenance had an especially shrewd and humorous look; and those fantastic spirits, which have bewitched the world in the night pieces of 'Robert' and 'The Prophet,' appear to be lurking in its wrinkles."

In 1861 Meyerbeer celebrated his seventieth birthday, which was remembered by hosts of his friends and admirers. This same year he wrote for the International Exhibition at London a festival march in three parts, ending with "Rule Britannia." His presence added to the enthusiasm with which it was received. Several theatres simultaneously brought out his "Prophet," "Huguenots," and "Dinorah" with festal success. After the perform-

ance of the march he was publicly thanked by Lord Granville, "in the name of the Queen, of all great artists, the public, and the English nation," for his great services.

This was his last great triumph. His failing health and the trouble with his eyes grew more and more alarming. Occasionally his old energy would flame out, and he would work on his pet opera "*L'Africaine*," which had occupied him for so many years. He was unable to accept Napoleon's pressing invitation to the autumnal court hunt and festivities at Compiègne. He was forbidden even to travel to Brussels to confer with the tenor who was to sing the rôle of "*Vasco da Gama*."

Unknown to him, his physician summoned his two youngest daughters from Baden-Baden. His nephew Julius Beer and one or two intimate friends hastened to his bedside.

His last words were spoken cheerfully on the evening of Sunday, May-Day, 1863, — "I will see you in the morning. I bid you good-night."

He died early the next day.

His body lay in state in his simple dwelling, in the Rue Montmartre. Rossini when he heard the news fainted away. Then he went out to wander in the Park Monceaux, where he noted down a religious meditation inscribed to his "poor friend Meyerbeer."

Meyerbeer's body was taken to Berlin. It was attended to the station by a stately throng of notabilities, accompanied by music. Farewell orations were spoken. Selections from the "Prophet" and "Dinorah" were performed with organ and voices.

On the way to Berlin at every stopping-place, signs of grief were manifested. The funeral train reached Berlin

unexpectedly. The King was just about to make a journey from the same station. It was a dramatic incident, the meeting of the living monarch and the dead musician.

Two days later the pompous ceremonies of the funeral took place with black catafalque, silver candelabra, laurel wreath, bouquets from royal and princely houses, music and orations, palm-adorned hearse, throngs of deputations, an endless array of carriages headed by the king's, drawn by four horses.

He was buried by the side of his mother, in the family tomb in the Jewish Cemetery. Later, a religious ceremony in his honor took place in the Meyerbeer Synagogue which had been founded by his father.

Meyerbeer, though possessed of millions, always lived frugally when in Paris, with only one servant; he labored as industriously as though he were poor, saying: "I am above all an artist, and it gives me satisfaction to think that I might have supported myself with my music, from the time I was seven years old. In Berlin, to be sure, I keep up some style; but in Paris I have no desire to stand aloof from my associates and play the rich amateur."

His habits were extremely simple. He neither smoked nor took snuff. He enjoyed walking, and when he heard a hand-organ man playing one of his own compositions, he would stop and listen and reward him with a piece of silver. He was fond of the distinctions heaped upon him. But, being all his life true to his faith, he never possessed the cross of the Order of the Red Eagle.

His judgment of other composers was always generous. He was on terms of friendship with nearly all the composers of the day. Gluck and Mozart were his favorites of the past. "No one," he said, "will ever equal

Gluck in simplicity, naturalness, and powerful dramatic expression; and when I am enjoying his majestic works, I often feel so humiliated that I would like never again to write a note."

His great property, with the exception of a few thousand dollars bequeathed to half a dozen musical and philanthropic institutions, was divided among his relatives. His music, with the exception of "*L'Africaine*," he directed to leave untouched for thirty years. Then, in case a grandson were living it would be permissible to publish it. Otherwise it was to be given to the royal library in Berlin.

"*L'Africaine*" was performed for the first time in April, 1865. Every effort was made to carry out the composer's ideas; and the enthusiasm was so great that, as his biographer says, it seemed like an apotheosis of his manes.¹

¹ A still greater apotheosis takes place in Paris in September of the present year (1891), when the hundredth anniversary of his birth is celebrated with appropriate ceremonies and the reproduction of his masterpieces. Paris will share with Bayreuth the pilgrimages of the musical.

MENDELSSOHN.

(1809-1847.)

IT is a proverb that names go by contraries. But proverbs, though often containing popular wisdom crystallized, no less often embody popular delusions; as, for instance, that lightning never strikes twice in a place. Berlioz applied the line of Horace as a prophecy to Mendelssohn's godson Felix Moscheles :—

“Donec eris Felix multos numerabis amicos.”

(“So long as thou art Felix, that is happy, shalt thou reckon many friends.”)

The same line might sum up Mendelssohn's biography. He seems to stand as the type of the fortunate composer: rich, talented, courted, petted, loved, even adored. “Whom the gods love die young.” This distinction also he enjoyed, and it gives an additional glamour to his life.

Mendelssohn is in a certain sense the musician of the unmusical; his “Songs without Words” appeal to the young Philistines of the conservatories; his “Elijah” is the masterpiece for religious Philistinism.

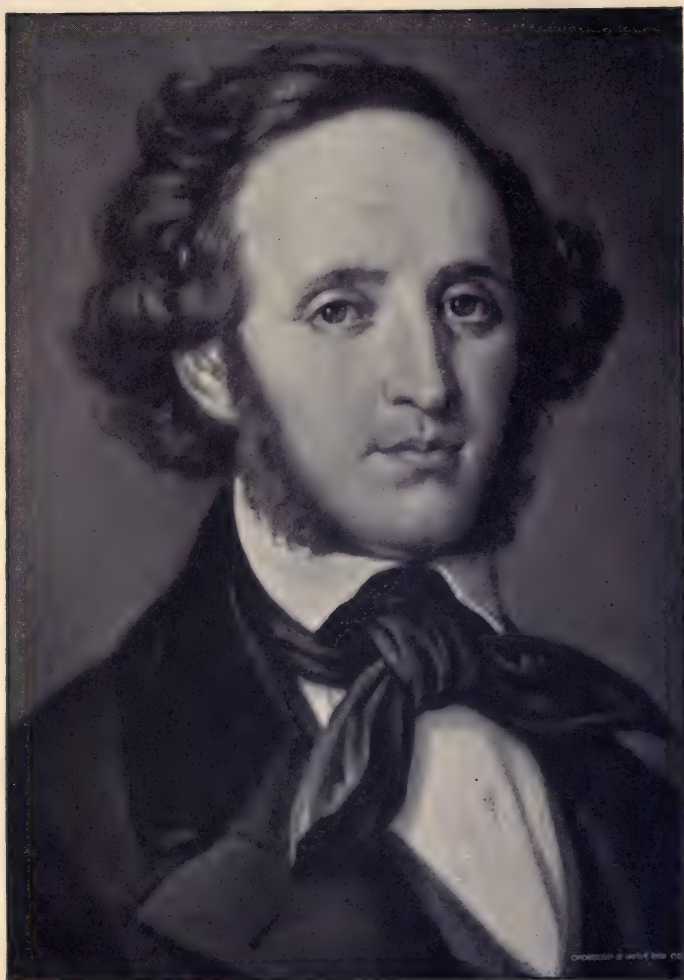
There is, undoubtedly, at the present time a tendency, especially among the adepts of Wagner, to underrate Mendelssohn. It seems indeed rather ludicrous in a recent writer to speak of him as being the last of the

musical Titans ; but we may sympathize with Schumann, who said, "I look upon Mendelssohn as the first musician of his time, and pay him the homage due to a master."

And though it may be safely maintained that he had not the spontaneous creative genius of a Bach, a Mozart, or a Beethoven, still he deserves the distinction of having "restored the lost art of counterpoint," and of bringing back classic forms at a day when romanticism was compelling men like Meyerbeer and Weber into enchanted, if not dangerous ground.

Mendelssohn also restored Bach to a world that had forgotten him for a hundred years. This service alone was an immortality. He may have been narrow and prejudiced ; but judged according to the standard of the world, his character was well-nigh above reproach. His aunt declared that during his whole career she could not recall a deed or a word that could be criticised. His virtues are well summed up by the American translator of his *Life* by Lampadius :—

"The son and heir of a rich Berlin banker, he always wrought as a poor man's son, and never indulged himself in ease or sloth, as he might have done; tempted to write down to the masses, to win popularity, rather than write up to the few, to set a high standard and leave good work behind him, he always did the latter; flattered beyond any man of his age, not only in Germany but in England, he never lost his head for a moment, and remained one of the most unaffected of men ; living in loose capitals and surrounded by unprincipled people, he was true to all moral obligations, and perfect in all the relations of son, brother, lover, husband, and father; surrounded by intriguers, he stood above them all, and was frank, transparent, honorable, noble; tempted by his sunny, enthusiastic, alert nature, to do simply bright and genial things in music, he was thorough, studious, earnest, religious, and steadfastly consecrated to the highest and the best."



MEDELSSOHN.

Not without reason does Mendelssohn stand out as the type of the blameless musician.

Some time before the middle of the last century, a little humpbacked Jew peddler boy, with an alert face and keen eyes, entered Berlin by the Rosenthaler Gate. The world at first went hard with him. He was so poor that he was in the habit of marking his miserable loaf of bread into rations by means of a string, so that it might last as many days as possible. But his hunger for knowledge was greater than his physical hunger. The little that he could earn by copying, he devoted to prosecuting his studies with a learned rabbi.

At last he secured a position as resident tutor in the house of a rich Hebrew silk manufacturer, and in course of time married a Hamburg Jewess, and became rich as well as learned. He wrote a dialogue on the immortality of the soul, that was translated into a dozen languages, and gave him the title of the "Modern Plato." He was a valued friend and correspondent of the noted men of his day,—Herder and Kant, Lavater and Lessing. It is said that Lessing took him as the model for his "Nathan the Wise." His name was not Nathan, but Moses, and as his father's name was Mendel, he became known as Mendel's son, or in German Mendelssohn.

He had six children. Abraham, the second son, was the father of the composer. He was a man of character and ability, but often remarked jokingly that he served merely as a hyphen between Moses and Felix: "Formerly," said he, "I was the son of my father; now I am the father of my son."

He began his commercial training in Paris, but in 1804 returned home to Hamburg, formed a partnership with

his brother Joseph, and married Lea Salamon, a young lady of property and accomplishments, whose parents lived in Berlin.

Their first child was a daughter, Fanny, who was born, as her mother poetically expressed it, with "Bach fugue fingers." Like Mozart's older sister, she had remarkable genius for music.

Jakob Ludwig Felix was born November 3, 1809.

It has been fancifully said that Titania, Queen of the Fairies, flew on that day over the prosaic city of Hamburg and kissed the child on his forehead, as he slept, endowing him with all the graces.

When he was going into his third year, the French captured the city; and the Mendelssohns fled to Berlin, and lived for some years in the grandmother's house on the Neue Promenade. There a new banking-house was established, and for various practical, social, and sentimental reasons, the whole family were baptized into the Lutheran Church, and adopted the additional name of Bartholdy.

The somewhat patriarchal family rule was not in the least relaxed. Absolute and unquestioning obedience, unceasing industry, were required of the children. Yet this strictness of discipline was so tempered by love and gentleness that it seemed not like severity, and Felix especially had the warmest affection for his father, even to the end of his life, when, owing to physical infirmity, he had become extremely irritable and disputatious.

The mother was a model housewife. She spoke several languages, she read Homer in the original, she played the piano. It was she who began to instruct Fanny and Felix in music, giving them at first five-minute lessons several times each day. Afterwards, when they prac-

tised, she sat by them with her knitting to see that they wasted no time. At five o'clock in the morning they began to study. Discipline was relaxed for a few moments at lunch, but if Felix spent too much time talking over it she would appear and say, "*Felix, thust du nichts?*" ("Have you nothing to do, Felix?")

He was allowed out-of-door exercise of course, and many people in Berlin remembered seeing him playing "I spy," and other games, under the trees by the canal in front of their house, or trotting along in his "big shoes" by his father's side. His brown curls, which afterwards turned black, always attracted attention, as well as his big brown eyes, lurking under long lashes.

He was an interesting boy, unspoiled. When foolish people asked him idle questions, he had a peculiarly indignant, almost spiteful, way of answering and avoiding flattery.

When he was seven years old his father was called to Paris, and took his whole family with him. Felix and Fanny profited by their stay by taking piano lessons from the brilliant Madame Bigot. When they returned to Berlin lessons continued still more strenuously.

The droll little Professor Rösel taught them drawing, and the clever practice of the pencil which Mendelssohn enjoyed often added piquancy to his letters so long as he lived. The methodical Henning gave him instruction on the violin; the "weak, good-natured" Berger taught him on the piano. His knowledge of counterpoint he got from "the old bear," the crusty but honorable Zelter, who taught him as they walked up and down in the big garden back of the house. Marx remarked, "When Zelter became Mendelssohn's master, he merely put the fish into the water and let him swim away as he liked." Yet

many of Mendelssohn's old-fashioned notions were due to this pedantic master. Heyse, afterwards professor in the University of Berlin, and father of Paul Heyse the novelist, was their resident tutor.

Felix was excellent in languages. French was like his native tongue. He spoke English fluently. He was able to write a charming letter in Italian. He translated a comedy of Terence (the "Andrea") into German verse, and he made considerable progress in Greek. He was not fond of mathematics. He was a good horseman; he could swim and dance.

When he was almost ten years old he made his first public appearance as a pianist, and was much applauded. The following year he, with his sister, sang alto in the famous old Singakademie, founded May, 1791, by Carl Fasch, Frederick the Great's cembalo player, and at that time directed by Zelter. Devrient tells of seeing him at Zelter's "Friday afternoons," dressed in a close-fitting jacket, open at the neck, with his hands in the pockets of his full trousers, shifting uneasily from one foot to another, and rocking his curly head from side to side.

From this time he began to compose. The list of his compositions falling in the next four years is remarkable for its amount and variety. There were nearly sixty movements in 1821, — sonatas, organ pieces, songs, a cantata, and a little comedy. He wrote or copied them with the greatest neatness and care in volumes which in the course of time extended to forty-four in number, and are now preserved in the Berlin Library.

As he grew older and more mature, they improved in quality. The direct stimulus to this composition was the fact that they were performed by the home circle, which consisted now of four children, the youngest, Paul, being four years younger than Felix.

All distinguished musical people who passed through Berlin visited the Mendelssohns, and the Sunday afternoon musicales often enlisted the local talent of Berlin. Thus, in 1822, the young theatre singer Devrient, through the medium of his betrothed, who was a friend of Fanny Mendelssohn, came to take part in one of Felix's little operas. He gives a charming description of the boy sitting at the piano on a cushion and gravely conducting while the performers sat around the dining-table. Mendelssohn's utter freedom from conceit was his greatest charm.

Zelter was generally there to pick flaws or give merited praise. Zelter had been for years the friend of Goethe, and in 1821 he took his young pupil to Weimar to visit him. They spent more than two weeks under his roof. The friendship between the old man and Mendelssohn was delightful. Mendelssohn called him "the pole star of poets." Goethe made him play and improvise by the hour. He was amazed at the skill shown by the boy in playing at sight a manuscript of Beethoven's. It was like unravelling hieroglyphics. Goethe had heard Mozart, but he thought Mendelssohn vastly his superior. Once (though this was at a later visit), Goethe said, "I am Saul, and you are David. When I am sad and in low spirits you must come to me and calm me by your accords."¹

In the summer of 1822 the Mendelssohns took a trip to Switzerland. At Potsdam, where they had made a brief halt, Felix was forgotten, and his absence was noticed only after they had got as far as Gross Kreuz, three miles away. Heyse started back in search of the

¹ Mendelssohn's sprightly letters describing his visit to Goethe are to be found in a volume entitled "Goethe and Mendelssohn."

straggler, but found him manfully trying to overtake them on foot. They stopped at Cassel and made music with Spohr, for whom Mendelssohn professed deep reverence.

After a pleasant sojourn among the Alps, they returned, stopping at Frankfort, when Felix astonished Schelble, the conductor of the Cecilia Society, by his powers of extemporizing; and at Weimar, where they enjoyed delightful intercourse with Goethe. In the following December, Mendelssohn played in public a pianoforte concerto of his own. The progress of his talent can be easily followed in the compositions which he wrote in 1822 and 1823. They were no less numerous and varied than in the years before. A pianoforte quartet, begun near Geneva, was afterwards published as his first opus.

He had grown into a tall, slender lad of fifteen, with his hair cut short, and his features marked by great vivacity. His good spirits were infectious. He was always ready for a frolic. Indeed, so long as he lived he was apt to indulge in the gayest pranks. He was called by his friends "the king of games and romps." When Ferdinand Hiller first saw Mendelssohn he was running behind the well-known Aloys Schmitt, jumping on his back, clinging for a little while and then slipping off, to repeat the frolic. Afterwards, in Paris, Mendelssohn suddenly surprised Hiller as they were walking along a boulevard late one night by saying, —

"We *must* do some of our jumps in Paris. Our jumps, I tell you. Now, for it — one! two! three!" And off they went like kangaroos.

One of Mendelssohn's little home operas was entitled "The Two Nephews, or the Uncle from Boston." It was performed for the first time on his fifteenth birth-

day with full orchestra. A supper followed. Zelter took him by the hand, and, after proclaiming him no longer an apprentice but a master, "in the name of Haydn, Mozart, and Old Bach," kissed him amid the enthusiastic plaudits of all present.

Some years before, Abraham Mendelssohn had presented Zelter with a quantity of cantatas and other manuscripts, written by "the poor Cantor of Leipzig." Zelter affected to call Bach's compositions crabbed pieces (*borstige Stücke*), and evidently thought them too high for the comprehension of people; still he revered these sacred relics, and sometimes took Mendelssohn up to the closet of the Singakademie where they were stored, and showed them to him, saying, —

"There they are! Just think of all that is hidden there," but he would never allow his pupil to touch them.

At last, however, Mendelssohn's grandmother obtained permission for his violin teacher, Edward Ritz, who was also his intimate friend, to make a copy of the score of Bach's Passion Music, and she presented it to him at Christmas, 1823. This had a great influence upon his development.

In the following summer he, for the first time, saw the sea — the stormy Baltic at Dobberan. He wrote an overture for the wind-band of the bathing establishment. It was afterwards re-scored and published. This year was memorable for his progress in composition, and included his C-minor Symphony (now No. 1) and several important chamber compositions. Later in the year Moscheles came to Berlin and spent several weeks, seeing the Mendelssohns daily. He was persuaded to give Felix regular lessons, and he has left on record his impressions of the family: "Felix a mature artist, though

but fifteen; Fanny extraordinarily gifted, playing Bach's fugues by heart and with astonishing correctness."

"To-day," he writes in his diary, "I gave Felix his first lesson." But he adds that he could not hide the fact that he was with his master, not his pupil. The acquaintance thus formed led to an intimate friendship, as is shown by the correspondence between the two. Felix became godfather to Moscheles's son, the well-known portrait painter.

In the spring of 1825 Abraham Mendelssohn, who had been hesitating whether to allow his son to embrace music as a profession, happened to be in Paris, and determined to consult with the famous Cherubini. The verdict was favorable. Cherubini, though usually so crabbed and uncertain, like old Zelter, seemed fascinated by the boy. Felix compared him to an extinct volcano covered with stones and ashes and occasionally belching forth flames.

Felix himself disapproved of the musicians of Paris, and the frivolous atmosphere that prevailed there; he thought that the whole tendency of the place was to make men lose sight of strict time and calm and earnestness and real musical feeling from their love for strong contrasts.

His own detestation of such things carried him to the opposite extreme. Even his friend Hiller, who called him "one of the brightest and most beautiful stars in the firmament of German art," thought his great fault was in being too old-fashioned, and not yielding enough to the modern tendencies toward richness and fulness of ornamentation.

Curiously enough, the French think that if Mendelssohn had been a French composer, as might easily have

been the case, he would have lost that Germanic stiffness that repelled them, and would have gained in more ways than one.

On their way back from Paris they stopped again at Weimar for another — the third — visit to Goethe, to whom he played his B-minor Quartet dedicated to him. Not long after their return, Abraham Mendelssohn purchased the so-called "Reck Palace," a spacious, many-roomed mansion, surrounded by grounds covering over ten acres and including summer-houses, rustic seats, lovely shrubbery, noble trees, and every device for comfort and pleasure, especially in summer. A separate building, called the "Gartenhaus," gave accommodations for musical parties, easily seating several hundred people.

The property was really in the suburbs of Berlin, near the Potsdam Gate on the Leipzig Road. It had three drawbacks: it was damp, it was extremely cold in winter, and it was a long distance from their friends.

Nevertheless, their friends were glad to come to them, and their Sunday musicales always attracted a crowd of celebrities. Sebastian Hensel, who married Fanny Mendelssohn, painted more than a thousand portraits, filling forty-seven volumes, of the family and their distinguished guests.

This new home was the one oasis to Mendelssohn in the dreary waste of Berlin. Here, under the direction of a former royal groom, he learned to ride with remarkable skill. In warm weather the boys played bowls under the trees, and had lively swimming parties, with songs sung in the water, Klingemann furnishing the words and Mendelssohn the music. And here social and musical intercourse was delightful and unrestrained. A manuscript newspaper, entitled in summer *The Garden Times*,

in winter *Snow and Tea Times*, to which such great scientists and philosophers as Humboldt and Hegel did not scorn to contribute, added to their fun. Billiards, and chess, and whist, also found their devotees. And Felix was in all things the central figure, happy, witty, gay, loved by all. Just before their removal Felix composed the music for an opera, the words of which were furnished by Klingemann. The subject was taken from "Don Quixote," and it was entitled "Camacho's Wedding."

It was submitted to General Musical-Intendant Spontini, whose jealousy had already stood in the way of Spohr's "Jessonda." Spontini was living in a house once occupied by the Mendelssohns. Spontini led him to the window, and pointing to the dome of the Roman Catholic church opposite, said pompously in French:

"Friend, you must have conceptions as grand as yonder cupola!"

Mendelssohn, whose one great fault was inability to endure lack of appreciation, and who could never forgive a disparaging remark, was not likely to overlook this man's insinuation. It is said that Spontini disliked Mendelssohn because he conducted without score, a feat which he himself could not perform.

Spontini, however, after vexatious delays, allowed "Comacho's Wedding" to be produced in the small theatre. The *claque* was made up of Mendelssohn's friends, but even after their vigorous applause had scored it a success, it was never given again. The truth was, Mendelssohn had not a dramatic, or rather, not a theatric, talent. The opera was poor, and he himself, almost twenty years later, begs that his "old sin of 'Comacho's Wedding' should not be stirred up again."

Mendelssohn's greatest work of this period was the overture to "A Midsummer's Night's Dream," inspired by a reading of a new translation of Shakspeare, and composed during the first summer in the new domain. This work alone would have made Mendelssohn immortal: nothing more perfect of its kind was ever composed; and it was remarkable that when, in the last years of his life, he came to set music to the "Midsummer's Night's Dream," he used the overture practically unchanged.

This same year he entered the Berlin University, and the number of his compositions fell. It is not known whether he followed the regular curriculum or not; but ten years later the University of Leipzig honored itself and him by conferring upon him the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and B. A. M.

One of his friends complained that Bach seemed to him a mathematical exercise. Mendelssohn determined to prove him mistaken; he got together a small choir of sixteen voices, and on Saturday evenings rehearsed the "Passion according to St. Matthew."

One of the number was Devrient, the opera singer. His zeal and enthusiasm were such that Mendelssohn's timidity in presence of Zelter's opposition was overcome. One day the two young men, dressed exactly alike in blue coats, white waistcoats, black cravats and trousers, and yellow gloves, called upon Zelter and laid their plans before him. It may be remarked in passing that Mendelssohn had overdrawn his allowance and had to borrow a thaler to buy his gloves, — a piece of bad management which his father felt obliged to reprimand.

Zelter was at first so surly that Mendelssohn had his hand on the door-knob to flee incontinently, but Devrient managed to smooth the way by deft flattery, and at last

the old director yielded and gave his permission for the work to be performed by the Singakademie.

The rehearsals began in January, 1828, and the work was performed publicly on March 11, 1829, for the first time since the death of its composer. The apathy of the people, which Mendelssohn had so much dreaded, was stirred to enthusiasm. Every ticket was taken, and hundreds were turned away. The success was complete in every respect. This was the beginning of the Bach revival. Mendelssohn remarked one day to Devrient with some glee, "It is a Jew and an actor who have restored to the people this great Christian work."

Mendelssohn knew the work by heart, and conducted without the score. At one rehearsal he stopped the chorus saying, "In the twenty-third measure the sopranos have C-natural — not C-sharp."

This retentive memory was characteristic of Mendelssohn. A year or two later in Paris, at the Abbé Bardin's, where musical reunions were held every week, Hiller was asked to play Beethoven's E-flat concerto. The parts were all there, and the string quartet, but no wind.

"I will do the wind," said Mendelssohn simply, and sitting down at a second piano he filled in the wind parts from memory, not neglecting even a note of the second horn. He always played his piano pieces from memory. Once when he was praised for this feat, the famous organist Kühnau exclaimed: "That is not art. I could do the same thing if I did not manage to forget everything!"

It might have been supposed that Mendelssohn would have been Zelter's natural successor as conductor of the Singakademie, but after Zelter's death (May, 1832), when the election was held, he was defeated by sixty

votes out of 236. This added to the disappointment at the failure of "Camacho's Wedding;" and the unhappy relationship between Mendelssohn and many of the Berlin musicians, notably the Royal Orchestra, who would not play for him — was it because he was a Jew? — made Berlin even more like a desert to him than ever. He was hopeless of things bettering themselves there. "Berlin will never do anything in music," he declared to his last days, "so long as sand is sand, and the Spree is a river."

But he could afford to look down upon such annoyances, and soon after the second performance of "the Passion," which took place on Bach's birthday, he was off on what he calls his "grand tour," and enjoying such a succession of delightful experiences that they would alone fill a book.

He went first to England, where he laid the foundation of that popularity which even now makes most Englishmen look upon him as the greatest of composers. He gave four concerts in London, with wonderful success.

After the musical season was over he went to Scotland, stopping at the Hebrides — where he was inspired with the first conception of his overture called "Fingal's Cave," — and at Abbotsford. Here he was disgusted enough, after travelling eighty miles, to be put off with a half-hour's "indifferent conversation" with Sir Walter. Nor even Melrose Abbey consoled him. "We cursed great men, ourselves, and the whole world," were his words.

His visit in London on his return in September was prolonged, owing to a lame knee, which kept him in his room for two months, and prevented him from being present at his sister Fanny's wedding.

In December, when he returned to Berlin, he found the artist and Fanny installed in the Gartenhaus, which had been turned into a studio. They were ready to take part in a surprise which Mendelssohn had prepared for his parents' silver wedding. This was a comedietta entitled, "The Return from Abroad," or "The Son and Stranger." Every member of the family was to take part, but as Hensel was totally unmusical, he was given a part which required him to sing one and the same note. At the performance he could not even do that.

In the spring, having recovered from an attack of the measles, — for genius, as well as meaner folk, must endure "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune," — Mendelssohn resumed his world tour. He reached Venice in October, after enjoying delightful visits at Weimar with Goethe, at Munich, at Vienna, and Presburg.

Mendelssohn's great passion was letter-writing. One of his intimate friends declared that most of his time was spent in this way. The result is that we have remarkably detailed information in regard to every step of his Italian journey. He drank in the very air with ecstasy, and, as he says, systematically idled away the days. Natural scenery, the treasures of art, intercourse with brilliant painters, poets, and musicians, kept his enjoyment to the highest tension. Italian antiquities failed to interest him, and it has been remarked that he showed scarcely a trace of devotional sentiment, either in his letters or his music. Indeed, the ancient music of the Roman service entirely irritated him. He called it insignificant and dull.

He spent nearly half a year in Rome, and was fortunate enough to witness the coronation of a pope, and

the ceremonies of Holy Week. He spent six weeks in Naples, where he found his old friend Benedict. He then visited Florence, Genoa, Milan, and the Italian Lakes. From Geneva he walked to Interlachen, where he composed some waltzes, his only ones, — and yet he was passionately devoted to dancing.

In Italy he composed his Italian and Scotch symphonies, the music to Goethe's "Walpurgis Night," and other pieces instrumental and vocal, and filled drawing-book after drawing-book with his sketches.

In December he reached Paris, where he threw himself "into the vortex" of musical and social life. At this time he had a marked resemblance to Meyerbeer. They wore their hair in the same way. Mendelssohn was annoyed, and one morning appeared with his locks close cropped. Meyerbeer heard of it, but took it "in his usual invincible good-nature."

In spite of his warm reception there, and the presence of Hiller and other good friends, Mendelssohn could not stomach Paris, particularly after his Reformation Symphony had been shelved by the "Concert Society" as too learned and abstruse. He was glad to be back in "that smoky nest," London, where he spent two months, playing at many concerts, and publishing a number of important pieces.

During the following winter he gave three public concerts at the Singakademie, bringing out a number of interesting novelties, his Reformation Symphony, his overtures to "Midsummer's Night's Dream," "The Hebrides" ("Fingal's Cave") and the "Calm at Sea, and Prosperous Voyage," as well as pieces by Beethoven and Bach.

Mendelssohn's success in conducting the Lower Rhine

Music Festival at the end of May, 1833, brought him an offer to undertake the entire charge of music in Düsseldorf for three years at a salary of 600 thalers.

By the advice of his father, who was with him during the festival, and who was pleased that while others had titles without duties, he would have duties without a title, he accepted it. Afterwards the two went to London together, and many interesting details of this visit are preserved. The old man learned that a very fine morning in London was like the end of a November afternoon in Germany. He could not appreciate his son's enthusiasm for English fog, Sundays, and other institutions.

Düsseldorf proved to be less pleasant than Mendelssohn had anticipated. He complained that by four o'clock in the afternoon, half the town was drunk, so that he had to transact all his business in the morning.

After a few months, during which he gave operas by Mozart and Cherubini at the theatre, and at the church religious works by Palestrina, Bach, Beethoven, and Händel, he threw up direction of the former. Even the slight connection which he had with it caused him immense irritation and disgust.

Socially there was much in Düsseldorf to enjoy. He lodged with the painter Schadow, who had established an art school there. Thus he was thrown into an artistic circle. They often took long walks together; Schadow with his noble head, and distinguished manner and eloquent speech, quite overshadowing the bevy of handsome young fellows who surrounded him. One time Chopin was there. No one took much notice of him, but when they returned to the studio "the lyric epicurean" had his revenge. He was called upon to

play, and, after the first note, all were dumb with amazement.

Mendelssohn kept a horse. On Christmas Day, 1834, he went out for a ride on his bay. The steed bolted, and ran through the town straight for the stables.

"I kept my seat," he wrote, "but I was in such a rage! and weren't the people just delighted to see the Herr Musikdirector racing along!"

Mendelssohn in a rage was a fine sight; for then his eyes simply blazed out from under the long lashes. This was not rare with him. The orchestra at Düsseldorf was responsible for much of his irritation. He gives a humorous description of their lack of time and tune: "Every *allegro* leaves off twice as fast as it began, and the oboe plays E-natural in C-minor, and they carry their fiddles under their coats when it rains, and when it is fine they do not cover them at all; and if you once heard me conduct this orchestra, not even four horses could bring you there a second time."

In the following spring, he was invited to Leipzig, to conduct the concerts at the Gewandhaus. He accepted, and found it, as he said, "a paradise."

A little more than a month after the first concert, he was quite stunned by the sudden death of his father, who had become entirely blind from cataracts. In the very last letter that he wrote, his father had urged him to keep on with his oratorio of "St. Paul" which he had begun several years before at Düsseldorf. Felix selected the words himself. He once wrote: "There are always two things that I must have when I stop anywhere: one is a Bible, and the other is a piano."

It was ordered for the Cecilia Club of Frankfurt, but, owing to Schelble's illness, the engagement was can-

celled, and it was first produced at the Lower Rhine Festival, in 1836, by a chorus of three hundred and sixteen singers, a large and efficient orchestra, all full of enthusiasm. When it was over, young ladies showered flowers upon the composer, and crowned the score which was placed upon a golden lyre on the conductor's stand. Later he went to Frankfurt to supply Schelble's place for six weeks.

One of the aristocratic families of this place was named Souchay. They lived in a fine house with a beautiful view down the Main. Mendelssohn became a frequent visitor at this house. He was always more or less in love, but here, at last, was a genuine passion, destined to last. The object of it was the granddaughter, Cécile Charlotte Sophie Jeanrenaud, a beautiful girl of seventeen, of most serene and gentle disposition, with the face of a Madonna. The family, at first, thought that Mendelssohn was attracted by her mother, a charming young widow. The townspeople soon found out that there was a courtship going on, and it afforded them considerable amusement and curiosity to see what the result would be; for, though Mendelssohn was young, rich and handsome, a man of culture, amiability, genius, and fame, and belonged to a family of considerable celebrity, still all these things weighed as little against the imponderable significance of "patrician blood!"

Mendelssohn was hard hit, but, being a young man of prudence, he determined to tear himself away from his idol for a time, and test his affection by separation. It stood the test. He was miserable without her. The sea baths at Scheveningen could not cool his ardor.

At the end of a month he flew back, proposed, was accepted, and made "the happiest man in the world."

When he returned to Leipzig, in the full halo of his bliss, it was commemorated at an early concert in the season by the significant finale to "*Fidelio*" — "Who a lovely wife has gotten" — put on the program by the directors. He was compelled to improvise on the theme amid shouts and hurrahs !

He was married at Frankfurt in March, 1837. The delight and fun of their happy honeymoon are preserved in a diary kept by them both, and adorned with all sorts of droll sketches and remarks. Their happiness was almost cut short at "Bingen on the Rhine," when Mendelssohn, in attempting to swim the river, was taken with the cramp, and barely saved from drowning.

Shortly after this, he had to hasten over to England — his fifth visit — to conduct his "St. Paul" at the Birmingham Festival. His wife was unable to go with him. It is curious that he says so little about her in his letters, but when he was absent from her he indulges in the gloomiest complaints: "What is the good of all the double counterpoint in the world," he asks, "if his Cécile is not with him !"

After a more than usually successful visit both in Birmingham and London, he returned to Leipzig, glad to be again established in his own pleasant home. He asks if he ought not to be perfectly satisfied with his Cécile in a nice new comfortable house with an open view over Lurgenstein's garden, and the fields, and the city towers, feeling more serenely happy, more calmly joyful, than he had ever felt since he left his parents' roof.

His happiness, the next year, was interrupted by his wife's dangerous illness, and by his own ill health. He complained of complete deafness of one ear, and pain

in the head and neck. He could not even hear his own playing on the piano, and often missed the point of what people said to him. It made him somewhat anxious, but a similar attack four years previously had passed off in six weeks, and this one also was only temporary.

The summer of that year he spent in Berlin, and was full of work and pleasure. That memorable twelve-month included the forty-second and ninety-fifth Psalms, several string quartets, his violin concerto, and other things; and when he returned to Leipzig, and had recovered from a second attack of measles, his "Elijah" was well under way.

Mendelssohn's favorite motto was: "What is worth doing at all is worth doing well." What he found time to accomplish in his busy life at Leipzig is almost incredible: writing innumerable letters, composition, business, society, the circus, visits from friends, the exhausting labor of conducting and arranging programs; and while he, one might say, with one hand composed two cantatas for the festival in honor of the invention of printing, with the other he translated for his uncle a number of Italian poems into German verse. It was a constant whirl of excitement, — "a really overpowering turmoil." He thus tells of a *soirée* given in honor of Liszt: —

"Three hundred and fifty people, orchestra, chorus, punch, pastry, Calm at Sea, Psalm, Bach's Triple Concerto, choruses from St. Paul, Fantasia on Lucia, the Erlking, the Devil and his Grandmother."

He was fond of Liszt, and called his perfect playing of the G-minor pianoforte concerto at sight a miracle.

If he liked anything he liked it immensely, but if he disliked it he would act in the oddest way. Once, when

Hiller played to him some poor composition he threw himself down on the floor and rolled all about the room.

Some of Liszt's idiosyncrasies he could not abide. He could not see how Hiller could see anything in Berlioz's Symphony. "I cannot conceive of anything more insipid, wearisome, and Philistine," he says, "for with all his endeavors to go stark mad he never once succeeds; and as for your Liszt with his two fingers on one key, what does a homely provincial like me want with him?"

Mendelssohn was a severe critic even on Händel, but he thought "William Tell" a perfect and complete masterpiece. We sometimes get a pleasant picture of him at a concert or opera when something is going wrong. He simply boils with indignation, and his ever quiet and serene Cécile lays her hand on his coat and says, "Dear husband, do be calm!"

When he heard that Meyerbeer had been made court kapellmeister, he declared that he might have been jealous if there had not been a distance of several German miles between a court kapellmeister and a real kapellmeister. "If I were to be made a court composer to-morrow," said he, "I should be bound not to write another note so long as I lived."

Yet he was himself to be a kapellmeister, and his pleasant life at Leipzig was to be disturbed and finally broken up by the ambition of King Frederick William IV., who proposed shortly after his accession to the throne to found an Academy of Arts in Berlin.

Mendelssohn was invited toward the end of 1840 to take the post of director of the musical division or class. His better judgment, and his dislike of Berlin with "its shoals of sycophant courtiers" and its utter lack of musical taste, stood against it; but he was probably

weary with the season's work at Leipzig, where he had given nineteen concerts between January 1 and March 15. Indeed, what he did for Leipzig during his life there may be read in the sumptuous history of the Gewandhaus concerts recently published.

He accepted for a year, and his farewell to Leipzig appropriately consisted of the Matthew Passion Music of Bach. Mendelssohn had interested himself to raise funds for a statue of the old Cantor in front of the Thomas Schule. It was successful,

His first great work for Berlin, where he now became kapellmeister to the King, was the music for "*Antigone*." The first performance of this old drama with Mendelssohn's beautiful setting took place on October 28, 1841. It immediately became popular, but Mendelssohn's relations with his band, and indeed, with the Berlin public, were most unsatisfactory. The King was kind and obliging, and it was through his request that Mendelssohn wrote the music to "*Athalie*," "*Oidipous*," "*The Midsummer's Night's Dream*," and Goethe's "*Walpurgisnacht*."

But the situation grew more and more disagreeable, and at last the King released him from residence there, allowing him a salary of one thousand thalers for his duties of composition. His mother had died in December, 1842, and the Berlin house was now his. But during the rest of his life he lived chiefly in Leipzig, where his darling scheme of a conservatory of music was carried into effect. A legacy left by a man named Blümner was applied to this purpose, and the great institution destined to accomplish so much for German art was formally opened in April, 1843, with Mendelssohn, David, Schumann, and other well-known composers among the

teachers. One of the first pupils was the young Hebrew genius, Joachim, a boy of twelve, destined to be the greatest of violinists since Spohr.

Even "the long tedious Berlin business" had its compensations. The greatest of these was his lovely home life. And perhaps not least were his visits to England, where he was the most popular of men.

In the summer of 1842 he made his seventh journey to London, and this time was twice received at Buckingham Palace, where he played accompaniments for the Queen to sing. She asked him how she could best express her thanks. He asked to see her sleeping children, and when this favor was granted, kissed them, and thought of his own at home.

The next year he conducted the last six concerts of the Philharmonic Society in London, introducing many novelties of his own composition and by Bach, Schubert, and Beethoven.

Mendelssohn conducted with his right side toward the orchestra. His movements were short and decided, sometimes almost invisible. He took pains to get the best from his orchestra. He had great tact and good-nature, though sometimes when things went persistently wrong his tongue was sharp. But he was popular with the band, and inspired them to enthusiasm.

Ever since 1838 Mendelssohn had kept in mind the subject of Elijah for an oratorio. It gradually took shape, and at last was engaged for the Birmingham Festival of 1846. In the midst of his incessant labors as head of the Conservatorium, — teaching the piano and composition and overseeing administrative details, — he yet managed to finish it in time, and by the middle of August was in London again.

The oratorio was performed on the twenty-sixth, with unheard-of success. Mendelssohn himself was amazed, and wrote home glowing accounts of it. But he was not satisfied with the work, and, in accordance with his usual custom, after judging by the public hearing, made many changes in it. His taste was most fastidious, and often he would spend hours on a few bars till he had polished them to perfection. When he returned to England for the tenth and last time, to conduct the "Elijah" in its revised form, the Prince Consort, who was present, wrote a note in his program-book, addressing him as another Elijah, "faithful to the worship of true Art, though surrounded by the idolaters of Baal." He also played two hours at Buckingham Palace for the Queen and the Prince Consort alone.

On his way back, he was arrested and detained by a zealous official, who mistook him for a Dr. Mendelssohn wanted by the police. It was a very annoying accident. He had hardly reached home before the news of the sudden death of his sister Fanny was abruptly broken to him. With a cry, he fell unconscious to the ground. He spent that summer in Switzerland, occupying himself largely with painting in water-colors. Thirteen large pictures of Swiss scenery, and carefully executed, are in existence.

He who had so many times held vast audiences spell-bound with his masterly performances on the organ, played for the last time in the village church of Ringgenberg, on the Lake of Brienz.

When he returned home his friends were shocked at the change that had taken place in him. He had aged, and grown dull and listless. Only occasionally his usual gay spirits asserted themselves; for the most part he was mournful and depressed.

The trouble which he had suffered in his head grew worse. After three severe attacks between October 9 and November 3, he died in the evening of Thursday, November 4, 1847. It is not too much to say that all Europe mourned. In Leipzig, it was as though "a king were dead." In London, Manchester, and Birmingham, where he was so beloved, in many of the chief cities of Germany, and even in Paris, memorial concerts were organized.

Scholarships were established in his honor. Busts and statues of him were erected.

After his death, a commission was appointed to publish selections from the immense mass of his manuscript. They included male and mixed part-songs, duets, "songs without words," quartets and quintets, fragments of unfinished opera and oratorios, overtures, concerted pieces, and symphonies.

As a song-writer Mendelssohn cannot be compared to a dozen other German composers. He himself did not care for what are called *Volk*-songs. He declared that national airs were beastly, common, false things. Scotch bagpipes, Swiss horns, and Welsh harps were not to his heart; still less, "so-called melodies whined in a nasal tone, stupidly accompanied by maladroit fingers." Naturally, therefore, his own songs, with few exceptions, lack spontaneity. His duets are better. Still greater are his four-part songs, many of which are immortal.

He himself confessed that pianoforte pieces were not what he wrote with the greatest pleasure or even with real success. Yet his "Songs Without Words" have enjoyed almost unequalled popularity.

It was as a composer of chamber and concerted music, especially of symphonies and oratorios, that Mendelssohn

was great. His greatness consists not in those overwhelming effects characteristic of the music of a later day; but in calm, symmetrical beauty. In this he is unexcelled.

As a man, as a friend, in all the relations of family and society, Mendelssohn stands alone and apart. His letters have endeared him to the world. He is known as few other composers have ever been known. Though it is somewhat the fashion to sneer at him, it seems safe to predict, that as time goes on his fame will rather increase than diminish.

SCHUMANN.

(1810-1856.)

MOZART'S life has been called panoramic; Beethoven's was volcanic; Mendelssohn's was kaleidoscopic. In contrast with these, Schumann's was colorless and monotonous.

Mendelssohn and Schumann were antipodes. The one clear, open, spontaneous, effervescent; the other, silent deep, sometimes obscure. The one, fond of publicity; the other, most at home by his own fireside, or in the guarded sanctum at the editorial desk. The one, the light and spirit of any company; the other, almost a hermit and recluse.

We know both most intimately through their letters. Both have exerted great influence on musical art. But Mendelssohn's was ephemeral, and felt mainly by those of weaker fibre; whereas Schumann's has been felt especially by stronger natures. Contrast Gade and Brahms.

Robert Alexander Schumann was the youngest of five children. His birthday was June 8, 1810. His birthplace was the quaint little Saxon town of Zwickau, with tall, picturesque houses and broad, grass-grown streets, where his father, F. A. G. Schumann, carried on the business of bookseller and publisher. His father's

father was a clergyman. His mother's father was a surgeon.

No long line of musical ancestry explains his bent for the Tone-Art. He was a graft on the tree. But his father was a man of culture, sensitive, imaginative, fond of poetry; and his mother strangely combined strong, practical common-sense with an extravagant view of romantic sentimentality. His father favored his bent. The mother opposed it.

Yet it was cultivated to a certain extent, beginning early. At seven he was taking lessons of the pedantic *Baccalaureus* Kuntsch, organist of the Marienkirche, who was not long in discovering the boy's talent, and predicted that he would be one of the lights of art. He must have felt the lack of musical nurture at home, for he afterwards remarked how fortunate were they who drew in music with their mother's milk, thereby feeling themselves consciously members of the great family of artists, into which others like himself had to make their entrance by dint of sacrifice.

When he was nine, he heard the famous pianist Moscheles at Carlsbad. It was a revelation to him. It awakened ambition; it made him conscious of his wings. When he was back at his home again, and studying at the gymnasium or high school, all his sports and pleasures had music for a background. He formed a little orchestra consisting of two violins, two flutes, a clarinet, and two horns. Missing parts Schumann filled in with the piano. He composed pieces suitable for this band. He amazed them by his skill at extempore playing. The father was pleased. He was sure of an audience of one, who was ever ready to buy classic masterpieces for his use.

Kuntsch gave a public performance of a choral work by Schneider. A lively boy of eleven stood at the piano playing the accompaniment, — it was Schumann. Two years later he himself arranged the 150th Psalm (for chorus and orchestra), and played in public. He was not precocious merely in music. When he was fourteen, he helped his father prepare a book entitled "Picture Gallery of the Most Famous Men of All Nations and Times."

His father, who had been hindered in his own choice of a profession, wrote to Carl Maria von Weber, at Dresden, with a view to putting Robert under his tuition. Weber consented to receive him; but nothing came of it, and the father died in 1825. His long course at the gymnasium ended three years later; and, out of love for his mother, who was supported in her views by his guardian, Herr Rüdel, the merchant, he reluctantly sacrificed his inclinations, and began the study of law at Leipzig.

He was by this time fully under the sway of the sentimental Jean Paul. Whole pages of letters which he wrote while still in Zwickau are like the rhapsodies of the author of "Titan." He lies on the sofa with tears in his eyes and his friend's letter in his hand; he wanders out through nature, and reads it over a dozen times. He feels pure and undying love for the first time; he would fain be a smile and play around *her* eyes, would be joy so as to bound through *her* pulses, would be a tear and weep with her, and *die* on her eyelashes! His poetic mill is still either because there is too much water in the sluiceway, or too little. Yet can he hardly tell whether it is Liddy or Nanni that most stirs his heart.

Verily it cannot be Liddy, for on a fatal Thursday he

sat with her on the Rosenberg; great bluish mist mountains arose in the east; the sun was setting; the whole temple of nature lay far and wide before the intoxicated vision. It almost seemed to him that his ideal was by his side. He seized Liddy's hand, and pointing to the black-purple storm-clouds on the horizon exclaimed, "Liddy, such is life!"

But Liddy was not one of the young women so common in that day, who worshipped Jean Paul and deified his dog. She made some remark that fell like cold water on his flowers of sentiment, and he cries, "The dream is over."

Quaint and far-fetched conceits, glowing words about love and friendship and the ideal and the real, sentimental pictures of peasant dances and idyllic scenes, all that strange and to us almost incomprehensible rigmarole of sense and nonsense, then so dear to the German heart, flow from his ready pen.

Occasional hints at his acquirements and tastes: He has finished reading Sophokles; he has lately taken up Plato's "Crito," but can find no delight in it: "Plato is food for men." Tacitus and Sallust attract him strongly, but Cicero revolts him: "he is a *rabulist*, — that is, pettifogger, — charlatan, and windbag braggart."

It is Jean Paul who finds still "the first place" with him. "I place him above all — even Schiller (Goethe I do not understand as yet) not excepted."

This influence remained supreme with him through life, and explains to a certain extent his love for the brilliant and extravagant in expression, the sharp contrasts, — laughter and tears, — and the disregard of form, which characterize his music.

Before he took up his residence at Leipzig he went on



ROBERT A. SCHUMANN.

After a water-color made in his youth.

After a drawing by E. Bendemann.

a pleasure trip with a new-made friend, Gisbert Rosen, also a strong Jean Paulist. He went as far as Munich, where he made the acquaintance of Heine, so many of whose poems he afterwards set to music. At Augsburg he lost his heart to a charming Clara von Kurrer, but it was only a platonic and sentimental passion. The young lady was engaged. Her image of which he writes so ecstatically, with eloquent silence was doomed to go into that picture-gallery to which his heart gave so much room.

He made a pilgrimage to Bayreuth to see the widow of Jean Paul. Frau Richter gave him a portrait of her husband. He was delighted with the palace-like houses, but more with the people, like Rollwenzel, who could talk for hours about his idol.

When he returned to Leipzig it was hard to fix his attention on his law studies. Rosen had gone to Heidelberg. "Oh, to be at Heidelberg with you!" wrote Schumann early in June; "Leipzig is a horrid hole where one cannot enjoy life. It is far easier to make progress in the art of spending money than in the lecture-rooms."

Yet he had written his mother only a few days before declaring that though "chilling jurisprudence" with its "ice-cold definitions" is revolting to him, yet he will get the better of it: "if only a man uses his will-power, he can indeed do all things."

He hides nothing from his beloved mother, his "good, forgiving mother," the "gentle monitor" of his youth, who so faithfully warned him when he was in danger of "sinking deeper into the labyrinth of life." He writes her long letters full of sentimental effusiveness, complaining that there are no mountains, no valleys, no

forests where his thoughts may have free course; no place where he may be alone. "Nature," he writes her, "is the great wide-spread handkerchief of God, embroidered with His eternal name, and serviceable to man for wiping away all his tears of sorrow."

The perfect frankness with which Schumann pours out his soul to his mother, and the evident love and sympathy between them, make it somewhat hard to understand why she so opposed him in making music his profession.

He lets it be no secret that he is still interested in music. In the same letter that tells her of the cost of his "patriarchal establishment," he mentions paying a ducat a month for the hire of a piano, and wishes he might either have his own "dear old faithful instrument, or be able to spend four hundred dollars in the purchase of a new one."

He tells her that he goes regularly and machine-like to the lectures, plays the piano much, works at home and reads a great deal, plays chess every evening, and goes out for a walk of two or three hours. He also takes fencing lessons, but he calms her apprehensions as to the danger of duelling by saying, "I have never been a brawler [*Raufbold*], and never will be." Neither does he go often to the *Bierkneipen*, but rather finds more delight in the society of two or three congenial young men; the only family whom he visits is Dr. Carus's, who were old acquaintances. They were musical people, and led to Schumann's acquaintance with Marschner, whose "*Vampyr*" was brought out that spring, and with the Wiecks.

Schumann began to take lessons of Friedrich Wieck, one of the best piano teachers in Germany; but as early

as August he wrote for his mother's permission to leave Leipzig and go to Heidelberg for a year, so as to hear the most famous German jurists, especially Thibaut, the author of "*Purity in Musical Art*," who had performed the miracle of combining two such opposing professions.

His spirits, which had been low, immediately improved at the prospect of being with Rosen in that blooming paradise, with its great tun and little tuns, its jolly people, and its nearness to Switzerland, Italy, and France; of being in the society of those who should understand him. That was the cause of his gloom in Leipzig — the lack of sympathizing spirits to inspire him, the monotonous course of commonplace life.

So he went to Heidelberg — the journey being like "a flight through hundreds of spring skies." It was all illusion about the law. In the easy-going life of a university student without restraint or obligation, the temptation was irresistible to drift with the stream. Piano open was more attractive than pandects covered with dust. We read of practice seven hours a day, of evenings devoted to music, of Thibaut the musician rather than Thibaut the lawyer.

Strange forecast of fate! In his first enthusiastic letter to his mother, he tells her that his "princely lodgings" (princely because of the view of the splendid old mountain castle and the green hills covered with oaks) are between the Catholic Church and the mad-house, so that he is truly in doubt whether to be crazy or Catholic! His descriptions of the whole journey are like pages from a sentimental novel, — like Longfellow's "*Hyperion*."

Before he procures a piano, he goes with all boldness into the establishment of a dealer, introduces himself

as the steward of a young English lord who was thinking of purchasing an instrument, and plays for three long hours, "gaped at and applauded."

Thousands of such details are found in Schumann's letters. In September he is in Italy. He tells his sister-in-law of a beautiful English girl at Milan, who *seemed* to have fallen in love, not with himself, but his piano-playing.

She gave him a sprig of cypress when they parted. She was haughty and kind, loving and hating, hard and soft, when he played. Schumann applied similar contradictions to himself: poor and rich, weak and strong, worn out, yet full of life. And long the recollections of the cypresses of Milan filled his heart. Perhaps they, more than lack of ready money, caused him to weep as he sat on a stone bench in front of the Doge's palace at Venice, looking with sad and weary eyes at the sea and the unknown people passing to and fro. Sentimental hearts like Schumann's have their valleys of sorrow, as well as their heights of bliss. But how susceptible he was, is shown by his diary and his letters. A pretty Englishwoman's speech is like the whispering of an angel. The Grecian noses of the maidens who dwell with Father Rhine, and their oval cheeks and brown hair, delight him amazingly.

Whether he got all the advantage from his trip to Italy which he expected, and which he eloquently set forth under twelve heads in a letter to his mother, cannot be told. He had learned to speak French and Italian fluently. But if the charming days that he spent in Switzerland and among the Italian lakes did nothing more than confirm him in his love for all things beautiful, they were not wasted. Moreover, he heard

Paganini! And when he heard Pasta and Rossini sung at the Scala in Milan, it seemed to him (so he wrote Friedrich Wieck) as though God Himself stood before him, and let him look into His face. The charm was upon him; henceforth the law was an impossibility. He must make his mother renounce her dream of seeing him "a future diplomate, ambassador of the Royal Court of Saxony to the Free States of North America!"

Still he remained at Heidelberg, undecided, yet longing to decide, toying with art, and yet in a sort of desperation making one more effort to redeem lost time by reviewing the course with an old lawyer. An unsatisfactory existence; for, as he wrote his mother, speaking of his attraction for music, and of the creative spirit, jurisprudence "turns him into gristle, and freezes him into ice, so that no flower of fancy will any longer yearn for the springtime of the world!"

He tells her how economical he is, living on the simplest of fare, and spending only one hundred and thirty thalers for the semester, forty florins for piano-hire, and almost as much for French lessons, which are "stupendously dear," but justifiable, because he daily sees how necessary a perfect knowledge of the language is, and because his dear father had recommended it. Sometimes his economy led him into the extravagance of living on nothing but potatoes for a fortnight at a time.

Evidently his guardian was inclined to keep him on short commons, for he is always writing to his "most honored Herr Rüdél" for more funds, or sharing his anxieties with his "dear good mother," telling of his debts, and his plans for raising money by methods which he should adopt only in the most unnatural circum-

stances; namely, in case he should get none from home.

He was too light-hearted to be unhappy; he drifted with the current. One day he goes to Mannheim in the four-horse coach of the widowed Grand Duchess Stephanie of Baden, "to breathe court air for a little while, though it is choking." Then he figures as leading soloist "at the great, miserable Heidelberg concert, which is attended by almost all the royal highnesses from Mannheim or Karlsruhe." And he tells his mother of the fine society which, as it were, under protest, he frequents at Dr. Wüstenfeld's, — where there is a pretty daughter, and witty *gouvernante* from Lausanne, "with French eye-play," which, nevertheless, does not move him, — and elsewhere. Or, on a Thursday he listens to a Händel oratorio sung by a select chorus at the "holy house" of "the splendid, divine" Thibaut, of whose wit, keenness, sensibility, pure artistic sense, charm and grace, he cannot say enough.

He celebrates his mother's birthday in the ruins of the old castle. "What else should the life and the vocation of a child be, than an eternal wish for the happiness of its parents?" he fervently exclaims. As a birthday gift, he wrote several songs, — a *Liederkranz* (song-wreath) he called it; but, as he failed to get them done in time, he gave her — his piano-playing! adding, in his letter, the hope that she is not annoyed at his wit, and will smile at the deceiver again.

But, oh, the debts! — 145 florins to the tailor for his fine red cloak and black stockings and blue dress-coat and black coat and waistcoat, and then dues for shoes and cobbling. And then he must eat and drink, and go to Mannheim, and smoke, and buy books and music;

masked balls, fees, subscriptions, cigars, cigars, piano-tuner, washerwoman, bootblack, candles, soap, good friends who must sometimes have a glass of *bier*; and he adds pathetically, "For four long weeks I have not had a kreutzer in my pocket!"

But the fateful June came at last. How he revels in the glorious summer life! "I get up every morning at four," he writes his brother; "the sky is blue enough to kiss. I work till eight on pandects and civil law; play the piano from eight to ten; from ten to twelve with Thibaut and Mittermayer; from twelve to two, go out for a walk and dinner; from two to four, with Zacharia, and Johannsen; then we go to the castle, or to the Rhine, or to my dear mountains."

On the last day of June, he wrote his mother, at five o'clock in the morning, "the most important letter of his life." The alcohol boiling and sputtering under his coffee machine, the sky pure and golden enough to kiss, his cigar tasting excellently, his mother's last letter lying before him, and now he comes to his great confession: "My whole life has been a twenty years' battle between poesy and prose, or call it music and *jus*."

In Leipzig he dreamed more and cared less about his plan of life; but in Heidelberg, he says he has really tried to work, with the result that he has come more and more to depend on art.

"Now I stand at the parting of the ways, and am frightened at the question, 'Whither?'"

He tells her that it seems to him his genius points out the right way, and in spite of her good motherly reasons and the danger of "an uncertain future and a precarious living," he must choose for himself. Thibaut the jurist had long advised him to dedicate himself to Art.

And so he begs his mother to write to Wieck, and ask him frankly what he thinks of him and his plan of life. Hard as it was for her, she consented. His guardian was not so yielding. When her answer came enclosing Wieck's advice to try the experiment for six months, what an earnest protest he sent her against any longer degrading his talent! With what eloquent scorn he holds up the petty life as *oberactuarious* in a provincial city of 3,000 inhabitants and with 600 thalers salary, sitting from seven in the morning till seven at night in the council-room, dealing with four-groschen lawsuits, with convicts and scoundrels! Even the title of nobility, and the much-coveted "*von*," would not repay those years of service to a false ideal.

Yet when he had turned his back on beautiful Heidelberg, ready for a three-years' devotion to his art, to win his spurs, and already dreaming of a career as a virtuoso, with America as one goal, and an English wife as another, he writes his dearest mother that his "heart is as dead and barren as the future."

After he was comfortably settled — in an idyllic and simple fashion — in Leipzig, he once more began to lack money. On the sixteenth of November he wrote his mother: "For two weeks I have not had a shilling. I owe Wieck twenty thalers, and Lühe thirty, and I am actually living like a dog." His hair was "a yard long," yet he could not get it cut, and for a fortnight he had been obliged to wear white cravats, his black ones were so shabby. His piano is horribly out of tune. He can't even shoot himself, because he has no money or pistols. Still in all his mock despair he assures his mother that her fear lest a good tree may bear bad fruit will not be justified.

Schumann took lodgings near Wieck's house, and began at the very beginning, although he could read any concerto at sight. But he was so anxious to get ahead that he secretly practised for hours, fastening the third finger of his right hand in a strained position, hoping thereby to give it equal strength with the others, and thus equal if not surpass Moscheles. This, says Ambros, was a good illustration of the saying that a man is liable to break his neck if he jumps through a window in order to get down stairs quicker than by descending the stairway.

In the summer of 1831, perhaps owing to what he calls his "painful, almost childish, fear of cholera," — he even made his will, — Schumann thought of going to Weimar to take lessons of Hummel. But the plan was given up. Was it because of the slight lameness which he began to feel in his hand? Perhaps.

Two years later he wrote his friend Dr. Töpken that he is playing the piano but little, having injured and crippled one of the fingers of his right hand. The injury began, he says, by being insignificant, but through neglect it grew worse, so as to make it almost impossible to play at all. Yet he was resigned, and even considered it providential.

It was. It turned his activity into two channels, both of incomparable influence: composition and criticism.

Composition he had already attempted, though he knew not the laws of the science: at Leipzig a number of songs full of queer indiscretions, but also of soul and poetic feeling. At Mannheim he had met a young girl named Meta Abegg at a masked ball; and on the letters *a, b, e, g, g*, he wrote a set of variations afterwards printed

as Op. 1, and dedicated to a Countess Pauline Abegg, who existed only in his imagination.

This trifle formed a part of his "*Papillons*" ("Butterflies") which appeared in Leipzig in 1831. "In a short time," he wrote his mother, "I shall be the father of a healthy, blooming child, which I should like to have baptized in Leipzig. . . . Heaven grant that you may understand it with its earliest tones of youth, of living life!" They were directly inspired by Jean Paul's "*Hegeljahre*," as he writes to his friend Rellstab in Berlin: after reading the last scene in the work, as he called up before his mind Walt and Wult—and the masks—and the dances, he sat almost unconscious at the piano, "and so arose one *Papillon* after another."

He studied harmony with Friedrich Dorn, conductor of the Leipzig opera; but systematic application was contrary to his nature, and years later, when he had begun to feel the need of more thorough knowledge, a caller found Schumann and his wife poring over a manual of counterpoint. Schumann was always grateful to Dorn for his instruction, and speaks of him as the man who first helped him to the heights where he might see less of the common herd of men, and drink in more of the pure atmosphere of Art.

Schumann spent the winter of 1832 at Zwickau and Schneeberg writing his first symphony in G-minor. It was never published, but one movement was played at Zwickau at a concert in which Clara Schumann, a wonder child, took part. Schumann says her playing was so marvellous that Zwickau was fired to enthusiasm for the first time in its existence.

In March, 1833, he returned to Leipzig, where he lived in quiet though easy circumstances — a happy type of

"the free lance" in music, working as he pleased, and surrounded by gifted friends, whose stimulus made him eager to do something great.

Between him and the charming Frau Henriette Voigt, there was a noble platonic friendship which was interrupted only by the early death of the latter. He wrote to his mother in the following summer, of "two splendid female beings" who had come into their circle, — Emily, the sixteen-year-old daughter of the American Consul, "an Englishwoman through and through, with keen, sparkling eyes, dark hair, firm step, full of spirit, dignity, and life;" the other, Ernestine, the adopted daughter "of a rich Bohemian, Baron von Fricken, her mother a Countess Zeltwitz — a gloriously pure, childlike nature, tender and thoughtful, with the most intense love for me and everything artistic, extraordinarily musical." He whispers into her motherly and sympathetic ear that if he could choose he would make this young woman his wife. They became engaged, but the engagement was broken in the summer of 1835. She came from the little town of Asch, which he celebrated in music with a theme made up of the letters composing it, and mystically hidden in his own name.¹

At Poppe's restaurant, Kaffeebaum, gathered every evening a coterie of young men, and Schumann frequently joined them, though he was apt to sit silent and pensive, dreaming his "Jean-Pauliads."

He wrote Clara Wieck: "I am often very leathery, dry, and disagreeable, and laugh much inwardly." And

¹ A-es-c-h: *Es* in German corresponds with E-flat; h for B-flat. "I have just discovered that the town of *Asch* has a very musical name, and that the same letters are found in my name, indeed, are the only musical ones in it," he writes in a letter dated September 13, 1834, and signed "Robert SCHumann."

again, speaking of his tendency to seclusion, he says : "Inwardly I acknowledge even the most trifling favor, understand every hint, every subtle trait in another's heart, and yet I so often blunder in what I say and do." Those who knew him best were satisfied with "his radiant expression and his speechless glance" when he approved of what was said.

Among these congenial spirits originated, at Schumann's suggestion, the musical journal which was to lead the revolt of genius against traditions, and be the protest of youth in favor of greater freedom, of new things. The year 1834 saw the establishment of the *New Journal of Music* (" *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*"), which at first was edited by Friedrich Wieck, Ludwig Schunke, Julius Knorr, and Schumann, but afterwards by Schumann alone. The various contributors employed various signatures, Schumann taking for his, either the figure 2 and combinations of it, or *Florestan*, *Eusebius*, *Meister Raro*, *Jeanquirit*, according as he wished to criticise from different points of view, the impulsive and imaginative, the gentle and sensitive, the light and humorous. These imaginary characters formed a revolutionary band, conspiring to fight Philistinism in all its forms. Schumann introduces them into his music; makes them figure in his carnival scenes. We have a march of the *Davidsbündler* against the Philistines.

Schumann certainly revolutionized the science of criticism, and the influence of the new journal, started at a time when both music and musical journalism were at a low tide, can never be over-estimated.

Schumann once declared that if he had not been feared as an editor, he would not have been able to find a publisher for his works. They were not generally

understood by his contemporaries; they were considered dry, eccentric, heavy, out of rule. Spohr, who could not comprehend Beethoven, found in Schumann's works "a want of euphony and melodious breadth of harmony!" But still he composed, with his eyes fixed not on present popularity, but on his ideal. Not until he published his lovely "*Kinderscenen*" was he appreciated by the general public.

Meantime Leipzig was blossoming out as the most musical city in Germany. Mendelssohn came there in 1835. On the evening after the first Gewandhaus concert, Wieck gave the new conductor a reception. Mendelssohn and Schumann met for the first time. The next day they dined together, and in the afternoon at six, Moscheles, Clara Wieck, and a pianist from Bremen played Bach's concerto for three pianos, Mendelssohn furnishing the orchestral parts on a fourth. "It was splendid," wrote Schumann.

Mendelssohn apparently influenced Schumann in the direction of greater perfection of form. They met frequently, though Schumann was such a recluse. He liked Mendelssohn better than Mendelssohn liked him, as was natural, considering their opposite polarities. "Mendelssohn," said he, "is a glorious fellow, a diamond right from heaven!" In another letter he calls him "a high mountain, a perfect god!"

Among the other brilliant lights who shone then were Chopin and Hiller, Gade and Henselt.

Clara Wieck had grown into a woman. Schumann, whose warm heart had been set to beating by the languishing eyes of dark-haired Italians, by intellectual English girls, and the pretty maidens of the Rhine, found in her at last his truest ideal. Years before she had been

perfection. He wrote her, in 1832: "I think of you not as a brother or a sister, or as a friend of his friend, but perhaps somewhat as a pilgrim thinks of the far-off altar-picture." And after asking her how apples tasted in Frankfurt, he closed with the words: "My paper comes to an end. Everything comes to an end except friendship."

She had become the greatest pianist in Germany. She played Bach, Chopin, Beethoven, and it was said of her, "She came, she played, and she conquered." No one could resist the poetry of "this tender, noble apparition." Schumann said Schubert, Paganini, Chopin, and now Clara, were examples of those brilliant flashes of lightning which make the world, that herd of cattle, look up from its tranquil grazing.

Schumann loved her. But her father, who Schumann said was a man of honor, but with a screw loose, refused to hear of their marriage. He even forbade any sort of intercourse, "on pain of death." He carried Clara off, and Schumann for a time did not even know where she was. At one time Wieck called him phlegmatic! — "*Carnaval*, and phlegmatic!" wrote Schumann; "F-sharp minor sonata, and phlegmatic! Love for such a maiden, and phlegmatic!" — Then he slightly asks where is his "*Don Juan*" and his "*Freischütz*"? Then he scornfully remarks that the public will not buy his compositions. But the "*Kinderszenen*" had already appeared. And what promise there was in that marvellous "*Toccata*" (Op. 7), which is a prophecy of so much, — of all!

In 1838 Schumann, hoping to place his journal on a better paying basis, transferred it to Vienna. But he found Vienna had lost its prestige as a musical centre.

No one then seemed able to appreciate Jean Paul and Shakspeare. The police authorities interfered with his work, and required him to have an Austrian editor. The struggle was in vain. Vienna cakes and the chorus in the Kärnthnerthor Theatre helped to console him, but in April of the following year he returned to Leipzig, and in revenge placed the "*Marseillaise*" in his Carnival Scene¹ from Vienna.

Wieck was still strong in his opposition. But, as Clara reciprocated his love, Schumann had recourse to law. The father's objections were overruled, and on September 12, 1840, Schumann, who, at his own request, had been made Doctor of Philosophy by the University, was married to Clara Wieck at the church of Schönfeld. Rückert wrote them a congratulatory poem.

Schumann felt justified at this step. He wrote, in the following February: "We are young, we have our fingers, power, reputation. I have, moreover, a modest property which brings me three hundred thalers a year; the profits of the *Journal* are almost as much, and my compositions are well paid for."

Yet the annoyances of the experience were exceedingly trying to a man of Schumann's temperament. He himself acknowledged that his concerto, his "*Davidsbündler*" dances, the E-minor sonata, the "*Kreisleriana*," and the "*Noveletten*," particularly betray the struggle that his Clara had cost him.

Hitherto, with the exception of the E-minor symphony, his works had been written exclusively for the piano. Now, under the inspiration of love, came upwards of one hundred songs in one year; and what gems most of them are!

¹ "*Faschingsschwank aus Wien.*"

Nearly all of his great works date during the five years that followed his marriage: in 1841, three symphonies; in 1842, mostly chamber music — three string quartets in a month, at the rate of one movement a day. The same year he wrote his quintet for piano and strings, which was first played on January 8, 1843, Madame Schumann at the piano. Berlioz was present, and took the fame of it to Paris.

In 1843 Mendelssohn established the Conservatory at Leipzig, and Schumann was appointed instructor in composition and part-playing. He had, however, little ability as a teacher.

The next year he accompanied Madame Schumann to Russia. The imperial family and many of the nobility were kind to them, and *all* the musicians were friendly. The Grand Princess Helena, whom they visited at Tsarskoye Selo, "treated them as she had never treated artists before." She was anxious to keep them there. Schumann found an older brother of his mother's living in Tver, and enjoyed the unexpected meeting. It is pleasant to read that complete reconciliation with "the old man" had at last taken place, and many of the details of their Russian visit are to be found in their letters to their "dear papa." Schumann forgave, if he never forgot, the cruel acts of his father-in-law.

After Mendelssohn was called to Berlin, Schumann, who had resigned his editorship, settled in Dresden, the change being necessitated by his ill-health. He wrote Mendelssohn, in July, 1845, that he had been having an awful winter: "absolute nervous prostration, accompanied by a swarm of terrible thoughts, nearly drove him to despair." Insomnia, a horror of death, a dislike of metal tools, a fear of being poisoned, tormented him.

The doctor forbade his hearing music. And Dresden was much more quiet than Leipzig. Here he had pleasant acquaintances, also, among them being the young Wagner, then kapellmeister, hot-headed and ready for any kind of revolution.

The following year he was much better; "the rosy glow" which he had begun to feel as a promise of renewed strength had brought its sunrise, and he composed his second symphony, the drums and trumpets of which had been throbbing and blaring in his head tremendously, as he writes.

Encouraged by the great success which his cantata "Paradise and the Peri"¹ had won in the Leipzig concerts of December, 1843, he took up the composition of an opera entitled "Genoveva," which was completed in 1848. When, after long delays caused by intrigue, this was produced in Leipzig in June, 1850, it fell unappreciated. In spite of its exquisite music, it was regarded as too monotonous, colorless, as over-sentimental and undramatic. After three performances it was shelved.

The same year he was called to Düsseldorf as "city music director," with the duty of conducting an orchestra and a vocal society. He believed in his own power as a director, but he, like Beethoven, really lacked the ability. He was nervous, and sometimes oblivious of what he was doing. If at rehearsal a piece went wrong, he would never think to stop and correct it, but would try the whole over and over, to the annoyance of the performers.

¹ In June he wrote to a friend that during the past ten days he had been putting on paper many hundred thousand notes and getting ready for the heavenly journey by means of a great work — an oratorio, not for the chapel, but for cheerful men, and that while composing it, an inner voice seemed to say to him in sweet accents: "Thou art not writing in vain. This production will become immortal."

This difficulty made his experience at Düsseldorf very trying, although he had exceptional opportunity for bringing out his own works. In November, 1853, the committee requested him to conduct only his own compositions, and leave the rest to Tausch, the music director. This led to open rupture, and he left Düsseldorf.

Those years had been splendidly prolific: among the compositions which poured from his pen after the completion of "*Genoveva*," was the beautiful "*Faust*" music, some of which was performed at Dresden, Leipzig, and Weimar, on the hundredth anniversary of Goethe's birth, Rückert's "*Advent Song*," the music to Byron's "*Manfred*," the "*Wood Scenes*," two symphonies, the overtures to the "*Bride of Messina*," "*Julius Cæsar*," and "*Hermann and Dorothea*," the cantata "*The Pilgrimage of the Rose*," his Mass and Requiem, and an immense number of songs and instrumental compositions. Many of them were written in most untoward circumstances, — in the nursery, surrounded by his children, in a noisy restaurant, sitting in a corner, face to the wall, oblivious of all things.

The following winter Schumann and his wife undertook an artistic tour through Holland, which, as he says, was "accompanied by good geniuses from beginning to end." He was surprised and delighted to find that his music was so thoroughly appreciated there, "almost more at home than it was in the Fatherland." Still even the Fatherland treated him well, for only a year or so before he had written that he was accustomed to be misunderstood by new acquaintances; but still he was pleased to notice how his music was more and more taking root in Germany and also abroad: "I receive many proofs of this,"

In 1854 a Leipzig publisher arranged with him to bring out his literary and musical essays in four volumes. Schumann declared that he was glad to find that during the twenty years since some of them had been written, he had scarcely changed his opinions at all.

These essays contained most interesting estimates of nearly all the composers and performers of the epoch. Schubert, "that sweet, pale youth round whose lips ever plays an expression of approaching death;" Bach, who "was neither ancient nor modern, but much more — eternal;" Brahms, the "John who was destined to come . . . and to express the highest ideal utterance of our time," and hundreds of others. It was a many-sided criticism, a genial recognition of genius, a friendly warning, a trumpet-blast against unworthiness; the outpouring of a nature above pettiness, generous and sympathetic.

It was true in more senses than one that "Florestan," the impulsive critic, kept vases full of flowers instead of candles on his piano, especially when a woman's composition was to be tried for the first time!

Many of Schumann's criticisms have become the aphorisms of music. Many are treasured for their flashing keenness and their wit, as when he speaks of "the length, the heavenly length, like a romance in four volumes," — of a Schubert symphony.

When Schumann first thought of going to Düsseldorf, he looked up the place in a geography-book, and found that it had three convents and a mad-house. "I have no objection to the former," he wrote, "but it made me rather uncomfortable to read about the latter. . . . I have to be careful in guarding against all melancholy impressions."

The lunatic asylum, more than once and more than twice, loomed up as a part of the landscape. It was his doom.

The nervous disorders, which his passion for strong cigars undoubtedly aggravated, began to grow worse. He imagined that he heard persistent tones ringing in his ears. Sometimes he heard whole pieces. Mendelssohn and Schubert, who had been, with Bach, his guiding lights, seemed to come to him and hold communion with him.

One night he got out of bed to write down a theme that they gave him. His variations on this were his last work.

In February, 1854, he attempted to commit suicide by throwing himself into the same Rhine where Mendelssohn so narrowly escaped drowning. He also was rescued by the boatmen.

After this, he was confined in a private asylum near Bonn. He had lucid intervals; he corresponded with his friends, and received visits from them; he played and even composed, but it was a sad ending of an eagle's flight.

He died on July 29, 1856. A monument was erected over his grave in 1880, but he needed no other monument than his mighty works.

“Thou didst rule with a golden sceptre over a splendid world of tones, and thou didst work therein with power and freedom. And many of the best gathered round thee, intrusted themselves to thee, inspired thee with their inspiration, and rewarded thee with their deep affection. And what a love adorned thy life! A wife, gifted with a radiant crown of genius, stood at thy side, and thou wert to her as the father to daughter, as bridegroom to bride, and as master to disciple, and as saint to the elect. And when she could not be with thee and remove every stone

from before thy feet, then didst thou feel, in the midst of dreams and sorrows, her protecting hand from the distance; and when the Angel of Death had pity on thee, and drew nigh to thy anguished soul, in order to help it again toward light and freedom, in thy last hours thy glance met hers; and reading the love in her eyes, thy weary spirit fled."

Thus cried his friend Hiller, inconsolable at his loss.

FRÉDÉRIC FRANÇOIS CHOPIN.

(1809-1849.)

“HATS off, gentlemen! a genius!”

With those words Robert Schumann, in his character of Eusebius the mild and dreamy, the gentle and sentimental, welcomed the young Polish composer, Frédéric Chopin, sixty years ago.

Julius Knorr, the pianist, who describes the conversation between the “*Davidsbündler*,” — “the hosts of David,” — replies —

“Chopin? I have never heard the name before — who may he be? Yet still he’s a genius.”

And “heated with wine, Chopin, and much discussion,” the imaginary army go to see “Meister Raro,” who is Schumann again as umpire, cool and critical between his own contrary and conflicting natures.

“Meister Raro” laughed much, and showed small curiosity over the new work.

“I know you and your new-fangled enthusiasm,” he cries, “but let me see your Chopin once.”

Henceforth “Eusebius,” “Florestan,” and “Meister Raro,” that trinity of critics, all are one in their admiration of Chopin, the first of the generous youth “to scale the wall and fall upon the sleeping Philistines,” and whip them hip and thigh, in that memorable uprising of Art which dates from 1830.



CHOPIN.

After the painting by Ary Scheffer.

"He came not," says Schumann, "with an orchestral army, as great geniuses are wont to come. He possesses only a little cohort, but it belongs to him wholly and entirely, even to the last hero."

In the middle of the last century a former King ¹ of Poland was Duke of Lorraine, and held court at Nancy. Naturally, many Poles settled or visited there, and through the friendships or acquaintances thus formed there would be Frenchmen going to Poland for profit or pleasure.

A Frenchman from Nancy had started as a tobacconist at Warsaw. The demand for his snuff became so great that he was obliged to have an assistant. About 1787 he engaged a youth of seventeen, named Nicolas Chopin, to come to Warsaw and keep his books for him.

There is a mystery about this Nicolas Chopin. All that is known about his early years is the date of his birth at Nancy. Whether his father was a Polish soldier named Szop, or a nameless Polish nobleman, or a French refugee named Chopin or Choppin, cannot be told.

When he reached Warsaw, he found that lively and picturesque capital in a ferment. Political hopes were beginning to rise, bright and enticing, before the eyes of the naturally light-hearted Poles. The Diet soon assembled, and after many stormy sessions passed the famous constitution of the third of May (1791), which promised to restore to the country her former greatness, — "the golden age of Poland."

But the Poles reckoned without their host.

It was a mirage.

First came commercial ruin caused by the uncertainty.

¹ Stanislas Leszczyński (pronounced *Les-chin-skee*).

There was greater demand for gunpowder than for snuff; the Frenchman's tobacco factory was closed.

Then came the national rising under Kosciuszko.

Nicolas Chopin joined the national guard and became captain. On the fifth of November he was on guard at Praga, and was relieved only a few hours before the Russians, under the cruel Suvárof, entered and massacred all the inhabitants — men, women, and children, to the number of ten thousand.

“ Poland, by the Northern condor's beak
And talons torn, lay prostrated again.”

This narrow escape turned his thoughts to his former home, but a severe illness prevented him, and on his recovery he maintained himself by giving French lessons. He was engaged as resident tutor in a wealthy family, one of his pupils being afterwards the mother of Count Walewski, minister to his father's nephew, Napoleon III.

In 1806, while tutor to the young Count Fryderyk Skarbek, at a manor-house about twenty-eight miles from Warsaw, he married a Polish lady,¹ whose name was longer than her fortune, but whose character was admirable in every respect. They lived for a few years in a humble little cottage belonging to the Skarbek estate, and here, on the first of March, 1809, was born their only son.

Warsaw, meantime, had been erected into a Grand Duchy, and Nicolas Chopin was appointed professor of French at the newly founded Lyceum. From this time forth, and with the improving condition of the country, the Chopins were in easy circumstances.

¹ Justina Krzyzanowska. The village where they lived at first, and where Frédéric Chopin was born, is Zelazowawola.

Nicolas Chopin was a man of blameless life and excellent abilities. He held various positions of trust, and counted among his friends many men of distinction. His wife, says Karasowski, "was peculiarly tender-hearted, and rich in true womanly virtues." She was free from pride, and "considered the quiet of home life the greatest of blessings."

In her old age, after the sorrows which came upon her in the death of her youngest daughter, of her husband, of her son, and of her oldest daughter, she was described as "a neat, quiet, intelligent old lady," of still remarkable activity. Her son called her "the best of mothers."

Frédéric was of rarely sensitive nature. All that is known of his early childhood is the fact that he could not hear music without sobbing violently. His first and only piano teacher was the Bohemian Adalbert Zywny, and his progress was so rapid that at eight he played before a numerous company, and was regarded as a second Mozart.

When he was nine he was invited to take part in a public charity concert organized by a number of influential citizens. The invitation was given personally by Poland's greatest poet.¹ After the concert, which took place in February, 1818, his mother asked him what the public liked best. The lad, who was of course arrayed in all the bravery of the Polish national costume, replied, "Oh, mamma, everybody was looking at my collar!"

Nearly two years later Madame Catalani gave four concerts in the Warsaw city hall. She expressed a wish to meet Frédéric Chopin, of whose precocious genius so much was said. She was so delighted with him that she gave him a watch with an inscription in French.

¹ Ursin Niemcewicz (pronounced Nee-em-tsee-ă-vitch).

About this same time he composed a march which he dedicated to the Grand Duke, or, more correctly, Grand Prince Konstantin of Russia, who had renounced all right to the throne, and married a beautiful Polish lady — “the guardian angel of Poland.” The Grand Duke had the piece scored for a military band, and played on parade.

Oftentimes a handsome carriage, drawn by four fine horses harnessed abreast, drove up to the Chopins’ house, bringing Frédéric’s young friend Paul, the Grand Duke’s son, or adopted son, with his tutor, the Count de Moriollles. The two boys were about the same age and were great friends.

Among the aristocratic families of the Polish magnates, whose extravagance and pride were proverbial, young Chopin found a warm support. He was invited to the houses of many princes and counts, whose long and unpronounceable names star the history of Poland. There he got an insight into that wonderful elegance and refinement which characterized the Poles. This high society had a strong influence on his tastes and character. As he grew older, he spent many summers at the country estates of friendly families who had sons of his own age.

But his father, who kept a sort of boarding-school for boys, was too wise to let him fritter away his time. He recognized his genius, but knew that something besides music was necessary; so he fitted him for the Warsaw Lyceum.

Zywny, though not himself the best pianist at Warsaw, was a wise and admirable teacher. His great hobby was Bach, and thus Chopin had for a foundation this corner-stone of classic pianism. The “well-tem-

pered clavichord" was his daily bread. Afterwards, when about to give a concert, instead of practising his own compositions, he would shut himself up for a fortnight and play his Bach.

He was equally fortunate in his master in composition. This was Joseph Xaver Elsner, a native of Silesia, who, after a busy and varied life, had settled in Warsaw, as musical conductor of the theatre. He was director of the Warsaw Conservatory so long as it existed, and a man of keen insight and fine ability; "full of nobleness of purpose, learning, industry, perseverance."

He saw what a genius Chopin was, and said, "Leave him alone; he is extraordinarily gifted. He does not stick to the traditional methods, for he has his own, and he will develop an originality never before discovered in such a degree."

Many teachers would have tried to run his genius into a mould. Then, after wasting, perhaps, years of his life in the vain effort to stick to the mould, he would have split it by a sudden effort, and become unhampered, except so far as pieces of the mould clung to him.

That is what is generally meant by a man's three styles. He begins as an imitator. Then follows the period of the mould. Then the originality asserts itself.

Chopin was original from the beginning. At first, to be sure, he was more successful in evoking the tricky spirits on the pianoforte than in catching them and confining them between the bars. Afterwards this power also came to him. He might have had severer training, but the world would probably have lost.

Elsner had the strength of his insight to resist the criticisms of people who thought Chopin should be

drilled in Himmel and Hummel. "The clever *Pan Elsner*," says a correspondent to Schumann's journal, "very clearly perceived what a poetic germ there was in the pale young dreamer, and felt very keenly that he had under him the founder of a new epoch of piano-forte playing, and declined to put a nose-band upon him, knowing well that such a noble thoroughbred may, indeed, be cautiously led, but must not be trained and fettered in the usual way."

Chopin always felt himself deeply beholden to his two teachers, especially to Elsner, who taught him, as Liszt says "to be self-exacting, and to value the advantages obtainable only through patience and hard work."

Chopin had great gift for improvisation. It is proved by two anecdotes.

Once when his father's assistant was not able to keep order in the schoolroom, Frédéric told the boys that if they would sit down and keep quiet, he would improvise an interesting story for them. He had the lights put out (for he always preferred darkness when improvising), and began.

He told how robbers were approaching the house, but just as they were going to climb into the windows, they were frightened away by some noise. Instantly, with winged feet they make for the deep, dark forest, and there, under the starry skies, they lie down and fall asleep.

He played more and more softly, and at last found that all his audience, like the robbers themselves, were sound asleep.

Then he stole out, called in his sisters and the servants with lights, and, seating himself at the piano again, played a crashing chord, which woke up all

the sleeping robbers, much to the amusement of every one.

Another time, the summer before he entered the Lyceum, he was visiting at a country house.¹ Some Jews had come to the village to buy grain. He invited them to his room, and entertained them by playing *Majufes*, or wedding marches. His guests fell to dancing, and were so pleased that they urged him to come to an approaching Jewish wedding; for, said they, "you play like a born Jew!"

In his letters home he gives entertaining descriptions of life in the country, especially of his attempts at horseback riding. The flies bother him by lighting on his prominent nose, and the mosquitoes bite him — fortunately *not* on his prominent nose.

He was full of good spirits, a capital mimic, and not only acted well, but also wrote a clever little play that was performed on his father's birthday.

In the early summer of the year following, Chopin improvised in public on a new-fangled instrument called an *ælopantaleon* — a sort of combination of ælommelodicon and piano. When the Emperor Alexander I. was in Warsaw at the same time, he expressed a desire to hear the ælommelodicon, which was the invention of a Warsaw genius. One was set up in the Lutheran Church, and Chopin was called upon to play it and display it. The Emperor was so pleased that he rewarded the boy with a diamond ring.

This same year was also memorable for the publication of his first *opus* — a rondeau for the piano, dedicated to Mrs. Linde, the wife of his father's friend the Rector, Dr. Linde. Schumann, who got hold of it later, charac-

¹ With the Dzięwanowskis at Szafarnia.

terized it as "very pretty, very piquant, almost Moschelesque."

His progress toward individuality and freedom was very marked in his next pieces. As Schumann said, there must have been two years and twenty works between Opus one and two. They were not published in the order of their birth.

In his second rondeau (*à la Mazur*), Chopin's liking for difficult skips, and for chords to be grasped only by large hands, began to manifest itself. It is said that in order to stretch his own hand, he invented an apparatus to put between his fingers and wear at night. He was more fortunate than Schumann, for the experiment did not end in permanent lameness.

During the summer holidays of 1826, Chopin, with his mother and sisters, went to Reinerz, a famous watering-place in Prussian Silesia, to drink whey for his health. He had been overworking. He was forbidden to climb the Heuscheuer mountain; but in spite of what he calls his laziness, he gave a successful concert in behalf of two young children who had been left orphans, without money enough to pay the funeral expenses of their poor mother or to reach their home.

At this time he is described as being a youth with clear, finely-cut features, high brow, thin lips, the lower protruding slightly, and an expression of gentle melancholy. His health, though not robust, was generally good.

From Reinerz, Chopin went to the summer residence of his godmother,¹ and also visited Prince Anton Radziwill at his country seat, Antonin, which was near by.

¹ Mrs. Wiesiolowska at Strzyzewo, sister of Count Fryderyk Skarbek.

Prince Radziwill was governor of Posen, and nearly related to the royal family of Prussia. He was also passionately fond of music, and composed very creditable works — for a prince. His music to “Faust” was performed at the Berlin Singakademie only a few years ago, to considerable satisfaction. A few years later, when the Prince was the representative of Prussia at the coronation of Nicholas at Warsaw, he frequently visited the Chopins. The friendship between him and the delicate, sensitive youth was very pleasant.

In 1827 Chopin passed his examinations, though not with flying colors, so much had music absorbed his time and energies, and graduated from the Lyceum. It was finally decided that he should devote himself to Art, and so with great joy he made his first visit to Berlin in company with a learned friend of his father’s, who was going to attend the Scientific Congress there.

Chopin was more interested in musical celebrities than in the zoölogical professors who gathered round Humboldt. He was too modest to intrude upon Mendelssohn and the other famous musicians who were there at the time, but he heard some fine performances of opera, and was greatly impressed by Händel’s “Ode on St. Cecilia’s Day.” His letters home detail all his experiences, and give the impression of a keen-witted, rather satirical young man, who finds a comedy *in*, not *on*, the stage, who pokes fun at the scientists, — all save Humboldt, — and who criticises the dress of the Berlin ladies.

On his return to Warsaw, Chopin led a rather gay life — going to so many parties that, as he expressed it, he could compose nothing worthy either of God or of man. He had a pleasant little nook in his father’s

house, where many of the talented young musicians and poets of the city often gathered.

Warsaw, though out of the world, as it were, was not wholly without advantages: French and German operas were given at the theatres, and the great Hummel played that winter and had a powerful influence on Chopin's style. He also heard Paganini, and perhaps helped toward purchasing the gold snuff-box which was presented to the uncanny magician of the violin.

Next August found Chopin in Vienna, after a delightful journey with three congenial friends in a private carriage, through "the Polish Switzerland," and "the picturesque regions of Galicia, Upper Silesia, and Moravia." His friends urged him to give a concert, and at last he consented. It took place at the Imperial Opera House on the eleventh of the month. He writes that he was called back several times, and his "free fantasy" on a Polish theme electrified the audience, and was "followed by stormy applause and many recalls."

The only drawback was the grumbling and sour faces of the orchestra, at having to read his illegible manuscript.

A week later he gave a second concert, which was even more successful, though he refused to be paid for his services at either. He was praised by all the amateurs and favorably criticised by the press. Some of the ultra Germans ("*Stockdeutschen*") thought he played too delicately. This was indeed his strong point. "I know," says he, "that I have pleased the ladies and the musicians."

The days and evenings of his stay were fully occupied with sight-seeing, music, and visits at the houses of the Vienna aristocracy, with whom he instantly became a

great favorite. Musically, also, his visit was a great gain to him. He wrote home that he already felt forty years wiser and more experienced. His health was good, and he was in capital spirits. The day before he left Vienna he remarked, "My popularity is here on the *crescendo*, and that indeed pleases me."

Such praise and compliments as he received would have intoxicated a more experienced man. Nevertheless, he was sober enough to write that his finances were in the best of order.

After a tearful parting from his new Vienna friends, Chopin started for Dresden, stopping on the way at the famous old city of Prague, where he enjoyed "the charming views, the majestic cathedral with its silver statue of St. Johannes, the beautiful chapel of St. Wenzel, adorned with amethysts and other jewels," and a visit to the Museum under the personal direction of the learned Wacław Hanka, a friend of Count Skarbek's.

He also made the acquaintance of the parsimonious but celebrated pianist and composer, August Alexander Klengel, whom he liked much better than Czerny, though he did not wish his "dear ones" to repeat it.

At Teplitz, Chopin found a number of friendly Poles, and one of them introduced him to Prince Clary, one of the richest magnates of Austria. He went to the castle, dressed in his best white gloves, and found a brilliant assemblage of Austrian princes, generals, counts, and ladies. He was asked to play, and judged that he succeeded in pleasing with an improvisation on the chief theme from Rossini's "Moses."

He was urged to dine next day, and even to make a longer stay at the castle, but he refused the temptations offered, and, joining his travelling companions, was

borne into Dresden by a team which cost the enormous sum of two thalers!

At Dresden, Tieck's adaptation of Goethe's "Faust" was given in commemoration of the author's eightieth birthday, with passages from Spohr's music to "Faust" in the *entr'actes*. There was such a rush for places that Chopin had to stay for an hour in the "*queue*" that was formed in front of the box-office.

He was back in Warsaw by the middle of September.

Prince and Princess Radziwill offered him lodgings in their palace in Berlin, but he distrusted their "fair words" and remembered the old proverb, "It is not good to eat cherries with great lords;" nevertheless, he could not resist the temptation of a week at Antonia, that "Paradise" whereof the young princesses are the "two Eves."

But Berlin offered slight advantages for a musician. He exclaimed in a letter to a friend that he had undertaken so much work that it would be wiser to stay at home, even though Warsaw were a melancholy place to him. He must be near his parents, and, moreover, "Pan Frycek," — Mr. Freddie, — as his Polish friends called him, had found his ideal and was worshipping her faithfully and sincerely, and dreaming of her every night (so he said), though he had never spoken a word with her!

This was Constantia Gladkowska, a young singer who was receiving her musical training at the Warsaw Conservatory. His letters for a year to come to his friend Titus¹ are full of sentimental ravings worthy of Jean Paul and quite out-Schumann Schumann! A vein of humor saves them from being nauseating. He was so

¹ Titus Woyciechowski, whose country seat was at Poturzyn.

deeply in love, that in a fit of melancholy, such as occasionally made the valleys between his mountainous spirits, he wished that when he was dead, his ashes should be scattered under her feet. Like most youthful passions, it burned itself out. Not even ashes of roses were left.

On November 1, 1830, he left his "sweet home" as he calls it, with the presentiment that he should never return to it, or see his native land again. His friends accompanied him part way on his journey: a farewell banquet was given him at the end of the first stage; the Conservatory pupils sang a cantata composed for the occasion by the worthy Elsner, and a silver goblet filled with Polish soil was presented to him with the needless injunction never to forget his country or his friends who expected great things of him.

It took him nearly a month to reach Vienna, for he delayed four days at Breslau at "the Golden Goose" Inn, and enjoyed music and the theatre, and intercourse with congenial friends; also a week at Dresden, where he had his first ride in a *poste-chaise*, or sedan-chair, — "a curious but comfortable box," the bottom of which he was tempted to kick out, — and visited the Green Vault, and went to innumerable dinners, soirées, operatic performances; also at Prague, where he probably went through the same routine.

His first letter to his parents, from Vienna, shows him in good spirits — "sound as a lion." He makes a terrible pun, occasioned by the fact that he and his friend Titus were occupying three charming rooms on the cabbage market, just vacated by an English admiral. "Admiral!" he exclaims, "and I receive admiration!"

Chopin expected to find the impression which he had

made in Vienna still vivid — the iron still hot. He was mistaken. All his plans for concerts fell through. The publishers were not ready to accept his compositions, much less to pay for them.

Then came the Polish insurrection, caused by the tyranny of the Grand Duke Konstantin. Chopin was moved to join the insurgents. He hired post-horses, and tried to overtake his friend Titus, who, at the first news, had started for home.

But, after a few stages, his resolution gave out. He returned to Vienna, and had his picture painted, since he was not in a mood for playing. He says the artist has given him an inspired look, though why, he cannot imagine. He makes many visits, attends "many dinners, soirées, concerts, and balls," which only bore him, and he indulges in sarcastic references to various notabilities; which he confesses is due to his frivolity, and promises to amend. Yet, at heart, he longs to be at home.

"I am sad," he writes one of his Warsaw friends. "I feel so lonely and neglected here. I cannot live as I would like. I must dress, must appear in the *salons* with cheerful face; but when I am in my room again, I have a confidential talk with my piano, and tell it all my woes as to my best friend here in Vienna."

Niecks declares that Chopin mentions in his letters from Vienna upwards of forty families and individuals with whom he was personally acquainted, and that his gayeties prevented him much study or composition.

Chopin's eight months at the Austrian capital were productive of little good. He added almost nothing to his list of compositions, and he made no money. Toward the end of his stay he forced himself to give

a concert, but it did not pay expenses. It was at exactly the wrong moment, and perhaps caused him to draw upon his parents, suggesting that they should sell the ring given him by the Emperor Alexander.

He was often in low spirits, but found recreation in excursions and other amusements.

In June, 1831, he went to Munich, where he was kept waiting for funds, but having made some musical acquaintances, he was induced to give a concert in the hall of the Philharmonic Society at which he played his E-minor concerto, and a fantasia on Polish national songs. He "gained unanimous applause."

It was the last time that he ever played in public in Germany.

At Stuttgart he learned of the capture of Warsaw by the Russians. This sad event is said to have inspired his étude in C-minor.

The Russian ambassador at Vienna gave Chopin permission to go only to Munich, but his passport contained the words (in French), "Passing through Paris to London," and to Paris he came. It was henceforth his home.

Poland and the Poles were at this time objects of sympathy to the Parisians; whereas in Austria, in Vienna, it was quite the opposite. General Ramorino had just returned from Poland, where he had taken part in the insurrection. A regular mob shouting "*Vivent les Polonais!*" besieged his lodgings. The police had to clear the streets.

And the timid, gentle, irresolute Chopin lived in the fourth story of a house opposite the General's lodgings!

But other things besides mobs excited the Paris of 1831. It was the very heyday of French romanticism, and Victor Hugo, Balzac, Dumas, Alfred de Musset, and

a dozen other young geniuses, were just beginning to give the world the benefit of their lights.

Romanticism in music was also welcomed; Chopin had found his place. And what a host of talented musicians and composers there were in Paris at that time! We need only mention Rossini, Meyerbeer, and Liszt! They all met in the salon of old Cherubini, whom at first Chopin called a mummy, though he afterwards came to like him better.

The stiff, elegant, and marchpane-like Kalkbrenner, whom he thought as perfect in his way as Paganini, wanted to give him lessons, and promised in three years' time to make a great artist of him, thoroughly grounded in the old traditions. But Chopinetta (as Mendelssohn called the little man) had no wish to surrender his individuality, even though he recognized his shortcomings in technique.

"I shall never become a copy of Kalkbrenner," he wrote his old teacher Elsner: "he will not be able to break my perhaps bold but noble resolve — *to create a new art era.*"

He did, however, attend Kalkbrenner's class for advanced pupils, to see what it was like: and Mendelssohn and some of Chopin's other friends, who undervalued Kalkbrenner and thought Chopin played better than he did, were furious.

Chopin's first concert in Paris took place on February 26, 1832, after several annoying delays and postponements. He was assisted by Kalkbrenner and others; financially it was a failure, the audience consisting chiefly of Poles, and most of the tickets having been given rather than sold. But all the musical celebrities of Paris were there, and everybody was taken by storm.

Mendelssohn was present and "applauded triumphantly." In the following May he played again at a charity concert given by the Prince de la Moskowa.

At first he seems to have had plenty of funds, for he paid twenty-five francs for a place at the opera to hear Malibran, Rubini, and Schröder-Devrient. Later, his funds ran low. His health became precarious, and he was depressed in spirits. He seriously thought of emigrating to America. His parents advised him to return to Warsaw, and, against the advice of Liszt and his friends, he was on the point of doing so when (so the story runs), he met Prince Valentine Radziwill, who took him to a soirée at the Rothschilds', where he played and delighted every one.

From this time forth he began his career as one of the great pianists of Paris, and "professor *par excellence* of the aristocracy."

He himself wrote early in 1833:—

"I move in the highest society — among ambassadors, princes, and ministers; and I don't know how I got there, for I did not thrust myself forward at all." Then speaking of the esteem in which he is held by his fellow-artists who dedicate their compositions to him, he continues:—

"Pupils of the Conservatoire, nay, even private pupils of Moscheles, Herz, and Kalkbrenner (consequently clever artists), take lessons from me, and regard me as the equal of Field. Really, if I were somewhat more silly than I am, I might imagine myself a finished artist; nevertheless, I feel daily how much I have still to learn."

His friendship with Hiller and Liszt was very delightful, and at the houses of the influential Poles in Paris he was always a welcome visitor. One day he came into

Count Plater's *salon* in the character of *Pierrot* or *Harlequin*, and after jumping and dancing about for an hour, left without saying a word !

Yet generally he was distinguished for his gracious manners, his "studied but somewhat affected refinement in all things, his gentleness and winning playfulness." Affectionate as he was to his friends, it was only a few, and those his Polish intimates, who, as Liszt says, "penetrated into the sacred recess where, apart from the rest of his life, dwelt the secret fountain of his soul."

Chopin used his growing popularity and fame to float his compositions, many of which he had brought with him from Poland. In looking over the list one is surprised both at the rapid succession with which, after 1832, they came out, and at the skill with which he selected princes and counts, princesses and countesses, for his dedications. In this respect he was rivalled only by Beethoven.

Though his works were written in such an unusual vein, they were generally well received by the critics, which was not the case with those of Schumann, who was often soundly rated by those who failed to understand his depth and height. Chopin, however, knew himself and his limitations. He could not be induced to write an opera.¹ To one of Louis Philippe's aides who asked him why, with his admirable ideas, he did not do so, he replied : "Ah, count, let me compose nothing but piano-forte music ; I am not learned enough to write operas."

Such self-knowledge is rare. It has been remarked

¹ The Polish national opera was established in 1778. Between that time and 1859 there were at Warsaw 5,917 performances, of 285 works with Polish words. Of these ninety-two were composed by 16 Polish composers.

that geniuses often have prided themselves most on what they did least well. Chopin's forte lay in the smaller forms of music; even orchestral writing he quickly abandoned, and thus he stands forth as the greatest of masters of pure pianoforte composition. In this respect one might compare him to a Japanese artist, whose greatest labors were exerted on carving a minute piece of ivory into a marvel of delicate beauty.

During the year 1835 he played frequently in public, but each time he came to dread it more and more. He told Liszt that he was not fit to give concerts, that the crowd intimidated him and paralyzed him with their curious looks.

Moreover, his playing was too delicate, refined, and subtle for large audiences; and modest as he was, this lack of success on a grand scale was a great disappointment to him, as Niecks says, cruelly torturing and slowly consuming his life like a malignant cancer.

In private, however, and with congenial spirits, he delighted in showing his unique mastery of the piano; and during a charming visit which he made to Leipzig, primarily to make the acquaintance of Clara Wieck, he played at several houses, enchanting every one. Even Mendelssohn called him "a really perfect virtuoso."

Schumann, Mendelssohn, and Chopin, whom Niecks calls "the three most distinguished composers of their time," were together for several hours.

Chopin also went to Carlsbad, where he met his father and mother, after an absence of five years; and from there he ran across to Dresden to see his boyhood friends, the Wodzińskis. There were three brothers, all of whom took part in the Polish revolution, and one sister, the Countess Maria, a tall, slender girl of nineteen, with

fiery black eyes, long luxuriant ebony-black hair, and a talent for music and painting.

Chopin fell in love with her, and offered himself to her. She liked him, but yielding to her parents' wishes, refused his hand. She gave him a rose and drew his portrait. He composed for her a waltz.

Afterwards she married a son of Chopin's godfather, Count Fryderyk Skarbek, and the marriage turned out a failure.

Chopin was in Leipzig again the following summer (just after his rejection by the lovely countess), and enjoyed much intercourse with Schumann. He wrought with him some "heavenly" études, nocturnes, mazurkas, and a new ballade, all of which he played "very incomparably."

In July, 1837, Chopin visited London, and was introduced to the piano manufacturer James Broadwood, under the name of M. Fritz. He dined at Broadwood's house and played "most beautifully" (so Mendelssohn reported), and was detected in his incognito. He was suffering with his lungs, and therefore refrained from all acquaintances. He attended a few concerts, and disappeared as mysteriously as he came.

Hitherto his health, though never robust, had been good; from this time forth his life was a long battle with disease.

Early in 1837 Chopin gave a little party in his rooms. Liszt brought with him the famous novelist, George Sand,¹ a beautiful but undisciplined genius, in whose veins flowed the blood of Polish kings mixed with that of the daughters of French Bohemia.

¹ *Amantine Lucile Aurore Baronne Dudevant (née Dupin)*. Her great-grandfather was *Maréchal de Saxe*, natural son of *August the Strong*, King of Poland.

Separated from her husband, George Sand amused herself with love-affairs with poets and musicians. Alfred de Musset had fallen under her spell; now it was Chopin's turn. He was delicate and feminine, she was masculine, and even at times wore men's clothes. He was weak and vacillating; she was strong and self-willed. She soon obtained complete control of him.

Accounts differ as to Chopin's personal appearance. Niecks, who follows Karasowski to a certain extent, says he was slim and of middle height, with delicately formed hands and feet, an oval softly outlined head, a pale transparent complexion, long silken hair of a light chestnut color, parted on one side; tender brown eyes, intelligent rather than dreamy; a finely curved aquiline nose; a sweet subtle smile, and graceful and varied gestures.

His dress was always studiously elegant, vainer of dress than any woman; he even had his hair curled. Perhaps George Sand's utter unconventionality was the cause of Chopin's first impression of dislike to her. This was soon dissipated by her beauty and her wonderful power of pleasing.

He visited her several times at her country estate at Nohant, and when, in 1838, she went to Majorca for the sake of her son Maurice's health, Chopin was induced to accompany her, thinking that the rest, the freedom from care, and the out-of-door life, would be good for him.

At first, the picturesque tropical scenery, the delicious climate and the novel life were delightful; but when the wet season set in, the dampness and the impossibility of keeping warm set Chopin to coughing worse than ever. All the doctors in the island were called in, and Chopin, who gives an amusing account of their methods of procedure, declares that he had a narrow

escape from their bleedings, cataplasms, and such like operations. They took up their lodgings in "an old, vast, abandoned, and ruined monastery of Carthusians" at Valdemosa; "the most poetic residence on earth." Chopin's cell, so he wrote, was shaped like a coffin, high and full of dust, with a small window shaded by orange, palm, and cypress trees, and over their heads majestically soared the eagles.

He had a piano sent to him from Paris, but it fell into the clutches of the customs officers, who demanded a duty of five or six hundred francs, but accepted, after much wrangling, three hundred. Rightly enough, Chopin called the people thievish.¹

Their food consisted mainly of pork "appearing in all imaginable and unimaginable guises and disguises." Juicy grapes, excellent potatoes from Malaga, and fried Valencia pumpkins, gave a zest to their appetite, but the terrible rains frequently spoiled everything, and to keep from starving they had to gnaw the dryest of dry bread. Had Chopin been well, he might have enjoyed the rough-and-ready picnic, but bronchitis and nervous excitement brought on symptoms of pulmonary phthisis, and his spirits were at the lowest ebb. He was irritable and difficult to manage; in short, as George Sand declared, "a detestable patient."

Toward the last of February, when fair weather set in, they left Majorca on a steamboat loaded down with pigs, which made the voyage almost unendurable, and when they reached Barcelona, he was "spitting basins of blood and crawling along like a ghost." The doctor on a French war-ship soon stopped the hemorrhage, and he

¹ Read George Sand's *Un Hiver à Majorque* for an exaggerated but charmingly poetic description of this abode in the Carthusian monastery.

began to improve. At Marseilles he was kept till early summer under the care of an excellent doctor, "resigning himself to recover patiently."

By the last of April he was so much better that he could play the organ at a memorial service at the Church of Notre-Dame-du-Mont, for the tenor, Adolphe Nourrit, who had committed suicide at Naples. He played a simple melody of Schubert's "as a souvenir to place upon his coffin." The organ was very bad, but Chopin did his best with it, and the song sounded "like the far-off echo from another world."

He also made a trip to Genoa, and for the first time saw Italy, which nine years before had been the land of his dreams.

After a visit at Nohant he returned to Paris in October, 1839, and immediately resumed his lessons. He must have been very much better, for Moscheles, who met him for the first time a few months later, spoke of him as merry and exceedingly comical in his imitations of Liszt and other musicians. He and Moscheles were invited together to play at St. Cloud before Louis Philippe and the royal family. The King sent Chopin a gold cup and saucer, and to Moscheles "a travelling-case, the sooner to get rid of him," remarked Chopin with sly humor. Chopin, however, did not like a Jew.

In April, 1841, and in the following February, Chopin mustered courage to give concerts at Pleyel's rooms. The audiences were most aristocratic, and the critics waxed eloquent over the chaplets of trembling pearls, the roses and mignonettes, the interplay of gay colors, over "the perfumed heads and snowy shoulders" of beautiful women whom princely salons were proud to honor.

The effect of Chopin's playing upon the poets and musicians of the time was very remarkable, and so many of them have described it that we almost know what it was. Individuality was its great feature. Schumann declared that he knew his instrument as no one else did. He was called the Ariel of the pianoforte. Heine and Liszt rhapsodize about his poetic interpretations. His playing was the soul of tenderness, delicacy, refinement. It reminded some one of the warbling of linnets. George Sand called him "Velvet Fingers."

Between 1838 and 1846 Chopin spent eight summers at the Château de Nohant. The monotonous life there, varied though it was by the singing of nightingales and the visits of distinguished people, bored him frightfully. He longed for Paris, but his love for George Sand kept him a prisoner; and, moreover, the quiet and freedom from cares enabled him to indulge in composition. Niecks speaks of the friendship between him and the painter Delacroix as a green oasis in the barren desert, amidst the affectations, insincerities, and superficialities of his social intercourse at Nohant. His infatuation reminds one of that of Odysseus for the immortal but cruel nymph Kalypso. But Chopin's Kalypso smoked, and smoked enormously thick Trabucco cigars: and she called him "*mon cher cadavre!*"

In Paris they lived in fine apartments in the Court d'Orleans, called Little Athens from the number of celebrities who had inhabited it.

Chopin's rooms were furnished with much luxury; flowers, of which he was passionately fond, always abounded. Easy-chairs and cushions embroidered by princesses and titled dames, his pupils, rugs, and handsome tablecloths made them cosy. He had a "sanc-

tum," where he could retire if he liked; but he used it chiefly in giving his lessons. He was generally short of money, and always quarrelling with his publishers, whom in his letters he calls Jews, rogues, dogs, fools, knaves, and thieves who tried to cheat him out of all profit for his "manuscript flies" and "spider feet."

Though he earned much he was generous and improvident. His poor countrymen were always draining him of his last franc. On one occasion he spent a thousand francs at a charity fair, and gave back all the knick-knacks he bought to be sold again. He got twenty francs a lesson, but he never taught more than five hours a day, and many of his lessons were for love, not money. He kept a cat, and indulged in the luxury of a male servant at a salary of nearly two thousand francs.

In spite of his exquisite manners, his love for "high society" sometimes made him actually rude to those who much more deserved his consideration. He was often tormented by "dilettante bores," and he kept clear of young pianists so far as he could. Karasowski relates an example of his impertinent behavior to the young Bohemian, Schulhof, until the latter had played to him, when he made amends. It was a common criticism of him, that he was spoiled by the caprices of society, and "was too apt to treat his brother artists with a supercilious hauteur which many of his equals and a few of his superiors were wont to stigmatize as insulting."

Niecks says that even among his friends he was more loved than loving. Liszt says, "Ready to give everything, he did not give himself." He was too apt to say pleasant things to people's faces, and cutting things behind their backs.

He was, at least in his later years, when worn with

illness, extremely irritable; and when teaching, if things went wrong, would jump up and ask if a dog had been barking; or (so it is said) fling the music on the floor and break up the chairs as ferociously as Beethoven himself ever did. Such were some of the spots on the sun.

Bach and, above all, Mozart were his ideals, "his gods." Hummel, Field, and Moscheles were his favorite pianists. Field's "Nocturnes" were greatly prized by him. He admired Schubert, though not without reserve. Weber and Beethoven only partially satisfied him. He disliked much of Mendelssohn's music, and found still less to praise in Schumann, never using any of his pieces in giving his lessons. He disapproved of Berlioz, and while he liked Meyerbeer¹ personally he heartily disliked his music. Liszt says truly that Chopin sought in the great masterpieces only that which corresponded with his nature. "What resembled it pleased him; what differed from it received scant justice from him."

With Liszt himself he was on terms of the most intimate comradeship until their quarrel, which is said to have resulted from a circumstance not very creditable to the former. Yet he and Liszt can hardly be said to have been friends. Chopin rarely mentioned him without a sneer, and Liszt, who wrote a poetic rhapsody in prose on Chopin's life, did not fail to point out his weaknesses.

Just as Rossini dreaded the fatal number thirteen, Chopin had a superstitious horror of the figure seven.

¹ It is said that once Meyerbeer had a falling-out with his wife. He sat down at the piano, and played a nocturne sent him by Chopin. Such was the effect of the music on his helpmeet, that she went and kissed him. Thereupon Meyerbeer wrote the composer, telling him of the incident, and inviting him to come and see their domestic happiness.

He would not live in a house that bore the number, or start to travel on a day of the month that was marked by it. His shameful alliance with Madame Sand began in 1837, and it was in 1847 that it ended. It is a long and sad story. Probably Kalypso tired of Odysseus. She sought a pretext for dissolving the wearisome bonds. In her novel "*Lucrezia Floriani*," under the mask of Prince Karol she caricatured Chopin and deeply wounded him.

The connection was broken. The two geniuses parted, never to meet but once again, and then only for a moment. As for Chopin, he loved her to the end.

In February, 1848, Chopin gave his last concert in Paris, before an audience said to have been selected and sifted by himself from a long list, so that he was surrounded only by his friends. Tickets were twenty francs, and never did he win greater success. A second concert was projected, but the outbreak of the French Revolution on February 22, 1848, upset all his plans.

Two months later Chopin arrived in the "whirlpool of London," and secured a "fine large room," where he hoped to be able "to breathe and play."

He could rarely be prevailed upon to play in society. But he was heard at the Countess of Blessington's and at the Duchess of Sutherland's, and also at a private house, where one who was present wrote: "I do not know what he played to us, I do not know how long our ecstasy lasted; we were no longer on earth; he had transported us into unknown regions, into a sphere of flame and azure, where the soul freed from all corporeal bonds floats towards the infinite. This was, alas! the song of the swan."

He was invited to play at the Philharmonic, but de-

clined. He gave, however, two *matinées* at private houses, with tickets at a guinea. They brought him money, but he was in such wretched health that life seemed dark to him, and he soon gave up his possible plan of settling in England.

He played at Manchester for sixty pounds sterling, and made a long visit in Scotland, where one of his favorite pupils, Miss Stirling, resided. He gave a successful concert also in Glasgow and Edinburgh. It is said that the Broadwood piano on which he played was afterwards sold at a premium of £30.

After a visit at Stirling Castle he wrote that he should soon be forgetting his Polish; that he already spoke French with an English accent, and English like a Scotchman. French he always spoke with a foreign accent in spite of his French birth. His intercourse as usual was with the high nobility. "I drag," he wrote, "myself from one lord to another, from one duke to another."

The last concert at which he ever appeared — this, says Niecks (whose admirable biography ought to be in the hands of every music lover), "may be truly called the swan's song," — took place at Guildhall on the sixteenth of November, 1848, on the same evening as the annual "Grand Polish Ball." Mr. Hueffer says "he was in the last stages of exhaustion, and the affair resulted in disappointment."

Perhaps the little attention which this performance attracted caused him to exclaim on the journey home: "Do you see the cattle in that meadow? They have more intelligence than the English!"

On his return to Paris he was too ill to teach. His capricious improvidence had left him almost penniless,

and only the generosity of his friends, especially Miss Stirling, who sent him anonymously twenty-five thousand francs, kept him from actual want.

His last days were days of weariness and pain. His sister Louisa, the faithful Princess Czartoryska, the beautiful Countess Potocka, who loved him dearly, and several other friends, were unwearied in their attentions. The death struggle was long and trying. Two days before he died, the Countess Potocka, "mastering her sorrow and suppressing her sobs," sang "beside the bed where her friend was exhaling his life." A Polish abbé¹ gave him the sacrament.

The priest afterwards writing of it said: —

"From this moment, by God's grace, or rather under the hand of God Himself, he became quite another man, and one might almost say he became a saint. . . . His patience and resignation to the will of God did not abandon him up to the last minute."

He died early in the morning of October 17, 1849. A fortnight later a most imposing funeral ceremony took place in the Church of the Madeleine, which was packed to the doors. Mozart's Requiem was performed, with the greatest singers of Paris as soloists. Liszt conducted the procession which carried Chopin's body to the mausoleum, to the solemn sounds of his own "funeral march."

He was buried in Père-la-Chaise, Meyerbeer, Prince Czartoryski, Delacroix, and other noted men, being pallbearers. Over his coffin was scattered the Polish soil which he had kept for nineteen years in the silver cup presented to him on leaving Warsaw forever. His heart was taken to Poland, and is preserved in the Holy Cross Church at Warsaw, where a marble bust of the composer was set up a few years ago.

¹ Alexander Jelowicki.

Clésinger, the husband of George Sand's daughter, designed a monument, which was unveiled on the next anniversary of his death.

Miss Stirling bought at the public auction all the furniture of his former rooms, a portrait painted by Ary Scheffer, his Pleyel piano, the Sèvres porcelain presented to him by Louis Philippe, and all the trophies of his friendships.

In 1858, after Miss Stirling's death, these objects were sent to Warsaw to Chopin's mother, and three years later came into the hands of his sister Isabella.

The Russian Count Berg, Governor-general of Poland, after the insurrection on January, 1863, was shot at from a house next where Chopin's sister lived. The Russian soldiery, infuriated, surrounded the two houses, removed all the inhabitants of them, and then sacked them. All the precious Chopin memorials were thrown into the street, and helped to make a bonfire. A Russian officer himself flung the Ary Scheffer portrait into the flames. Thus perished all the books and papers, and the letters which had been preserved during eighteen years. Only the Pleyel piano, which happened to be elsewhere, was saved.

Such an ending of Chopin memorials seems to me quite in keeping with the tragic note of Chopin's life, — that tragic note which rings persistently through his marvellous compositions.

Niecks says Chopin's importance in the realm of art "lies in his having added new elements to music," in having originated new "means of expression" for moods and emotions, and shades of moods and emotions that hitherto had "belonged to the realm of the unuttered and the unutterable," and he quotes with approval the

dictum that his compositions are "the celestial echo of what he had felt, loved, and suffered."

His works are indeed his autobiography, told only to those who can read under the notes. "No other poet," says Niecks again, "has like Chopin embodied in art the romance of the land and people of Poland. And also no other poet has like him embodied in art the romance of his own existence."

"Poland," says Heine, "gave him his chivalrous temper and historic passion (Schmerz); France gave him his airy charm and grace; Germany gave him his romantic melancholy; while nature gave him an elegant, slender, rather slim figure, the noblest heart, and genius."

In spite of his failures and shortcomings he was one of the greatest (within a limited sphere) that the world of music has produced, and his errors were cruelly expiated and purged by the fire of suffering and sorrow.

NOTE.—During Chopin's life the published number of his works (including rondeaux, nocturnes, mazurkas, concertos, variations, *krakowiaks*, scherzos, ballades, études, préludes, impromptus, vales, polonaises, etc.) was 64; to these must be added four works without opus numbers. After his death ten more works with opus numbers were published, including seventeen Polish songs, also six mazurkas and several other pieces of little value without opus number; in all nearly 200 distinct compositions of which it may almost be said that the least are the greatest.

MIKHAÏL IVÁNOVITCH GLINKA.

(1804-1857.)

CHOPIN, though only partially a Pole by birth, was wholly one by predilection. He took the peculiar rhythms of his native land — the dance songs of Krakof and Mazur, — and adopted them, bringing them by refinement and careful nurture to be, as it were, his own children. He is the typical representative of Polish music.

Yet Poland had no monopoly of national music. All the Slavs are musical, but Russia, it is claimed, leads in the number, beauty, and variety of folk-melodies.

Poland, being on the border, was more open to Western influences. Russia was isolated from Europe, and hence preserved in greater purity that heritage of song which has come down through the ages. Curiously enough the widespread use or abuse of the harmonicum through the central Russian provinces has had, in later years, the effect of destroying the national type of song. Rightly enough Cui calls it an anti-musical instrument.

The characteristics of Russian music are very marked. The principal feature is the complete liberty of rhythm, which often seems like caprice, perhaps in a few measures changing several times.

Odd modulations, harmonies suddenly ending in



GLINKA.

unisons, plaintive minor cadences, dashing dance forms, frequent reminiscences of ancient Greek modes—the Lydian and Dorian—give Russian folksongs a character all their own, as individual as the jerky measures of the Magyar *Nep* or the singsong of the Scottish ballad.

Russian musicians have done much to rescue from forgetfulness these charming wild flowers of song. The first collection that is known was published toward the end of the last century; and from this, or the second edition of it, Beethoven took the themes which he embodied in the Razumovski quartets. Thus he wrote an adagio in the Lydian mode in Opus 132. Still better collections have been published since.¹

Nevertheless, outside of Russia, little is generally known of Russian music, and some of the best Russian composers cannot be even said to be “names and nothing more.”

Early in the “sixties” a Russian prince, Yuri N. Galitsin, whose father had been one of Beethoven’s many patrons, directed several hundred concerts in London and other cities of England and Scotland. The *Times* declared that through the prince’s efforts Russian music had been acclimated. At one hundred and fifty of these concerts a gay and rollicking piece entitled “*Kamárinskaya*” was played, and not once did it fail to be redemanded.

This piece, which represented a popular wedding and the songs sung at it, interrupted by the inevitable intoxication, and full of the wild glee and broad humor, was composed by the prince’s teacher, Russia’s greatest com-

¹ Such are the little Russian *Pisni* of Kotsipinski; Balukiref’s “National Russian Songs;” and the collections of Prokudin, Ruimsky-Korsakof, and Professor A. I. Rubets.

poser, — Mikhaïl Ivánovitch [or, in English, Michael John's-son] Glinka — often called the “Berlioz of Russia.”

Glinka was born on the first of June, 1804, at a little village¹ in the Government of Smolensk, belonging to his father, who was a retired captain. He was early intrusted to the care of his adoring grandmother, Thekla Glinka, in whose apartment he grew up, rarely seeing his parents. He was a sickly, nervous, impressionable child, “a sensitive plant” as he afterwards called himself in his “Recollections,” but remained sweet-tempered and docile in spite of the over-indulgence with which he was treated.

He was precocious in his studies, and amazed every one by his ability in reading the Holy Books. The Holy Books in Russia are printed in quaint, difficult type, and in a language that differs essentially from ordinary Russian. It was as though a boy or girl should be compelled to read Coverdale's version of the Bible printed in black-letter.

He had a natural gift for drawing, and he was passionately fond of all musical sounds, especially of the bells as they would ring out over the steppe at all hours of the day from the gayly painted belfries of the churches. He would greedily listen to them, and then mimic their music by striking on brazen wash-hand-basins.

After his ailing old grandmother's death, Glinka returned to his mother. She had no belief in the system of coddling to which he had been accustomed, and tried to throw around him a fresher and more wholesome atmosphere. But he was a hot-house flower, and pined for the old companionship.

¹ Novospaskoyé.

According to the custom of old-time landed proprietors, his father often entertained their neighbors at great dinners, at which the music was the chief attraction. It was usually furnished by his brother-in-law's orchestra, composed of serfs.

Many great nobles at that day had private orchestras and opera companies. In the Imperial Orchestra were forty hornists who each played only one note, and yet executed most difficult music. They served instead of an organ, and supported choruses with great firmness and strength.

Some of the proprietors derived considerable income from letting their serfs practise and teach music. In 1773 a serf named Danila Kashin, belonging to Alekséi Bibikof, not only taught but composed many songs, some of which became very popular, and he was the promoter of the first musical journal in Russia.

Young Glinka was simply overcome by the beautiful music of his uncle's orchestra. He was like one charmed. It plunged him, or rather lifted him, into a delicious but tormenting region of dreams. As he grew older it absorbed him more and more; and when his tutor again and again reproved him for his abstraction and for neglecting his studies for music, he replied, —

“What can I do? Music is my very life!”

His first teacher in his father's house was a French governess, who had no ideas above routine. She compelled the boy to learn his lessons by heart. Her system was not a success with such a sensitive nature. She taught him some of the rudiments of music, but in this also she was mechanical and without inspiration. Still, he made rapid progress, and seemed to have a natural predilection for all that was worthiest and best.

One of his uncle's fiddlers taught him the violin, but there was some fault in his handling of the bow, and Glinka caught it from him. Afterwards, when he went to take lessons of Böhm, the latter exclaimed in queer broken French, "*Me Sieu Klinka, fous ne chourez jamais du violon*" ("Mr. Glinka, you will never learn to play the violin)."

When he was in his fourteenth year he was sent to the newly opened boarding-school for the sons of the nobility, connected with the chief Palæological Institute at St. Petersburg. The teachers in the upper classes were excellent men, who had enjoyed training in European universities, but in the lower classes they were rough and boorish. The sub-inspector, I. E. Kolmakof, enjoyed great popularity among the students, owing to his sweet temper and his comical ways.

Glinka mimicked him capitally, and never forgot him as long as he lived. Some of the students composed some doggerel lines, —

Podinspektor Kolmakof
Umnozhaët durakof
On glazami vsió morgaët
I zhilet svoï poprevlyaët.

which might be translated freely : —

Sub-inspector Kolmakof
 Is a fellow odd enough.
 With his eyes he's always blinking,
 And his *vest* fits to his thinking.

Glinka set these words to music, and one day after dinner the students sang them in the fashion of a serenade.

Kolmakof listened. He pricked up his ears. The

sense or nonsense of the verses began to dawn upon him. It touched his dignity. He started in the direction of the singing. But when he came to the suspected spot he found the students quietly sitting in their places and diligently studying, while the jolly but offensive singing sounded from a different quarter.

At the time of Glinka's arrival at Petersburg the most distinguished piano-teacher there was the composer of nocturnes, John Field. Field, who was of Irish origin, was a curious and interesting figure. He had blond hair, blue eyes, a light complexion, and expressive and pleasing features. He was remarkable for "an almost somnolent tranquillity," and for the "clear limpid flow" of his playing. Afterwards he was inclined to indulge too much in strong drink. He became heavy, vulgar-looking, — a sort of musical Falstaff. He was extremely indolent and easy-going, sometimes falling asleep while giving lessons. On one occasion when this happened he was asked whether he thought he was paid twenty rubles for allowing himself to be played to sleep. Another time he dropped his cane and waited till some one came along to pick it up for him. Another time, finding his dress-boots too tight, he put on slippers, and wore them in a most fashionable company.

Glinka began to take lessons of him, and made rapid progress. When Field quitted the Russian capital, Glinka continued with one of his pupils, named Osman, whom he shortly after exchanged for the famous Zeuner. But Zeuner made him learn his theoretical lessons by heart, a process which the young man could not endure, and in consequence he made still a third change, this time selecting another German named Karl Mayer, also a pupil of Field, and so far his equal that if the piano

were screened from sight, not even clever connoisseurs could tell which was playing.

On the day of his graduation in 1822, Glinka and Mayer played in public Hummel's A-minor concerto for two pianos. His progress on the violin had not been less brilliant. During the summer vacations which he spent at his father's home, he played frequently in his uncle's orchestra, and learned the piccolo and other instruments, and acquired a practical knowledge of orchestral demands.

At Petersburg he often went to the theatre, and heard many operas and ballets. He particularly liked Rossini's music.

At first he studied diligently ; and as he had remarkable aptitude for languages, he made great advances in German, Latin, English, and Persian. French he considered barbaric and thoroughly unpoetical, and he made little progress in it.

Afterwards he grew lazy, and neglected his studies. Only through the memory of his earlier attainments and by certain clever artifices, the nature of which is not known, he managed to graduate with good rank, obtaining the *chin* (as it is called in Russia) of Collegiate Councillor, corresponding to staff captain in the army, and conferring personal nobility. The same year he published several pieces for harp and piano, and composed a string quartet.

The next winter he went to the Caucasus Mountains to drink the waters of some famous mineral springs. He relates in his "Recollections" that his cousin, who was undergoing a course of treatment by means of magnetism, went into a trance, and advised him to try similar measures. Glinka, like Rossini and Chopin, was

extremely superstitious. He believed, for instance, in the fatal meaning of seeing three burning lights.

The mineral waters of the Caucasus had a bad effect on his health. He returned to Petersburg worse than he had left it; but, in accordance with his father's wishes, he entered the chancellery of the Department of Public Highways as assistant secretary, a position which required not more than an hour's service each day; and brought him into friendly relations with Count Sievers, a great lover of music, who had around him a pleasant circle of friends.

During a visit to the country to attend his sister's betrothal, he wrote his variations on the then fashionable aria *Benedetta sia la Madre*, and dedicated them "to his dear niece;" and while at Smolensk he furnished some choruses and an aria, as a prologue to General Apukhin's "Death of Alexander and Accession of the Emperor Nikolaï Pavlovitch."

This was the poetical and dreamy part of Glinka's life. He was carried away by the romantic poetry of young Zhukovsky; he wrote melancholy "romances," and loved "to weep the sweet tears of emotion."

In 1827, thanks to the selfish and narrow-minded policy of his chief, he was removed from his position in the public service; but it was for the gain of art.

Fortunately the debts which had encumbered his father's estate were wiped out by a sudden rise in the tide of prosperity. A man named Pogodin, who was afterwards senator and court intendant, learning that Glinka's father was anxious to embark in a speculation that promised great returns, decided to help him. Trusting to his stainless reputation, he loaned him 500,000 rubles, taking a share in the transaction. It succeeded, and the profits were very great.

During this eventful year Glinka made the acquaintance of Prince Sergyéi Galitsin, a connection of the Prince Yuri, who was such a devoted friend to him. Prince Sergyéi encouraged the sensitive young composer, stirred his activity, wrote verses for him, had his works performed, and introduced him to many of the leading members of the aristocracy of the city.

In company with Galitsin and his friends, he made an excursion on the Chernaya River, in two boats, illuminated with lanterns. In the stern of one of them was placed a piano, on which he accompanied the attendant musicians.

Afterwards, encouraged by the success of these "serenades," as they were called, the musicians gave a comic operatic performance for the benefit of Prince Kotchubey, President of the Imperial Council. Glinka, arrayed in a muslin dress and red wig, took the part of Donna Anna, in Mozart's "*Don Giovanni*."

Glinka was always feeble in health. It has been said that he was "the voluntary victim of medicine and doctors." In 1828, finding that his breath troubled him more and more, he called in Dr. Spindler, who examined him, found that he had a "whole quadrille of diseases," and advised him to go abroad for three years.

In 1830 he summoned up energy and started on the long journey, taking with him as a travelling companion the tenor singer Nikolai Ivánof, who afterwards enjoyed a great reputation in Italy and Paris.

Glinka went first to Dresden. The doctors advised him to try the waters of Aix. Thence he passed leisurely through Switzerland; and when he reached Italy, he took up his abode for some time in Milan, Turin, and Naples; and visited Venice, Rome, and other cities.

Twice he and Ivánof almost died from accidental poisoning, their meals having been prepared in an untinned saucepan.

Yet Glinka worked diligently, and composed many pieces, — among others, a sextet, a trio, and variations on Italian themes. He went into society, meeting at the houses of the Russian envoys the most distinguished artists and composers of the day. He also took lessons in singing, and studied the Italian method of writing for the voice.

At first, like Meyerbeer, he felt completely under the influence of the Italians, and, like Meyerbeer, he quickly recovered from the subtle intoxication. He even grew weary of the sensuous, soulless style of Donizetti and Bellini and the lesser imitators of Rossini.

His physical infirmities grew alarming. He became subject to hallucinations; but, strange to say, owing to the excessive tension of his nervous system, his voice, which had been hoarse and uncertain, developed into a strong, high tenor.

On reaching Vienna, Glinka underwent what was called "a homœopathic cure," and seemed really to improve under it.

At this time Vienna had fallen from its high estate as a musical centre. The great masters whom it had allowed to die in neglect were still forgotten. Strauss and Lanner were, as Chopin said, the *élite* of the city.

Glinka heard the dance music of these popular composers, and was moved to imitate them. He wrote a theme which he afterwards utilized in his great Russian opera.

In 1836 he got word of his father's death and hastened back to his home. In Moscow, the same year, it sud-

denly occurred to him to write an opera; but he could find no suitable words, and the few scenes that he composed on a subject that occurred to him were laid aside.

He was making his preparations to go abroad again, and had even applied for his passport, when at the house of the Stuneyefs he met a relative of theirs, Márya Petrovna Ivánova. It was a case of love at first sight. He married her in May, 1835, and settled in Petersburg, where an enthusiastic set of young literary men who were more than dreaming of a great national literature stimulated him to compose a national opera.

Russian opera had been established by the Empress Elizabeth Petrovna, and in 1775 a troupe of Russian singers had performed "*Kephale and Prokris*," the music of which was composed by an Italian, Francisco Araja. Sarti, Cimarosa, Paisiello, Boieldieu, and many other distinguished foreign composers, had visited Russia, and helped to stimulate the national love of music, and drill singers and orchestral performers for their work.

Some had taken up their abode in Russia. Sarti, Saliva, Sapienza, and others, wrote operas on Russian texts. Caterino Cavos, who was a Venetian by birth, came to Petersburg in 1775, and devoted his great talents to treating Russian subjects; so that he himself came to be regarded as a genuine Russian. One of his works bore the same name as that first chosen by Glinka.

There were others of genuine Russian birth who composed operas, but Glinka was the first to make the music as well as the subject national.

The poet Zhukovsky suggested to him a subject taken from the troublous times of Russian history, and was anxious to write the "*book of the opera*;" but he failed to fulfil his promise, and the task was intrusted to

Baron Rosen, who found it difficult to keep up with Glinka's energetic flow of ideas. Oftentimes he was obliged to fit the words to the music. "All you had to do," said Glinka, "was to show him what sort of verse you wanted,—no matter how complicated; 'twas all the same to him. In a day's time it was all done." Zhukovsky remarked, laughingly, that Rosen had verses all billeted in his pocket. "Tell him what sort, and there you are!" Moreover, he had the most implicit faith in the inspiration of his own poetry.

The composition of the opera was somewhat hindered by domestic troubles. Glinka was remarkable for the sweetness of his disposition, but his wife was one of those women who, as the saying goes, would try the temper of a saint. While he was writing his immortal work, she complained before every one that he was wasting ruled paper.

Another time, in the presence of visitors, she remarked to her husband: "All poets and artists come to some bad end, as, for example, Pushkin, who was killed in a duel."

Glinka for once was goaded to make a savage retort. He replied: "I do not claim to be wiser than Pushkin; but I should certainly not expose myself to a bullet for the sake of my wife."

The incompatibility between them was fomented by Glinka's mother-in-law, and finally they separated, and she married another man. Glinka tried to procure a divorce, but failed after enduring many unpleasant experiences.

On Friday, December 9, 1836, Glinka's great opera, "A Life for the Tsar," was performed for the first time at the Bolshoi (or Great) Theatre, in the presence of

the Emperor and a brilliant audience. The success was immense. Immediately after the curtain fell, he was summoned to the Emperor's box, and congratulated by the Imperial family, — the Empress and the Grand Dukes. Glinka was bound by a written agreement not to demand any compensation for his work; but shortly after the Emperor sent him a purse of four thousand rubles, and in the following January appointed him kapellmeister to the court chapel.

The secret of the success of "A Life for the Tsar" was not far to seek. It appealed to all the patriotic emotions of the people, and, moreover, embodied in itself many of the elements of popular national song.

After the death of the Tsar Iván the Terrible, an ambitious *boyár* named Borís Godunóf, by murdering the young Prince Dimitri, paved the way to the throne. He reigned only seven years. Just before he died a monk named Otrépief pretended that Dimitri, the son of the late Tsar, had not been murdered, but that he had escaped. He claimed to be the Tsarevitch, and managed to enlist to his support an army of Poles, joined by many disaffected Russians. Public opinion made his conquest easy. The young son of Borís was murdered, and Otrépief became Tsar.

His reign was of short duration. Russia became the prey of warring factions. Anarchy threatened to ruin the realm. When the trouble was at its height, a butcher named Minin and a prince named Pozharsky, forgetting all differences of rank, heroically determined to restore order. By their efforts a Tsar of pure Russian origin was elected; and thus came into power the present house of Románof.

These exciting years, filled as they were with in-



ANTONIDA DRESSING FOR THE WEDDING.
"A Life for a Tsar." Painting by Makowsky.

tensely dramatic events, have furnished the Russian poets with material for many brilliant plays. From this Glinka also chose the subject of his opera.

The Poles who had come in with the False Dimitri are still in possession of the Kreml, or city fortress of Moscow. They plot to abduct the new Tsar Mikhail Románof. They force the peasant, Iván Susánin, to conduct them in the guise of ambassadors to his hiding-place. The peasant instead leads them into pathless brambles, and when his design is accomplished and discovered, he is made to pay the penalty with his life.

In the first act of the opera, the peasant at first forbids his beautiful daughter, Antonida, to marry Sabínin because of the dangerous uncertainty of political affairs; but when news arrives of the election of the Románof, he gives his consent. The second act is a ballet divertissement, introducing a polonaise, a *krakoviak*, a mazurek, and other popular Polish dances. The third act shows the wedding preparations for Antonida and Sabínin interrupted by the arrival of the Polish party. Susánin sends his son, Ványa, to warn the Tsar, and after a tender farewell to Antonida, departs with the Poles to certain death. Sabínin, entering, discovers what is in the wind, hastily gathers a party, and starts in pursuit.

The fourth act has two scenes and an epilogue. The first portrays Ványa warning the Tsar; the second, the death of Susánin. The epilogue relates the story of the martyr's death, and concludes with the Tsar's solemn entry into Moscow.

This brief synopsis of the opera will give a hint at the possibilities of song and dramatic situations which it afforded. Glinka's great innovation was the employ-

ment of national melodies, especially the contrast of Polish and Russian ones.

Whenever the Poles are introduced, as in the last act, Polish rhythms are employed, and there is a mazurka quite worthy of Chopin. This, and the orchestral reminiscences of the melodies of Ványa and Antonida, are distinct foreshadowings of what in Wagner are called leading motives.

"Glinka," says his countryman, Tsesar Antónovitch Cui, "was a fertile and inexhaustible melodist, understanding the art of giving songs a perfectly vocal form, free from violence and the commonplace. He displays variety, grace, and animation. His melody is always expressive. His musical knowledge, the astonishing richness of his harmonic inventions, — bold, original, and always lucid, — are equal to his melodic genius. His harmony introduced a multitude of effects absolutely novel and full of good taste."

In April, 1838, Glinka was despatched by command of the Emperor to "Russia Minor," — the Ukraina, that border land, so fertile in popular songs, where the three-stringed lute, whose very name, *balalaïka*, is suggestive of dance and sweet refrain, still was heard in many a peasant hut. His especial service was to procure singers, and he succeeded in enlisting in the Emperor's service nineteen boys and three men, among them the famous Gulak-Artemovsky. Nicholas was so pleased that he gave Glinka fifteen hundred rubles. Glinka did not retain his position as kapellmeister beyond the following year. Owing to his shattered health, — he had a severe attack of fever, — the death of his brother, Andréï, and various disagreeable circumstances, chief of which was the quarrel with his wife, he retired on the last day of December, 1839.

Not quite three years later, his second opera, "Ruslan and Luidmila," was brought out for the first time.

The idea of the opera had been suggested by Prince Shakóvskoï, who saw the possibilities of a dramatic score in Pushkin's famous narrative poem, the scene of which is laid in the East. Had it not been for the fatal bullet of the duel which cut off Russia's greatest poet and dramatist in the very prime of his powers, Glinka would have followed the author's indications; but as this was impossible, a certain Bakhturin, one of the many brilliant young men who gathered at the house of the Kukolnik brothers, undertook the task, and, as Glinka himself said, finished the libretto in a quarter of an hour "with his drunken hand." Four or five others had made experiments with the libretto. The plot represents Liudmila, the daughter of an Eastern prince, wooed by Ruslan, a Slav, Ratmir, an Oriental, and Farlaf, a villain. Nuptial choruses, the singing of a prophetic bard, the marvels of a magician, all enter into the score.

Aivazovsky, who had been in Persia, gave Glinka three Tatar songs, which he introduced into the third act to give an Eastern coloring. Moreover, while travelling more than ten years before, Glinka had caught a charming theme from the lips of his *yamshchik*, or postilion: this he utilized for the ballad of "Phinna."

The first performance of "Ruslan" took place on the 9th of December, 1842. The favorite singer, Petrova, was ill, and the important part of "Ratmir" was intrusted to a pupil who bore the same name but was not by any means her equal. The scenery painted by Roller, who had quarrelled with the director, Gedeonof, was utterly wretched. The chorus were not well drilled, and did not know their music. Though the music was of a

higher quality than that in "A Life for the Tsar," the opera was not nearly so dramatic, and it did not appeal so directly to patriotic emotions. This, together with the faults of the performance, caused it to be coldly received by the public, and when the curtain fell hisses were mingled with the faint applause.

One of Glinka's friends tried to comfort him by saying: "Come now, Christ suffered more than you do."

At the third representation Petrova herself took part, and more enthusiasm was shown. The composer was to receive ten per centum on two-thirds of the receipts, but instead of bringing him profit it plunged him three thousand silver rubles into debt. Bulgárin criticised the opera unmercifully, and the *Northern Bee*, edited by Count Bielskorsky, had a cruel sting for the sensitive composer.

The next year the Italian opera came to Petersburg, and "Ruslan" was shelved. Nor was it ever revived during his lifetime.

Glinka, who felt this failure bitterly, soon went abroad, and this time visited Paris. Berlioz appreciated his greatness, and caused the "*Leschinka*," a Caucasian dance from "Ruslan," and a cavatina from "A Life for the Tsar," to be executed in public. But neither was successful. Glinka remarked, what Mozart had remarked before him, that the French were bad listeners and worse singers.

He gave a concert at which his *krakoviak*, "Chernomor's March" (from "Ruslan"), a waltz scherzo, and an Italian romance, "*Il Desiderio*," were performed, but in spite of the presence of all the Russians in Paris, and a good audience, he lost 1,500 francs.

In May, 1845, he went to Spain, and travelled over a

large part of the country, indulging his passion for collecting folk-songs. He was there for two years. At Madrid, in 1847, he composed his great fantasy on the popular dance "*la jota arragonesa*," which he followed with a symphonic poem called "A Night in Madrid."

At the desire of his aged mother he returned to Russia this year, and again his health failed. From this time forth he led a restless, wandering life, sometimes in Warsaw, sometimes in Moscow, or in Petersburg, or Smolensk. In June, 1857, he received a letter from home, and before he had opened it felt a nervous shock from his finger-tips: it contained the news of his mother's death.

During these five years of nomadic life he wrote for Prince Varshavsky's orchestra a number of pieces, including his pot-pourri "Recollections of Castile," and his ever-famous "*Kamárinskaya*."

The following May he went abroad for the third time, again visited Paris, and started for Spain; but his painful nervous sufferings drove him back from Toulouse to Paris. He was homesick for his native land, and dreamed of a quiet life in a little house with a garden, where he should have room for his pet animals and birds.

It was about this time that he wrote his *Recollections*, or *Autobiography*.

Just two years later he was in Russia once more and visiting his sister Liudmíla Ivánovna Shetákova, who lived at Tsarkoye Selo. At Petersburg he found great pleasure in the society of the great singer Leonova, and began for her an opera to be entitled "*Drumuzhnetsa*" ("The Bigamist"), or "The Robbers of the Volga," for which he intended to apply some sketches of Malo-Russian songs, formerly written for "Taras Bulba."

The libretto, unfortunately, did not reach him in time.

Physical pains again made him restless, and in April, 1856, he went to Berlin in order to study the music of the ancients, especially the so-called church ecclesiastical modes. Here he was greatly delighted because a trio of his was performed by the King's band at a parade concert, and his "Life for the Tsar" was given in Germany for the first time.

He was suddenly taken ill, and died in February, 1857. No one was with him, but he was found peacefully resting in bed with a holy image pressed to his lips.

His body was brought to Russia in May, and buried in the cemetery of the Nevsky Monastery, near the grave of the great Kruihof, the *Æsop* of Russia.

Glinka always had the good fortune to make friends, and his intimates were the leading spirits of his time, who looked upon him with the greatest admiration. There are in existence numerous portraits of him. He is portrayed as a regular-featured boy in 1817; as a sentimental young man in 1824; as an inspired official in a uniform coat in 1830; as a contented citizen of the world, wearing a Turkish fez, in 1850; and in 1856, the year before his death, as a dark-eyed Titianesque thinker, with hair changing to gray, self-willed and imperious in expression.

HECTOR BERLIOZ.

(1803-1869.)

Colossal genius of the eagle's wing!
Fierce, unrestrained, ambitious, passionate,
With vast capacities for love and hate,
Foiled, fostered, ever met by spur and sting,
Taught by thy nature's wondrous art to sing,
Volcanic in impatience, doomed by Fate,
Successful in defeat, to work and wait; —
What message hadst thou to the world to bring?

A message far too vast for human thought!
It was as though thy spirit mounted high
And caught the choring voices of the spheres,
And fitted them to earthly harmony;
It wakes our wonder, stirs us, causes tears,
Yet we who hear it comprehend it not!

LOUIS HECTOR BERLIOZ was born in the chill month of *Frimaire*, in the twelfth year of the French Republic; that is to say, his birthday was Sunday, December 11, 1803. His birthplace was Côte-Saint-André, a tiny village (to use Berlioz's own words) "built on the slope of a hill and overlooking a vast plain, rich, golden, green, the silence of which was characterized by a peculiarly dreamy majesty, still further enhanced by the belt of mountains shutting it in on the south and east, and surmounted in the far distance by the gigantic snow-capped peaks of the Alps."

His father, of honorable family and considerable

wealth, was a "health officer," who practised medicine for humanity's sake rather than profit, and enjoyed the love and respect of the humble peasantry, who called him Monsieur Berl. His medical acquirements must have been considerable, for he won a prize for a memorial on chronic diseases that was published in Paris. His was a dreamy and meditative nature, a man free from prejudices of any sort, inclined to the scepticism of the Revolutionary philosophers, though he never interfered with the beliefs of others. In later life he was a victim of the opium habit. He was his son's instructor in languages, literature, history, geography.

Berlioz, while paying tribute to his father's learning and patience, considered that this method of home instruction was injurious to him. Having dealings almost exclusively with relations and servants and only carefully chosen companions, and seeing little of real life, he was unfitted for rude contact with the world. "I am certain," says he in his *Memoirs*, "that in this respect I remained an ignorant and awkward child till I was twenty-five."

Geography was his delight, and such was his passion for studying the maps of far countries, and reading all possible stories of foreign travel and adventure, that he declared if he had been born nearer the sea he should certainly have become a sailor, with or without the consent of his parents.

By a curious freak of heredity his own son became a sailor and visited the lands of which the father dreamed and never ceased dreaming.

He was obliged each day to learn by heart several lines of Horace and Vergil, but found the task odious. Nevertheless, at the early age of twelve he was so im-



HECTOR BERLIOZ.
After a photograph from life.



pressed by the pathos of the story of Dido in the fourth book of the *Æneid*, that he found it impossible to read it aloud without a breaking voice and flowing tears.

The secret of this lay not so much in the magic of Vergil's hexameters, so completely unfelt by the average schoolboy, as in the youthful Hector's precocity in falling a victim to what poets call "the tender passion," what he himself called "the cruel passion!" Indeed, he was so hard hit by Cupid's dart, child though he was, that half a century later the wound had not healed!

Every summer he was in the habit of going with his mother and sisters to visit his grandfather, "who bore the name of Walter Scott's fabulous warrior, Marmion." His home was in the romantic and picturesque village of Maylan, above the valley of the Isère, and looking toward the mountains. Hector's uncle Félix was in the army, and between the campaigns often returned home "all warm with the cannon's breath, adorned sometimes with a mere lance thrust, sometimes with a gun-shot wound in his foot, or a magnificent sabre cut across his face."

He was one of those intrepid heroes, like Captain Coignet, who followed "the great Emperor's luminous path," was "ready to give his life for a glance, believing the Napoleon's throne to be as solid as Mont Blanc." Many stories he had to tell of his adventures, gallant and jovial lance that he was! He also played the violin and sang comic songs.

But this warrior made a less vivid impression on the doctor's son than a girl of eighteen, who lived with her sister and her aunt, Madame Gautier, during the summer, high up on the mountain-side, in a white cottage, surrounded by vines and gardens, and guarded by a ruined tower and the mighty crag of St. Eynard.

One of Hector's favorite books was a pastoral romance, entitled "*Estelle et Némorin*," which he had discovered in his father's library, and read again and again. "The nymph, the Hamadryad of St. Eynard," was also named Estelle. She was, says Berlioz, "tall, and of elegant figure, with great eyes armed for war, though they were always smiling, a head of hair worthy of adorning the helmet of Achilles, and feet, perhaps not Andalusian, but thoroughly Parisian, and rose-colored buskins!"

The first time that the boy saw this superior being, he felt an electric shock. He grew dizzy with mysterious pain. "I spent whole nights," he says, "a prey to desolation. By day I hid in the corn-fields, in the secret retreats of my grandfather's orchard, like a wounded bird, silent and sad. Jealousy, that pallid companion of the purest love, tormented me if a man spoke the merest word to my idol."

Forty years after, when he had forgotten the color of her hair, he still remembered her sparkling eyes, her rose-colored buskins, and still the clinking of his uncle Marmion's spurs as he danced with her brought a pang to his heart.

He was only a boy of twelve, and she was eighteen at least, and so his passion, which he could not hide, afforded great amusement to the country-side. Estelle herself, "the star of the mountain," encouraged him for diversion's sake. Perhaps she knew not what cruel pain it caused him.

"One evening," he relates, "there was a large party at her aunt's to play *barres*. In order to form the two hostile camps, we had to divide ourselves into equal groups. The gentlemen chose their partners. They took pains to make me point out my choice

in presence of all. But I had not the courage; my heart beat too violently. I silently dropped my eyes. Every one was mocking me. When Miss Estelle, seizing my hand, exclaimed, 'Very well, let me choose; I take Mr. Hector.' Oh, agony! She also laughed, the cruel one, as she looked down upon me from the height of her loveliness."

This pathetic episode was of brief duration, but it colored all his life. Other loves failed to blot out the memory of the first.

"I was thirteen when I parted from her. I was thirty when, as I came home from Italy, across the Alps, I saw afar off St. Eynard and the little white house, and the old tower — I still loved her."

Berlioz declares in his memoirs that music was revealed to him at the same time with love, at the age of twelve. He means that it was then he first began to compose.

His first impression of music was gained at his first communion.

His mother, who was a tall woman, rather stern, and extremely religious, duly taught him the first precepts of her faith.

His older sister, Nancy, was a pupil at the Ursuline convent; and early one spring morning, the sun shining, the fragrant breeze murmuring in the poplars, the priest came to take him to the "holy house," where the august ceremony was to occur. In the chapel he found his sister and her companions all clad in white, their heads bowed in prayer.

Blushing at the undeserved honor of being invited to the table before those charming maidens, he received the Host, and just at that moment "a chorus of virginal voices, joining in a hymn to the Eucharist," filled him with "a mystic and passionate agitation."

"I thought," says he, "that I saw heaven opening — the heaven of love and chaste delight — a heaven purer and a thousand times more beautiful than that of which I had heard so much. Oh, marvellous power of true expression, incomparable beauty of a melody coming from the heart!

"Thus," he continues, "I became suddenly a saint — a saint, in so far as going to hear mass every day, taking the communion every Sunday, and going to the tribunal of penitence to tell my spiritual director, '*My father, I have done nothing.*' — 'Very well, my boy,' replied the worthy priest; 'keep on so.' And for many years I followed his advice only too well."

Before he was twelve he found a flageolet in a drawer, and his father succeeded in a day or two in giving him so good an idea of its use that he was able to play the popular air "Marlborough." Later he practised the flute, so that in seven months he played, as he himself says, passably well. Dr. Berlioz, who had taught him all he knew, then made arrangements to have a violinist named Imbert come from Lyons. The boy received two lessons a day, and, as he was able to sing at sight, and play "Drouet's Complicated Concertos," he made rapid progress.

He studied by himself Rameau's treatise on harmony, but could not comprehend it, though he burned the midnight oil, until suddenly, by a kind of mystic enlightenment due to practice in Pleyel's quartets, the fundamental principles established themselves in his mind. Then he sat down and wrote a six-part pot-pourri on Italian themes, and a quintet for flute, violin, viola, and bass-viol. Two months later he composed another quintet, which was so difficult that none

of them could play it. All of these pieces, naturally enough, were in the minor, and breathed the most gloomy melancholy. They were inspired by hopeless love.

"I burned these two quintets," he writes, "some years after I composed them; but, strangely enough, when at Paris, long after, I was writing my first orchestral composition, the passage approved by my father in the second of these essays, came into my head, and was adopted."

Berlioz's second instructor was an Alsatian named Dorant, a man far more clever than Imbert, and able to play the guitar, the clarinet, the violin, the bass-viol, and every other instrument known to man.

After a short time Dorant went to Hector's father :

"I cannot give your son any more guitar lessons."

"Why not? Has he failed in any manner toward you, or has he been so indolent that you despair of him?"

"Nothing of the sort; but, absurd as it may seem, he is as good a player as I am."

This was Berlioz's first diploma, and he found himself at the outset of his career (as he expresses it), "master of the three majestic and incomparable instruments, the flageolet, flute, and guitar."

Even while declaring that he could command no other instrument, he suddenly recollects the drum. He could beat the drum. This was his chief resemblance to Haydn. He always regretted that he could not play the piano; and yet this very lack caused him to rely upon himself entirely when composing.

But his father began to look askance at his musical enthusiasms, and his very pious mother — did he never

forgive her for it? — saw in that art the lurking temptations of the stage and all other evil.

His father desired to see him, like himself, a doctor. So having started him in Latin, Greek, and history, literature, and geography, he put him into the little seminary of La Côte near his home. From this, Hector graduated at the age of eighteen with a fair amount of learning, — it is said that he remembered his Latin well enough to talk in it with a famous professor at Stuttgart, many years later, and his memoirs are full of classical quotations, — and not indisposed to study medicine.

But it chanced one day that he picked up the *Lives of Gluck and Haydn*, and shortly after a piece of music-paper ruled with twenty-four lines fell into his hands; and he, who had never seen a full score or dreamed of music written in more than six parts, suddenly woke to a consciousness of what a world of harmony was to be reached by climbing that marvellous ladder, more magical than the one seen by Jacob in his dreams.

It was a revelation to him; and when under his father's direction he studied the splendid plates, life size, in *Monro's treatise on the human skeleton*, his mind was rather on the skeletons of symphonies, and only the bribe of a new flute that his father offered, and the respect and fear inspired by him, made him yield and give up what he calls "the empyrean for the most melancholy abiding places of the earth; the immortal angels of poesy and love and their inspired songs, for the disgusting attendants of the dissecting-room, hideous corpses, cries of patients, moans and death-rattle."

Yet he did yield, and in company with a cousin who became a distinguished physician, he read medicine with the old doctors until it seemed best for the two to go to Paris.

This was in 1822. When he first went to the dissecting-room of the hospital of La Pitié, the horror of the sight was so great that he jumped out of the window and ran to his lodgings as fast as his legs would carry him.

But it was only a momentary revolt. The next day he went again and showed himself calm and even more than stoical. He studied assiduously under famous professors for some months, till, at an evil hour for his father's hopes, he went to the opera and heard Salieri's "Daughters of Danaus," with Spontini's additions.

Again the magic spell came upon him. He tried hard, in honor of his promise to his father, to struggle against it. The next week he heard the ballet of "Nina," in which occurred the song sung years before by the young sisterhood at the Ursuline convent, at his first communion, when the realm of music was opened to him.

The theme was by the famous Dalayrac, and it was played on the English horn.

The next step was to seek the library of the conservatory, which he found was open to all, and there he buried himself in the scores of Gluck, his dearest admiration.

Gluck's opera of "*Iphigénie*," which he heard early in 1822, decided his career.

Inspired once more by these musical treasures, Berlioz, who knew so little, composed a cantata with orchestral accompaniment. A pupil of the conservatory, named Gerono, who had frequently found him at the library, offered to present him to Professor Lesueur, who has been called "the true inventor of program music." Lesueur looked over "The Arab Horse," as the cantata was called, and found it abounding in life and dramatic fire, but pronounced it so full of faults that it was of no use even to point them out.

Gerono was deputed to "coach" Berlioz in Lesueur's methods, and he did it so effectively, that in a few weeks the ambitious young man was able to enter Lesueur's classes.

Afterwards he came to mourn the time that he had wasted in studying "this excellent and worthy man's antediluvian theories."

Lesueur became his earnest friend, and took him every Sunday to hear his masses and his little "oratorios" on Biblical and Ossianic episodes, performed at the Tuileries. Then when the ceremony was over, and King Charles X. had retired to the sound of a barbarous fanfare on a big drum and a fife, master would take pupil on long walks, confiding in him all his struggles, his ambitions, his disappointments, his successes, and discussing with him theories and philosophies. The two so strangely dissimilar friends were united in their admiration for Gluck, Vergil, and Napoleon!

All this time Berlioz was having a heated discussion with his father, in regard to his "chimerical notion" of abandoning medicine for music. And when a mass, which he wrote at the suggestion of the chapelmaster of Saint-Roch, failed lamentably (not through his fault so much as that of the performers), his parents threatened to cut off his allowance of one hundred and twenty francs a month, and finally summoned him home.

During his two months' stay at La Côte, he almost talked his father over to his views, and presented Lesueur's services to him in such a light, that Dr. Berlioz sent his especial thanks and regards to the professor.

Berlioz was back in Paris early in August, 1825, but,

instead of attending to his medical studies, he spent his time revising and copying his mass. He could not afford to employ a professional copyist.

In order to have it properly represented, he needed twelve hundred francs, and he had applied to Chateaubriand for a loan, which was curtly refused. But a spendthrift young nobleman, named Augustin de Pons, whose acquaintance he made at the Opéra, proffered it of his own accord, and the work was excellently performed at Saint-Roch.

In order to repay the loan, Berlioz moved into humble quarters, gave music lessons, — flute, guitar, and singing, at twenty sous an hour — saved assiduously, almost starved himself, and had succeeded in slowly covering half of the indebtedness when De Pons in a fit of impatience wrote to Dr. Berlioz, telling him the situation.

The old gentleman paid the remaining six hundred francs, and, for a time, deprived his son of his stipend, hoping to bring him to terms.

But a new revelation had come to Berlioz on hearing the sadly garbled and travestied French version of "*Der Freischütz*," through which, though it was so "mutilated, vulgarized, tortured, and insulted," he was able, in spite of his prejudices, to see the grace, poetry, and romantic coloring given to orchestration by the German composer.

What was his disappointment when, one February day, in 1826, on reaching Lesueur's, he was told: "I have just had a visit from Weber: five minutes sooner, you would have heard him play whole scenes from our French scores."

Again that day he missed seeing him at a publisher's, and in the evening at the Opéra. Weber was on his way to London, where he died.

Berlioz this year determined to present himself as a candidate for the "prize of Rome." But, unfortunately, he was only a private pupil of Lesueur, and a preliminary examination was required, in order to get rid of the weaker ones, and he was "screened out."

This news reached his father, who was more than ever confirmed in his opposition, though Lesueur wrote an urgent letter assuring him that Hector had a great future before him, and that "music streamed from all his pores."

So Berlioz went home to try his powers of persuasion. It was a painful visit; after several days of icy coolness his father relented, but his mother first begged him on her knees to renounce his plans, and then, finding him unyielding, cursed him, — or so at least he relates in his *mémoires*.

One of Berlioz's first acquaintances in Paris was a young man named Humbert Ferrand, an ardent Roman Catholic, a zealous believer in the "legitimate monarchy," while Berlioz was growing more and more "liberal," both as regarded politics and religion. In spite of these divergences, a warm friendship sprang up between the two.

It was about the time of the Greek revolution, and Ferrand, stirred, like Lord Byron, by the poetic struggle, wrote a poem or heroic scene with choruses. Berlioz set it to music, but no letters of recommendation sufficed to get it publicly performed.

Then Ferrand composed an operatic poem entitled "*Les Francs-Juges*," which Berlioz, full of enthusiasm, set to music.

While he was engaged in this great undertaking, and dreaming of unheard-of success, he was definitely en-

rolled in the Conservatoire, and diligently carrying on two courses at once: composition under Lesueur, and counterpoint and fugue (which he detested) under Reicha, a friend of Beethoven's.

He gives a vivid description of his economies. He had taken as a room-mate a young student of pharmacy, a townsman of his, who had some skill in cooking; and from the sixth of September, 1826, till the twenty-second of May next, they feasted one day on raisins, another on bread and salt, varied occasionally by a cutlet or pulse fried in lard, or, as a special extravagance, a capon costing more than a franc and a half; so that their expenses were rigorously kept down to thirty francs a month. Nevertheless, a piano that cost one hundred and ten francs — "what a piano!" exclaims Berlioz — decorated their humble rooms.

They were young and well, and Berlioz was too proud to apply to his parents for aid. It came into his head to find an engagement as flutist in some American theatre, at New York, or the City of Mexico, or in China.

Then one day he heard that a new theatre for vaudevilles and comic opera was to be opened opposite the Bourse.

He went there and applied for a place as flutist or chorus singer: all the places were already taken. He left his address, and a few days later was given an engagement at fifty francs a month.

He kept this a secret even from his friend the pharmacist, pretending that he was giving lessons, and when he took his place in the chorus he concealed his identity by a false nose!

This slavery lasted only till spring. As soon as he felt free to quit it, he began to renew his visits to the

Opéra, always taking pains to give a careful preliminary study to the score of the work performed, and to assure himself of the scope and compass of various instruments.

He was still under the influence of Gluck and Spontini, but when the new trial for the *Prix de Rome* was instituted, the judges, among whom were Lesueur, Cherubini, Paer, Boieldieu, pronounced his compositions unperformable. Berlioz insisted that it was because the pianist, whose duty it was to represent the orchestration, was incompetent !

Berlioz never forgave them for their rejection of his claims. He had his revenge a few months later by sending them tickets to his mass, which was executed at Saint-Eustache on Saint Cecilia's Day, 1827, — a work, as he wrote his friend Ferrand, thirty times more difficult than his lyric scene presented for the prize. It went finely, especially one tremendous passage executed by six trumpets, four horns, three trombones, and two ophicleides !

It was the first time that he had ever directed an orchestra ; and the excitement of conducting his own piece affected him so that he felt faint and almost dropped the baton.

This year was memorable in Berlioz's life : two new revelations came to him, — two, and a third, which was an old one revived.

Charles Kemble and Miss Harriet Smithson with an English company came to the Odéon, and revealed Shakspeare for the first time to the French people. Victor Hugo, Dumas, Vigny, and other writers, hailed the new phenomenon ; the name of Shakspeare henceforth for them was as it were the watchword of romanticism. Berlioz knew scarcely a word of English, but the new ideas came

to him like a thunderbolt; "Shakspeare," he says, "unexpectedly coming upon me, struck me as by lightning; its flash, opening to me the heaven of art with a sublime crash, illuminated for me its most distant profundities. I recognized the true grandeur, the true beauty, the true truth, of the drama. I saw — I comprehended — I felt that I was a living being, and that I must arise and walk."

Henceforth Shakspeare and Vergil were his inseparable companions: these two, Goethe, Byron, Scott, Tom Moore, Cooper, Gluck, and Beethoven made his pantheon. He worshipped them all in turn, and all equally to the end. Shakspeare and Goethe were the "mute confidants" of his life. He kept Vergil's works in his pocket wherever he went.

Week after week these Shaksperian representations were given, and when in March, 1828, Miss Smithson had a benefit, more than a thousand people were turned away. The theatre was turned into a garden of flowers. Charles X. and the Duchess de Berri, who were present, made the lovely young Irish actress magnificent presents.

Berlioz, with his inflammable heart, found it in vain to resist the sudden passion. He saw her in "Romeo and Juliet," and "Hamlet," but with fierce pain stayed away from "Lear" and all the other performances.

But it was too late. He had become the prey of a Fury. He could not sleep, he could not work, but wandered wildly through the streets of Paris. It is said Liszt and Chopin followed him all one night across the Plain of Saint-Ouen until at last he fell, worn out with fatigue, and slept where he lay, like one dead.

It is a common story that Berlioz exclaimed on seeing Miss Smithson in "Romeo and Juliet," "I will marry

this woman, and I will write my greatest symphony on this drama." Berlioz denied saying such a thing. But Hippeau points out that Jules Janin put the words into Berlioz's mouth in *Les Débats* of Nov. 29, 1839, at the time of the first hearing of the symphony, and Berlioz did not then deny "the soft impeachment."

Another shock came to rouse him from this moral anguish. Beethoven was for the first time adequately presented to the sceptical Parisians. In March, 1828, the "Heroic Symphony" was performed at the Conservatory concerts, and a fortnight later, at a concert in Beethoven's memory, only that master's works were given.

Berlioz suddenly awoke from what he himself calls "a sort of stupor" (*abrutissement*), and determined that the *Ophélia* of whom he had dreamed so unprofitably should be made to hear of him.

Accordingly he announced a concert composed entirely of his own works: the overture to "Waverley," that of "*Les Franc-Juges*" (the opera itself was shelved forever), a few numbers from "*La Scène Grecque*" and the "Death of Orpheus," which had been declared, by the Academy of the Fine Arts, impossible of execution. (Berlioz proposed to have that fact printed on the program.) The last number, however, was replaced by the *Resurrexit* from the mass.

It took place on the twenty-sixth of May at the Conservatory, and in spite of some serious faults of execution, created a genuine sensation. The applause was tremendous; congratulations were showered upon him; the comments of the press were generally favorable.

He was famous. With some show of right he was called "the Byron of music." For, did not Byron wake one morning to sudden fame? Still his "star, wor-

shipped afar," — she whose name he could not pronounce and whose language he could not understand, — ignored his existence, refused even to receive his letters, scorned him. His despair was almost comic. Sometimes it impelled him to compose madly, and numberless songs and instrumental pieces flowed from his pen. Sometimes he wrote hyperbolical letters to his friend Ferrand.

Then he tried for the third time for the *Prix de Rome*, and won only partial success. The first prize was decreed to a friend of his; the second prize was divided between him and another of Lesueur's pupils.

His most important composition at this time was eight scenes from Goethe's "Faust," inspired by Gérard de Nerval's translation. This was afterwards elaborated into "The Damnation of Faust." While he was at work on them he learned that Miss Smithson was going to Bordeaux. During her absence in November, 1828, he declared that he no longer lived, that he suffered the impossible.

Yet his sufferings but inspired him the more: an oratorio for two solo voices and organ accompaniment, a new arrangement of "*Les Francs-Juges*" and musical settings to Thomas Moore's "Irish Melodies," — Miss Smithson, be it remembered, was Irish — revealed "the intoxication of mingled joy and sorrow that only true love knows."

Not one grain of hope consoled him. Miss Smithson, about to leave Paris for Holland, and learning of the furious adoration of the young composer, who would storm the citadel of her heart, said, "Nothing is more impossible."

She at least knew of his existence; she had spoken his name! Thus ended one act in what he calls the greatest drama of his life.

Again came the annual competition for that coveted prize. Berlioz refused to make allowance for the conventional prejudices of the committee. He gave free rein to his imagination, and the best and most original passage in his work — “The Death of Cleopatra” — lost him the honor. The committee decided not to give any first prize, and to divide the second. Berlioz was entirely left out!

He spent the summer in Paris, and in October gave another concert, with a hundred and ten musicians, under the direction of Habeneck. The program included a Beethoven piano concerto, played by Hiller, and a number of his own compositions, — his overture to the “*Franks-Juges*” and “*Waverley*,” his sextet of Sylphes from the “*Faust*,” and the number from his mass. Except for the sextet, which was badly played, the concert was a tremendous artistic success. He was loaded with ovations, and it brought him five hundred and fifty francs profit.

But he had borrowed much money, first for the concert and secondly for having his “dear” Irish melodies engraved and published; and his earnings from teaching his two pupils were small. His prospects were not happy, and worse than all, he had to correct, for pay, the proofs of Rossini’s “*William Tell*,” — Rossini and his everlasting *crescendo* being his pet detestations.

When he learned of the immense success of Miss Smithson in London, he was rendered almost insane.

“She is still in London,” he wrote Ferrand, in February, 1830, “and yet I imagine that I feel her near me; all my recollections awake and join forces to tear me in pieces; I hear my heart beat, and its pulsations shake me like the piston strokes of a steam engine. Each

muscle in my body shudders with agony. . . . In vain ! . . . horrible ! . . . Oh, unhappy woman ! if she could for one instant conceive all the poetry, all the infinitude of my love, she would fly into my arms, though she were to die in my embrace !” And to express the depth and height of this fierce and tempestuous passion, he wrote his wonderful “*Symphonie Fantastique*,” the “Episode from the Life of an Artist.”

It is probable that Berlioz was growing weary of this hopeless love. A sudden shock cured him of it for the time being. Some officious friend repeated a scandalous libel regarding Miss Smithson. He received it as “a frightful truth.” He disappeared from Paris and went wandering through the fields, half dead with hunger and weariness, till at last he fell fainting, and slept like a dog.

At the end of two days he returned to his friends, who had supposed him dead and had sought for him in the morgue. Then after a few days more of gloomy silence he came to himself again, and so far forgot “her, the *Juliet*, the *Ophelia* that his heart called to,” that he fell no less desperately in love with a charming young pianist, named Marie-Felicité-Dénise Moke, of German and Belgian parentage. She was known as “Camille” Moke, and afterwards became a rival of Thalberg and Liszt, enjoying a European reputation. Hiller had lost his heart to her, and asked Berlioz to be his go-between, — always a dangerous experiment.

Berlioz supplanted the young Hebrew lover. He dreamed of marrying her. Her mother objected, and with good reason. Berlioz was more than ever stirred to accomplish great deeds. First, he would have his “*Symphonie Fantastique*” performed with a scene in it which should show the world the perfidy of his false one

and wreak his vengeance upon her: nay, not his vengeance; "I do not wish to avenge myself," he writes; "I am sorry for her, and I despise her. She is an ordinary woman, endowed with an instinctive genius for expressing such torments of the human soul as she has never felt, and incapable of conceiving an immense and noble love such as I honored her with." Pity that he did not cling to this view. It would have saved him much suffering!

But after Berlioz had his twenty-three hundred pages of music copied, at a cost of 400 francs, and had undergone one rehearsal, the scheme was abandoned. Next, came the trial for that tantalizing *Prix de Rome*, and again he girded himself for the contest.

And he won it. The vote was unanimous — an unheard-of event, he writes the next day, intoxicated not so much with his success in pulling the wool over the eyes of the judges, — for he hastened to burn the piece that won their approval, — as with the thought that his "*Ariel*," as he called Mlle. Moke, would soon be his.

His successful cantata, written in the last two weeks of July, during that exciting political crisis which saw the fall of a monarchy, gave him an annual pension of three thousand francs for five years, and in December he unwillingly departed for Rome. He would gladly have stayed in Paris, where his heart was, but the authorities to whom he appealed obliged him to fulfil the conditions of the pension. Before he went he gave several concerts with great success, and in his memoirs he makes delightful fun of the solemn performance of the prize cantata which utterly failed of its effect, from the fact that the horn forgot to play at the climax, and all the other wind instruments likewise, losing their cue, were silent. It

represented the burning and destruction of Sardanapalus' palace. What a crash and tumult of brass and wood would be expected of Berlioz: and all that was heard was the twittering of the strings! No wonder the public went away mystified and inclined to think that Berlioz had made sport of them.

His last concert took place early in December, and it included, among other pieces of his composition, "The Ball," "The March to Execution," and "The Witches' Sabbath," from his "*Symphonie Fantastique*." "The Witches' Sabbath" was his revenge on "that wretched Smithson girl," as he calls her, and at that very time she was once more in Paris playing the part of Fenella in "*La Muette de Portici*," for the first and only time.

But she knew nothing of the "satanic effect" of this scene in which she was pilloried, nor did Berlioz care; for had not his "good Ariel's" parents at last consented to their marriage after he should have been a year in Italy? and was she not his angel, his genius, his thought, his heart, his poetic life?

The story of his sojourn in Italy reads like a comedy.

This strange, eccentric creature, with his fiery eyes, his shock of blond hair, and his eagle nose, was received by the young pensioners of France with shouts and hurrahs and jests of every sort, as he dismounted from the diligence one February evening, just at supper-time.

He, like the rest, became an *habitué* of the dingy "Café Greco," and one of his first acquaintances was the young Mendelssohn, who, in a letter to his mother, pictured him in vivid gall, calling him a genuine caricature without a shadow of talent, ambitious to create a new world, full of immoderate vanity, desperately

affected. Yet the two opposites had a certain attraction for each other.

"He is a fine fellow," writes Berlioz ; "his talent of execution is as great as his musical genius — and that, indeed, is saying much. All that I have heard of him has charmed me. I firmly believe that he is one of the loftiest musical capabilities of our day. He has been my cicerone. Every morning I have been to his rooms : he played me a sonata by Beethoven ; we sang Gluck's '*Armide* ;' then he took me to see the famous ruins, which, I confess, had a very slight effect upon me. Mendelssohn is one of those open natures which are so rarely seen ; he has a firm belief in the Lutheran religion, and I sometimes greatly scandalize him by laughing at the Bible. He has given me the only endurable moments that I have had during my stay in Rome."

Insinuations from Paris that his fair one was not true to him almost drove him wild. His excessive despair procured from his associates the mock title "*Père la Joie*," "Father Joy." He threatened to return home. Mendelssohn wagered he would not dare to do so. Berlioz having secured some money suddenly left, and an excellent dinner was eaten at Mendelssohn's expense.

At Florence, where an attack of sore throat detained him, Berlioz received a letter from Madame Moke, accusing him of having brought sorrow into her family, and announcing the marriage of her daughter to Camille Pleyel.

Then sheer madness seized upon him. He conceived a fearful plot : to hasten to Paris, to kill the two faithless women and the innocent man, and then blow his own brains out !

He procured the disguise of a chambermaid ; he wrote his last will, secured a passport, and set forth in a private carriage.

But in changing equipages at Pietra Santa he lost his

disguise, and had to wait at Genoa till another should be made. And while he was restlessly roaming about, he accidentally or purposely plunged from the walls into the salt brine of the Mediterranean. He was fished out more dead than alive, "harpooned like a salmon," laid in the hot sun to dry and revive, and was thus cured of his passion.

The "terrible hippopotamus of a mother" sent back through Hiller (of all men!) the trinkets that he had given "Camille," but afterwards he had his revenge — not a very worthy one; he wrote a crazy story entitled "Euphonia," in which he introduced all the characters under very transparent anagrams. And when Madame Pleyel returned to Paris crowned with laurels, Berlioz gave, in "*Les Débats*," a savage criticism of her playing.

He determined to live for his two sisters, whose death would have been caused by his own, and wrote a penitential letter to Horace Vernet, the head of the French Academy at Rome.

Being assured that his name was not stricken from the list, he spent a few of the happiest weeks of his life near Genoa, wandering among the orange groves, bathing in the warm waves, and inspired by the mountains and the sea to compose his wonderful overture to "King Lear." Was there ever such a queer genius born?

During his leisurely journey back to Rome, mostly on foot, he began to compose his *Lélio*, that extravagant and extraordinary lyrical monodrama which was afterwards united to the "*Symphonie Fantastique*," showing the tortures of the artist attempting suicide and then returning to life.

Berlioz was frightfully tired of his sojourn at Rome: he considered it a miserable waste of time. What could

he get out of the works of Palestrina sung by the eighteen male sopranos of the Sixtine Chapel — merely interesting vestiges of a glorious past? But the lazy wanderings around “the Eternal City,” the vagabond life among the woods and crags of Tivoli and Subiaco, were no help to his ambition. He wanted energetic life, struggle; he wanted a chance to exercise that “prodigious aptitude for happiness” with which he was gifted, to satisfy his “incalculable superabundance of sensibility,” to stop the fearful “evaporation of heart, senses, brain, nervous fluid,” which tormented him.

Then suddenly he began once more to compose with fierce activity; his overture to “Rob Roy” and a number of other pieces were finished, and tremendous plans were evolved, among them that of a colossal oratorio on “The Last Day of the World,” with several different orchestras and groups of brass instruments placed at the four points of the compass.

At last he was allowed six months’ leave of absence, and started for Paris by way of his home. His eldest sister had just made a satisfactory marriage, and his parents were ambitious that he should do the same. Indeed, an heiress with three hundred thousand francs dowry and a similar amount in expectation, was, as it were, at hand. But Berlioz had seen the graceful daughter of the Vernets at Rome, and his fickle heart went out to her; her also he had called his “fair Ariel”! He refused to entertain his father’s plan.

After tranquilly working and reading for four months at La Côte, Berlioz returned to Paris and arranged for a grand concert at which “The Episode from the Life of an Artist” and “*Lélio*” were the chief features. It took place early in December, and Miss Smithson, who had

returned to Paris, with the intention of establishing a permanent English theatre there, was present, in a box. She, the heroine of the musical drama! It may be imagined what interest it gave to the occasion. She could have no doubt who was meant by the scarcely veiled allusions in the spoken text.

She allowed Berlioz to come to see her. He had at least once thought of her while in Italy. On his one sea-voyage from Rome to Naples, he saw a black crow flying heavily northward. His thought followed the bird toward England,—the land of Shakspeare and *Juliet*! He became more her slave than ever. She accepted his love. Her family and his fiercely opposed the match. Then followed a year of the most wretched torments. Miss Smithson, whose affairs were going from bad to worse, at last announced an afternoon “benefit.” Just before it began, she fell and broke her leg.

Berlioz here found his opportunity. He took tender care of her, arranged a concert at which Chopin and Liszt played, thereby managing to pay some of her pressing debts, and finally, after the most melodramatic scenes,—in one of which he tried to kill himself with opium in her presence, and on hearing her protestations of despair and affection bravely swallowed some ipecacuanha for an emetic,—the two foolish creatures, destined so palpably to misery, were married at the English embassy on the third day of October, 1833, and went to Vincennes to spend their honeymoon.

When they returned to Paris what a prospect awaited them! The bride had only her debts,—some fourteen thousand francs’ worth,—and Berlioz had three hundred francs loaned him by a friend, and his pension from the Institute which had still a year and a half to run.

Alas ! Berlioz had married a falling or a fallen star. The "delicious being," as he called her, had lost her popularity among the French people. She tried again and again to win it back. In vain. On Berlioz rested the task of supporting their domestic arrangements, which were made more trying by the birth of his son Louis, "the sweetest and loveliest baby" that he had ever seen.

He gave concerts, he composed, and above all, he wrote musical criticisms which, as might be supposed, were original and piquant. His connection with the *Journal des Débats* began early in 1835, and lasted for twenty years. He was regarded as one of the most brilliant critics that ever lived, and shares with Schumann the glory of having determined many of the canons of art.

His fame began to be spread through Europe. "*Les Francs-Juges*" was given with success in Leipzig, was praised by Schumann; though Mendelssohn declared that the mystic element was "a progression of screeching harmonies, unintelligible to all but the March cats," while "to show that something terrible is agitating the composer's fevered brain, an apoplectic stroke on the big drum shakes into shivers the efforts of the whole orchestra as well as the auditory nerves of the assembled audience."

His two great musical works at this period were his symphony "Harold in Italy," begun as a viola concerto for Paganini; and the *Requiem* or *Messe des Morts* (his favorite composition), composed for those who perished in the July days, but performed for those who were slain in the capture of Constantine.

But he dreamed of greater conquests: he burned to

write an opera, and chose for his subject certain episodes in the romantic life of Benvenuto Cellini, the great Italian silversmith, "artist and brigand, with musket on shoulder and guitar on his back."

It was performed on the tenth of September, 1838. The overture had a tremendous ovation, but all the rest was received with hisses, groans, cat-calls, and every species of insult, — "condemned to the flames before it was heard," said a writer in *L'Artiste*. It was played twice more with even less receipts.

Four further attempts were made the next year to give it, but it was shelved until, thirteen years later, Franz Liszt, who had been present and recognized its latent greatness, brought it out at Weimar.

The failure of an opera was the most cruel blow that could have befallen him. The memory of it followed him all his life, and obscured the glory that he received abroad.

Berlioz, suffering with bronchitis, and grieved at the "brilliant failure" of his first opera, was obliged to raise some money to pay the debts incurred. He therefore gave two concerts. The first scarcely covered expenses.

The second, which occurred on the sixteenth of December, was the turning-point of his career. Paganini the famous violinist, "the infernal virtuoso," was present, and heard "Harold in Italy" for the first time. He forced his way to Berlioz, surrounded by congratulating friends, knelt before him and kissed his hand.

The next day he wrote him a note in Italian, hailing him as the heir and successor of Beethoven, and begging him to accept twenty thousand francs in order that he might live for music.

Berlioz replied, saying that the encouragement of such a genius touched him a thousand times more than the royal generosity of his gift. The letters were published. Berlioz dedicated to him his new "Romeo and Juliet" symphony, written in seven months while he "swam vigorously over that mighty sea of poetry, kissed by the wanton breeze of fancy, under the warm rays of that sun of love whereby Shakspeare was illuminated, and feeling able to reach the marvellous isle where the temple of pure art rises aloft."

The beauty of Paganini's gift is somewhat lessened by the supposition that it was only a clever advertising dodge suggested by a wily journalist who foresaw that Paganini's concerts were likely to fail unless some great stroke to attract public attention were made. Paganini was famous for his stinginess.

This year Berlioz was granted the Cross of the Legion of Honor, and fragments of his "dramatic symphony" — was it inspired by his *Juliet*? — made a great success. He was indeed recognized as a genius by his native land, and in 1840 he was commissioned to write his "*Symphonie funèbre et triomphale*" in honor of those much-mourned victims of the July days. The next year he wrote an orchestral arrangement of Weber's "Invitation to the Dance," — Glinka also performed the same service, — and while engaged in preparing the "*Freischütz*" in its correct form for the Opéra, was greatly rejoiced at the news of his works succeeding abroad: "*Les Francs-Juges*" at Hamburg, the "*Requiem*" at St. Petersburg.

Berlioz had the "gentle art of making enemies." And while he was generally misunderstood and misrepresented, even while he held a sufficiently prominent place in the public eye, as is shown by the multitude of

caricatures which stud the French journals throughout his life, he was exasperated and tormented beyond endurance by domestic unhappiness.

His wife, who was considerably older than he, had lost her charm, though she had heroic characteristics. She was a failure in public. She proved at home to be a termagant, a Xantippe. She was too fond of the bottle, and her jealousy, only too well founded, was constantly goading her to make "scenes." Legouvé, in his *Recollections*, says that according as the Smithson thermometer went up, the Berlioz thermometer went down, and when her love, which at first had been simply cool and complaisant, grew into the passionate jealousy of a tiger, he was already tired of the marriage noose, and not only dreamed but plotted a separation. Yet he could write that "she was the harp that found its place in all my concerts, my joys, my sorrows; and many of its strings, alas! I broke." There is nothing to be said in extenuation of his treatment of her. It was cruel. But from the time that he deserted her, his punishment began; one of the saddest stories in the history of art.

He found himself at a stand-still in France. Abroad there were tempting vistas.

In September, 1842, he quietly sent off his luggage and music, and slipped away to Belgium, leaving his wife a note of farewell.

Henceforth he became a nomad, and while ever yearning for Paris and a genuine Parisian success, he had to content himself with the bitter-sweet of increasing triumphs abroad.

His first grand tour lasted about half a year, and included only Germany. At Leipzig he and Mendelssohn exchanged batons.

"Only squaws and pale-faces love decorated arms," wrote Berlioz. "Be my brother, and when the Great Spirit shall send us to hunt in the land of souls, let our warriors hang our friendly *tomawack* on the gate of the lodge." He had evidently been reading Cooper.

The "tomahawk" presented by Mendelssohn is preserved at the Conservatoire in Paris.

Followed journeys to Austria, Bohemia, and Hungary, everywhere meeting with ovations. At Prague he performed for the first time his "Hungarian March" on the famous theme of Rakoczy, beginning pianissimo, contrary to all traditions, and rising to a climax which carried enthusiasm to its height.

During this journey he began his great work, "The Damnation of Faust." Snatches of it were composed at Budapest, at Prague, at Breslau; but the larger part on his return to Paris, almost like an improvisation, now in a café (after the manner of Schubert), now while walking in the garden of the Tuileries.

When at last it was finished, being unable to obtain the hall of the Conservatoire, he hired the Opéra Comique for sixteen thousand francs, engaged soloists, chorus and orchestra, and gave the work on the sixth of December, 1846.

The Parisian public stayed away!

The three or four hundred enthusiastic partisans who made the echoes ring through the empty theatre could not awaken the "*beau public*," nor even the second performance helped matters or brought returns for the terrific expenses. Moreover, the hostile critics poured out all their venom.

Thus originality and innovation must always fight its way. And generally only after the innovator is dead is his greatness realized.

For Berlioz the recognition of his genius abroad could not atone for its lack at home. Even Chopin, who had once been his friend, thought that such music justified any man in breaking all acquaintance with him.

He once took up a pen, bent back the point, and let it fly, spattering the paper. "That is the way Berlioz composes," said he. "The result is as chance wills it."

How different from the judgment of Glinka, who wrote home to Russia saying (and posterity upholds him in it), —

"In the domain of fancy no one has such colossal inventions, and his combinations have besides all their other merits that of being absolutely novel. Breadth in the *ensemble*, abundance in details, close weaving of harmonies, powerful and hitherto unheard instrumentation, are the characteristics of Berlioz's music."

And it was apparently due to Glinka that "the first composer of his time" was invited to go to Russia.

He had to borrow money to enable him to get away. He reached Petersburg in February, 1847, and his first concert, carefully exploited by his partisans, brought him eighteen thousand francs profit. When he returned to Paris in June, there was talk of making him director of the Académie de Musique; but there being some hitch in the proceedings, he suddenly broke off all negotiations and accepted an offer to go to the Drury Lane Theatre in London as director of the Grand Opera on a ten years' engagement.

He expected great things of this opportunity, but it burst like a bubble. He found the affairs of the theatre in a wretched state, and had nothing else to do but to do what his fate kept him continually doing all his life, "organize concerts." During his eight months' stay in

England he had in this respect considerable success. He declared that he was received by the English as though he were "a national talent."

The French Revolution of 1848 in the mean time broke out, and Berlioz felt that he was an exile: "The arts are dead in France now," he wrote, "and music in particular begins to putrefy; may it be buried speedily."

Nevertheless, the Republic continued him in his one conceded public position as librarian at the Conservatory, at a salary of about fourteen hundred francs.

Soon after his return to Paris his father died, his deepest regret being that he had never heard any of the great works of his now illustrious son. During this year he was engaged in composing his fascinating memoirs, which must be read with great caution, for in them his imagination flames as well as in his music.

Then about the beginning of 1850 he founded a Philharmonic Society which gave a concert a month. At its first one he gave a portion of his "Faust." It was beginning to make its way. The year before, some of the scenes had been sung and played at the Conservatory, and Meyerbeer and others had a gold medal struck in memory of its first performance.

In November, Berlioz had his society perform a chorus of shepherds, a pastoral which he claimed had been written by a certain Pierre Ducr  attached to the Sainte Chapelle in 1679, and discovered by him in an old armory.

It was a charming piece of mystification, for when many of Berlioz's enemies had praised it to the skies, and made invidious comparisons, it leaked out that Berlioz himself was the composer of it! He afterwards added a little fugued overture, a piece for tenor voice, "The

Repose of the Holy Family," and other numbers, completing "The Flight into Egypt."

In March of the next year Berlioz was in London again, directing the concerts of the "New Philharmonic Society," where he received a triumphal ovation. Yet his "*Benvenuto*" failed there as completely as it succeeded the same year at Weimar under the direction of Liszt.

In March, 1854, Berlioz's wife, who had been long dying of paralysis, passed away. Her husband had often seen her, and shown her proofs of his continual affection. Her death threw him into despair, made all the more poignant by the thought of his failings toward her. He shortly after married the dissolute woman who had brought misery into his home life. Strangely enough, however, he thus obtained a mother-in-law who proved to be a real guardian angel to him. Her only fault was that she spoke Spanish, and Berlioz had no gift for languages.

Berlioz presented himself again and again as a candidate for the Institute. But the Immortals refused to recognize him. Yet how many crosses and medals he possessed attesting his membership in foreign societies! Not until 1856 was he elected to that Institute which, says Jullien, "had so long refused him as a pupil, condemned him as a composer, rejected him as a candidate."

In 1851 Prince Napoleon proposed to Berlioz to give a series of concerts at the Palais d'Industrie during the Exhibition. He refused to run that risk, but on the fifteenth of November, in the presence of the emperor and empress, he had a gigantic concert with twelve hundred musicians; it included the benediction of the poniards from "*Les Huguenots*" (eighty voices singing instead of

four as usual), the prayer from Rossini's "Moses" accompanied by eighty harps, Mozart's *Ave Verum*, and his own "March of the Banners."

The next day the concert was repeated, and brought receipts of seventy-five thousand francs and a series of caricatures, some of which were very amusing. Berlioz was fond of brass instruments, and one caricature (of later date) represented cattle being killed at the abattoir by means of his scores; and another placed a cannon in the midst of his orchestra. Still another portrayed the Greeks running from the walls of Troy at the sound of Berlioz's brass.

The year of Berlioz's election to the Institute, he published a new edition of his great "Treatise on Instrumentation" with an additional chapter on the art of conducting. It had been published first in 1844. The next year he began to suffer from neuralgia of the bowels, the agony lasting days at a time, and preventing him from any work. At the same time his only son Louis, whom he devotedly loved, quitted the navy to enter the merchant marine, and Berlioz, in order to raise money for the required examination, published selections from his memoirs.

The last ten years of Berlioz's life were sad and pathetic.

Wagner came to Paris and gave three concerts in 1859 which introduced the "Music of the Future" to France. Berlioz wrote his famous musical "*Credo*" which was a declaration of war. Probably jealousy was at the bottom of it, for those outside the arena recognized that the two redoubtable musicians were "brother enemies" for whose creation the last works of Beethoven were responsible.

Berlioz worked with all his might to prejudice the public against "*Tannhäuser*," and in fact it fell flat. The public at that time were hungry for classic masterpieces, and the revival of Gluck's works under Berlioz's direction met with astonishing success, which made him think that the music of the future was routed forever.

In 1862 Berlioz's second wife died suddenly, and by a strange irony of fate, the two women who had caused each other such cruel tortures, were buried in one common grave. Berlioz did not marry again; but when the "Star of the Mountain," his first love, was already a staid grandmother, a white-haired woman of seventy, he saw her again, and with all the ardor of a boy, offered himself to her and almost persecuted her with his importunities.

Was there ever such a strange volcanic creature? All this time his musical productiveness continued. He composed both words and music to his comic opera, "*Béatrice et Bénédict*" (taken from "Much Ado About Nothing," and planned as early as 1833), and his superb works "The Capture of Troy," and "The Trojans at Carthage," but an evil fate pursued him. It was not until ten years after he was dead that any one of his operas was performed in Paris exactly as he had demanded that it should be; the last has been called "a final and magnificent incarnation of the lyric tragedy illustrated by Gluck."

For it must be remembered that in spite of Berlioz's passion for descriptive or program music, he was wholly controlled by the classic masters: Gluck and Spontini, Beethoven and Weber. It was the contradiction of his nature.

The comparative failure of his "*Troyens*" (it was

given twenty-one times in a garbled version with diminishing receipts, amounting to only a little over fifty thousand francs) was made all the more trying by his failing health. Nevertheless, it enabled him to resign his position of critic, which had been a continual punishment for twenty years: he compared it to a cannon-ball perpetually chained to his leg. It also brought him the Cross of the Legion of Honor.

None the less bitter was it for him to hear of the growing vogue of the Wagner music; already their names began to be coupled: Wagner and Berlioz. If it could only have been Berlioz and Wagner! It seemed to him as though another were reaping what he had sowed. Nor could he forgive his old friend Liszt for his Wagner enthusiasm.

Abroad, his fame was growing more and more assured. From all parts of Europe, even from America, came the tidings of successful performances of his works. In December, 1866, he went to Vienna, where his popularity was immense, and heard his "Faust" complete for the first time for twelve years. The ladies wore jewelry ornamented with his portrait. He was offered the position of kapellmeister at the Imperial chapel, but though he called the French Hottentots and Chinese, he could not forswear Paris. He was in a terrible nervous state, and the least mistake in time or tune threw him into a passion. He flung his baton at the head of the man who played the English horn, and when it was handed back to him, he cried, "Oh, I am sick unto death."

On his return to Paris he learned of the death of his son at Havana, of yellow fever. On hearing the news he flung himself on the ground, and cried: "It was for thee to live, for me to die." The young captain had been the

cause of great grief and anxiety to his father, owing to his irregular habits, but he loved him and mourned for him as only a Berlioz could. More than ever his wonderful face came to remind his friends of a wounded eagle.

One more great honor came to him. Rubinstein had just resigned from the management of the conservatory at St. Petersburg, and the Grand Duchess Helena of Russia urged Berlioz to take the direction of six grand concerts the following winter. His honorarium would be four thousand rubles and all expenses and lodgings in the Imperial Palace.

At the same time William Steinway of New York offered him a hundred thousand francs to come to America, and insisted that he should sit for a colossal bust to ornament a new hall that he was building.

Berlioz reached Petersburg in November, 1867. He gave the six great concerts, and directed one at Moscow, where he had an orchestra of 500 musicians and an audience of 10,600 people. One of his dreams at last realized! No, not realized, for such monster concerts must be always a disappointment. The reality falls below the ideal.

On his return from Russia, fearfully exhausted by his labors and the ovations given him, and above all by the climate, he went to Monaco. One March day, clambering over the rocks, he fell headlong, and lay for some time insensible.

Nevertheless, he was at last enabled to reach Paris. He even recovered sufficiently to go to his old home at Grenoble, where he had accepted the presidency of a great meeting of choral societies. But he was a doomed man.

He lingered still six months. One autumn day a

friend met him on the quai, not far from the Institute; he pressed his hand and disappeared in the mist, whispering these words: —

“Oh, the life of man! when it is happy, a shadow is sufficient to darken it; when unhappy, a damp sponge wipes out the image of it, and all is forgotten.”

During his last days his favorite amusement was to feed the birds that flocked around his window; he also liked to visit and receive visits from his friends, occasionally to discuss his works or Shakspeare with sudden energy.

But his end was that of a volcano growing extinct.

One of his last efforts was to vote for an old benefactor for the Institute. At last paralysis completely overcame him. He died on Monday, March 8, 1869.

Then began the reaction. When too late, France recognized him as her greatest composer. His music became popular. Statues were erected to him. Indeed, the stones which had been cast at him came, as he predicted, to build the pedestal of his monument!



HOMAGE TO BERLIOZ.
J. Fantin-Latour.

FRANZ LISZT.

(1811-1886.)

GOETHE, in a mysterious poem which might almost have suggested to Wagner the idea of "Parsifal," speaks of a genius of whose birth a spirit prophesied, and over whose baptismal feast a star stood blazing in the western sky.¹

Such a genius was Franz Liszt. The star was the comet of 1811, which, on the night of October 21-22, seemed to the superstitious peasants to hover, bright and portentous, over the dwelling of Adam Liszt in the lonely little town of Raiding in far-off Hungary.

On that night Franz Liszt was born.

The name of Liszt is found in the old Hungarian nobility, but there are no documents to prove that Franz Liszt bore relationship to the Johann Liszt who in the sixteenth century was Bishop of Raab. Perhaps Franz Liszt's leaning to the churchly order is sufficient internal evidence of it.

Bishop Liszt's descendants were wealthy. Franz Liszt's known ancestry were poor. His great-grandfather was a subaltern officer of hussars. His grandfather, Adam, was

¹ Wie ihn ein Geist der Mutter früh vorhies,
Und wie ein Stern bei seiner Tauffeier
Sich glänzender am Abendhimmel wies.

— *Die Geheimnisse.*

steward to the Esterhazys, and the father of twenty-six children whom poverty scattered for the most part into unknown paths. Three made names for themselves.

The oldest son of this patriarch, also named Adam, followed in his father's footsteps, and in time became a steward to Prince Esterhazy.

He was passionately fond of music, and in his moments of leisure taught himself to play on many instruments. He was frequently at Eisenstadt, where the great Haydn took an interest in him. He was frequently called upon to play as a substitute or additional in the famous band. Here, too, he made the acquaintance of musical visitors from Vienna, among them Cherubini and Nepomuk Hummel, then at the height of his glory, and caught like a star by the rich Hungarian magnate, to glitter in his crown.

Few suspected what a bitter pain of ambition balked, lurked in the heart of that tall, gaunt, steadfast, defiant-looking young man who was so frequently seen in the gorgeously frescoed music-room of the Esterhazy palace.

His honesty and faithfulness brought a reward that was a punishment. When he was about thirty years old, he was promoted to the stewardship of the estate of Raiding, and thus separated from the musical pleasures of Eisenstadt.

He had a struggle with his inclinations, but accepted it, took to himself a wife, named Anna Lager, and set up his penates in the steward's residence, surrounded by the humble huts of the peasantry.

His wife was of German origin, and endowed with the characteristic German virtues; attractive in face and form, with calm, regular features, lighted by dark eyes; simple in heart and manner, true, honest, gentle, gracious, womanly; a model housewife!



FRANZ LISZT.
Painting by Ary Scheffer.

Franz, or Ferenz, was their only child ; a beautiful boy, rather tall and slender ; as he grew older, graceful, with delicate lineaments, mysterious blue eyes, and a mass of light blond hair framing his face like a picture.

His mother declared that he had none of the common failings of children, that he was always lively, cheerful, loving, and "obedient, very obedient."

Liszt long years afterward wrote : "With honor and tender love I thank my mother for her constant proofs of goodness and affection. In my youth I was called a good son. It was indeed no especial credit to me, for how could I help being a good son when I had such a faithful, self-sacrificing mother ? "

While his father was devoted to music, and employed abundant leisure at the clavier, the mother, taking advantage of his sensitive and excitable nature, fostered in his heart a genuine passion for religion.

These impressions struck the keynote of his life.

Again and again, amid all the turmoils and errors of his worldly career, came the intensest yearning for the calmness and repose of the Church ; and it was only a logical step that led him at last to take holy orders, and to pass from life not so much in the character of a crownless king as in that of a humble Franciscan friar.

All Liszt's early surroundings fostered his poetic impulses, — the quiet but picturesque landscape ; the horizon, bounded by wooded mountains ; the dim, mysterious forest stretching away ; the village church where, especially on grand holidays, the gorgeous ceremonials stirred his heart ; the dark, swarthy gypsies swarming in the outskirts of the village, and at evening practising their free, lawless dances, or singing their plaintive songs.

As a rule, genius for music shows itself earlier than any other. There was no exception in the case of Liszt. First he listened, next he tried to imitate. The clavier acted upon him like a loadstone. His father tried to put him off. It was useless. One day when he was six years old, he sang correctly a theme from a concerto by Ferdinand Ries, that he had only once heard. His father began to teach him according to the best of his ability.

Even then the boy had the ambition to be a man like Beethoven, whose portrait hung upon the wall. His progress amazed, but his zeal alarmed, his parents, who would rather have had him play with his comrades out of doors than spend so much time at the piano. At the same time, they could not help being amused to see the little fellow bending over to strike with his nose some note that was out of the reach of his diminutive hands. Such ingenuity he showed in conquering difficulties! He also tried to compose even before he could spell. It was like the newly-hatched swan swimming before it could walk.

This progress was interrupted by a strange sort of slow fever that came upon him. He grew so ill that his parents despaired of saving him. Indeed, the village carpenter, hearing the rumor that he was dead, began to make his coffin.

But he got well. And with fresh health came fresh impulse to music.

Three years thus passed, his general education not neglected. The village priest taught him reading, writing, and arithmetic; but he never learned to speak Hungarian, — that alien Asiatic tongue that has no kinship to the speech of Europe. But he must have

come later to know the meaning of those wonderful *nép*, or popular songs, whose odd, broken rhythms he so effectively wrought into his Hungarian rhapsodies.

Occasionally Adam Liszt took his son to Eisenstadt, where he began to be called "the artist."

A report of his powers reached a blind pianist, Baron von Braun, who was about to give a concert at Ödenburg. He wanted an additional attraction, and asked Adam Liszt to let Franz play.

When the time came, his teeth were chattering with fever; but his indomitable will carried him through. He was so successful that it was decided to let him give a concert on his own account. This also succeeded.

Then his father took him to Eisenstadt, and had him at the castle before the Prince. Encouraged by the praises showered on him, he arranged for a concert at Presburg. Many great Hungarian magnates lived in that vicinity. Prince Esterhazy himself had a palace in the Blumenthal suburb, which he put at Liszt's disposal, besides giving the boy a magnificently embroidered Hungarian costume.

The concert decided his future.

Such enthusiasm as only the warm-blooded Magyars could feel was evoked by his playing. The ladies smothered him with caresses. The men, learning that his father had no money, raised a subscription, six of the magnates pledging an annual sum of six hundred Austrian gulden — less than three hundred dollars — for six years for his musical education. This certainly, small though it was, induced Adam Liszt, against the counsels of his prudent wife, to cut loose from the Esterhazy sheep. His first choice of a master for his son was Hummel; but the avaricious artist, who had

become kapellmeister at Weimar, demanded a louis-d'or for each lesson.

At Vienna, Karl Czerny, seeing the boy's talent, gave him lessons during a year and a half, saying, "I wish no pay from the little Zizi." The boy rebelled at the dry technicalities upon which Czerny insisted. Could he not read and perform anything at sight? But his teacher knew the necessity of a solid foundation, and his father wisely upheld him in it, suggesting a slightly more elastic method of reaching the result.

Salieri was old, and weary of teaching; but he, too, could not resist the pleasure of instructing the marvellous boy.

It was not long before he was making a sensation in the musical circles of Vienna; that is to say, in the circle of the highest aristocracy. At last his father felt justified in bringing him out in concert. This took place on the first of December, 1822. The critics praised "the feeling, expression, shading," ability to read at sight, and genius for "free fantasy," shown by the "musical wonder-child," "the little Hercules," as they called him.

In April following he gave another concert, at which Beethoven was present. Liszt saw his leonine head and felt his fiery eyes on him; but it only inspired him to excel. When he was done, the great master came upon the platform and kissed him.

Among Beethoven's works is a piece containing thirty-three variations on a waltz by Diabelli. It was published with variations by fifty Viennese composers. Liszt also contributed, and his number is said to hold its own with the rest. That is not saying much, however; and the fact is chiefly interesting from the connection which it

makes between Liszt and Beethoven. Czerny, indeed, had no hesitation in comparing the boy to Beethoven as he was in his boyhood; or to Mozart, prototype of all musical prodigies.

From Vienna, Adam Liszt took his son to Paris, and tried to place him in the famous Conservatoire, under the surly but magnificent Cherubini. The family set forth, stopping at all the principal cities¹ on the way, and everywhere finding a welcome for "the new Mozart," and praise unlimited for all those qualities which the greatest virtuosos exhibit.

Prince Metternich had given Liszt a letter of recommendation to Cherubini; but neither this nor tears and supplications sufficed to move the crabbed old man from the rule that no foreigner could enter the Conservatoire. Yet he himself was a foreigner. Liszt, in his vivid description of the fateful interview, says the decision was a thunderbolt, and years afterward the wound still bled.

But not all was lost. Paer consented to teach the boy. Letters of introduction from their Austrian and Hungarian friends opened the doors to the most exclusive residences of Paris.

"The little Litz," as the French called him, became the idol of the *salons*. Yet he was still as fresh and unspoiled as when he played in the fields of Raiding. When the Duke of Orléans, carried away by his genius,

¹ In the hall of the Seven Electors at Budapest, on May Day, 1823, he played variations by Moscheles, and, as usual, improvised. In his appeal to the "High gracious nobility, the military, and the honorable public," he said:

"I am a Hungarian, and know no greater good fortune than to be able to dedicate the first fruits of my education and culture to my dear fatherland, as the first offering of my inmost attachment and gratitude before my departure for France and England."

offered him anything that his heart might desire, he asked simply for a little toy that his eye happened to fall upon.

Liszt's first public concert in Paris took place in the Italian Opera-house on the eighth of March, 1824. He was assisted by the orchestra of the Opéra; and more complimentary to his genius than the plaudits of the audience was the fact that the musicians were so carried away by his playing of a solo passage in the Hummel concerto (which he played by heart), that they forgot to come in at the proper place. A wag said:—

“Orpheus touched the beasts of the field and moved stones, but the little *Litz* so affected the orchestra that they became dumb!”

The French press was unanimous in its praise of the boy's perfection. They called him the eighth wonder of the world.

Even at this day Liszt's characteristic generosity and unselfishness were manifested. He was always giving, even at personal inconvenience.

One day, as he was passing along the street, a cross-sweeper begged a sou. Liszt had nothing smaller than a five-franc piece.

“Can you change it?”

“No.”

“Then go and get it changed, quick.”

Liszt took the boy's broom and stood there waiting, at first perfectly unconscious of the absurdity of the situation. The passers-by, some of whom recognized him, stared at him and laughed, but he did not care. He took good care of the broom until the boy returned with his change.

It must not be supposed that the sunny sky of this

Parisian success was absolutely free from clouds. Liszt's genius awakened jealousy. Calumnious reports were circulated about him; even threatening letters were written. So, with a feeling of relief, Adam Liszt seized a favorable opportunity to go to London.

He also made a strange and almost inexplicable change in his plans. He sent his wife back to Austria. He never saw her again. The boy's heart was almost broken by the separation, but his father was inexorable.

His first public concert in London took place on the twenty-first of June, 1824, and —; to describe Liszt's concerts, we need only use one formula, and as that will suffice for his whole career, we may spare ourselves its monotonous repetition.

London is naturally colder and more formal than Paris, but the marvellous boy won all hearts. It is said that one evening he played at a *soirée*, following a distinguished pianist, whose performance fell flat. Some of the ladies present tried to explain the greater success of Liszt by making invidious comparisons between the pieces.

Liszt had played the same piece!

Yes, the boy had the philosopher's stone of genius. He was able to transmute everything that he touched into gold. One of his admirers said that oftentimes after he had played a piece of little intrinsic worth with such fire and brilliance that it seemed great, the notes remaining on the rack were like a heap of dead ashes.

While Liszt was in England he finished the composition of an opera entitled "Don Sancho, or the Castle of Love," which, on his return to France, was given at the Opéra on the twenty-fifth of October, 1825.

It was received with great applause; yet significantly enough it was shelved after three performances. The

work itself perished when the Library of the Royal Opéra was burned, nearly fifty years later. Indeed, most of Liszt's youthful compositions disappeared. Only two were ever printed, — an allegro and some studies. Nothing is known of a "grand overture" for orchestra which he contributed to a concert in Manchester that same year; or a sonata of his own, which as a joke he palmed off as one of Beethoven's, thus deceiving the elect. The elect, alas, are ever being deceived!

After several more journeys Liszt returned to Paris and underwent a thorough course of counterpoint under Reicha, who was delighted at the ease with which he mastered its intricacies: six months sufficed for him to open and explore this realm of mysteries. Then followed a new season of journeying with his father, and for the third time he went to London. Only in London did he fail of fullest appreciation.

But a crisis had come to him. As he grew into young manhood, a morbid dislike for the world grew upon him, and a yearning for the life of the Church.

He begged his father to let him become a priest and renounce the world.

But his father, who had endured so many trials for his sake, sternly set his face against it. "Thy calling is music," he said. "Love God, be good and true, and so much the higher things wilt thou attain in thy art."

In 1860 Liszt wrote: —

"With tears and humble supplication I begged to be allowed to enter the seminary at Paris; there it was my hope to live the life of the saints, and perhaps even to die the death of the martyrs."

And he adds that though, alas, it was not at that time to be, yet in spite of all his errors and entanglements,

for which he felt the deepest contrition, the divine Light of the Cross was not withdrawn from him.

The truth of the matter is that Liszt was a man of emotions. No one like him spoke to the emotions. His whole career was emotional; all his disciples were emotional. His compositions, in which the intellectual musician hears nothing but incoherent ravings, are written in a language which the intellect cannot understand. It is therefore not an uncommon phenomenon to see pianists outgrowing their Liszt enthusiasms and to look back upon their "Lisztomania" as only a phase of development, of which they are not ashamed, but rather proud. In hearing and criticising the works of Liszt this must not be forgotten.

Amid this contest of will, when discords had arisen between father and son, the former was taken ill, and died in August, 1827, at Boulogne-sur-mer.

After he recovered from what to his sensitive nature was a terrible shock, he wrote his mother to join him; he sold his piano in order to pay certain small debts, and then hastened back to Paris, where he and his mother took a modest dwelling, the maintenance of their establishment falling on his shoulders. He was soon able to settle upon her a snug fortune of 100,000 francs which she enjoyed so long as she lived.

Among his pupils was the beautiful Caroline, Countess de Saint-Cricq, daughter of the Minister of the Interior.

Liszt fell in love with her. She was not slow to return it. Her mother saw the pretty romance unfolding like the petals of a flower, and was wise enough and true enough to approve.

But she died, and the Count de Saint-Cricq compelled his daughter to marry the man of his choice.

The bitter disappointment of this first love crushed, once more turned Liszt to the mysticism of the Church.

"A maiden," he wrote ten years later, "a maiden chaste and pure as the alabaster of holy vessels was the sacrifice which I tearfully offered to the God of the Christians. Renunciation of all things earthly was the heaven, the only word of that day."

He avoided all society, gave himself up to religious reading and meditation, and would have actually taken orders had not his mother persuaded his confessor to discountenance it.

The strain upon his nervous system, of this exalted state combined with the unhealthy life he had been leading, — sometimes going a whole day without food, and staying faintness by wine, — late hours, and all sorts of irregularities, at last brought on him a severe illness.

For a second time the report of his death was circulated. Paris papers printed obituaries of him, and his pictures, with the dates of his too short life, were displayed in the shop windows!

About this time a young Russian enthusiast from Riga, named Wilhelm von Lenz, came to Paris intending to take piano lessons of Kalkbrenner, then popular, but now forgotten. Chance brought him to Liszt.

"Yes, he is at home," said his mother, "a very unusual thing; my Franz is almost always at church, and will have scarcely anything more to do with music."

He found him smoking a Turkish pipe as he lay on a sofa surrounded by three pianos — "a thin, pale-looking young man, with infinitely attractive features."

He compared his smile to the flashing of a dagger in the sun. Lenz claims to have won Liszt's good graces by introducing to him the pianoforte works of Weber,

who at that time was all the rage in Riga. He claims to have been Liszt's first pupil, and in his little book on "the great pianoforte virtuosos of our day," calls him "the past, the present, and the future of the piano." He apotheosizes him.

The July Revolution of 1830 woke Liszt from his lethargy. "It was the cannon that cured him," his mother said. She had difficulty to keep him from rushing out and fighting at the barricades for the cause of humanity and popular freedom. He planned a "Revolutionary Symphony," after the model of Beethoven's "Battle of Vittoria," but it was not completed. Even the sketch of it is lost, but one or two of the motives are employed in other compositions.

With returning health and energy came a tremendous zeal for knowledge. His general education had been neglected. He now made it good. And what a throng of brilliant young minds formed the circle of artists, poets, philosophers, historians, novelists, composers, during that Romantic awakening!

The phases of Liszt's development are interesting. First he read Chateaubriand, and began to doubt. Then he was stirred by the teachings of Saint-Simon and his followers, but he never joined the mystic society which hoped to revolutionize the world. They helped to stimulate his genius, but the extremes to which the members of the sect were carried revolted him. Yet he would have been their ideal of an artist, standing as a priestly mediator between God and the world.

Still further stimulus came to him from the hearing of Paganini, who, while "at the zenith of his European celebrity," came to Paris in March, 1831. The demonic inspiration of his playing kindled Liszt to emulation.

Music he had neglected. He again took up his practice, and worked fiercely at it, sometimes exercising his fingers six hours a day. When again he emerged from his hiding, he had become the Paganini of the pianoforte — the King of Virtuosos.

Hitherto Beethoven had been Liszt's idol. He had been the first to play Beethoven's concertos in public, when the Parisian public found such music altogether too high for them. He was now to make the acquaintance of Berlioz and Chopin, both of whom had a powerful influence over him — an influence that was equally retro-active, in spite of the unlikeness of their characters and natures.

Berlioz, in his battle for a wider scope for the symphony, enlisted Liszt's sympathy and aid. A noble and unbroken friendship united them. Liszt transcribed for the piano several of the movements of Berlioz's "*Symphonie Fantastique*," and they were among the earliest of his published works.

Between Chopin and Liszt there was at first warm friendship; but "We are friends — we have been comrades," said Chopin, early in the forties. The cause of the breach in their friendship is very curious and interesting, but it lies in a chapter in Liszt's life over which we must draw a veil.

After Chopin was dead, Liszt wrote¹ a prose rhapsody on his genius and career, which is a classic, even if its biographical accuracy is far from being ideal. To read it is to penetrate into the mysteries of genius.

The turmoil of new ideas that found vent, especially in Paris, in the second quarter of this century, bore away many great minds, as a freshet in the spring overflows

¹ Weimar, 1849.

high banks and sweeps off bridges, houses, and barns. Into the wells of calm faith flowed turbid doubts ; over the walls of discretion dashed fierce passions ; across the green fields of conventionality ran riotous, extravagant theories. Never was such intellectual ferment known.

What wonder that a man like Liszt, all emotion, responded to the spirit of the times ?

From absolute scepticism he was indeed saved by the influence of the celebrated Abbé Lamennais, whose liberal and democratic ideas came into conflict with those of a conservative Church, but whose truly religious and truly cosmopolitan philosophy of the universe was highly stimulating.

Liszt visited him at his country-seat in Bretagne, and under the inspiration of his teachings composed his beautiful "*Pensées des Morts* ;" he called him his "paternal friend and instructor." For him Art was the divine medium between God and the world. "Art is for men what the creative power is for God." The Beautiful must be the immutable object of art, which, like knowledge, must be forever progressing toward loftier heights. There is one law for the True, the Good, and the Beautiful. They unite in the divine unity.

Such a theory is in the highest degree ideal. The danger lies, that under the plausible name of the Beautiful, one may follow a phantom light, a will-o'-the-wisp, that may lead one into the miasmatic swamps of Immorality.

Love is beautiful. But because it is beautiful, there oftentimes come crises when 'Love himself takes part against himself' to warn men off, —

"And Duty loved of Love

O this world's curse — beloved but hated," —

comes like Death betwixt two souls.

Liszt yielded to that Love that conflicted with Duty. His partisans, and oddly enough the women above all, have defended him in the irregularities which mar his life, affecting to judge him as though he were a king whose "divine right" placed him above morality.

Judged by the healthy common standards, he, like Berlioz, for many years lived a life of shocking immorality. The world treated him leniently, and the husband of the countess who bore him children declared that he acted like a gentleman in the difficult position in which he was placed by her guilty infatuation; still, we have no right to mince matters or defend genius for its aberrations.

In other respects his character shines bright as the sun. Generous to a degree unexampled in the history of art, self-sacrificing, heroic, his career simply bristles with beautiful, unselfish acts which it would take a volume adequately to describe.

When Liszt, after long silence, again appeared in public, it was found that a new era of piano-playing had come. No one could withstand the magic of it. It was said: —

"His soul is in his fingers, his soul is in his eyes:

This perfect artist seems inspired directly from the skies." ¹

Hosts of clever people have left descriptions in prose and verse of Liszt's playing. Nothing like it was ever known. The classic Cramer and others devoted to traditions might vainly try to sneer, or shoot impudent epigrams.² Wherever Liszt appeared, the people flocked to hear him.

¹ Son âme est dans ses doigts, son âme est dans ses yeux :

Cet artiste parfait semble inspiré des cieux.

² Cramer shook his head and said: "De mon temps on jouait fort bien ; aujourd'hui on joue bien fort."

It would take too long to describe all his journeys or mention all his concerts, even those that were given for philanthropic purposes. Much that is interesting may be found in his "Letters from a Bachelor in Music," which began in 1835, and tell of his doings in Switzerland and Italy. Adolf Pictet has devoted a whole book to a mountain tour taken by Liszt, the Countess d'Agoult, known as "Daniel Stern," "George Sand," and others, making a jolly, unconventional, sun-browned party, calling themselves "the Piffœls Family," emitting witticisms as an electrical machine emits sparks. At one of the hotels Liszt inscribed himself as a "*musicien-philosophe*, born on Parnassus on his way from Doubt to the Truth." George Sand also described their experiences in her "Travellers' Letters." The memory of these Swiss days Liszt preserved in his "Years of Swiss Pilgrimage."

While he was residing in Geneva, he heard that Sigismund Thalberg had gone to Paris and been hailed as "an epoch-making pianist." Liszt determined to meet his rival; but when he reached Paris, Thalberg had returned to Vienna. Liszt, however, gave two concerts, and Berlioz wrote a tremendous article in the *Gazette Musicale*, praising him to the skies, at the expense of the German, and predicting that "all things were to be expected from him as a composer." His article ended with the words: "He is the pianist of the future; to him be the honor." A new musical war broke out as in the time of Gluck. But where is Thalberg now, and who plays his trivialities?

The next year, in December (1836), Berlioz gave a great concert, and Liszt came once more from Switzerland to take part in it. Thalberg was present, and all

his adherents. When the young man with his "ivory profile" appeared on the stage, he was received in silence. All the greater was his triumph, because it was wrung from a hostile public. It was during this winter when he gave many concerts in Paris, that Heine wrote his famous description of his improvisation which he declared made him *see* what other people only heard.

But the war with Thalberg was not over. Liszt wrote a critical review of two of the German pianist's compositions, and handled them without gloves.

Of course it was ascribed to motives of jealousy.

Shortly after, Thalberg himself appeared on the scene, and abundant opportunity was given to hear and compare the two virtuosos.

Then Fétis, Berlioz's bitter enemy, replied, and at the end of his article, while acknowledging Liszt's prodigious talent and incomparable ability in conquering difficulties, declared that no new musical thought informed the marvel of his playing, giving it a creative and original character:—

"Thou art the offshoot of a school that is drawing to an end and has no further mission, but thou art not the man of a new school. Thalberg is the man. That is the whole difference between you."

A lady who heard the two pianists at a concert given by the Princess Belgiojoso, expressed the difference more wittily: "Thalberg," said she, "is the first pianist in the world."

"And Liszt?"

"Liszt! Liszt is the only one!"

The question as to Liszt's genius as a composer is another matter. His enthusiastic acolytes have been known to predict that after Schumann and Brahms were



A "SZEGÉNY LEGÉNY" IN A PUSZTA CZARDA LISTENING TO ONE OF LISZT'S RHAPSODIES.
Michael Munkaczy.



forgotten, Liszt would still live. His opponents, — and they are not few or to be despised, — while acknowledging his genius as an interpreter and transcriber of other people's ideas, declare that his music is like sounding brass, great noise covering the lack of great ideas.

Certainly no one ever equalled him in the beauty of his translations of opera or song to the keyboard of the piano. Schubert's lovely melodies live anew in his fascinating arrangements of them, a round hundred in all. And those wonderful Magyar songs which he wove into his nineteen Hungarian rhapsodies for both orchestra and piano, introduced a nation to the knowledge of the world. One hundred and thirty of his compositions derive their inspiration from the Magyar land.

Liszt was a most voluminous composer. Over twelve hundred compositions flowed from his pen. Of these, six hundred and forty-nine were original, though that number includes two hundred and sixty-four re-arranged for other instruments.

He was himself modest in regard to his own work. He declared that he had no intention of being an innovator and iconoclast.

"I have written," said he, "as my heart dictated. Whether my things will prove to have permanent value, I do not presume to predict; but they have been honorably intentioned."

His seventy songs with piano accompaniment, though Liszt himself called them abstruse and hard to criticise, are worthy of immortality.

Indeed, Liszt's career as a composer seems to suggest the thought that as the combinations of the notes in our scale are necessarily limited, and the more obvious and spontaneous melodies and chords have been long ago

exhausted during three hundred years of musical activity with thousands of composers drawing from the fountain, the "tone poet" of the future will be driven to avail himself of the treasures of the past, frankly confessing the source. Perhaps, however, the human ear will educate itself to find beauties in quarter tones and eighth tones, and thus inaugurate a new era of tone-colors and tone-pictures.

After a three-months' visit at Nohant, George Sand's country-place, — which he describes in a poetico-pastoral letter to Pictet, — Liszt started once more on his travels. It was toward the end of July, 1837, and he set his face toward Italy. He spent some time at the beautiful Villa Malzi, on the dreamy shores of Lake Como, where his reading of the "Divine Comedy" inspired his strange, poetic "Dante Fantasie," and, where on Christmas, 1837, his daughter Cosima was born, who afterwards became the wife successively of Hans von Bülow and Richard Wagner.

At Milan he gave several concerts when he played his own compositions mainly, and, by his improvisations, awoke the Italians to an unprecedented enthusiasm. Hitherto they had cared little for piano music. Liszt himself commented on the fact that since John Field had played in Italy, "no Hummel, no Moscheles, no Kalkbrenner, no Chopin, had appeared on that side of the Alps."

Liszt enjoyed the memorials of the past, and the sculpture and painting inspired him as nature had done in Switzerland.

Moreover, he met Rossini at Milan. Between the two sprang up a warm friendship which was not cooled by Rossini saying frankly, "You have the making of a

great composer, a great writer, a great philosopher — and yet you are doing nothing.”

Liszt repaid him by transcribing a dozen of Rossini's musical soirées.

In Rome, where he went the next year, he gave a concert at the Palazzo Poli, then occupied by Prince Galitsin, governor-general of Moscow. His audience consisted wholly of titled personages; and for the first time he had no one to assist him — an innovation never before attempted. Here also he composed his first¹ song.

To Liszt, Rome was the consummation of all Italy. Nature, the arts, religion, here found their richest manifestations; and when in 1839 he left Italy he was able to write that he was a different man, older, more mature, more perfect as an artist; for, said he, “I have been working enormously.”

The period of his development was complete. He had now to choose his career. And after much deliberation he decided against his inclinations, and became a virtuoso rather than a kapellmeister.

At the same time he found it necessary to separate from the Countess d'Agoult, the mother of his three children.

No wonder that it was said of him that “his nature consisted of uneven proportions of demon and angel.” And so long as he lived, silly women, dazzled by his genius and his personality, flew into the blaze of his attraction as moths singe their wings in the flame of a torch.

One time he was discovered in his house at Budapest,

¹ The exquisite *Angiolin dal biondo crin* — “Angel fair with golden hair.”

seated on a platform surrounded by pianos, and in full view of six or eight ladies trying to portray his clear-cut features and long gray hair. He was sound asleep, wearied with homage.

"You have found me," said he with the ready wit that never failed him, "in the attitude of St. Sebastian; but the arrows this time are paint-brushes."

At St. Petersburg ladies of the high nobility met him on the steps of his hotel, and crowned him with flowers. Four celebrated beauties of the court of the King of Prussia had their portraits painted representing them as Caryatides supporting his bust. Ladies begged and preserved as inestimable treasures the stumps of his cigars.

Was it strange that such unbounded worship turned the head of the "dear sublime," as Berlioz called him?

Between 1839 and 1847 Liszt gave concerts in all the countries of Europe. The blazing comet of Liszt's birth-night seemed to have become flesh and started wandering through the world.

Princely, Zeus-like in his generosity, he everywhere poured the golden rain that his wonder-working hands compelled, into the coffers of deserving charities. It was he who, at an expense of fifty thousand marks from his own means, caused the monument at Bonn, to Beethoven, to be finished and erected. This was but one of his manifold services to art.

The last concert that Liszt ever gave for his own benefit was in 1847. From that time forth he labored exclusively for others.

Early in the forties he engaged to direct a number of concerts at Weimar each year. Here, in 1849, he settled as conductor of the Court Theatre, and began an interesting battle in behalf of unrecognized composers. His

theory was, that all truth and genuine merit must conquer in the end, though the powers of misrepresentation and intrigue may delay them. His ideal was lofty: he could say, in this respect, that his life's highest aim was to uphold it.¹

Dingelstedt, whom Liszt caused to be appointed general intendant at Weimar, intrigued against him, and was successful in having the theatre exploited at the expense of the lyric drama. The "Orpheus of Weimar," as Victor Hugo called him, resigned his official position, and retired to semi-private life, drawing closer and closer to the Church, spending a large part of each year at Rome in constant intercourse with Pope Pius IX., who called him "my Palestrina," and with the great dignitaries, especially Cardinal Hohenlohe, at whose beautiful Villa d'Este he always found "peace, sweet hospitality, mild air, splendid landscape, delightful walks, good food, good wine, books, *musicalien*, pianos to be used *ad libitum*, and a delightful temperature."

In Rome itself he lived either at the Dominican Monastery at Monte Mario, or at San Francisca Romana, near the Forum. He took charge of the musical performances which the art-loving Pope and Cardinals arranged.

In 1858, at Budapest, he had become a "tertiary," or member of the third order of Franciscans: Francis of Assisi was his patron saint. Even before this he wrote to Richard Wagner:—

"Come back to the Faith: it gives such happiness; it is the only, the true, the eternal. However bitterly you may scorn this feeling, I cannot help recognizing in it the way of salvation. I cannot help yearning for it, and choosing it."

¹ "I had dreamed of a new art period for Weimar," he wrote in 1860, "like that of Karl August, in which Wagner and I should have been the leaders, as formerly Goethe and Schiller were; but unfavorable circumstances brought these dreams to naught."

In the last weeks of his life he scouted the idea that his appointment of abbé was due to external circumstances, but wholly to the requirements of his heart; the circle of his life completed itself in the yearnings for the rest which he could find only in the bosom of Mother Church.

Cardinal Hohenlohe, in 1865, invested him with the honorary title of abbé. In 1879 he submitted to the tonsure, and took upon himself the vows of the four minor orders. He was appointed honorary canon; but these church dignities did not make him a priest. He could not offer mass, and he was at liberty at any time to marry had he chosen so to do.

But Liszt's life was not confined to Rome or the Church. It was what he called a three-branched life, — *vie trifurquée*. Weimar was still a favorite resort, his residence being either on the Altenburg at the palace of the Russian Princess, Carolyne Sayn-Wittgenstein, whose devoted friendship to him has become historical, or (after 1869), at the beautiful Hofgärtnerei on the Ilm, which was redolent with memories of Goethe.

In 1870 the authorities of Hungary made him president of an academy of music which did not yet exist, and gave him a salary of four thousand gulden. Accordingly, each year saw him at Budapest.

The adoration of the Hungarians for their famous countryman amounted to frenzy.

At both Weimar and Budapest he was surrounded by pupils, but he refused all pecuniary compensation. A pupil was obliged to display distinguished talent to be admitted to his instruction. The published list of his pupils gives the names of 227 men and 183 women, — the list is not complete, — many of whom have won a

wide fame. His influence on the musical life of the present generation is inestimable; nor can we tell what Wagner would have done without his superb generosity, his wise tact, and his infinite patience.

Liszt was founder of the Weimar Sängerkunstfest, and was first conductor and president of the festivals of the Universal German Musical Union.

On the twenty-second of May, 1884, the Union celebrated at Weimar its twenty-third anniversary. The next day, at the Ducal Theatre, the Muse of Poetry and Music and the Nymph of the Ilm came upon the stage, and spoke a prologue written by Professor Adolf Stern, and then crowned Liszt's bust, while the tone-poet himself, "with his Jupiter head," so wonted to clouds of incense, smiled benignly. This ceremony was followed by Liszt's beautiful "Legend of St. Elizabeth."

The last time that Liszt ever directed publicly was at Jena, at the Singakademie, on the twenty-sixth of June, 1884. His last year was full of enjoyments. He made a triumphal journey through Europe. On the sixteenth of January, at a concert in Rome, on almost the fiftieth anniversary of his first appearance there, nothing but his works was performed. At the Palazzo Bacca, before a brilliant assemblage, he played for the last time in Rome. He chose his Thirteenth Rhapsody, and extended it to nearly double its length by a marvellous improvisation.

On the twenty-first of March he was in Paris, almost coinciding with the sixty-second anniversary of his first appearance there. Here his "*Granter Fest-Messe*," which he wrote Wagner "was rather *prayed* than composed," was given, and brought receipts of 42,000 francs.

He also went to England, after an absence of forty-

six years; and if there had been any remembrance of former coolness, it must have been entirely swallowed up in the fire of enthusiasm which blazed around him. Even the London cabbies, who had never heard him touch a piano, were so stirred by his personal magnetism, that they cheered him on the street.

The same experience he had in St. Petersburg. In May he was back. On the seventeenth of May he was welcomed home to Weimar with a serenade by the Liszt Union. On the thirtieth he played for the last time there. One piece was a study that he had not performed since he was a boy. Indeed, he had, as he expressed it, "a terrible memory." One one occasion Count Giza Zichy, a young Hungarian pianist, who, having but one arm, played as well as most men who have two, had composed a Hungarian fantasy. He played it over to Liszt. In the evening Liszt, having caught it in his memory, played it before a numerous audience. He was equally talented in reading the most labyrinthine scores at sight.

Early in June he went to Halle to consult with an oculist in regard to his eyes, which seemed to be failing him. An operation was suggested, but not performed. His wonderfully elastic health began to show signs of yielding. He apologized to friends for keeping his seat one time, saying, "They are putting on my boots for the long journey."

The twenty-fifth anniversary of the Musical Union celebrated Liszt's seventy-fifth year by giving two Liszt concerts at Sonderhausen. At the second his "Cristus" was performed. He was up every day at five o'clock in the morning.

On the seventh he returned to Weimar in a palace



LISZT.

car crowned with flowers. He was in the best of spirits, and played his favorite game of whist all the way. On the twenty-fifth he went to Jena, and heard a beautiful performance of Mendelssohn's "St. Paul." The next day he gave his last official "lesson" in the Hofgärtnererei. It included Schumann's novelette in D-major, a little gem dedicated to Liszt himself. On the first of July he left Weimar. He never saw the town again.

At Bayreuth he was present at the wedding of his granddaughter, Daniela von Bülow, to Dr. Thode, the author of a beautiful work on his favorite St. Francis d'Assisi.

On Sunday, July fourth, he went to Luxemburg to visit the famous Hungarian painter Munkacsy at Schloss Colpach. He had a slight cold, and there increased it. But once more he yielded to the request of friends, and played for the last time.

On his return to Bayreuth he was suffering from a bad cough. On the twenty-first he took to his bed, but in spite of all protests insisted on visiting the Wagners. On the twenty-third he attended the first "*Parsifal*" performance, and was the observed of all observers. On the following Saturday he played his last game of whist. Though warned by the doctors, he insisted on attending the performance of "*Tristan*." The exposure was fatal. The whole town was filled with grief to know of Liszt's serious illness. He died on Saturday, the thirty-first of July, 1886. Curiously enough, as August Göllerich pointed out, Wagner had written to him thirty years before :—

"Remember the thirty-first of July : adieu, Mein Franziskus! Thou indefatigable, farewell! Thou dear, good fortune that hast vanished. If only thou knewest what divine memories thou hast left behind thee!"

The inhabitants of Bayreuth erected in his memory a splendid chapel-form mausoleum, designed by Siegfried Wagner. The Duke of Weimar, Karl Alexander, founded a Liszt Stiftung. Maria Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, sister of the Cardinal, who so loved Liszt, endowed it with 70,000 marks for the aid of talented pianists and composers. It was dedicated on the twenty-second of October, 1887.

The residence in the Hofgärtnerei is now a museum, kept forever as Liszt left it. Here is the piano where he composed, his writing-table, and the tokens of honor which were heaped upon him, — countless stars, sixty-three medals and orders, golden laurel wreaths, batons, snuff-boxes, pipes, the sword presented by the Hungarians in honor of his re-instatement into the nobility, diplomas giving him the freedom of many cities, and a complete collection of his published works. Many of his manuscripts are still in the hands of friends. Pilgrims to this interesting Mecca of Art never fail to be amazed at the simplicity which surrounded this knight of artistic chivalry. He lived as he died, utterly oblivious of mercenary considerations, simple, whole-souled, ascetic.

RICHARD WAGNER.

(1813-1883.)

IN the year 1887 six hundred and forty-one performances of Wagner's operas were given in forty-four towns of Germany. In 1890 the number had swelled to nine hundred and sixty-seven. The Wagner Society founded in 1883 had, five years later, two hundred and forty-four branches, and six thousand members; in 1890 it had three hundred branches, and eight thousand members.

"Only a comet and no fixed star is Richard Wagner," wrote Flodoard Geyer twenty years ago. But how is "the great train" grown, which even then made the metaphor more brilliant in the eyes of the critic:—

"Charlatan."

"Fanatic of unmelodiousness."

"The Heliogabalus of Harmony."

"The Marat of music."

"The murderer of melody."

"The Musical Munchausen."

"The Vandal of Art."

Such were some of the opprobrious epithets which hot-tempered opponents applied to Richard Wagner, while they bent and twisted the malleable German tongue to evolve absurd and ridiculous names for his music:—

"An indistinguishable lyrico-epico-dramatic gelatine."

"A moral delirium tremens (*Katzenjammer*)."

"Epidemic Wagneropsy."

"Transcendental nebulosity."

"Circus comedy."

"Wild chaos of tones."

"A caricature of music."

"A chaos of combined chord effects."

"A spectacular demonstration."

"Dissonance music."

"Butchery in notes."

There is a whole volume — "a dictionary of incivilities" — containing hundreds of rude, sarcastic, slanderous expressions used by the critics and rivals of the master, to vent their scorn and hatred upon him.

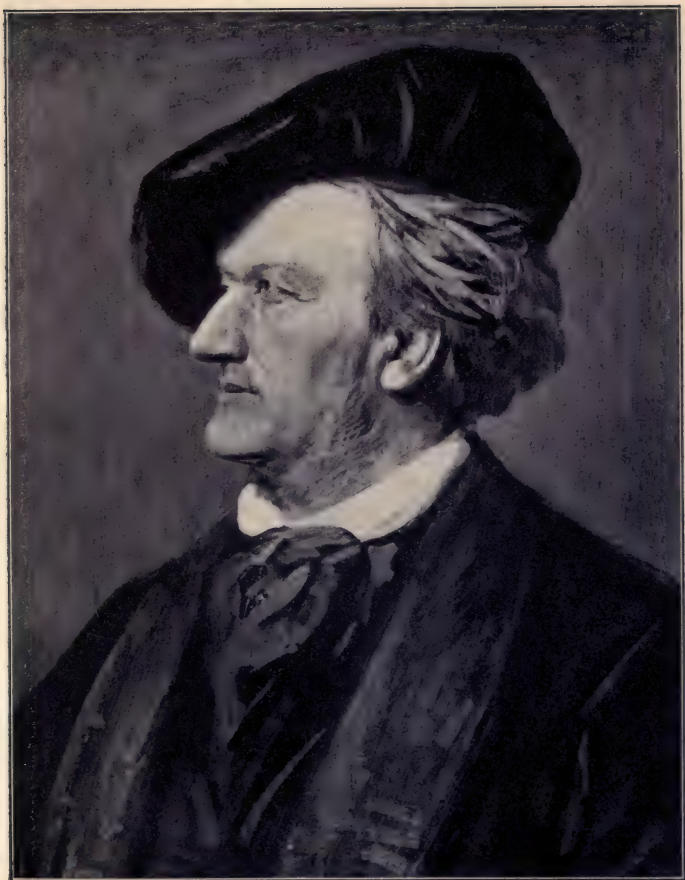
Reformers have ever had to run the gantlet of ridicule, jealousy, and misunderstanding. Human nature remains unchanged. The Greeks, who could not grasp the idea of an alien civilization, called those who spoke another tongue *barbaroi*, as though the foreigners were "silly sheep." So the Russians called the Germans "dumb."

And when a genius like Beethoven, or Berlioz, Liszt, or Wagner, comes speaking a new musical language, instantly the conservatives have him by the ears, and, secure in their own conceit, declare that the new is barbaric, and that music will perish with the old.

Thus does history teach modesty, but men are loath to learn.

Wilhelm Richard Wagner was born at Leipzig, in the "House of the Red and White Lion," on the twenty-second of May, 1813.

Significantly, prophetically, around his cradle was



RICHARD WAGNER.
Painting from life by F. von Lenbach.

fought the terrible "Battle of the Nations." One hundred and twenty thousand Germans and Frenchmen lay dead or dying in the fields around the city; and the epidemic fever which came stalking abroad like a pestilence to finish the grim work of carnage, left the boy fatherless six months to a day after his birth.

The family, as the name would show, was of popular and not aristocratic origin; humble, one might say, if any honest work were ever humble. The grandfather was a clerk in the customs service; the father, a clerk in the police service.

Friedrich Wagner had received a good education and could speak French, so that Marshal Davoust had employed him in the reorganization of the police. He had a passion for the stage, and often played in private theatricals. This talent he handed down to his daughter Rosalie, who won fame as a tragedienne; to his oldest son, Albert, an actor and singer, and in turn the father of two daughters, both of whom appeared on the lyric stage.

The widow Wagner, after two years' struggle with penury on the small pension granted her, married one of her former husband's friends, Ludwig Geyer, a member of the Royal Company of Comedians at Dresden, where she went to live with her seven children.

Geyer was a painter, as well as an actor and playwright. He proposed to make a painter of his step-son, but Wagner confesses having no talent for drawing. Geyer died before any definite plans could be made. On the day before his death, he asked the boy, then about seven years old, to play over two small pieces which he had learned from "*Der Freischütz*."

Wagner remembered hearing him say in a feeble voice to his mother, "What if he has a gift for music?"

"Early the next morning, after he was dead," continues Wagner in an autobiographical sketch, "our mother came into the nursery and said something to each one of us children; to me she said, 'He hoped that something worth while might be made of thee.' And I remember that I long imagined that something would be made of me."

Two years later a place was secured for him in the School of the Cross (*Kreuzschule*), where he seems to have been under no sort of discipline. Both at school and at home he was left to his own devices. "I grew up," he said, "unrestrained by authority, and with no other guides than life, art, and myself."

He got a smattering of Greek, Latin, mythology, and ancient history. Perhaps more than a smattering of Greek, for even while he was in the third form, he translated twelve books of the *Odyssey* into verse. He was considered apt at literary studies, and when a school-mate died, and a prize was offered for the best poem on the occasion, he won it. The verses, shorn of some of their bombastic bathos, were printed. He dreamed of being a poet, and composed several tragedies in the Greek spirit. He began to study English so as to read Shakspeare in the original, but after he had translated *Romeo's* monologue, he dropped it.

He projected a great Shaksperian tragedy — a stupendous compound of "Hamlet" and "King Lear." "The plan was on the most colossal scale," he wrote. Forty-two persons were destroyed one after the other, before the end; and in order to have any one on the stage, he was obliged to resuscitate the majority, and bring them in as ghosts.

In these Dresden days, music was of secondary con-

sideration. His Latin tutor gave him a few piano lessons, but his ambition to play the overture to "*Der Freischütz*" so outstripped his willingness to acquire a proper fingering, that his teacher predicted he would come to nothing. Strange! the two great masters of the orchestra — Berlioz and Wagner — both found no use for the piano. Wagner attributed his detestation of "runs" in music to his inability to play a passage clearly.

Weber himself was then living in Dresden, engaged in his battle for German art against Italian music. He probably knew "the charming and intelligent Madame Geyer, whose pleasant manners and lively character had a special charm for artists." Certainly he frequently passed the house, and the young Richard always rushed to the window to see him.

Though he was only thirteen when Weber died, he declared that from that master he received his first musical impressions: "His melodies," says he, "roused me to enthusiasm; his character and nature had a perfect fascination for me; his death in a foreign land filled my childish heart with grief."

In 1827 Madame Wagner-Geyer, with her younger children, returned to Leipzig, where her daughter Rosalie had an engagement at the "Stadttheater." Richard was here put into the Nicholas College, but in a lower class, and the disappointment so embittered him that he let everything go except the ideal of his portentous drama. "I was idle and disorderly," he says, "but my great tragedy held its place in my heart."

This was the year of Beethoven's death, and Wagner for the first time heard one of his symphonies. The impression it made upon him was revolutionary. "One evening," says the hero of his imaginary "Pilgrimage to

Beethoven," "I heard a symphony of his ; I thereupon fell ill of a fever, and when I had recovered — I was a musician."

Fiction that is history !

Not long after, he heard Goethe's "Egmont" with Beethoven's incidental music. Forsooth, his own great drama must have an accompaniment of music !

One cannot make Egyptian bricks without straw. So he borrowed a method of thorough-bass, and plunged into its mysteries, hoping in a week's time to be fitted to compose. It was not such easy swimming as he had expected, but its very difficulties stimulated him, and he then and there decided on his profession.

Meantime, his neglected studies were calling for vengeance. His family discovered his tragedy, and he was brought down once more into the plane of real life. Whatever music he might make must be made secretly, and thus surreptitiously he composed a sonata, a quartet, and an aria.

His family, to whom he at last confessed these secret amusements, looked upon them as a passing fancy, but they allowed him to study harmony under Gottfried Müller, a first-class organist and musician.

Wagner had got hold of Hoffmann's "Fantastic Tales," and was given over to mysticism and day-dreams. "Thirds," "fifths," and other chords seemed to him to take incarnate forms with which he conversed. The practical Müller could make nothing out of such a young visionary. Many prophets begin as visionaries. He shook his head over him. He was the type of the anti-Wagnerites to the present day.

Wagner, undisturbed by fell predictions, by the reproaches of his anxious relatives, set to work to write

overtures. He carried one to Dorn, conductor of the Royal Theatre, where his sister was playing a leading part. It was accepted and played. A vivacious drummer insisted on beating a fierce fortissimo every four bars. It first annoyed, then disgusted, then amused the audience. This merriment at his expense, said Wagner, wounded him deeply. Yet the first performance of a work by him was very impressive — upon himself.

This overture — the climax of his absurdities, as he calls it — was written out in three different colored inks — the strings in red, the wood-wind in green, and the brass in black.

Curiously enough a somewhat similar scheme has been recently adopted in an edition of Bach's fugues.

Came the July Revolution of 1830. The fever in the air, one need not doubt, set the youthful Wagner's blood boiling. He became a fiery republican. He could think and talk of nothing but politics, he even began an overture which dealt with a political theme.

This same year he entered the University of Leipzig; but instead of making the most of his opportunities, he at first, as he confesses, "gave himself up to all the excesses of student life, but with such recklessness and zeal that they soon disgusted him."

He had chosen the faculty of philosophy and æsthetics with a view to their aid in his chosen profession. When he came to his senses and saw that he must begin anew, he had the wisdom to put himself in the hands of a really capable professor. This was Theodor Weinlig, cantor of the St. Thomas School.

Weinlig inspired him, and, as it were, unconsciously led him into right paths and gave him a thorough training in the essentials of his art.

In less than six months Weinlig told him that he had arrived at technical independence. "You will probably never wish to write a fugue, but the fact that you can write one will make all composition easy to you."

Under Weinlig's instruction he wrote an overture which was played at one of the Gewandhaus concerts "with encouraging applause." Beethoven was his model. He also found help in Mozart's example, and under the joint influence of their "clearness and strength," composed a symphony which was performed on January 8, 1833, at a Gewandhaus concert. Fifty years later this "superannuated production of boyhood," as he called it, supposed to have been lost, was discovered in an old valise at Dresden, and performed in different parts of the world. It was given by the professors and scholars of the San Marcello Lyceum at Venice on Christmas Day, 1882, in honor of Cosima Wagner's birthday. Wagner declared that it had many singular errors. Mendelssohn evidently felt the same, for he let it not only lie idle but disappear.

At this time Heinrich Dorn, who afterwards became a thorn in the flesh to Wagner — one of his bitterest foes — declared that there probably never lived a young composer who was more familiar with the works of Beethoven. Yet later it was a common attack upon him to assert that he was a musical ignoramus, "a literary, poetical, and musical humbug," "ignorant *par excellence*," "an impotent quack."

In 1832 Wagner made his first visit to Vienna, but the city of Mozart and Beethoven was given over to "Zampa," and Strauss pot-pourris of "Zampa," which were his pet detestation.

On his return he spent some time in Prague, where he

made the acquaintance of Dionys Weber, the director of the famous Conservatory, who had his symphony and other of his compositions played at the Conservatory concerts.

Wagner then began a tremendously tragic opera entitled "The Wedding," which, because of his sister's disapproval, he destroyed root and branch.

Albert Wagner was settled at Würzburg as manager of the theatre there. Richard spent the year 1833 with him, and got much good from his knowledge of acting and singing. He there composed the libretto and music to an opera entitled "The Fairies." Beethoven and Weber were his models, but at that time the Germans "were crowded from their own stage by successful Frenchmen and Italians." Pretty promises were made, yet Wagner could not get "The Fairies" mounted.

The next year he heard Madame Schröder-Devrient in Bellini's "Romeo and Juliet." The fact that music which seemed to him so "unutterably insignificant" met with such success, led him to study the causes of it. Material beauty, passion, fire, vivacity, melody, beckoned to him. Germany suddenly dwindled into insignificance compared with a whole world. Beethoven seemed to have reached human limits, beyond which no one could go.

At Töplitz, in Bohemia, he set himself to compose an opera that should exhibit the sensuous elements of the French and Italian school.

Thus arose the "*Liebesverbot*" ("Forbidden Love"), the libretto imitated from "Measure for Measure."

Full of the fresh life of his one and twenty years, keyed up to the tense spirit of the time, he put away seriousness as puritanical hypocrisy, and breathed into it the free license of "young Europe."

He had accepted the position as director of music at the Magdeburg theatre, and there in the spring of 1836 he had it performed after only ten days' study. As it was Holy Week, the censor obliged him to take a new title: "The Novice of Palermo." Thus to mount an opera is like launching a ship whose timbers are glued and not riveted. It is sure to go to pieces.

At the first performance, a good audience was present to applaud what they found to applaud. At the second performance, which brought the season to a close, there were only three in the audience. Just before the curtain rose, the prima donna's husband attacked the second tenor and his wife, and pounded them so ferociously that they could not sing. So the performance had to be stopped before it began, and the Polish Jew, who was probably the only one of the three who had paid for admission, having received back his money, went home and took off his gala-day costume!

Wagner in his zeal had loaded himself with debts, and, in the hope of extinguishing them, tried to induce Ringelhardt at Leipzig to bring out the new opera; indeed, said he, there would be a fine chance for his daughter to make her appearance in a very sympathetic part! The director was more canny than the Magdeburg censor: he was not to be caught by putting the salt of flattery on his feathers!

So Wagner took it to Berlin, with like result. But here he saw Spontini conducting "Fernando Cortez," and he learned a lesson in regard to stage effects that he did not forget. He left Berlin in most wretched financial circumstances, and clutched at a straw when he accepted the position of musical director at a theatre in Königsberg in Prussia, whither his betrothed, Minna

Planer, had gone from Magdeburg, as "leading lady." Her he married in November, 1836. "I was in love," he afterwards wrote, "and I persisted in getting married, thus involving myself and another in unhappiness."

Dorn had gone to Riga as cantor and director of religious music. Through him Wagner, his wife, and his sister-in-law obtained places at the theatre; but cares, debts, and all sorts of annoyances, followed them.

Bulwer's novel, "Rienzi," which he read at Dresden, inspired him to attempt a grand opera with "The Last of the Romans" as its hero. His ambition designed it for the grand opera in Paris. Hueffer relates that he wrote to Scribe proposing to him to translate the libretto, and secure its acceptance. It was another libretto that Wagner offered Scribe while he was at Königsberg, but the generous proposal met with no response!

His Riga contract having expired, he set sail for London and Paris, with his wife, his big Newfoundland dog, and the two completed acts of "Rienzi."

The voyage was long, boisterous, and terribly fatiguing, abounding in mishaps. Three times they were caught in violent storms, and once had to put into a Norwegian port. The sailors told him the story of "The Flying Dutchman." *Senta* was a Norwegian maiden. True men extract their costliest triumphs from their severest hardships. The howling of the storm is heard in the music of the opera born of this voyage. Such works are written in life-blood, and are immortal.

In London, Wagner cared only for the city, its public buildings, and did not enter a theatre. After a week's rest, he went to Boulogne, where he made Meyerbeer's

acquaintance and showed him his "Rienzi." Meyerbeer gave him letters of introduction to famous theatrical managers and publishers. Heine has left on record a curious remark: "Do you know," said he, "what puts me on my guard against this young man is that Meyerbeer recommends him!"

"Celebrity," remarks Wagner, in his autobiography, "is everything in Paris; at once the fortune and the destruction of the artist."

If by celebrity Wagner meant pecuniary success, he stood in no danger of being ruined. Anténor Jolly, director of the Théâtre de la Renaissance, influenced by Meyerbeer's representation, indeed went so far as to accept the "*Liebesverbot*," and the French translation was admirably adapted to the music; but when every thing promised well, the theatre suddenly went into bankruptcy.

He had wasted his labor, and overdrawn his account in the bank of hope.

He was also disappointed about having his overture to "Faust" played. It was rehearsed, but the musicians called it a long enigma, and refused to touch it. Another, entitled "Polonia," he offered for a concert, arranged by a Polish princess. This overture was lost, but turned up years afterwards, and came into Wagner's hands in 1881. He had it performed in Palermo in honor of his wife's birthday.

He expected to mount by one bound into the temple of fame. He found confronting him on every side the thorny hedge of poverty, the misleading lights of intrigue, the fallacies of false friends.

He was, as he expressed it, in a state of inward revolt against the artistic life of Paris. Yet he had

many pleasant experiences of friendship. Berlioz, "in spite of his repellant nature," attracted him most among the musicians whom he knew. Berlioz on his side found Wagner "superb in his ardor and warmth of heart," and confessed that even his violences transported him. Liszt was then to him an object of suspicion.

While he was thus encompassed with difficulties and bitter poverty, and saw absolutely no prospect of the Opéra opening its doors to him, or any other chance of success, Meyerbeer suddenly returned to Paris, and offered to help him. The plan for a two or three act opera was suggested; and Wagner, who had developed his idea of "The Flying Dutchman" by the assistance of Heine, suggested it to Léon Pillet.

Then Meyerbeer again left Paris, and Pillet wanted Wagner to part with the libretto, to give to another composer whom he had promised a chance at the grand opera!

About this time he was commissioned to write for the *Gazette Musicale*, and contributed, besides articles on music in Germany, two novelettes, — "The Pilgrimage to Beethoven," and a semi-humorous pathetic sketch entitled "The End of a German Musician in Paris," in which he portrayed vividly enough his own struggles with poverty, and immortalized his dog! In order to earn a scanty living, he underwent the most humiliating musical drudgery, "making arrangements for every imaginable kind of instrument, even the cornet-à-piston." He applied for a position as singer in a small theatre, but had worse fortune than Berlioz in similar circumstances; the conductor who examined him declared that he could not sing!

He finished his "Rienzi," and despatched it to Dres-

den, where it was cordially recommended by Meyerbeer. Then he was induced for five hundred francs to give up his scheme for the Opéra; and having nothing more urgent on hand, he hired a piano, and set to work on his own version of "The Flying Dutchman." To his delight he found that he was still a musician. He fairly shouted for joy, and everything went so fluently that the whole was completed in seven weeks.

The version composed for the Opéra by Paul Foucher was given in November, 1842, and made a fiasco.

In these days he was cheered by the splendid performances of Beethoven's Choral Symphony at the Conservatory, and by the representations of Weber's "*Frei-schütz*," conformed by Berlioz to the requirements of the Opéra, which insisted on a ballet; but as nearly as possible in its pristine form.

The clouds were beginning to lift. "Rienzi" was accepted for Dresden; and in the spring of 1842 Wagner shook off the dust of Paris, and with bright tears in his eyes, for the first time saw "the Rhine, the German Rhine, and swore eternal fealty to his fatherland."

"Rienzi" was given for the first time on October 20, 1842. It showed the influences of the Italian school and of Meyerbeer, but had passages of power and promise. It was produced with fine scenic effects, and instantly made Wagner famous. It gave him the position of kapellmeister at the royal opera, and an assured position with a salary of twelve hundred and fifty dollars. It was no sinecure, as the full list of his labors there would show. He brought out a number of great operas besides his own.

"The Flying Dutchman" — Wagner's transition opera — at first failed, though Schröder-Devrient's creation of

Senta was regarded as wonderful; but it was hailed by Schumann as a "signal of hope" that German art would be emancipated. Spohr called it "a masterpiece," and had it performed at Cassel. "Indeed," said Wagner, "Spohr was the only German kapellmeister who received me warmly, and lovingly cherished my labors to the best of his ability, and in all circumstances remained friendly and faithful."

Yet Schumann, — perhaps from unconfessed jealousy, — speaking of "*Rienzi*," declared that Wagner could not write or imagine four consecutive bars that are melodious, or even correct!

When he brought out "*Tannhäuser*" in 1845, and displayed his tendencies more fully, Schumann relented a little: he wrote to Mendelssohn "that it contained much that was deep and original." But with this began that chorus of abuse from the critics that has not yet ceased. Auber, hearing it, said, "It is Berlioz without melody." In Paris a word signifying to bore, *se tannhauser*, was coined from it.

When the Revolution of 1848 broke out, Wagner, — "a spirit never content, and always devising something new," — who, says Liszt, "was a born reformer, undaunted by blood or fire," took an active part in it; and when the insurrection in Dresden was crushed by Prussian bayonets, he made his escape. At first he took refuge with Liszt, but finding that a reward was offered for him he fled to Paris.

In the printed description of this "dangerous political," he is described as of medium height, with brown hair, open brow, gray-blue eyes, well-proportioned nose and mouth, round chin, and characterized by quick speech and gestures.

The next year Liszt had Wagner's new opera "Lohengrin," just finished before the Revolution, performed at Weimar.

Thus began Liszt's unselfish services in aid of the poor exile. Wagner went to Zurich, and while there, finding it hard to earn a living, sometimes asked Liszt for money. Hence has arisen the charge of "mad ingratitude," the "cry of the horse-leech!" But during the ten years that he spent in Switzerland he wrote Liszt over three hundred letters, and only twenty-seven deal with money matters, and there are only twelve personal appeals for help, though some of the time he was lacking firewood and bread. This "genial, wayward, but most human master mind," read Liszt's generous nature correctly; but he acknowledged his services. "Like Christ on the cross," said he, "Liszt was ready to help all others but himself."

He borrowed not money alone from Liszt. In 1876 at Bayreuth, during a rehearsal, Wagner seized Liszt's arm, and, referring to Siegelind's dream-words, said, "Papa, here comes a theme that I got from you."

"Good," said the other, "at least some one will hear it." It was the theme at the beginning of Liszt's "Faust Symphony." Nearly a dozen such borrowings have been pointed out.

In 1882, at a banquet after the performance of "Parsifal," Wagner publicly called attention to the influence of that "unique and exceptional man" on his whole career.

"When I was discredited, banished," he said, "and repudiated by Germany, Liszt came to meet me, — Liszt, who had in the bottom of his soul a thorough knowledge of my being and my work. He said to me, 'Artist, I have faith in you.'"

Wagner wrote to Liszt: "When I compose, I always think of thee, and of thee alone, how this passage and that will please thee."

During Wagner's years of exile he seized his pen, and became the philosopher of music and art. The world was forced to see that "a super-eminent genius," as Liszt called him, had arisen, — "a flashing spirit of flame." They could not see at that time that "he was destined to wear a double crown of fire and gold."

Here he worked out his revolutionary theories, which to detail here would occupy too long. They have given rise to a whole library of books. Never was revolution in art made the subject of a more bitter warfare. And Wagner himself led the van in his bitterness of spirit. Liszt even said: "His genius triumphed in spite of him, for no one put more spoke than he himself in his own wheels."

And here he began to put into shape the splendid conception of the *Niebelungen* drama, which is the most colossal structure that ever entered into the mind of man. Its base goes back before history began: its walls embrace humanity: its pinnacles tower to heaven. Human nature and divine, art and religion, are comprehended in it.

Such is the conception. There may be room for legitimate divergences of opinion as to its creation. Those who yearn for the tickling melodies of Rossini, who are stirred by the concerted pieces of the Italian opera, will find only cacophonies in Wagner's weaving of leading motives, and see only a wearisome "goose-march" in his accompanied recitatives.

For upwards of twenty years Wagner was occupied with his Tetralogy, to which, as usual, he wrote the

words, — “bombastic stuttering of alliteration” one critic called them, — and composed the music.

His labors were interrupted by frequent journeys. In 1855 he went to London to conduct the eight concerts of the Philharmonic Society. He had already delivered his drastic and uncalled-for attack upon the Jew in music; he was a well-known opponent of Mendelssohn, England’s idol: he took no pains to be politic; consequently his season was not a brilliant success.

After his return to Zurich, there was some talk of his coming to America. The Emperor of Brazil was one of his admirers, and he was offered a position in Rio Janeiro.

In September, 1859, he was back in Paris, where, early the next year, he gave three concerts of his own music. They did not pay expenses.

Then, suddenly, Berlioz turned on his old friend and colleague, and attacked “the music of the future.” It was the beginning of still a new war. And it was carried into the Opera House, when, at the express desire of Prince Metternich, Napoleon ordered “*Tannhäuser*” to be given there.

Wagner himself took general charge. In his zeal to have the words properly translated, he nearly killed the poor poet, Edmond Roche; he succeeded in arraying against him all the employees of the theatre, from the director to the salaried *claqueurs*. And when it was given for the first time, on March 13, 1861, a more remarkable fiasco was never chronicled. It was simply drowned by the catcalls of the Jockey Club; and though the two following representations brought increasing receipts, even up to ten thousand francs, and the demand to hear it was immense, it was withdrawn. Berlioz

wrote his son: "The press is unanimous in exterminating it. As for me, I am cruelly avenged."

Only of late has the political opposition to Wagner's music begun to yield to more generous feelings.

When he left Paris in June, 1861, though burdened again with frightful debts, he was free to return to Germany. His pardon was assured. In order to procure money, he made a concert tour through Europe, producing chiefly Beethoven's symphonies, and selections from his own works. It was a series of triumphs. He made in Russia upwards of thirty-five thousand rubles, which, on his return to Vienna, he wasted in foolish, boyish extravagances, such as always marked his private life. His expenditures for royal apparel and silken tapestries, and the like, were so great, that, after the failure of his hopes to be made kapellmeister at Dresden, he had to flee from Vienna and his creditors. This was in 1863. The next year fate brought to the throne of Bavaria the visionary Ludwig II., a youth of nineteen, who summed up Wagner's genius by calling him his "Word-tone-poet-Master." The King gave him a handsome residence, and a pension, and planned a general overturn in the musical affairs of his capital.

At his desire Wagner's great opera, "Tristan and Isolde," founded on a Keltic or Welsh legend, was performed under Hans von Bülow's direction.

Three years later, in 1868, his comic opera, "The Meister Singers," in which the old was satirized and the new proclaimed, was also performed in Munich with most brilliant success. It was written in Switzerland, after Wagner's vain effort to establish a new singing-school in Munich; when his enemies, who circulated the most outrageous libels about him, even declaring that he had

let his wife starve to death,¹ had practically driven him from the city. The King's lavish gifts were a scandal in the community. It was estimated that he presented Wagner with at least two hundred and fifty thousand florins. His greatest pleasure was to dress himself in the costumes of the operas. On his lake at Starnberg, twenty years later, he had a boat like "Lohengrin's," drawn by mechanical swans. The man was crazy; but his craze was the making of Wagner.

Meantime Wagner's friends determined that his works should be heard under the most favorable auspices. In answer to his famous "Invitation" they rallied, and raised three hundred thousand thalers to build a new and ideal theatre in the little Bavarian town of Bayreuth. Here, so to speak, the Muses of Painting and Architecture, of Poetry and Music, descended to crown their wayward but genius-gifted priest in his Neo-Grecian amphitheatre. It was immediately after the Franco-Prussia War that the corner-stone was laid, on Wagner's birthday in 1872.

Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and Wagner's "*Kaisermarsch*" were chosen as the herald music of the occasion. More than two thousand musicians and singers were present. Wagner had come, in a certain sense, to stand

¹ Frau Wagner, who publicly protested that her husband had allowed her an ample income, died suddenly of heart-disease, at Dresden, January 25, 1866. The relations between them were cordial and affectionate. It is said that "she always treated him like a big boy, which he was; while he showed her a tenderness at once filial and paternal." On August 25, 1870, he married Cosima von Bülow, Liszt's daughter, who had at first declined to meet him, but at last took her four daughters and joined him at Lucerne. She became a Lutheran. The "religious consecration" took place in 1872, in the presence of the Abbé Liszt. Von Bülow, almost heart-broken, forgave them both, and remained faithful to the "Music of the Future." "Women," said Wagner, "are the music of life." He might have added, "They have their discords."



RICHARD AND COSIMA WAGNER ENTERTAINING IN THEIR HOME WAHNFRIED, LISZT, AND HANS VON WOLZOGEN.
Painting by W. Beckmann.

as the representative of the German nation. And yet never were the attacks upon him more odious. One Jew doctor, who bore the name of Puschmann, declared that the composer was a raving maniac! The same year Wagner was offered one hundred thousand dollars to come to Chicago and direct some of his works. He was obliged to decline, but he accepted five thousand dollars for a march to be performed at the Centennial Exhibition. It was generally regarded as unworthy of his genius.

In August, 1876, the Tetralogy was given at Bayreuth, before an audience which had gathered from all the world, and including the Emperor and Empress of Brazil and other crowned heads. The Emperor of Germany heard a part of the performance, but he cared little for music, and took his departure, a slight which the Grand Mogul of Bayreuth could not forgive. The King of Bavaria at first insisted on hearing the rehearsals absolutely alone, but the music sounded so ill in the empty hall that he allowed an audience to be present, and thus twenty thousand marks additional were gained.

The orchestra, under the direction of Hans Richter and a magnificent "*ensemble*" of interpreters, showed what "the Music of the Future," as it had at first been derisively nicknamed by Ludwig Bischoff, really was. All the decorations of the stage, the dresses of the actors, and the effects of light and shade, were prepared with marvellous success.

The success seemed almost to turn Wagner's head. In answer to the thunders of applause, he appeared on the stage and made a speech which was a model of bad taste. He repaired the bad effects of it at a great subscription banquet given on the nineteenth, at his own suggestion, to himself and the great artists who had

brought him such glory. Here he explained what he meant by saying that *at last* Germany was to have an art. The next day a reception at Wagner's magnificent house, called "Wahnfried" (because "here my illusions found their peace"), took place, and again there was a frenzy of enthusiasm. Liszt improvised and played for over an hour.

At the end of the third series of representations, on the thirtieth of August, a still more touching ceremony took place, to commemorate which Wagner had a number medals struck off. One in gold was presented to King Ludwig II., through whose liberality alone the scheme had succeeded. Kings before had been made by Warwicks: this was a unique instance of a king already made, being decorated by a subject! A memorial stone, giving the name of the principal actors in letters of gold, was also erected. It simply bore above the inscriptions the words:

DER RING DES NIEBELUNGEN

ERSTE AUFFÜHRUNG IM JAHRE 1876.

Wagner's name nowhere appeared. It was unnecessary!

After the exertions of the festival, Wagner went to Italy, and there received an ovation. He was made an honorary member of the St. Cecilia, and at Bologna he was present at a fine performance of his "Rienzi."

When he returned to Bayreuth, he found himself confronted by the fact that the great success of the festival had resulted in a deficit of over one hundred and twenty-five thousand marks! First he issued an appeal to the Wagner Societies; then he decided to go to London with Hans Richter, and give a series of concerts.

They took place in May, but in spite of the immense interest which they excited, the expenses for the enormous orchestra were so heavy — not less than sixty thousand pounds — that they brought a profit of only about seven hundred pounds.

Meantime, at intervals, Wagner was working on his “Parsifal” — the solemn drama of the Holy Grail — his last work — his musical “will.” It was finally finished at Palermo in January, 1882. It was first presented at Bayreuth, on the twenty-eighth of June, and was followed by sixteen performances, bringing a profit of seventy-five thousand marks, and silencing the croakers who had predicted failure. It guaranteed the future of the theatre, which had been closed since 1876.

Two months later Wagner and his family, by the advice of his physician, went to Italy and settled in Venice at the Palazzo Vendramini. He was troubled with heart-disease and asthma. On Monday, February 13, 1883, as he was going out in his gondola, he gave way to a fit of anger. He had been warned to avoid all excitement. The warning was in vain. He suddenly sprang up crying, “I feel very ill,” and fell. When the doctor came, he was dead in the arms of his wife, who supposed him sleeping.

The city of Venice proposed to have a state funeral, but his widow, who was inconsolable, objected. His remains, escorted by various delegates of Wagnerian societies, were taken to Bayreuth, stopping on the way at Verona, Botzen, Innsbruck, and Munich.

After a solemn and magnificent service, Wagner was laid in his tomb, before which his faithful dog Russ was buried.

Wagner is said to have received two hundred and

forty thousand marks as copyright for "Parsifal," and if he had been wise in saving he would have left a large fortune. But he spent lavishly, foolishly, on personal adornments and delicate furnishings. He died poor.

As an artist Wagner had unequalled genius. As a man, though generous, temperate, and virtuous to an unusual degree, he also had extraordinary faults: — he was egotistical and proud, prone to fierce enmities; he went to extremes in everything. A living paradox: impatient, nervous, irritable; noble and petty; never made a man more friends and more enemies. He was worshipped and hated. Taken all in all, musically, he stands as the most notable figure of this age.



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