THE LETTERS
OF
A LEIPZIG CANTOR.

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THE LETTERS

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A LEIPZIG CANTOR

BEING

THE LETTERS OF MORITZ HAUPTMANN

TO FRANZ HAUSER, LUDWIG SPOHR, AND OTHER MUSICIANS

EDITED BY

PROF. DR. ALFRED SCHÖNE

AND

FERDINAND HILLER

TRANSLATED & ARRANGED BY A. D. COLERIDGE.

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C. V. STANFORD AND C. H. H. PARRY

BY THEIR FRIEND

A. D. COLERIDGE.

INTRODUCTION.

THE letters in these volumes are the random thoughts of a German composer and famous theorist, the friend and coadjutor of Mendelssohn, and from 1822 to 1868 the first teacher of his day. I doubt if the bare idea of their publication ever crossed his mind. Franz Hauser, to whom most of them are addressed, was for many years Director of the Munich *Conservatoire*, a man of learning, and of such long and practical experience as a public singer, that he was consulted by the greatest artists of their time—among others by Sontag, by Staudigl, and (according to Hanslick) by Jenny Lind herself, the first singer of the nineteenth century. I have selected from a more recent publication of Ferdinand Hiller's, Hauptmann's letters to Spohr and some other less eminent men, adding most of the supplementary thoughts and aphorisms to be found at the end of that volume. In the purely theoretical portions of the work, I have received invaluable assistance from my learned friend, Edward Dannreuther, himself a pupil of Hauptmann's, and conversant with his modes of expression. I am anxious to show the philosopher and teacher in his everyday mood, talking familiarly with his friend; for his deep speculations on Harmony and Metre, his application of Hegel's method to the study of Music, &c., are only for the chosen few. He sends his chief work to Spohr, hoping that he will be so kind as to accept it, and let it take its place on his bookshelves. "I shall not expect you to read it. It is by nature abstract, and happily for the world, your business is with the concrete." "Perhaps excess of energy as a theorist does hinder my practical effectiveness."

In spite of this self-depreciation, his teaching was for many years reckoned as an indispensable factor in the training of

musicians, who wanted to understand their business. What the late Mr. Shilleto was to aspirants for honours in the Classical Tripos at Cambridge, such, at Cassel and Leipzig, was Moritz Hauptmann to the pupils who flocked to his Lecture-room from England, America, and Russia. It would be hard to understand this, if he were taken at his own valuation. "Bad at the fiddle, bad at the piano, out and out bad as a musician—that's the sum of me at 35 years of age." The outside world thought otherwise, and the world is generally right in such matters. Many of his pupils attained great eminence. In an earlier generation, I find the names of F. David, Curschmann, Kiel, and in a later, those of Joachim, von Bülow, and Sullivan. Many others have made their mark in the world of Music. I believe that one and all pay willing homage to the memory of their old master.

The geography of the life of Moritz Hauptmann is contained in the three words, Dresden, Cassel, Leipzig. At Dresden he was born on the 13th October, 1792. At Cassel he played the violin in the orchestra of the Opera House for twenty years (1822—1842). At Leipzig he was Cantor of the *Thomas-schule* for twenty-six more, and there he died. He visited other places of course. He spent four years in Russia (1815—1819), in the household of Prince Repnin. He took the regulation trip to Italy ten years later, and visited Paris with his wife. But neither North nor South made any lasting impression upon him; he was not the man to be quickly influenced by anything external. All that we hear about Russia is, that he felt the want of artistic sympathy, and longed for somebody with whom to play duets. As for Italy, it was Goethe's Italy that he wanted. "No stage-coach, no steamboat can transport us to that Italy. Goethe himself could not get there." He describes it conscientiously enough in his letters, which might have been written for the benefit of Murray or Baedeker, and confesses, at a later period, that he never realized it so enjoyably as he did while he sat reading, over his cup of coffee, in the *Aue* at Cassel. This curious want of touch with the outside world, except where Music was concerned, is evident in all the

relations of his singularly uniform, yet not uninteresting career. He tells us somewhere, how delighted he was with the beautiful singing of an old Frenchman, who had no voice. He has no voice himself. His style is want of style. He is dull and longwinded and unmelodious. It is almost inconceivable, that a musician should be so absolutely destitute of feeling for the music of words. Yet, like the old Frenchman, he is worth listening to.

It is not life of any kind that the reader must look to find in this book: there are no living people in it. Even Mendelssohn passes across its pages as a mere shadow. Hauptmann appears to think that it will gratify his friend, to know exactly at what o'clock the brilliant guest dined, and drank tea—and nothing more. The generality of his acquaintance are as hazily indefinite as the appropriate name of one of the chief of them, *Herr Nebelthau*. If it be true, that in the letters of a good letter writer, a strong hint of the character of his correspondent is always discoverable, then Hauptmann can lay no claim to the title. All his letters might perfectly well, but for slight incidental distinctions, have been written to one individual. Of Hauser we learn nothing, except that he was a baritone. Similarly, the other people mentioned are all vocalists, violinists, or pianists; they do not seem to have struck him as anything but so many different embodiments of sound. The whole world is turned orchestra. Genuine feeling he certainly possessed. He shows it in his fumbling way at the death of Therese Spohr—when he becomes engaged to his Susette (*née* Hummel),—and most of all when Mendelssohn and Spohr are taken from him. But in the ordinary course of things it does not come uppermost, because he lives almost entirely amongst abstractions. These are his realities. Art, not life, is the object of life to him. His chosen friend was an artist, his wife an artist; his adoration of Spohr the artist survived his disappointment in Spohr the man. His was an unhappy nature, morbidly sensitive to its own defects and those of others, modest and conscientious to a fault, shy to the point of shrinking even from those with whom he was most intimate. It is no wonder that many things jarred

upon him, that he hated the cliques of Dresden and the ignorance of his master, Morlacchi, the dulness of Cassel and the bigotry of Spohr, the lawless impetuosity of his pupils at Leipzig and the Radicalism of Wagner. If he could play the violin, why he could not play the piano; if he could compose music, why he could not conduct it; if he could write the most learned book in the world on Theory, why he could not write it in the vulgar tongue, and consequently it was almost all wasted. *A propos* of his complaints about this last work and his allusions to the one person, Louis Köhler, who tried to popularise it, one is reminded of the dying utterance of Hegel himself: "Only one critic understood me, and he *mis*-understood me." It is pleasant to see that as he became older, and his fame as a teacher, a composer, and a theorist slowly but surely extended itself, he lost that habit of perpetual regret which saddens all his earlier correspondence. Of jealousy he never had a trace.

Brought up as he was for an architect, early and accurate training had familiarised him with the laws of construction. He had many of the qualifications of a great critic, maintaining his independence of thought in the midst of various and conflicting opinions. He was no indiscriminate worshipper of Handel, and thought it affectation to admire unreservedly the songs in Sebastian Bach's famous Mass. Yet a certain innate conservatism blinded him to the obvious tendencies of the age; it was long before he recognized the full significance of Beethoven, and he abhorred Wagner. On the other hand, he sturdily defended Berlioz at a time when Berlioz stood in need of defenders, and he was one of the first to appreciate the genius of Schumann. He left behind him the memory of an unblemished existence, consecrated with pure devotion to the best interests of Art.

ERRATA.

Vol.	I.,	Page	1.—For	*Go ahead*	read	*That's your look out !*
"	"	"	56.— "	Caccia	"	Coccia.
"	II.	"	23.— "	Felicien	"	Félicien.
"	"	"	117.—After line 9		"	Tieck was a man of this kind.
"	"	"	130.—For	*Rousseau*	"	Rousseau.
"	"	"	147.— "	1860	"	1861.
"	"	"	157.— "	January	"	June.
"	"	"	184.— "	Biadana	"	Viadana.
"	"	"	222.— "	Brennung	"	Breunung.

HAUPTMANN TO HAUSER.

1.

CASSEL, *November 27th*, 1825.

WE are lazy fellows, you and I, about writing. Thank goodness, I have a letter from you at last! Why, one would have thought that all the rivers of ink in Dresden and Cassel had run dry, and the cuttle fish [*Dintenfische*] had been stranded! A rotten simile! . . .

The best way of studying counterpoint? Well, my advice would be: *Go ahead* [*Da sehn Sie zu*]; short but unedifying, and not even new, for Goethe has used it already in one of his poems. However, it is hard to be concise and edifying at the same time, if you are to steer clear of platitudes, and if you are not to write a volume on the subject. Kirnberger though, as far as my memory serves me, is good (*the mobled queen is good*, you know); he is more exhaustive, and keeps more to the point than Vogler or Weber, whose pretentious works lose themselves in generalities.

I have been reading Thibaut of Heidelberg's book on *The Purity of Musical Art*. It seems to me defective in many points. Truth will not gain much by his blustering; he is too manifestly an exaggerated partisan of the old style. He seems to me altogether too flimsy, even in his enthusiasm, to inspire much confidence. The strange, odd sound of ancient music cannot surely be accounted a merit in itself, and yet, comparing it generally with our modern work, I should be at a loss to discover any other. And what is the meaning of this outcry about the artificiality of the modern school? Mere artificial music is bad, whether it be new or old, but where do we find it more frequently than in what Thibaut calls the Golden Age of music? Take that mass of Palestrina's (the *Missa Canonica*, if I remember rightly), which is sung on Good Friday in the *Katholische Kirche*. To be sure, it is quite free from the "amorous style," which

Thibaut objects to in our modern Church music; but then it is also free from any other, and in my judgment, it is no more a Mass than it is an opera or a ballet; for in point of fact, it is not music at all. I don't mind the Canon form—though it would never occur to anyone who had not lost sight of the purport of his work, to write a Mass through from A to Z in this fashion—but then how artificial it is, how dry, how musically uninteresting; rigid crystallization, with no organic development at all! When Sebastian Bach does a thing of this kind, it has life and soul. In his *Temperirtes Clavier*, there are passages that dwarf everything else; to listen to them is as difficult as to play them, and listening is not much good. You must know them through and through, so that you could, as it were, compose them over again, if you had to. It is hard work enough learning the notes, to begin with, and of course, to get to that point, you must forget them again. No one has ever rivalled that extraordinary wealth of combination; no one has ever sounded those depths of expression. These glorious compositions are quite unique; they possess in themselves all the conditions of their existence and their development. They are so perfect, so full of intrinsic vitality, that one is tempted to deny that Art and the artist had anything to do with them, just as one is tempted to deny the Creator, who has made Nature so divine, that she continues to exist of herself, by virtue of some inner necessity.

By the way, that Mass is not the *Missa Papæ Marcelli*, which is ranked before all others; but still it is one of Palestrina's, and it has been admitted into the *Collection des Œuvres Classiques*. Now, Palestrina is the representative of the old style of music, as Mozart would be of the new; and if he wrote Masses with nothing in them, how about other composers? For it is not only Palestrina and his contemporaries that ought to charm us; we are bound to find Josquin, Ockenheim and Co. enjoyable—nay, more than that, preferable to any of our living writers. All honour to the old gentlemen! But leave their works in the proper place—*i.e.*, in the History of Music. Forkel gives us a short specimen of each, and thinks that quite enough for us. And Forkel is right.

Spohr is writing an oratorio, *The Last Judgment*. The text is an arrangement by Rochlitz of passages from the Apocalypse, and very grand and beautiful. The First Part, which Spohr has now finished, was given (the Overture excepted) last St. Cecilia's Day, with pianoforte accompaniment. The music is very fine; it begins rather tamely, but you do not feel this afterwards, when he has warmed to his subject.

On the whole, I think it only too modern. The style is beautiful and noble; yet here and there it reminds one of one's own age, whereas, if one looks at the majestic words, "they are not of an age, but for all time." However, you know as well as I do what Spohr thinks of such poetry; he thinks it crude, and excusable only on account of the crudity of the age in which the writers lived. Would it ever occur to one of our brilliant young poets, such as G. Doering or Gehe, to say, "The sword goeth out of the streets, and hunger dwelleth in the houses?" No, certainly not. The crudity might perhaps be given as a second reason; but the first would be, because anything so great and powerful would never enter the minds of those tame geniuses. Besides the First Part of the Oratorio, we had, that same evening, Spohr's *Hymn to St. Cecilia*, choruses from *Judas Maccabæus*, and the Kyrie and Gloria from my Mass, sung without accompaniment. Everything went off very well.

Leopoldine Blahetka gave a concert here a short time ago. She is a dear girl—a rose among dandelions and daisies. If she should come to Dresden, please do all you can for her. I might have given her a letter to you, but why should I? Nature has recommended her to every one that loves beauty. I have often heard her play; it was so beautiful, that I never for one moment remembered the difficulty of the piece she was playing. I am not in love with her, but I could have done anything for love of that girl. It is a real joy to humble oneself before beauty; to lie at her feet, asking for nothing in return.

You want to know what I have been about all this time? I haven't composed a note. Far too often, I am nothing but a *Corrector*—not even a *Con-rector*.

How fares my dear Constance in her new sphere? Were it not that I often get news of her through H., I should be very uneasy about her, for it is long since I heard from her direct. I should so like her to tell me herself, that she is all right. My best regards to her and the rest. Remember me kindly to your wife. I meant to write to you about all sorts of things; somehow I can't manage it. You know how often I think of you.

Yours,

H.

P.S.—My kindest remembrances to Weber. I heard, to my great delight, through Mr. Smart, who met him in Dresden, that he has quite recovered. . .

2.

CASSEL, *February 11th*, 1827.

DEAREST HAUSER,—

I am too often a Job's comforter, particularly in winter. But I have never yet felt a winter like this winter, and when I see every bit of green covered with frost, my hopes are frozen too. Misfortunes never come singly. First I lost something that was, I have long known, only a fancy, a vision—but still it filled a gap; then there was Constance; and now you are in Frankfurt—miles away! You can have no idea, what a blank such things make in the life of a man like me. One can put up with all sorts of privations and discomforts, if one has a good wife and two such boys as yours, with money enough to keep them. But I doubt if I shall ever marry. I don't know how to set about it, and it's hardly worth while to undertake anything new (especially as I should be almost sure to go to the deuce) for the few short years that are left. . . . I suppose you think I ought to be quite content, now that my new coffee machine has arrived. My hopes and wishes must have come to a bad pass indeed. Well, it is a first-rate invention, and it makes splendid coffee! I may well say *makes*, for it does almost everything of itself—dear old thing! I have nothing to do but drink. The evening it came, I made some coffee at seven o'clock (couldn't get away earlier), and, as I had no spirits of wine, I used *Eau de*

Cologne. That craving for happiness, how idiotic it is! I doubt if any one gets the measure he thinks his due. How unhappy my dog, Raton, used to be, when we went for a walk without him! and yet it isn't his fault that he is so fat, but ours; and, spite of that, he always wagged his tail, when we came home again. An animal like that has read his Bible with profit, and *takes no thought for the morrow.* It's very touching, and instructive withal.

Please write, and let me know if you have told your wife about the money I owe you. I know that this is a trifle to people like yourselves; still, she may be waiting for it and I not know it. My pupils are so d——d unremitting; but for that, I should have squared matters long ago. To be sure, they get little enough out of what I teach them—but there the lessons are.

Fräulein Curschmann is composing an opera; her librettist is Herr von Calenberg.

> "For when the stern with mild unites,
> When strength its troth to weakness plights,
> The tone they yield is clear and strong."

But that sort of placid self-complacency won't go very far. I would rather be like Gretchen—

> "Sometimes gay,—more often full of woe;
> Weeping at will,
> Then again quiet and still—
> Or she seems so!"

I am parading my extensive knowledge of German classics, but I really didn't mean to. Please tell me whether Bach's *Passion* is to be sent by Cassel, or direct to Frankfurt? If by Cassel, it might stay with me for a few days to rest itself. . . . Have you made the acquaintance of a certain Fräulein Villers, who is now at Dresden? Constance told me a great deal about her at first, and now I hear from my mother that she is a very pleasant girl, and that she likes my songs and sings them capitally. Mother and Constance both assure me that *Le Danpaume* [*Tannenbaum*] *est un objet précieux pour elle.* They had sung it over and over again, always with fresh delight (I suppose, because it is the easiest of the lot). Now, why should I call myself a coxcomb for being

pleased at this? Surely I have a right to be glad that I have given pleasure to others. As it is, my life is hard enough without it, and therefore heavy enough often.

I began this sheet because it was empty, and stop because it is full. Write to me soon.

Yours, as of old,

M. H.

8.

CASSEL, *March 6th*, 1827.

. . . I have gone through Handel's *Israel* several times lately, and I think it is almost the best of his oratorios; he is nowhere so happy as he is in some parts of it. Wherever the text admits of exact musical expression, he hits it invariably; the Frog Aria means hopping, so he hops—it's all he can do with it. To make up one's mind about some of the choruses, one really must hear them first of all; many of them owe their individual colouring to the old ecclesiastical modes in which they are written, more or less freely or strictly. I think we once agreed, that all this wealth of harmony they make such a fuss about in modern music, is a poor affair after all, really moving as it does in but two chords, the tonic and the dominant, which turn up again, transposed, whenever there is a modulation into remote keys. Bach, on the contrary, while keeping to one key, finds abundant matter for developing the richest variety, seeing he not only makes use of these two, but of all the different harmonies contained in the key. I think there is something like (or rather unlike) this, in the difference between our modern major and minor and the old modes; the former are a mere transposition of one and the same mode, the latter differ altogether from one another by the succession of intervals in their scales. Each has a distinct character of its own, which, as employed by Handel in the *Israel*, produces a like effect. Thus, chorus No. 11 is quite Phrygian in character, whereas 21, mainly by the treatment of the mode, is quite Dorian. Such progressions should not be discarded as so much rubbish, they might be profitably used to neutralize the sentimental style of our time, and, willy-nilly, infuse a little strength into it.

After writing the first chorus of my cantata, I fell ill, and now my work is at a standstill. It was originally in six parts; these were merely sketched, but such polyphonic works contain almost everything in outline, because in them Form and Matter (I daresay you know what I mean—something quite different) begin and are developed simultaneously. I rather pride myself on having abandoned what I had finished, and composed another chorus in four parts—a much less pretentious work, but it says what it means, which the former did not. I was like a bad poet, led astray by his verses into saying things that he never thought of when he began.

Spohr is working at a new opera; if Frankfurt were *in* the moon, I would tell you who is the author of the libretto, but *under* the moon it is still a secret—so mum's the word.

Yours,

M. H.

4.

CASSEL, *June 15th*, 1827.

DEAREST HAUSER,—

I wrote you the other day my reasons for not writing, but now I take up my pen again, that you may have a letter instead of my expected self. I really cannot leave home just now, much as I should like to be with you. I have just had to send my librettist ten shining *Friedrichs d'or*, and eight shining ducats had to go off in another direction, so I am clean swept out. I intended real hard work these holidays, but as yet nothing has come of it; in such things one is not one's own master. Now I am drinking *Kreuzbrunnen* water and taking exercise, and perhaps that was the best I could do. I am better than I was, but my nerves have been in such a state lately, that I dreaded a sudden attack, especially of an evening when I was at the theatre. For once I am glad to avoid hearing a note of music; my pupils get their lessons at my writing-table, and I give my piano a wide berth. If it does happen that I forget myself and sit down to play, the very first note or chord gives me such a jar (whether physical or mental I cannot say), that I am only too glad to stop at

once. I feel the note and the vibration of the metal string in my eyes and in my teeth (as a galvanized frog might), like a thing that would do me good if it were less rough or less material, though in the present state of affairs it can only hurt. Long walks, quiet mornings spent in the calm of open-air Nature, where everything is so *natural*—these are the antidotes, when we are overdone with the perversities and perplexities of life. Anyhow, the balance must be restored; at any rate, the cure must be quite perfect, before one can voluntarily return to the old routine. Theatres—counterpoint—Wild—*Euryanthe*—instrumentation—musical scores—and scores of other things—the bare thought of them gives me a headache just now! I know I have not expressed this well, but you will read my meaning between the lines. I am bright and happy, when I am out of doors and in good health. At home I have nothing to do, and yet, before an hour is over, I am sitting at home again, kicking my heels, and wondering why I came back. This losing of oneself in the universe takes the sting out of life, but it does not satisfy one long. One is such a mere nothing, that real work becomes impossible. A man wants to be something, and to do something, himself. The first note of the harmonica, or the sound of an Æolian harp, heard again after a long lapse of time, seems at the moment so wondrously beautiful that all other music, be it Mozart or Bach, appears trivial, artificial, and weak; yet one has soon had enough of it. There is nothing to be got out of that eternal series, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. You can do nothing with it; it remains 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, just as God made it.

Yours,

M. H.

5,

CASSEL, *July 3rd*, 1827.

DEAR HAUSER,—

I see by my diary, which is always well posted up, that I sent you a letter on the 15th; whether there was anything in it, I know not, but surely it deserved an answer of some sort. However, as your vacation is over, and mine lasts till the 16th, I will take double turn, mindful of the old proverb, *One nail drives another.*

Here in Cassel, we are at a standstill; my stock of gossip is exhausted before I begin. Constance has written again; amongst other proposals from English families, she has had one to go as travelling companion to Italy, which seems to attract her particularly. Here I keenly sympathise with her, especially as I have just been studying Goethe's journey thither. Italy affected him powerfully; nay, speaking at random, I should say Italy made a Greek of him. How far the process had already gone, in the interval that elapsed between the third part of his Autobiography and the first of the *Italienische Reise*, I cannot pretend to say, but the transformation is all the more striking—*e.g.*, when we find him in the midst of the landscapes and ruins of Italy, exulting in his deliverance from the thatched cottages of woodland Germany, and the ingenious but over-minute ornamentation of Gothic churches. *Thank heaven, that's at an end!* says he. It is only by reading his works in proper order of date, that we can ascertain the remarkable interest of some of them. Only when we recollect that the Goethe who bores us to death with talking about the weather, and geology, and cloud formation, is Goethe at his zenith, the author of *Wilhelm Meister*, with the unfinished sketches of *Iphigenie* and *Tasso* in his portmanteau, ready to be worked up as he goes along; only then, I say, can it interest us to see in these trivial remarks, how his mind lay open to every impression from without. I have subscribed for the pocket edition of his works, ten *thalers* for the forty volumes, if you pay in advance, twelve *thalers* sixteen *groschen*, if you pay for each number separately, as I do. The instalment plan seemed to me cheaper than ten *thalers* on the nail, but I suppose it is a mere optical delusion. Pocket editions are not much in my way as a rule; but in the first place, I have Goethe's best works already in the old edition, and then this is a neat thing, even for big pockets. Anyhow, that which cometh in is more than that which goeth out, unless you carry *thalers* of Swedish iron or Russian *kopecks* about with you. For three and a half hours' lessons in thorough-bass, I get my five volumes, and keep in reserve an extra half-dozen of fifths and octaves, for they only cost one *thaler* fourteen *groschen*.

To-day I had a letter from Artaria. He undertakes, if I will meet him fairly, to engrave the Duets and the score and parts of my Mass. He wanted the Duets by return of post, so I sent them, and let him know my terms. I don't want to part with them for a mere song, but if he demurs, I shall not stop the business. A few *thalers*, more or less, what does it matter? And I shall be so glad to wash my hands of it all. I hope he is honest; if not, he may publish the Duets and put off the Mass, which costs him nothing, *in infinitum*. However, what I see of him inspires me with confidence, and I like the style of his letters. Mice are caught with bacon, publishers with Duets for the Violin.

Benedict is at Naples, and I wrote to him a week ago, *viâ* Dresden. I wonder why we hear nothing of him. He is tolerably active, and quite enough *en évidence* to attract notice. Weber, when I asked if he had any news of him, said: *What news should I have? He has nothing to do now but black Rossini's boots.* But Rossini happens to be in Paris, so I suppose he is consoling himself with *méringues* and ices.

Schelble has left, has he not? I can quite forgive him for not writing, but I should have been glad of a few lines. Feige, I heard to-day, is coming back here from Vienna; we shall see what sort of sport he has had, after fishing in those waters. Spohr will be back on the 16th.

We have already had full rehearsals of *Oberon;* some of it is very fresh and original. The situations are well marked, and the local colouring is correctly distributed. He has not painted his picture all with one brush. The fairy part is redolent of charm; and Tunis, or Algiers, or wherever it is, is characteristically Eastern; but then what wretched, disjointed stuff falls to the lot of Hüon, Rezia, and the other soloists! Spite of that, the opera is sure to please, and I shall not quarrel with people if it does, for it is hardly ever tedious.

If people want to get better, I advise them to drink *Kreuzbrunnen ad lib.*

Rüdinger is steward and head gardener in one, during Spohr's absence. He lives out there, he does the honours, he milks the cow, &c.; he dusts the books, and he reads

them too; that must seem uncommon odd to Spohr's books! Someone complained the other day, that Spohr always sent back his books in a damaged condition. I can't complain of that, for I never got one back at all.

I send you this letter (if you choose to call it one) to punish you for not having written. Remember me kindly to your wife.

Yours,

M. H.

6.

CASSEL, *July 20th*, 1827.

DEAREST HAUSER,—

I am sending you my opera *Mathilde*. I don't think you will like it much; I did not work enough at it. Criticism, which is too loud now, was not loud enough then. *A stitch in time saves nine*, but not a stitch out of time, alas! I have sent for the libretto. Gerber had lent it to Bexmann, Bexmann had lent it to the chief, the chief had lent it to somebody else; in short, I could not get it before. The prompter's copy would not be of any use to you. If I get the libretto in time, I will enclose it. It is pretty much the same as it was in the *Minerva* of 1814, only shorter, as you will see from the score.

There is one thing I want to ask you; I have been a long time about it, but sometimes I was not in the humour, and sometimes I forgot. Will you, some day or other, lend me Bach's Mass for a week or so? I mean to come to Frankfurt in October; you might let me have it as long beforehand as you can spare it. Curschmann has not yet returned, so I am still in ignorance about the Passion Music. By-the-bye, do you know of a shop in Frankfurt, where one can get the so-called Italian music paper that comes from Nürnberg? If I knew where I could get the genuine article, I should order some thousand reams of it. In Vienna they call it *Wälsch Papier* (Italian paper), and you can get it there, good and cheap, at the Nürnberg shop in the *Kärntnerstrasse*. Now this word *wälsch* (I can't resist airing my knowledge of derivations) comes from *wallen*, to wend; *wandeln*, to wander; *weit her sein*, to come from afar—*i.e.*, to be good or great in

consequence. So it comes to signify any good quality in the thing itself, and *wälsch* nuts, poultry, or cabbages are not necessarily Italian, but simply rare good nuts, poultry, and cabbages. Much this tells you about the music paper, and I have got to the bottom of my sheet! I must own, by the way, that I am a very bad hand at letter writing. Leaving your answers out of the reckoning, what good does it do either of us—me who write, you who receive such rubbish? Correspondence like mine means simply R.S.V.P.

As for my opera, I began the sketch of a plan for the beginning of the beginning yesterday, but I made very little way with it. I am surprised you have not come across any new old manuscripts in Frankfurt. Has Schelble none? Is there nothing of Frescobaldi's for the pianoforte or the organ? Riepel has one very curious specimen; I cannot make up my mind, whether I admire or detest it. I should like to see more of his work before deciding, for this solitary piece does not bridge over the interval to Sebastian Bach; there must be other things, and now's the time of day to find them. We ought to have specimens of Telemann, Keiser, and some others. Old books often quote Telemann and Handel together, yet we do not know a note of the former. I think that in the way of universal history, Marx often says a good thing in his *Gesangschule*, but the general tendency of the book is not good. He may not say it straight out, but according to his principles, any one of Weber's operas beats Mozart hollow. Musicians, fortunately, are not readers; if they were, this theory would do harm, for I believe it is easier to compose *à la* Weber than *à la* Mozart.

It is rumoured in Berlin, that Mendelssohn thinks of giving up music as a profession, and going to the University, and further, that the reception of his opera brought about this decision. If this be the real reason, his own judgment must have driven him to it, not that of the Berlin public. There is something heroic about such a resolve in a youth so unquestionably gifted as he is, and I commend him heartily, if it is really based on a clear knowledge of his own powers.

Spohr's new opera, *Pietro Apone*, is founded on a novel by Tieck, and the text has been arranged by a —— poet. The

dash before the word may be filled up with a birthplace, or an adjective, just as you please. I am not allowed to give his name. There are heaps of situations, but what is the good of that, if the thing itself has no kernel of truth, no *raison d'être?* The *Berggeist* too has situations, more than enough; but it is only when we listen to the music apart from those blessed situations, that we feel how beautiful most of it is. When I was on a visit to Speyer, his little daughter played me some numbers from the arrangement for pianoforte; I cannot tell you how pleased I was, to be transported back to the days of my heart-whole devotion to Spohr. Once, long ago, I bought an Overture of his (in C minor), and Franz, who had just come back as a pupil, happened to see it at my house. Energetic as ever, he contrived that the people at the Baths should hear it at once. That was in 1809, eighteen years ago therefore, and I was at an age when one of La Fontaine's novels could make me infinitely happy or miserable. After hearing that Overture I cried, cried again the whole way home, cried at home by the pailful, and cried for several days afterwards. I see myself even now, sitting alone in my room, steeped in that music, kneeling on the ground with my head on a chair, weeping like mad, in a delirium of joy and despair. Nothing in later life can compare with this. It is impossible to feel the same exclusive devotion to anything that strikes a sympathetic chord, the same inability to put it away from us and criticise it objectively, and philosophise about humour, irony, and that kind of thing. In those days Spohr was my idol; later on, I still ranked Cherubini before Mozart, but Mozart at last came to the fore, and there he remains on a pedestal, with Bach close to him. I have never been able to feel that Handel was on the same level, and I do not understand it, though I should not like to class him lower. He who has fathomed the deep secrets of one art can unveil those of another, and his appreciative faculties are all the keener. There is a very close affinity between Spohr's music and Kügelgen's pictures, and so Kügelgen was my favourite painter. When I was strolling through the Gallery yesterday, I was delighted with a good many things which I used to

think commonplace and far below the standard of any modern painter. The works of the inferior Italians alone left no sort of impression on my mind, but we have not many good examples of them here. However, there are plenty of fine Dutchmen. I could almost worship some of Wouverman's.

Yours,

M. H.

7.

CASSEL, *June 27th*, 1827.

10 o'clock.

OLD CURLY-HEAD, obliging and friendly as ever, has just brought me the book. That man, like Mieding, deserves a poem by Goethe when he dies. How he manages to be always useful, always cheery, and never tired, I cannot imagine; it implies a certain narrowness of character.

This morning I sent you off the opera, then I attended a rehearsal of *Figaro*, and gave three lessons; I have dined, I have supped, I have written a scrap of my new opera. What a lot of things Man can do! When my work suits me, I am so completely happy, that all I want is to be left alone *in statu quo;* when I am doing nothing, I grumble anywhere and everywhere. All study, everything indeed that I take up, only satisfies me for a time. I get restless, I become conscious of a want, and fall a prey to the most irritating kind of *ennui*, until I lose every shade of interest in external things, however attractive; then I set to work again, and so it goes round in a circle. Spohr is certainly to be envied; he can sit down quietly every morning and do his quantum of composition for the day. That means real progress. I wonder whether you scraped acquaintance in Frankfurt with Berwald, of Stockholm? He turned up yesterday at Spohr's; with all his bumptiousness and silliness, I rather like him—for a fiddler. I find fiddlers a very different order to musicians who have had to go in for harmony; they are unblushing in their utter ignorance of that science, and their *naïf* criticisms are vastly amusing. Just because they are mere melodists, they think they have a right to be superficial. Pianists, on an average, are far more thorough.

Benedict's opera has created a tremendous *furore* in Naples; he was called for after each act. Now they have engaged him to write another for Palermo, so he is making heaps of money. Lüttichau is to be *Oberkammerherr* to the Queen Dowager, and Miltitz, conductor. Morlacchi has written a Requiem for the late King. I doubt its waking him! Such a requiem should be supplemented by another *ditto*, that the dear deceased, after turning round once in his coffin, might right himself again. . . .

What a queer thing is *savoir faire!* Here is Benedict, with no particular talent, and not a spark of originality about him—at least, a few years ago everything he wrote was borrowed from others, and the patchwork was clumsy after all. He had no turn for enquiry; he was merely a laborious plodder. What Weber's teaching did for him, I cannot say; but he was quite innocent of music below the surface. And now, lo and behold! he, Benedict, creates a *furore!* Were he a real genius, it would be intelligible enough, but is he? It was just the same with Meyerbeer. I heard his compositions in Vienna, shortly before he went to Italy. The music was downright bad—poor in thought, diffuse, bombastic; but there, he is *divin.* 'Tis "a mad world, my masters"!—Addio!

Yours,

M. H.

8.

CASSEL, *November 26th*, 1827.

. . . That charming letter of yours was so full of interest, that it goes against the grain with me to answer it hurriedly. I was in no humour to send you a criticism of Spohr's last opera. I wanted you to see and hear it for yourself. My belief is, we should silently agree about it. The critics are severe on the dead body, the priest, the singing corpse. That is neither here nor there. We have had all these before—in real good operas too. But here, no doubt, there is (to quote the words of that snarling *Schnellpost*), *a flagrant example of the most wanton outrage.* It is no pretended corpse that the sorcerer, Abano, conjures up from the grave, but

a *bonâ fide* dead and buried woman, into whom, against her will, he pumps a soul, by means of his half successful magic —with the very best intentions, of course. I suppose you know that dreary novel? But we can read without aversion a good deal that it is revolting to see on the stage. I know well enough there are fine operatic moments, that is a matter of course; but if it's a question of a good German opera, text and music must go together—you cannot divorce them. Assume you have got your situations, do *they* constitute a fine work in themselves? If so, we must not turn up our noses at the French *Vaudevilles*. I feel annoyed about it, and do not care to say any more; what I have said is *quite between ourselves*, you understand. I suppose the opera will be given at Frankfurt. I have read Ries's libretto; what lamentable stuff! I almost envy composers who can set to work at once upon such a task, but the state of the opera is piteous indeed. I gather from your letter that my Mass has been dropped; it concerns me more on Schelble's account than on my own, for he wrote to say that it was certainly going to be done, and it will put him in an awkward position.

Ries's new Symphony was given at our first Subscription Concert, last Friday. Why are we less inclined to put up with imitations of Mozart or Goethe than with imitations of Beethoven or Jean Paul? The explanation possibly is not far to seek, but just now I feel too stupid to look for it. Besides this (and some other concert stuff), Carl Moor—not he of the *Robbers*, but a Danish *virtuoso*, now on a visit to Spohr—played Spohr's Ninth Violin Concerto in first-rate style. He is on his way to Paris, and I daresay he will make a short stay in Frankfurt; do you think a concert there would pay?

I had rather not send this letter at all, it is so patchy in consequence of my many interruptions; but I must keep faith with Henrietta. I don't think a nunnery, or rather a monastery, is half a bad place; one is torn and worn to fiddlestrings with the thousand and one petty worries of the day—at least, *I* am. If I can't sit boxed in by myself, free from all contact with the outer world, it's

all up with me. I must get myself a cap of herbs, as a tonic for my weak powers of thinking, like Fraischdörfer.

On the great day of their patroness, the St. Cecilia Choir performed Spohr's Mass in the *Austrian Hall*, and had supper there afterwards. It went off fairly well, and there was a good deal of applause; the choir is very full just now—a maximum of chairs, a minimum of voices.

I have not yet written to you about Bach's Mass. It is like a grand, bygone age, in comparison with which our own seems utterly mean, nerveless, and poverty-stricken. The whole cannot be understood as a whole, unless it is adequately given in its entirety. The bare idea of a great performance of this Mass makes me shiver, but such a performance has yet to be. There are two oboe parts treated as two real voices to a six-part chorus (at least, something like it).* There ought to be not two, but ten times two oboes, &c.† I always thought the engraved score would be published, and I meant to buy it there and then; this must be my excuse for still detaining the score you lent me. I am always radiant, if you can find me any new thing of Bach's, but please copy the parts at once; we cannot get on without them. . . .

Fidelio is a miracle of beauty, much of it perfectly divine —*e.g.*, nearly the whole of Act ii.—uneven only here and there. The close of the first Act is awkward, a mere Babel of sound. I have the same complaint to make of the part given to the Governor (or whoever he is—not Pizarro), in the second *Finale:* but this again is redeemed by a lovely 3/4 movement in F major. Still, after what has gone before, the whole *Finale* is an anti-climax. Much as I like the Overture now in vogue, I fail to see how it is appropriate to the opera. I daresay the colossal proportions of the first Overture to *Leonore* would tax an audience too severely; for all that, I think it is a much more suitable preface to the whole. I wish I had sent you a better *critique*, but I am in a hurry—you must take what you can get. Good luck to you and yours!

Yours,

M. H.

* He probably means the five chorus-parts, plus the *continuo*.

† Such was the custom in Handel's time.

9.

CASSEL, *December 30th*, 1827.

DEAREST HAUSER,—

My best thanks for your delightful letter and the books; since they came, my studies have been almost exclusively confined to the posthumous works of Solger. I dare say many parts of this correspondence are rather beyond a man of my powers, and some of it has no direct interest; but the bare contemplation of so noble a life is in itself a priceless lesson. I greatly admire Tieck for publishing these letters jointly with his own; in spite of all the fine things in his letters, and the many compliments he gets from Solger, he generally plays second fiddle, and he courts the position. Hamann is too much for my digestion, at all events in this form; have not those Sibylline leaves of his been made up out of other things? Anyhow, the flavour is too strong; I fancy I am munching pemmican, and washing it down with brandy-punch. If I did pitch my last letter in a different key—I don't know what it was—I really did not mean to be reproachful. The old story, alas! I wrote it in a hurry, and that must excuse an intemperate word here and there. . . .

Mathilde is to be done again, early in January, so please return me score and libretto as soon as you can. I never expected this revival, and I candidly own that it pleases me—all the more, that I myself am not over-pleased with a good deal of the music. Perhaps the better part warranted a re-casting of the rest, but I can't manage that; even if I could, the opera would be no great shakes. It is not written in the right style for the theatre; however fine the sentiments may be, up there it sounds consumptive and asthmatic, and one feels cramped. I will not join in this wholesale depreciation of Rossini. I admire his facility in the formal arrangement of his numbers, as such, though I admit his poverty of thought, and cannot but see how unsuitable the whole thing is, from a dramatic point of view. Still, by his long-winded periods, and the way in which he keeps the parts distinct from each other, he not only gives the singer room to move and to do something on his own hook, but he enables the listener to enjoy it.

Oh, that a nobler spirit animated the whole! I know you will not credit me with wishing to defend the ignoble part of him.

For some days past, I have been living over again my last year's visit to Frankfurt. That is quite natural, because you are often in my thoughts, and it is just a year since we were there together. I am often brought suddenly face to face with long past episodes in my life, so trivial as to have completely escaped my memory; but there they are, projected into clear relief with all their details, and when I try to fix a date, I find it is the actual anniversary of the event I have been thinking of. My earliest recollections are revived in this way. . . .

But why have we no books to help us in classifying and systematizing the process of thought, to enable us—be our faculties great or limited—to bring some order out of infinite chaos, and to set about our tasks with a rational hope of completing what we have well begun? When I am engaged in composition, it absorbs me completely, but there are far too many intervals in which I feel the want of some worthy employment, though there is no want of inclination for it, and I am tired of my present monotonous duties. For the devouring or tasting even of the best books, if we but half understand them, so far from advancing us one single step, only makes confusion worse confounded. What true riches should we find in books like *Erwin*, could we but appropriate them to ourselves; but I do not even like to look at it, knowing full well, that disgust with my own inability really to understand it, would force me to lay down the volume. Of course I am only speaking for myself; but however tempting, however seductive it may be, merely to turn over the leaves of such a volume, it profits me nothing, except it be in the way that Goethe declares a University career is profitable. College life, says he, is not altogether useless, as it means living for awhile with learned persons, or with those whose ambition it is to be learned; though a youth may learn nothing properly, here and there some particles of learning will stick to him. But it is just this haziness, this faint glimmering of light thrown on particular passages, which makes us yearn more and more for clearer

and fuller illumination. One could well-nigh envy those who, surrounded by infinite gloom, turn the dark lantern of their limited, commonplace minds on the nearest objects of their narrow environment, making each luminous in itself, without stopping to enquire about their origin or their dependence on one another. I long for enlightenment, for a clearer perception of all sorts of subjects, but dimly and indefinitely felt by me; when I try to grasp them, they are everywhere and nowhere. *Many a riddle this shall solve*, I say to myself over many a new book; and *many a riddle this involve*, is the answer. "That way madness lies," and I am glad to be rid of the mood—as now.

31*st*.

Good morning, dear Hauser! I underwent such tortures yesterday, listening to *The Two Sergeants*, that I was completely done up. We are now busy with the dress-rehearsal of *The Siege of Corinth;* I am curious to see how the opera will turn out. It is as good as a play, to watch composers of that sort outbidding one another in harum-scarum instrumentation, the last man invariably starting some new fad. There is Rossini again to the front with an *Ophicleïde*, which being interpreted, I take to mean a better kind of serpent. How did they manage that part in Frankfurt? Here they gave it to a fourth trombone, as the music stood on the trombone line in the original score. The *Banda turca* makes an incessant shindy, but still I look upon it as one of Rossini's best operas. Some of the recitatives, which appear to have been written in Paris, are remarkably good; but my favourite bits are those which smack of Spontini. Were Rossini to write an opera, constructed throughout on Spontini's lines, the latter would come off second best; for Rossini takes a freer flight and soars higher when he imitates, than Spontini does when he is original. That silly creature, Heinefetter, has actually refused all the handsome offers made her from Dresden. They tell me, she asked for an extra two hundred *thalers* beyond the three thousand five hundred originally proposed. The *Kurfürst*, however, who was weary of haggling about the terms, is said to have answered: "By all means, if she will only go."

Our St. Cecilia Choir has just begun rehearsing Graun's *Tod Jesu*, which is to be given in a church, with orchestra, on Good Friday. I still hope it will come to grief, for I think Graun's *magnum opus* a poor thing after all. I can't stand those weak, maudlin lamentations over the Passion; surely those sufferings were not meant for such pitiful wailing. And the airs! good heavens! No lapse of time can ripen or perfect what is so insipid. Contrast with this the music of many of Graun's predecessors, whom we still delight to listen to!

There's the clock striking, and I am only half dressed. This very day last year, you and I coached it from Frankfurt to Cassel. Do you remember that funny evening we spent at Spohr's, when Zahn and I played dominoes until 2.30, waiting for midnight to strike, and at last Frau Spohr burst out laughing from sheer *ennui?* My best New Year's wishes for you, your wife, and the little ones. I do hope we shall soon foregather, here or at Frankfurt. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

10.

CASSEL, *February 3rd*, 1828.

DEAREST HAUSER,—

To-day I am haunted by the old, old feeling. Before I sat down to write to you, I waited till I could fully master an idea which, when palpably within distance, seemed at once to vanish back again into space. But I am getting weary of it, as I always do, so now I send you an instalment letter, as an instalment of my next—which will most likely be another instalment. Perhaps you know Lautier's *System des Grundbasses der Musik und Philosophie* (Berlin: Duncker and Humblet, 1827), over which I am now slaving and sweating and worrying myself a great deal too much. To what extent it is a new system of Philosophy—whether it is spun from the author's own brain or that of another—I cannot say; but he often quotes Hegel with great admiration. As yet only one part of the work has appeared—viz., *The First Section of a Plan of the System of the Science of Sound.*

It is merely an introduction, but, as such, the beginning of the end, and therefore the beginning *and* the anticipated end; the explanation of the central idea or whole, by means of its two halves (Music and Philosophy), taken together, so that everything which follows can only be the development of this idea, branching off into never-ending dualism. I give you a rough sketch of these ramifications, as they would appear in space:

not in the one sense only, that these divisions as halves are half 1 and half 2 of the divided whole, but also in the *other*, that the whole as a *whole* (undivided), and the *divided part* (as identical with itself and its opposite) consequently branch off into half 1 and half 2—so that both senses hold good.

The whole work is the beginning of an infinite number of volumes, and thousands would not exhaust it; but the law of progression (*the common factor*, as mathematicians call it), or progression itself, is contained in it. I suppose you will get it, if you have a chance. The price is twenty *groschen;* one seldom makes so good a bargain. Still, it is tough reading, especially before one has got into the way of it. If it were a treatise on the combination of sounds or on the combination of algebraical symbols, I should probably feel more at my ease—those subjects suit me better; but I am utterly unused to this style of philosophical *formulæ*, and they are often far beyond me. When I met with them before, they were mere generalities to me and of no special interest. Here however, where they affect the science of music, they *are* of special interest; and for the sake of the particular things which I care for, I am obliged to understand the general terms, without which they are unintelligible.* In endless complication of meaning and conciseness of style, the book resembles a fugue of Bach's. There is nothing disjointed in it; no extract can be made without breaking

*I have not thought it necessary to translate the whole of this very involved passage, nor of others in the same letter.—A. D. C.

the threads of the connection on *every* side; or, if you take it the other way round, the whole is recognizable in every one of the detached threads; or again, every fragment *is* the whole, because the whole depends upon it. Now I, when at work on anything that engages all my mental faculties, can think about and work at only this *one* thing and no other, and so everything that goes to make up the other half of existence is not done at all, or not so efficiently as it ought to be; and that is why my thoughts and actions are faulty and one-sided. My actions are not the same as my thoughts; this is not the division which implies the idea of a whole, but mere unmeaning juxtaposition, in fact, a falsehood, *the other half* of which is the truth of this reflection.

I can't tell you how I am enjoying the *Passion Music.* Only I should like to know, whether those grand things of Bach were ever performed or not, or whether they were so wretchedly given as to produce no effect. I can imagine either alternative, as Bach himself was conductor, and yet there is no mention of any performance—at least, I have never come across any allusion to it in books which speak of the affairs of the day. His music has always been too grand for the general public, and I expect that we are not up to it, even now. Why, don't you see, the *Passion Music* is not passionate enough for the like of us; it is too antiquated in form, it is insipid, it is unenjoyable on account of the passing notes! . . .

The earliest style of polyphonic music was a combination of melodies that went well together; the latest is a succession of chords distributed amongst the vocal parts. The effect produced in the first instance—*i.e.*, harmony, is here taken for granted. However defective the former style often was in regard to harmony, the later style is often equally objectionable and unnatural in the progression of the individual parts; and when looked upon from the right point of view—as polyphonic music—much of our latest work is a great deal more barbarous than that of the earliest schools. But to condemn, not the earliest experiments, but the works of that glorious middle period—of that glorious composer who solved the two problems of harmony and the progression of

parts in such perfection that he has never since been equalled—to condemn these, I say (and we know that modern musicians think proper to do so), shows an almost inconceivable one-sidedness. They do, indeed, take one side for the whole, and that's at the bottom of the whole misunderstanding.

Spohr is now writing a Symphony in C minor. We had a rehearsal of his new Double Quartet lately; fine as it is, I prefer the first; it has more originality and freshness. Spohr's second attempt in a new *genre* is like a lake or a pool, which owes its formation to the fresh springs of his first inspiration; it is exquisitely clear, and the banks are lovely, but the mighty rush of the original stream is lovelier still. Please let me know, dear Hauser, if I am to return your Solger at once? Bach's Mass too I have kept an unconscionable time. I always thought it was going to be published, and Marx has actually advertised it lately. Have you read Krause's Göttingen Lectures on Music? As a condensed summary of Burney, Forkel, Gerber, &c., I daresay they were very well suited to his audience; but I doubt if the little volume will be of any real service to a novice, for it is nearly all bare assertion, and nothing is proved (*one half without the other*, you know). I thought the best essay of the lot was one on the music of India and of Greece, for there he really does show why *melody*, pure and simple, is nevertheless capable of finish and perfection (*the other half* of it being *recitative*).

But you will have had enough of me with my two halves. I can't keep clear of it, even in fun. The devil is in the thing. Look at this case of conscience! You threaten a man with hanging, if he doesn't say where he is going to. If he says he was going to be hanged, why then he spoke the truth, and ought not to have been hanged; if you don't hang him, why then he told a lie, and he ought to have been hanged. But it's no matter; in advanced mathematics the most complicated equations are reduced to $=0$, and their true value is derived from that kind of combination in which the quantities mutually destroy one another.

Please tell me something more about Ries's opera. He himself wrote to Spohr that it was soon going to be performed, and that *Pietro* had been shelved for a time, for want of a

suitable soprano. We are on the look-out for a new opera for the royal birthday. I suppose we must have recourse to some foreign work; between you and me, *Il Crociato* most likely. One's first feeling is disapproval; I know mine was; but where are we to find anything *new* in this country? Lindpaintner, Marschner, Alois Schmitt? Even supposing the Italian opera were inferior to ours, I should prefer it as not being German, for I had rather not parade our poverty. We are in the midst of a period like that which followed on the days of Bach and Handel, the period of the Rolles, Schweizers, Harrer, Homilius, and that galaxy of nobodies, amongst whom Graun was a star of the first magnitude. Fifty years hence, our names will be looked for in lexicons,—and not one will be wanting, for lexicons are well looked after now-a-days.

Yours,

M. H.

11.

CASSEL, *March 14th*, 1828.

DEAR HAUSER,—

I wish you were here; for besides the 150,000 reasons which "the limited space at my command" (as the journalists say) compels me to pass over, I now wish it for the additional 150,001st reason, that Beethoven's Choral Symphony is to be given on Easter Monday. We have had a few rehearsals already. It is a wonderfully grand work—quite unique—unlike anything we have ever had before. Of course there are some who, adopting a very low standpoint, see in these entirely new and original combinations and isolated passages nothing but a vain striving for effect; but Beethoven's music never gave me that impression, or, if it did, it is so long ago that I have quite forgotten it. If you look at it properly, you will see that this colossal work is based upon a foundation of deep and definite thought, the development of which makes every bar a necessity, whether beautiful or in itself ugly, connected or disconnected, conceivable or in itself inconceivable and only to be understood by the context. To-day I found a passage from Schlegel's lectures quoted in your copy of

Solger, which runs thus: "The art and poetry of the Greeks were the expression of the perfect healthiness of their existence, of the consciousness of a harmony of all their powers *within finite limits*." Now relatively speaking (not literally, you understand), might not Mozart be called antique and Beethoven modern, or, if that word be obnoxious, romantic? The art of the former seems to me to be the expression of a perfectly healthy state of existence of harmony *within finite limits*; and to expect to find in Beethoven's compositions the finish, the perfect balance of Mozart, seems to me an utter misconception of the essence of each writer. Beethoven is infinity laid open; Mozart is a circle whose infinity returns into itself. Beethoven, on the other hand, is the hyperbola which is continuously tending towards its asymptote without ever attaining to it. Hence Mozart's short but satisfying cadences, and the long, and yet unsatisfying cadences of Beethoven, which exhaust our powers of listening without exhausting the subject. Now and then he merely breaks off; witness the minuet in the A major Symphony, as also that in the last Symphony, where an apparent close makes us vividly appreciate the intrinsic incompleteness of the movement. Whenever these two composers do meet on common ground, Mozart in his boldest and most extensive, Beethoven in his most complete and finished works (generally those of his earlier period), it is but for a moment, as an ellipse is formed by a deflection from the line, which a circle and a hyperbola, or a parabola, ordinarily follow. I have no wish to invest this comparison with any oracular meaning, but would merely use it as a symbol, and amplify it by saying that Mozart's music has only *one* centre, Beethoven's two—or that Mozart is *unity*, Beethoven *duality*, disunion, suggestive of the words which Goethe makes his Faust address to Wagner: *Thou art conscious of one impulse, one alone. Oh, never learn to know the other!* I doubt, however, whether the term consciousness is to be construed in this passage in its primary sense, for this unity, this child-life in Nature, is of course nothing but the absence of consciousness, the non-existence of knowing, the failure to distinguish. I am far from using these words in a derogatory sense, for am not I speaking of our great and glorious Mozart

himself? Limiting my observations to instrumental music, I say that each of Mozart's works is the expression of *one* sensation; the exceptions are nothing more than exceptions with him, as with Beethoven. Were the last movement of the G minor Symphony to change places with the first, I should care little about the inverted order; the change would be merely external, not internal; as if, for instance, I were to put the effect where the cause ought to be. A shift like that is impracticable in Beethoven, where he is Beethoven *pur et simple*. Take the C minor Symphony: the transition from one point to another, the *construction*, is the whole thing. Mozart does not *construct*—he *is*.

I like Mozart's laughter much better than his tears; they seem to me to flow so readily that he soon gets maudlin. "You can be cheerful," I say to myself; "then why aren't you? Don't expect me to pity you!" Beethoven in a minor key is fearfully depressing, but I am with him in his gloom, I do not turn away as from unworthy sorrow; I take up arms with him against *dreadful inevitable Fate*, and I am elevated by the struggle.* But to return to the symphony—or, better still, to get done with it (only I wish you knew it too, so that we could exchange ideas on the subject). See here the Individual and Nature, distinct from one another! The development of consciousness is in reality the theme. The vocal part is simply the expression of conscious feeling, and the critic who insisted that it meant the triumph of the voice over the instruments was at fault. The sympathetic manner in which the idea has been worked out is marvellous. I often think how Mozart would revel in this music, were he alive to hear it; how he would love Beethoven just as Haydn loved him (Mozart), and enjoyed being surpassed by him. That exclusive homage paid to one composer, and to one only, goes against the grain with me. Spohr is an instance of this. Mozart is his man, and he shuts out all

* In the above comparison of Mozart and Beethoven with the spirit of ancient and modern art and poetry, Schlegel's definition of the antique is assumed to be true; but if it is not (and I incline to that opinion), a great deal of this would have to be altered, and I should say that Mozart was more of a Christian, Beethoven more of a pagan. Anyhow, Beethoven has something Promethean about him. They are both great, and, after all, they are both—men.

others. But since Mozart, in his deep reverence for Sebastian Bach, Handel, and others, studied them, and allowed himself to be influenced by them, and since Beethoven followed suit in his devotion to Mozart and his predecessors, I think Mozart is imperfectly understood, if other composers are not properly respected. They too found pleasure and inspiration in others, and therefore *everything* that is good and beautiful, either in intention or in execution, should be respected too. In Beethoven we often come across defective rhythms or violation of rules, which are good in themselves, for the sake of harmonic progression, and many other things which we should openly condemn in anyone else. Yet we cannot do so with him, for there is no rule which may not be subordinate to a higher one; or, perhaps, I should rather say, the rule *is* the subordination of details to the main point. Now suppose we were to try and improve certain passages in which Beethoven has violated the rules of harmony and of rhythm, and by the easy process of adding a tone or a bar we were to get rid of the eyesore, then we should be giving an undue prominence to conventional rules of harmony and rhythm in passages where these laws should only be subordinate incidents, and a higher law necessitates a violation of the lower one. It is as necessary that he should do this, as that we should punish a favourite child. Badness, as the other half of goodness, is in itself good, and *sham goodness* is the only thing that is bad. So it is in this best of all possible worlds!

Spohr's compositions, with all their faults, are often praised on account of the lofty spirit which permeates them all. In my judgment, there would be less to blame if there were not so much to praise. I think the want of base metal, of a certain alloy in Spohr's works, is a very real want indeed. When I say base metal, I do not, of course, mean anything despicable; I mean a certain contrast, without which gold is not gold. People applaud his wealth of beautiful harmony, but then it is always just the same; and just as in his true gold we miss the alloy, so in his full harmonies we miss those empty spaces, those powerful contrasts, which are to be found in all great composers—in Handel—even in Bach—in Mozart

—in Beethoven. It is the same with painting. The pure-spirited Raphael gives St. Barbara a commonplace expression, as compared with that of the Madonna. Shakespeare, Calderon, Goethe, have all got this commonplace side to their genius; no great poet is without it. How much there is in Mozart which, if you take it in the abstract, might have been the work of Wenzel Müller. Pure gold (Spohr) is just as one-sided, just as incomplete, as unmixed alloy (Wenzel Müller). . . .

Do write and tell me about the performance of Bach's Mass; I suppose you didn't do the whole thing? These holidays, I am bound to go for my sins to that philistine city, Dresden. Last year I shirked, and indeed I have made myself scarce ever since I left; but you see, if I kept away now, my mother would take it to heart, so go I must. I have a headache to-day, and that makes Dresden look blacker than usual. Excepting my own relations, I don't know a soul there but Franz, and I had just as soon never see him again. Besides, he is so swamped with lessons and children, that I cannot expect much of his company. In fact, it is *not quite homogeneous* (as Hosemann says) to spend one's holidays with busy people. When the gush of meeting is over, relations become strained. Far better, at such a time, to go to some place where one can live as an entire stranger. All things being equal, how much more fun we should have if you and I could be off to Switzerland together, or to some place "of that ilk," as they say in Cassel. . . .

Artaria wrote to me last week, to say he wanted a cut in the *Sanctus* of my G minor Mass; they find it too long for the service. For the same reason, he wanted me to shorten the *Hosanna*, but that I refused to do. I did suggest a possible cut in the *Sanctus* for the church service only; surely the priest can wait a minute or two, without driving me to cut my poor *Hosanna* into little pieces. The duets, *Amor timido*, and *Pièces détachées p. le P. F.*, have been printed, but no publisher for the *Ghaselen* is forthcoming. Spohr has finished his new Symphony in C minor, and it is to be given as the opening piece at our Easter Concert; we follow it up with Leo's *Miserere*, and finish with Beethoven's Symphony. I

wish you could tell me something about the Frankfurt metronomes. There are none to be had here, and Frau Spohr wants to make a present of one to her husband on his birthday, the 5th April. Those which do not give the beats audibly suit me best, but I stipulate that they mark the *tempi* correctly. H.'s cheap metronomes are badly turned out; mine gives sixty-three beats a minute instead of sixty; consequently everything regulated by it will be taken too slow. How far have you got with the Passion? I revel in the thought of it. Post-time again! If mum's the word about my compositions, there is good reason for it. "What the snow conceals the sun reveals." . . . How about Ries's opera? Of course you have heard that Heinefetter and her sister have life engagements here, at a yearly salary of 3,100 *thalers?* Good-bye. Kindest remembrances to your wife, in which Constance and Bauer join.

Yours,

M. H.

12.

CASSEL, *September 22nd*, 1828.

. . . I am glad that we both felt the time hang heavily. Your letter was welcome, though it leaves me in some doubt about your coming; can't you manage it? It would do you good too, to get quit of the *canaillerie* for a day or two; the long and short of it is and ever will be, that a rascal is a rascal. Hamlet is my authority:—

HAM. "There's ne'er a villain, dwelling in all Denmark,
But he's an arrant knave.
HOR. There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave,
To tell us this."

I often blame myself for using hard names, but I see we are in the same boat. I am at daggers drawn with our music now-a-days; my one exception is Beethoven, who had plenty to say for himself, and never spoke when he had nothing to say. Others speak so often, simply because they once learnt to speak, and because they think that Op. 85 must of necessity be followed by Op. 86 and Op. 87. How my gorge rises at those brand-new pieces, with an *initium*, not a *principium*, for a beginning; though to be sure, *à priori*,

nothing now is wanted, because their whole line of country has been surveyed and staked out. They start with the dominant of the dominant, they stick rigidly to $\frac{6}{8}$, $\frac{6}{4}$, $\frac{7}{4}$, for eight bars, introducing a melody in the key of the dominant, then a passage, and then the end of the First Part; then we have the whole repeated, whether we like it or not. I shrink from giving any description, however short, of Part II., which is always cut in the same fashion. Yet, believe me, the divisional method of Part I., as I have sketched it, and Part II., which I have left you to fill in for yourself, is not to be found fault with—still less does it originate in caprice, conventionalism, or indolence; on the contrary, I am convinced that this main division, c, g, c, has deep foundations in Nature, and so far from being adventitious, it is absolutely essential. The reason of this is it admits of expression, and has therefore been understood; but even if it were not so, we might conjecture with tolerable certainty, that what has been bequeathed as a legacy from the earliest times, and has outlived all kinds of changes, has not been capriciously adopted as a merely external arrangement. On this point I appeal to a very exhaustive treatise of mine, which, by the way, only exists in my imagination, where I expect it will be likely to remain. I am rather inclined to think that this natural division is still the only thing, which gives to such a composite affair the look of an original creation, and makes it tolerable to us. The Creator is not a maker of artificial flowers. He does not take tinsel leaves out of one box, branches out of another, roots out of a third; He lets them all grow from one germ. The germ contains everything. One part grows from another, unfolding itself into leaf and blossom, and the seed of new and never-ending variations. He does not rack His brains for new effects, whilst He is letting His trees grow, and yet each one becomes just what it was meant to be—very fairly done too in the free style! Crystals are not a bad example of the other, and there is more philosophy about them, just as there is more poetry about trees. Fugues and canons are subject to similar laws. There are exceptions, but I include all that Bach wrote. Go straight ahead; if you don't, it gets lame and halts. You ask if I

have been reading anything. Well, I have only looked into a few books, but then I have thought a good deal about them, and I must own that new light has dawned upon me lately, and some things have become quite clear, especially as regards the *science* of music. I fancy, however, you do not care about this, and I am not so foolish as to think that any good will come of it; composition is more in my line than theory. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

13.

CASSEL, *April 14th*, 1829.

DEAREST HAUSER,—

Though I have not been kept in bed, I was very far from well, I can tell you, and though on the high road to recovery, I cannot say I am yet out of the wood. That charming letter of yours was too much for me; after three or four efforts to read it, I had to put it aside. Anything like continuous reading still affects my head; I cannot concentrate my attention for any length of time, and serious work has been out of the question for months past. The only remedy, hard as I find it, is to twirl my thumbs and do nothing. Bauer promises me I shall get quite well, if I take constitutionals and don't shirk the physic; but Cassel is just the worst place in the world for Tom Idle, particularly in March and April. Give me Naples! I sigh for Naples! I am always donning my seven-league boots and scouring Vienna in spirit. But mind, I must go South! Don't you remember, when we were in Dresden together, that panorama of Sicily, close to the *Catholische Kirche?* Oh the aloes, oh the palms, oh the sunshine! How I long to unstiffen myself, to feel the warmth and beauty of that fair region! All this autumn and winter I have been worried with abstractions, till like that poor thing in the *Philister*, I don't know whether I am a goose or a goose's liver. I can't say that my present *far niente* has much of the *dolce* in it either. Sheer idleness is not much at home anywhere in Germany, certainly not at Cassel, in the months of March and April, and to work like a horse is the only way to make life endurable. (Pause.)

It is needless to say how much I enjoyed your letter, comments and original remarks included; if I say that it has more of the spirit of Mozart than of Beethoven, I mean it only in the sense that you indicated. . . . Have you got your copy of Mozart's Biography yet? I saw your name among the subscribers. His own letters and the narrative extracts from his father's are the best part of it: I will make anyone a present of the rest. A silly creature, that Herr von Nissen! flaunting his Danebrog order, and shrieking out his falsetto enthusiasm; nine times out of ten he misses the point altogether, and praises himself, or something equally irrelevant, instead of his hero. Well, it seems poor dear Mozart had a miserable time of it after the days of his childhood! nothing but a constant struggle with wretchedness of one kind or another. . . . We are going to repeat *The Last Judgment* at our Easter Concert, with *Christ on the Mount of Olives* for the second part. In one of Handel's oratorios you always have to leave out half, but it takes two modern works of this kind to fill up an evening. I have written nothing at all lately. One of the Bach family died of distress, because his work was no longer up to the mark; mine was never of any mark at all. I am a regular impostor; bad at the fiddle, bad at the piano, out and out bad as a musician—that's the sum of me at thirty-five years of age. But why plague you with my Jeremiads? I like to remember those old Cassel days, when I first met you in the *Aue*, under Spohr's auspices, and took to you at once. How new and fresh it all was! Though I had passed my teens, life was still before me, the future was hidden, and the sun shone gaily. Why, that time, compared with this, was as spring to winter! Do you remember our cosy torchlight suppers in the *Aue*, we two alone? I daresay you have forgotten it all: it's an old story now, and we are old fogies ourselves; but I could cry when I think of it. There is dry wood, where once there were green leaves. But after all there is something to be said for change of scene; it stirs one up and keeps one's life fresh. It would be another matter if, like our good old forefathers, we had to stick to the towns where we were born and bred; but it is intolerable to be tumbled

into a place like Cassel, and to have to stay there for the rest of one's life. However, to get any farther, one must be able to do something. When a fellow like me has been sitting for six or eight years in the orchestra, nobody thinks of asking whether the *Herr Kammermusikus* is really musical; but supposing he were to go to a new place? Grund has been re-engaged as *Concertmeister* at Meiningen. Rather he than I, in that snuggery with its one street, where every dog knows you, and you know every dog. Here I often take a turn through the tumbledown streets of the old town, for the mere pleasure of seeing something out of the way. Vienna, too, is full of odd corners; you never get to know it thoroughly. Oh, for the wishing-cap and the knapsack of Fortunatus! I could not have read that book at a more or less convenient time than now. You shall hear all about my winter doings in a week or so; I have not been idle, but as my first object is to banish from my mind everything associated with my recent illness, you will be content to wait. My letter is not worth the stamp; perhaps I shall be better soon. Constance is going to write to you and your wife. Good-bye. Do write. It is such a joy to me.

Yours,

M. H.

P.S.—Artaria seems shy about engraving my two Masses and the three *Versetti*. I heard last Easter from Herr Wolf, his manager or partner, that they were at work upon the voice parts of the Mass; but since then I have written twice and had no answer. He promised me, in black and white, to publish the whole work by October, 1829; but what is the use of that, if he won't do anything? He will not catch me going to law about it; but, after all the fuss there has been, I should like to see some result of my work, though no one knows better than I, how poor it is. I offered him the songs and my sonata in one of the unanswered letters. I am tired to death of it all!

14.

DRESDEN, *July 18th*, 1829.

DEAREST HAUSER,—

"Alas, my brain is all distraught!" Let me warn you, by way of preface, not to expect an answer to many of your questions. You will wonder why I am lingering on at Dresden in July, but our plans are only just formed. Constance and Adolf leave for Cassel in a day or two. They hope to induce His Royal Highness to grant me five or six months' leave, which means a trip to Italy *viâ* Vienna. Klengel would join me here about the middle of August, and after we have spent some weeks in Vienna, he wants to go on to North Italy. We bargain for mutual independence: if both are suited, well and good; but if he wants to go North and I South, we mean to part as friends. Italy will be a curious experiment for me. I have not been well since the beginning of the year, but from the time of my arrival in Dresden, I have been laid up altogether with throat and chest attacks. It is not always the same, and there are days when I am quite free, which gives me some encouragement, though I do not set much store by it. My homœopathic doctor, Trinks, absolutely declined to allow me to travel, when I asked him about it some time ago; so now it all depends on three things, which are as yet quite uncertain: leave of absence, state of health, and the doctor's consent. I shall stay here until I have the Duke's permission, that is a *sine quâ non;* though when I have got it, I may not go farther than Vienna. As that is not much more tiring than going to Cassel, Trinks would be agreeable; for once there, if I felt that travelling did not agree with me, I could go into lodgings and continue the homœopathic dosing more comfortably than I could in Cassel, if I were still grinding away at the theatre and giving lessons. It is an exceptional frame of mind, that induces me to undertake a journey that will force me into all manner of different situations and new surroundings, among people who are utter strangers to me, at a time when I am avoiding my most familiar friends, when I am depressed by everything outside myself, and when my one idea of freedom is to be shut up somewhere, behind thick walls, not a soul to know where

I am even, still less to pay me a visit. Do you remember how, in the year 1820, we sauntered together in the *Plauenscher Grund* one day, and watched the beautiful cascade for hours? We did not speak, but the waterfall did. Contrast that with the Babel at home yesterday! Pianoforte tuning in one room, singing lessons in another—let alone window cleaning, floor scrubbing, and endless chatter. Off I went in a cab to Plauen, to the same quiet, inviting spot where, in old days, we heard the plash of the waters together. Here was peace again—indescribably sweet after the daily drudgery—here I was in love with life and with other men; I was Hail fellow well met! with every chance comer, and would have done anything for him. But inside Dresden I give a wide berth to my dearest friend, fearful of his wanting to buttonhole me; in the pent-up city I am pent-up myself, a peevish, shy, odious creature; and even outside it, I am only different when alone, or with *one other* whom I love, as I do you; then, too, I must have no immediate care for the future.

20*th*.

I began my letter emotionally, but it is hard to take up the thread again; the feeling is dead before one expresses it, yet, if I did not express it, I should never write at all. "And then," as a sonnet rhymer of the thirteenth century would say, "How could I forget her?" Well! *she*, Louise v. Villers, is as charming as a lady in a sonnet, and she was with us yesterday at the Bastei.

I daresay I should have plenty to say, if I were like the man in Jean Paul, who only wants a listener to keep up conversation. I should discuss *Die Stumme von Portici*, *Aloise*, and the Nordhaüser Concert, which I attended. The two last are in the same bag; I prefer even the *Stumme* to that middle German, or middling German ware, which is about as indigestible as a stale Monday bun. Strip the *Stumme* of all her foreign frippery, spangles, tinsel, and rouge, and there is still a vital element, a fruitful germ, which I value more highly than the pure harmony and good part-writing they make such a fuss about; for "pure" and "good" are epithets misapplied often enough by quacks and ignoramuses. Bad, clumsy patchwork by bungling tailors and apprentices, thorough-bass and no

thoroughness—*i.e.*, by gentlemen absolutely ungrounded. For downright blunders, commend me to German composers; Spohr may say what he likes, I declare the Italians are far more correct. The Germans understand (or rather misunderstand) so much, that they take music to be the outcome of a bare intellectual process. Why, I have actually had pupils, to whom Nature denied the capacity for writing three notes naturally, either together or consecutively; and the idiots imagined that after plodding through a certain amount of Kirnberger and Marpurg, they could qualify themselves for composition! It has been torture to me lately to give lessons. I am not so *borné* as to try and persuade myself that I am teaching conscientiously, because I go on in the old groove, and I am still hazy in my views as to a system of instruction upon a solid scientific basis. If it were practicable, I would rather leave teaching alone for a year or two, and give my ideas time to formulate without interruption. What I teach now is neither fish, flesh, nor good red herring.

At Nordhausen, Thuringia mustered 400 people for the performance of music by F. Schneider, Maurer, Dotzauer, and Queisser. There were some selections from Spohr, which seemed to me utterly out of place. My one real treat was a first-rate rendering of the Overture to *Egmont*, and I should have been still happier, but for some monster's monstrous behaviour in strengthening the orchestra with extra trombones. After *Egmont* there was a Concerto by Maurer for four violins; as the fiddlers were Maurer, Müller, Wiele, and Spohr, the playing was glorious; but what poor, weak, spiritless stuff they played! What folly to employ four violins, often in four parts together, to the exclusion of all else besides, so that they have the big church echoes all to themselves! They were immensely applauded, but Queisser beat them with his Trombone Concerto. To be sure, the man blows a good blast, but why ask 400 people to come and hear it? Since I came here, we have had *Il Barbiere*, *Joseph*, *Hieronymus Knicker*, and Reissiger's *Libella*. Between you and me, *Libella* is one of those milk and water productions, specially concocted to please certain people. Now in art, or outside of it, if a thing be written to please *particular people*, it's *not worth a farthing*, for that is as

much as to say, it is really written to please nobody. Out of every ten listeners, each one will think it is written to suit the taste of the nine others, and yet not one of the ten will feel satisfied. It reminds me of a portrait, the subject of which presents his full face to the painter, and therefore to everyone else, whereas, if the sitter looks away from the painter, the eyes are meaningless to the spectator also. The theatre was crammed, but I am convinced that out of the four to five hundred persons present, not *one* really cared for the opera, just because it was written to please *many*. It comes to this, that there is no individuality of style; how much the composer has borrowed from Weber or Rossini is a matter of indifference. The text, compiled by a lady attached to the Saxon Court, is a poor prosaic make-up of a legend about a nymph of the Danube. If, however, they mean to give it in Vienna or in Cassel, let them do so! I have nothing better to propose, if they want a new German work with any originality or stuff in it. But I am getting into a bad habit of pulling things to pieces, and as this scurrilous fashion is my pet aversion in other people, I must try and give it up betimes. So now let us go on to something pleasant—our trip to Italy! Are you really serious about it, or only amusing yourself? You can imagine, or rather you *cannot* imagine the delight it would be to me, to take that journey with you. Yesterday I got Spohr's answer to my letter, in which I told him that I could not return to Cassel. I only hinted at my wish to visit Italy, but he was kind enough to set about getting me leave of absence at once. Constance left us yesterday to do her best in the matter; I really think I shall succeed. If I get leave, I shall start for Vienna with Klengel, about the middle of August. I hope this business will be settled soon. How about expenses? Do you think that from six to eight hundred *thalers* will see us out for six months? It is a pity I don't understand the art of getting fees when I am on the road. I dare say I should not extend my holiday, even if I had a full purse and unlimited leave, but it is rather oppressive to be so tied. Naples and Rome attract me more than anything else; but Klengel is more inclined for Milan and that neighbourhood. Far from contemplating a tour for the sake of *Art*, I am

just now utterly unprepared for such a thing, and in no humour for the special study required beforehand. I want to travel for the sake of *Nature*. Art really means the understanding of Nature, or Nature awakened to understand; and as just at present my understanding is in a morbid, sickly state, and my mind swollen to an abnormal size, like the goose's liver in the *Philister*, I shirk everything that affects it. Not that it is a colossal mind naturally; it is only diseased. I have not been to the Gallery, but yesterday I heard Beethoven's Symphony in F played in the *Grosser Garten;* it was quite new to me, yet I could not stand it. If the weather is fine, I delight in driving aimlessly about the neighbourhood of Dresden, among the trees, in the sunshine, letting my fancy build castles in the air, or thinking of past days. That does me real good. Writing to me about Artaria, you said that Conradin Kreutzer had put some of his own work into my Mass. I knew that already. They have cut out the body of the *Sanctus*, and stuck the head and tail together. Kreutzer has substituted something else for the *Hosanna* fugue; to be sure, this was for the performance; but deuce takes him, if he means to print the work in that fashion! However, I shall be in Vienna in time to see to that. Of course, a Mass ought not to be in the least like those which we are accustomed to hear. Palestrina is undoubtedly the best of all models. I have just returned from hearing a Mass by Reissiger. I can't help what I say: with all due respect for tradition, it really will not do; and besides, the music is very inferior, and there is nothing sacred about it. The *Sanctus* is quite atrocious, and the rest of the work wishy-washy stuff, the like of which I never met with yet from any young composer. The Mass was preceded by a sermon from Girardot on the text, "What lack I yet?" The sermon was better than the Mass, and the question ought to be put into the mouth of our present composers of church music. . . . Between the *Gloria* and the *Credo* they played a Symphony by Dotzauer, written in the style of Andreas Romberg, and quite as effectively; the music acquired a certain dignity from its surroundings, and I was pleased with it, and with Schuster's Offertorium

as well. Here I constantly attend the Lutheran Church services, but if I am to speak the truth, our clergy seldom give me any feeling of the Church itself; it is more like preparation, religious instruction by men who are more or less able teachers, with now and then a Quintus Fixlein among them, who squares the length of his sermon with the time of his Sunday dinner. How often are we exhorted from the pulpit to be diligent Church-goers! Does it not jar on you rather? I think it would be better, if the pulpit stood in front of the church door, so that the man who is in it could practise his own preaching. I remember we once got a sample of the newly-discovered potato-sugar, which had so little power of sweetening, that we were obliged to fill our cups to the brim with it—but then there was no room left for the coffee . . .

Yours,

M. H.

15.

Rome, *November 3rd*, 1829.

My dear Hauser,—

I had rather not start with the old sham excuse we have tried so often: "If you had got all the letters I thought of writing," &c., or, "How many times I have written to you in thought," &c. You would say: "I had rather he had thought of me in writing." Enough of that sort of thing! I had to write home from Florence and Rome, and to Cassel as well. I would fain have told you all that I told them; but the endless sights of famous cities have not only kept me incessantly on the tramp—they have so completely dissipated my thoughts, that I want a little quiet time to recover myself. At Venice one can think of nothing but the Piazza of St. Mark and the Lagunes; at Bologna the Arcades come uppermost; at Florence the Palazzo Vecchio, the Venus de Medici, and many other things. In Rome, even at the Porta del Popolo, the mere thought of being in Rome annihilates all others; I had to pull myself together, before I could even pay a visit to the Coliseum, the Pantheon, St. Peter's, and so on. Though a whole fortnight has elapsed since my arrival, I feel as if I had only just come; and I am so absorbed in sight-

seeing, that it is out of the question to sit down and write you a decently connected letter. I am incessantly on my legs; you must put up with scraps and fragments. I dare not think—much less would I have you think—that this is a letter from Rome; it hasn't the faintest look of it; and where is the motto from Horace, that ought to stand at the top? I should have got him up better before I came; it would flatter one's vanity to walk about the Capitol with a pocket edition. That everlasting *I also was born in Arcadia* has been overdone, and you know the second quotation—*It is a special providence that trees stop short of the sky;* true enough, but not strictly applicable in this instance. *Age gives us our fill of what we wanted in our youth* (*Was man in der Jugend wünscht hat man im Alter die Fülle*); that too is true to a certain extent, but the reverse is also true—namely, what we want in old age we had our fill of in youth—youth's fulness. Another abuse of terms! As a fact, every truth is of universal application; and if Providence has taken care that trees should stop short of the sky, it does happen now and then that the germ which promised to develop into a splendid tree turns out a sickly shrub, lop-sided, stunted, and with no crown of leaves to boast of. But why should I talk philosophy? I had rather be sitting out in the Campo vaccino or the Coliseum; there I can bask in delightful sunshine, and sunshine, you know, is the very thing for my rheumatism. I am lodging in one of the big houses in the Via dé Condotti, a noble street between the Corso and the Piazza di Spagna; but the sun has not yet succeeded in getting round the corner, and I shiver to the tips of my fingers and toes. These stone floors are first-rate for rheumatics (*Fluss*), and gentlemen with gouty hands and feet. I cannot say they help *the flow of my thoughts*, which are congealed past thawing. To take up the thread of my discourse again, let me ransack my threadbare journal, and copy an extract from my diarrhetic diary. The cold stone flooring of my Roman study is guilty of this threadbare Shakespearean clown's wit; once out in the sunshine, I shall recover my senses.

Sunday, November 1st.

I have now heard the Papal Choir—yesterday at Vespers,

and to-day in a Mass. The function was not in the Sixtine Chapel, but at Monte Cavallo; for the Pope is still living there, and will not return to the Vatican before Advent. The music was entirely different to that which I lately heard at St. Peter's (see an earlier passage of this work). From all accounts, it must be wanting in many of the characteristics of the Sixtine Choir. I have picked up a copy of Allegri's *Miserere*, and written it out for myself as they sing it—*i.e.*, with *pianos* and *fortes*, and those very significant embellishments, which make such flourishes on paper, that it is difficult to believe that any choir can execute them. But you must remember that even in works written for a double choir, they never have more than two or, at most, three singers to each part; if it be a small choir, a single voice is employed; and this style of music is sung in such slow *tempi*, that the *fioriture* can be sung simultaneously, by different voices, without producing a clash. The first movement I heard here was in six parts; music of the really severe order, and, of course, without a spark of sentimentality; it had all the effectiveness of a well-defined style, though the disconnected progressions and the harshness of the fifths were trying enough. There was not the faintest trace of the famous *crescendo* and *diminuendo* effects, which people compare to Æolian harps, there was not even a *piano* nor a *forte;* it was all like a single organ-stop throughout, but the intonation was never at fault, and the singers knew how to produce their voices. The music of each part is so thoroughly vocal, that it does not require of the singers that special knowledge of harmony, which modern music so often necessitates, when the singer, in getting from one note to another, has to think of all sorts of things betwixt and between. The first movement was the best; all that followed was very inferior. Those never-ending *Responsoria* are wearisome to a degree. They are well sung, but as music I never heard such crude, misshapen stuff. Rome is certainly the very last place in the world where we should require anything to be modern in order to think it beautiful, only I don't want it more than four hundred years old, or less than eighteen hundred. These are the first efforts of the very dark days, when people were just beginning to feel the necessity of

harmony. They have the *canto fermo* in the bass, the tenor takes the upper third, the alto doubles the bass, the soprano the tenor. These doublings, horrid as the effect is, are not the worst part of the matter; the excruciating thing is the unceasing succession of thirds $\begin{matrix} a & b \\ f & g \end{matrix}$ and the tritone in every possible form. On the other hand, the close is always in strict accordance with rule, and in full harmony—a release from torture, a return to Nature. The movements are often very long; when they are over, the priest says a few words, and the choir ends with

Sop. c d c
Ten. g g g
B. c d c

These *Responsoria* are doubtless quite different from other movements written in accordance with the rules of Art—*i.e.*, in accordance with the laws of Nature; but they make one so fidgety and uncomfortable, that all one longs for is peace and silence. If the number is not short enough for the audience to remember the begining and the end together, a sort of chaotic discomfort takes possession of one's mind during these regular movements. I always used to feel like a mariner on the open sea without a compass, when I was reading or playing these old things; try as hard as I would, it was sometimes more than I could do to get through them. And it is just the same at a performance. I am the worst of listeners; the opening and the introduction sound well enough, but when we look for a *central point* there is none to be found, nothing but slides from one harmony to another, rhythm and modulation vague and shapeless to the end of the chapter. For this reason, I much prefer those movements which are to a certain extent intelligible as one period. I can listen to them with pleasure, and I have no hesitation in saying that they come nearer genuine church music than all the music we have in church. But I am always master of the situation, I am never fascinated nor carried away, I can always distinguish between what is good, what is better, what is worse, what is bad. Of course I know that the accessories of the Sixtine Chapel enhance the effect, particularly for those who know nothing about music, but people like you and me cannot abandon themselves completely to the spell; we are in the

clutches of the demon of criticism—and indeed nothing divine is possible without him. (The first Creation emanated from Unity, and multiform Nature was the product; we, though mindful of *Unity*, can only piece our work together, selecting from amidst endless forms, colours, sounds, or words, the development or expression of that Unity.) The Sixtine is the proper home for this music, for there is plenty of reverberation there, and echo helps the effect. The *Miserere*, which is the show piece, is sung very slowly, in long-drawn chords, which swell and die away in almost total darkness. Before it begins, the lights are still kept burning in the choir, and the great works of Michael Angelo, Perugino, and others, stimulate feelings of devotion far more than the painted pilasters and arabesques *alla greco* at Monte Cavallo. I cannot say I was much impressed by the externals of a function, in which the Pope and twenty-five Cardinals were the chief features. The Pope sits under his canopy, and hardly stirs the whole time; once or twice the Gospels are held up in front of him, and he bows, or kisses the book. Each Cardinal arrives separately, and all of them seem to go through the service as a matter of business; with few exceptions, they look more like diplomatists and politicians than priests. The great entrance is thronged with their liveried servants, for every Cardinal has from three to four footmen attending his carriage. The *Cortile* is filled with gorgeous state equipages, and here you first perceive that you are in the midst of a distinguished company, though it looks more like a court ball than a church service. Full evening dress is indispensable; some gentlemen in white hats and overcoats were refused admission, but managed, *per nefas*, to get in later. Before the Mass, Pettrich the sculptor took me to see Thorwaldsen, such a genial, kindly, fatherly old fellow, I should like to have hugged him! He lives, with his two big dogs, in his two rather untidy rooms, full of fine pictures, chiefly by young artists of the present day, wonderfully good specimens; I should have been proud to own the worst of them. There were several visitors coming and going besides ourselves, and the conversation was general. Afterwards we went into the *atelier* or *studio*, as they call it here. The kindliness of his manner charmed me at once, and the feeling

culminated in veneration, when I saw him surrounded by his own works. These statues give me a feeling of purity and dignity, such as I have never had with Canova. I never could bring myself heartily to admire this sculptor, in spite of the extravagant praise lavished upon him, especially by the Italians, who idolize him; it always seems to me there is something untrue about it, something fatally external or meretricious. In spite of the drapery with which she half conceals herself, Canova's Venus in the Pitti Palace is quite willing to make the most of her charms; Thorwaldsen's Venus has no drapery at all, but the outlines are so true, the expression of her face is so divinely pure, that it is not possible to feel the slightest taint of immodesty. This glorious statue is in England; we only saw the plaster cast of it. The largest work Thorwaldsen has now in hand is a colossal statue of Pope Pius VII. for St. Peter's; his Holiness is sitting in the Papal chair, with two great female figures, Wisdom and Strength, one on each side of him; they are wonderfully simple and dignified. I saw many other fine things in the studio—the Three Graces, in bas-relief, were very lovely. I liked them less as statues; there was something disagreeable in such a mass of soft nudity. On the whole, I fancy that Christian subjects would suit an artist like Thorwaldsen better than Pagan subjects; the sphere of the antique is limited, and it must be difficult to express oneself with any originality, after what has been done already. Amongst the perpetual repetitions of Bacchus and Alexander in Thorwaldsen's large and highly finished bas-reliefs, I could not discover a single new figure. I speak, to be sure, only as an ignorant amateur, though I yield to none in my feelings of deep admiration for such an artist as Thorwaldsen.

How odd it seems, that in six weeks I shall be back again at Cassel, at work in the old groove! Rehearsal from 9 a.m. to 12.30, then a game of billiards for an hour with Spohr, then dinner, with the prospect of a dead-alive afternoon. From three to six, fifths and octaves, from six to ten *William Tell*, then to bed; and next morning the same old story over again. Here I often don't know where to begin, there is such an *embarras de richesses*, and I miss all sorts of things, simply

from not knowing which to choose. Yesterday morning I paid another visit to Roma vecchia, the Baths of Caracalla, the Sepolcro di Scipione, the Circo Massimo, and the tomb of Cecilia Metella, which are all of the grand and colossal order, as compared with modern Rome. The most colossal of all is and ever will be the Coliseum, not on account of its extent, for the Baths of Caracalla are much larger, but because in these ruins everything converges to one centre; it is the grand unity which works so powerfully on the imagination, a feeling that we can take in the whole and understand it at one glance. I was a long time alone there the other day. I made the Capucine monk unlock the door of the staircase, and leave me to make the ascent by myself. It was glorious sunshiny weather, the distant hills were obscured in haze, nothing disturbed the deep solitude and silence but the harmless lizards, darting out of the bushes that grow in the crevices of the old walls. From the opposite side of the ruins, I had a glorious view of the distant heights of Albano and Tivoli, with their aqueducts and pine trees. A large wooden cross, with fourteen little altars round it, stands in the midst of the huge, now silent and grass-grown arena. How suggestive, how eloquent the whole scene was! I felt glad to be alone, and glad to know, when I saw several ladies and gentlemen coming up, that they were not acquaintances of mine; but, in fact, so far from disturbing me, they only made the situation more interesting while they were there, and I soon lost sight of them.

No time for more. Klengel is about to return home, and offers to take my letter. Next week (D.V.) I go to Naples, but I shall not stay there longer than ten or twelve days. I have had no letter at all since I left home, but I wrote to you from Vienna, to Constance from Florence, and to my mother from Rome. My three months' leave will soon be at an end, and I really must know what I am going to do. Money is not so needful as one imagines, but time is more needful still. Good-bye, dear old Hauser. My kind love to your wife and children. Remember me to Fräulein Blahetka. Perhaps I may return by Vienna, but I don't know yet. I should like to write more, but I must stop. Yours,

M. H.

16.

NAPLES, *December 3rd*, 1829.

MY DEAR OLD HAUSER,—

I begin upon a crumpled half-sheet—the only one I have—for if I go to the stationer's, something is sure to prevent my writing, and I shall get no talk with you at all. I can only manage it now, because I really do want to exchange a few words with you. Scores of times have I resolved to write regularly, scores of times have I failed, and here it is more difficult than ever. Here you are a Neapolitan before you know it, the *dolce far niente* is in the air, and you lose yourself and your insignificant powers of action in the strength and activity of outward nature. But it is only a passing feeling, for in this very Naples, I am beginning to sigh for my return to dull but cosy Germany. I am like the excursionist who, on reaching the loveliest point after a long tramp, begins to think wistfully of his study lamp and the familiar faces on his bookshelves. It would be quite another thing, were I to come and take root here. The beauty of the country defies all description. One must get as far as Naples to know Italy well: Rome, Florence, and every other place I have seen, has something of the gloomy North in comparison. If I had cash enough and to spare, I would venture my luck here for a year, after which I expect I should go home again with alacrity. We are steeped in our native German juices, so that it is impossible to feel at home here. I am not saying this to our credit or discredit, but just as the *Faust* element in us prevents us from feeling that we are utter strangers, it prevents us from feeling that we are quite at home anywhere. Here amongst the lemons, the dark leaves, and the golden oranges of Naples, Mignon's *Know'st thou the land* awakes in me the romantic longing for a far-off country, just as powerfully as though I were singing it in Dresden or Cassel. No stage-coach, no steamboat can transport us to that Italy. Goethe himself could not get there. *Know'st thou the mountain and his cloudy path*, says he; but when he gets here (see Vols. XXIII. and XXIV.) all that he finds is "Quartz, field-spar, and crumbling rubble." I want to read over again Tieck's observations, in his

Correspondence with Solger, upon Goethe's journey to Italy, for when I read it before, I was out of sympathy with him. Just now this unbroken, unchanging sunshine is rather irritating to me, and I gladly take refuge in my recollections of *Faust* and *Werther*. *Tant pis pour moi* perhaps, but really I cannot bring myself to say, as regards Germany, *Thank Heaven, that's at an end.**

6th.

For the last two days I have been busy writing for the San Carlo Theatre, where Tosi and Lablache are starring it. That sounds very grand, but the bubble will soon burst, when I tell you that it is only recitatives for Benedict's opera. It is to be given on the 12th January, though the first Act is not nearly finished. Benedict is just what he was in old days; he writes pretty flowingly, and there is a good deal of Southern colour in his works. I have been very shabbily treated by the weather; anyone who depended upon it would be in a bad way indeed. Almost every morning, I wake up to hear torrents of rain rattling on the pavement, and barring one or two really good days, we have not had more than occasional rehearsals of fine weather, just enough to show what Naples really is. My passport was ready yesterday, but how can I go off without ascending Vesuvius?—a hopeless prospect in this incessant wind and rain. The mountain is always capped with thick mist, and the ascent is such a stiff business, even for a man in health and strength, that I can't think of it just now. If it is only decent weather to-morrow, I shall drive to Pæstum, a three days' excursion. If it rains, I give up Pæstum and Vesuvius, and go to Rome; and if I can get across the Apennines, I shall return in all haste to Germany. Perhaps I shall take Vienna *en route;* after Rome and Naples, I care very little about the towns of North Italy. I hope to find letters waiting for me in Rome; no one, except my mother, has written to me since I left. My time is up on the 25th November, and not having any news from Cassel, the French leave I have taken prevents my feeling quite *dans mon assiette*. Had I an extension of formal leave, I should, of course, prefer to spend the winter months here, and once

* See Letter 5.

settled down, I could pursue as a relaxation what I am now doing as a business. I have met a very charming Princess Wolkonsky here, a sister of that Prince Repnin with whom I lived four years in Russia. She offered me a beautiful apartment in her hotel on the Chiaja, with a lovely view of the sea, Vesuvius, and Capri, and I am as well taken care of as I could wish, and never have the slightest feeling of *gêne*.

All the time I was at Rome, I was perpetually haunted by visions of your coming; sometimes, in my great eagerness, I could not help thinking "He *must* come," just as Johanna von Montfaucon used to say "It *must* lighten." But, alas! it never did lighten. *De mortuis nihil*, &c., but as the gentleman I am thinking of lives only for his canons, and there are many things in life which are not canons—well, I don't want to make a fuss about it, but I did feel more at my ease when we parted company! It is a dream that I shall never realise; but what a delight it would be to have this tour over again, with you for my travelling companion! I am pretty well up in the geography, and we could dispense with those odious guides and *cicerones*. It would be perfect. (Pause again.) If it goes on in the way it has begun, this letter will tell you all about my return journey, and I shall end with being my own postman. Hardly had I written "perfect" when a friend called in to take me out for a bit; the weather had cleared, Vesuvius was enveloped in smoke instead of clouds, and as I could not reckon on a better day amongst the few that are left to me, I mounted a *calesca* in hot haste, and drove off to Resina, the starting-point of the ascent. I have done the deed; *O, but 'tis terrible on the heights!* So much so, that I wonder Virgil did not make it the entrance to Tartarus, in preference to the much less awe-inspiring neighbourhood of Cumæ. The climb to the top takes it out of one fearfully. At Resina I mounted a mule, and rode for more than two hours; our path leading through the *Lacrima Christi* vineyards, across the desolate, weather-worn tracts of lava, which are easily distinguishable by their different colours. The guide knows the year when each stream appeared; the uppermost dates from 1822. We next passed through a deep defile, full of the *débris* which overwhelmed Pompeii in the year 79. A short halt was made at the

Hermitage, where we lunched on cheese, washed down with some tolerable wine; then we rode on again for about an hour. At every step the scene becomes more desolate and dreary, for all vestige of organic nature disappears, and all around nothing is to be seen but mere rigidity, fragments of lava caked together, scattered about by chance, or arbitrarily. So it seems at least, though looked at more narrowly, it is one and the same law of nature that produces not only the rose and the lily, but also these uncouth masses. At the foot of the cone we dismounted, leaving the mule tethered to a rock of lava, and free to pursue his own meditations. The guide uses the mule's bridle as a shoulder-strap for the climber, and then comes the tug of war. For every forward step you take in scrambling up the steep, over the loose fragments of lava, you slip back two, and often you drop down from sheer exhaustion. In clear weather, the distant view may be a sufficient recompense for all this labour, but my journey was something like ascending the Harz in winter. From the Hermitage I could see, peering through the mist, the Bay of Naples and the adjacent Islands, but from the crater I saw nothing but the immediate surroundings, and in these nothing but death. The last bit of the ascent took me three-quarters of an hour. No book can ever give a real idea of the crater; to indulge in an utterly prosaic simile, it looks like a hollow tooth. Oh fie! The upper cavity is about as large as the Königsplatz in Cassel. The old crater is only three hundred yards deep, and since last July a new lateral crater has appeared, and broken out into a harmless eruption of smoke. From the foot of the mountain, this smoke looks much denser than it does when you come nearer to it. I had a horror of sulphur, but the smell was a mixture of steam and muriatic acid. I am boring you with my stale information. Vesuvius is to be seen, not talked about.

I have been to three opera houses and two theatres. There are some ten houses of public entertainment; I draw the line at the almost imperceptible transition to the Pulcinellos and Marionettes in the open street. San Carlo is a beautiful house, and splendidly constructed for music; the singers always fancy that they must shout *fortissimo*, if they are to

be heard in so vast a space, but all that is required is a good resonant voice, and then you need only exert it in moderation. Lablache, whom I think you have heard, is the one first-rate artist. Tosi is charming in some ways. Boccabardati whines rather than sings, and makes grimaces as if she had swallowed rhubarb; in spite of this, she is a great favourite. This evening Fodor Mainville re-appears, after an absence of four years.

17.

MY DEAR HAUSER,— ROME, *December* 21*st*, 1829.

Here I am back again from Naples—let us say Calabria; it sounds farther off, and Eboli and Pæstum do really belong to Calabria. My last expedition from Naples was over. A week beforehand, I had taken a seat in the *vetturino* for my return journey to Rome, and owing to the persistent bad weather, I had given up Pæstum; but on thinking matters over again, I felt I should never forgive myself, if I went home without seeing those two genuine bits of the old world. It is not so easy to get to Pæstum from Cassel, as it is from Naples. Forfeiting a few *piastres* for my intended ride in the diligence, I started next day for Salerno, accompanied by a young Frenchman (of whom more anon) and an old Scotchman, and we all went on to Pæstum together. It was a three days' journey, and we had a rare good time. The columns of the Temple of Neptune at Pæstum seem to dwarf the proportions of all modern architecture, and even Roman work looks like the age of Louis XIV. beside it. I am glad to have one more picture like this in my memory; we fancy we know these things, because we have seen the ground-plan, the skeleton, and, perhaps, a model of the perspective,—and lo and behold! when we get to the place, it is perfectly different, and we have never seen anything like it. Knowing how unsatisfactory any written account must be, I write but little; indeed, I shrink from describing what is simply indescribable.

On arriving at Rome, I found no letters at the Post Office, so I looked up my friend Aubel, the painter, to see if he had been for them. Again I was disappointed, and trudged off a second time to the post. There was your letter of the

5th, which they had overlooked. I feel certain that Constance must have written to me, but I have not got her letter. Moral: on future occasions don't direct *poste restante*. Of course I counted on getting a satisfactory budget, but as there is nothing, I am still fatally ignorant of what is doing in Cassel, and back I must go—at the risk of being snowed up in the Apennines—to find out. I shouldn't mind, if I knew it were necessary, but most likely they have written to say there is no hurry, and after I have started, I shall learn that I need not have gone. I was so comfortably housed in Naples, and so well cared for by the kind-hearted Princess W., that I would gladly have spent the winter there. Isn't it strange that such a solitary hermit as I am should get on so well with a Russian fine lady of the first rank, and that her delicate kindness should never oppress me with a galling sense of obligation? She gave me letters to the Russian Ambassador here, by means of which I can secure a good place in the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore, where the Papal choir sings at Matins on Christmas Day. She also gave me letters to her intimate friends, Boieldieu and Cherubini, invoking their hospitality in the event of my going to Paris. And all this goodness was absolutely unrequited by me! Were I a *virtuoso*, I might have played her something; but there I sat mute in my own apartment, and gave her nothing at all in return for everything she had done. There is one little episode I must tell you of, for it is rather funny. The Princess had introduced me to the Archbishop of Tarentum, the octogenarian Mæcenas of Naples, and I used to go frequently to his house. One day he asked me to try his piano, an old Schanz, and for very good reasons I played nothing but a chord or two, but somehow or other my modulations delighted the old gentleman, who had himself been a pupil of Martini's at the Bologna Conservatoire. That being so, I refrained from modern vagaries and only introduced the all-abhorred diminished seventh with a sparing hand. Now it chanced that Madame Bertrand, who shared Napoleon's exile at St. Helena, had sent the Archbishop what she called a "characteristic" waltz, composed by her on the Island, and he was longing to hear it. The Princess promised him that

I should play it, and when I came to hear of the agreement, all my vows and protestations that I could not play the piano were in vain. It was no use getting angry; I found that I must yield or be thought uncivil. So candles were put on the piano, the music was set before me, and a circle of listeners took their places round the instrument, as if they thought they were going to hear Hummel or Moscheles. I could not help a chuckle, when I saw them all under the delusion that they were going to listen to Madame Bertrand's waltz, knowing the whole time that it wouldn't be anything of the kind. However, something had to be played, if only to make the people get up again. I looked carefully at the cramped notes of the music, and began to extemporise a waltz of some sort in 3/4 time, imitating as best I could the principal features of the MS. The Archbishop was at my side, looking over the music; so where the notes went up, I went up; where there were quavers, I played quavers; and once or twice I shifted my hands across, where the passage seemed to require it. My only object was to get through a rhythmical something or other without breaking down; the rest was not my affair, but Madame Bertrand's. No waltz lasts longer than three or four minutes, and I was careful not to make mine an exception. Then came the compliments and discussions; they thought it charming, only some of them doubted whether it was quite suitable for a dance, on account of its *elegiac character*, and so forth. I know I was glad enough to get out into the open air, and very glad indeed that it was dark; the more I thought over what had passed, the more ludicrous it seemed to me, and I laughed till I cried. Still I must say, people like ourselves ought to be able to play the piano, and to read at sight, not for the sake of such a waltz as that, but for many other reasons—and it is not my incapacity that makes me laugh. I maintain, indeed, that anyone who busies himself solely with generalities, or is interested only in the connection of everything with everything else, is just as one-sided as he who is a sworn specialist; and the latter is worth more as a companion and a conversationalist, not only to one person, but to many.

I wish you dear people could appreciate the delight it is

to a wanderer in a strange land, to get news of his home; you would write oftener, could you feel the pleasure that every little word gives. But if I mean to scold, I know I ought to begin with myself. Your letter was more precious than I can say. So long ago as the 23rd October, my mother told me she was going to write to you, to thank you for all your kindness to me, when I was in your house. It touched her deeply. But you must forgive one who has not the pen of a ready writer. You know how often *we* let an opportunity slip by, though *we* are better hands at it. But my mother has the greatest esteem and affection for you and your wife. I can't give you much comfort as regards cellos and oil-paintings. Now and then I have heard of good violins for sale, but, when I enquired the price, I was told that they averaged from a hundred to a hundred and fifty Carolins, and the same tariff may be quoted for the pictures. I would rather turn thief at once. There are no end of private galleries: the Corsini Gallery, the Albini, the Barberini, and a dozen other *inis*, with gems on every wall. I wouldn't take the famous things, only the second best, for my little collection. These palaces stand empty from one year's end to the other—a custodian is their sole tenant,—and Englishmen, who hurry through them, are the only visitors. Queer fish they are too! We have one here just now, who is making a tour through the whole of Italy, on his way to Sicily, accompanied by forty-five *big dogs*. (This is not a misprint.) I have lately travelled in company with English, French, Italians, and Germans, and I find that in assurance and *aplomb* our dear compatriots are far behind them all. We are at our worst when, in the society of Frenchmen, we try and affect the French *tournure*. I never saw a Frenchman affecting a German or an English *tournure*, or an Englishman trying any other than his own. On my way from Bologna to Naples, I often came in contact with a young Englishman and his wife; I used to meet them either on the road or in the picture galleries. This young couple travelled about everywhere *en prince;* they paid no more than the rest of us, but they insisted on getting everything, and they got it. Yet the gentleman was, after all, only a curate, who wanted to see a little of the world before settling

down to his parochial duties. Think of our unbeneficed clergy—poor little humble creatures! Fancy their having the pluck to marry, to travel to Naples, and insist on having the fat of the land! Their highest flight, after the most mature deliberation, would be at best a trip to some provincial town, where they would put up at *The Green Donkey* or *The Black Boar*, and clean their own boots. *Par parenthèse*, my reverend friend always went out, even in Italy, with dirty boots, so that when he left his hotel, he could put off the servant with words in place of money, and then get his boots cleaned in the street for three *bajocchi* (*économie de bout de chandelle*). If ever he liked anything, which happened seldom enough, he immediately counted it up in *scudi*. He reckoned his first view of the Coliseum, on a fine warm day, at five *scudi* and a few *bajocchi*, but as the bad weather hindered him now and then from settling his travelling expenses in this manner, and as he was in a constant state of nervousness about his "personal security," he left Rome in very ill-humour, and often declared that his trip had proved a complete failure. You wanted amusing society, he would say, for such an undertaking—as it was, he was dreadfully bored. I don't know whether I should have been more amused or annoyed to have had his company farther, for in the neighbourhood of Terracina and Fondi, coming down Vesuvius at night, and travelling in the dark from Pæstum to Salerno, "personal security" is rather a risky matter. Perhaps it is just as well that our roads diverged, for travelling companions ought to be better suited to one another than we were.

Rome, when I first arrived, seemed to be a noisy, bustling city; but now that I have returned from Naples, I find it, by contrast, lonely and quiet as a cloister. What madcaps Neapolitans are! All day long Bedlam seems to have been let loose on the Toledo, it is a refuge for whole regiments of escaped lunatics. I don't see how this mad revelry can be exceeded, even in the Carnival time. That reminds me, the Pope is said to be seriously unwell, and people are getting apprehensive about the success of this year's Carnival. At Naples the theatres have been closed for a week, and here for a much longer period, on account of Christmas. Rome looks her best

at a time like this, when she is given up to representing the great Church of the whole Christian world. I think the women are more attractive too, going in crowds to Mass in those sober winter dresses which are so becoming. Well for us, that we have all been children once! The echo of the unutterable delight with which they welcome Christmas, is heard long afterwards, and dark indeed is the lot of any man, who does not feel the graciousness of this hallowed season!

You ask about the theatres. Wherever there was any music, there I went, but I seldom stayed beyond the first Act, though occasionally I had to sit through the second, so as to get in a few scenes of the ballet. First impressions are favourable; the Opera Houses here are much finer and better built than ours. Now and then one hears a German fiddler who is up to the mark, but it cannot be denied, that the Italians have a better tone, both in singing and playing. Grating bass voices like Föppel's, untuneful tenors like Albert, are not to be found here, and they never aim at making effects unless they are sure of them. An Italian audience is as merciless to a vocalist who breaks down as we are to a *virtuoso* who does not understand his business. Let the *prima donna* be as beautiful as an angel—let her, like a certain German soprano we know of, indulge in washy *roulades* without any form at all, and she will be hissed to a certainty. The production of the voice is better than I expected, but the airs and grimaces of the singers are quite intolerable. Lablache is the most natural, Tosi and a few others are moderately good artists, but, as a rule, the *prime donne* stand in the same relation to genuine artists as harlots to virgins. And then their irredeemable ugliness! Could they behave themselves quietly, no one would care about that, but as it is, they live on artistic misconduct. The composers are just as immoral, for the success of the opera not seldom hinges on certain passages which go against all our instincts; cut them out, and no one would care a pin for what is left! Look at Pacini's new Opera, *I Fidanzati;* the music has nothing whatever in it, and I could not describe to you its utter worthlessness, and yet, in spite of all that, it is popular. Donizetti and Caccia too are clever fellows, but neither of them has produced *one* really good opera; they

never have any time to wait for the moment of inspiration, or to let their music ripen. They begin to write an opera, a month before its performance. Directly the *Fidanzati* was over, Paeini started the same night for Milan, where he was under a contract to bring out a new opera three weeks later on; a second work was due at Parma, and not a note of either of them had he written. The arrangements for stage and orchestra are defective; the leader of the band has no score before him, but conducts from a part with two lines,—which represents something, of course, but not much.

I send you this letter, which I began at Naples; here is the best part of it—the clean page—which I will adorn with my Full Close. Let me see; am I quite clear about my journey home? Come what may, I certainly shall not stay on for the Carnival. I feel rather inclined to make an early start, as I cannot dangle on here for months without express leave, and a few days more or less are not worth thinking about. I really must pull myself together, and do some work of the *fireproof order* (as Fixlein calls his collection of misprints), so home is the thing for me—whether by the long round of Milan and Vienna, I cannot say yet. It is strange that directly I came back here, I longed for churches and picture galleries again. To-day I went to see the lovely Sibyl in Della Pace, and after that, Raphael's series of frescoes of Amor and Psyche and Galatea, in the Farnesina. In the Hall of Galatea there is a colossal chalk head by Michael Angelo, who is said to have entered the room in Raphael's absence, and irritated by the softness and voluptuousness of the subject, and the way in which it was treated, dashed off this wildly powerful head in his anger. The name of the Frenchman I alluded to in my account of the expedition to Pæstum, is Despréaux; he is a prizeman of the Paris Conservatoire. As he expects to be in Vienna in a few years' time, I gave him a letter to you; he is a little shy of Germany, because he does not know the language. Adieu, dear Hauser! Perhaps we may meet soon. Don't expect me to write from Milan. This is not the time of year for a journey, but I have no choice. Kind regards to your dear wife. Yours,

M. H.

18.

CASSEL, *June 9th*, 1830.

. . . I OFTEN feel as if all the fiddles in the world, and my own in particular, were utterly indifferent to me; then there is an interval when I brighten up, and cannot, for love or money, get a decent fiddle to play upon. Spohr, and a young Englishman of the name of Moawks (a neat and finished violinist), have been playing me my new Duets. Wiele was Spohr's substitute at the second performance,—but it is odd, how little pleasure such people can give me! Woe betide the Duets themselves, if on a nearer acquaintance, and in the hands of such capable executants, they fail to please! After all, we judge superficially when a piece is rushed straight through from beginning to end, at a single sitting, faults slurred over, and good points missed. It is anything but pleasant to receive compliments, after hearing one's work rehearsed in this fashion, though off-hand verdicts and criticisms are freely uttered, some blaming, some praising, when the music itself has not had the ghost of a chance.

Paganini has recently given two Concerts here; the second was on Whit Monday, in connection with the Opera. On the first occasion I was greatly interested, but at a rehearsal for the second Concert, I cannot describe to you the aversion with which he inspired me, though I admit that in *technique* and brilliancy, not one of our modern players can approach him. I fancy the violinists of former days were more like him than our own. Spohr cannot, Metz can imitate some of his tricks. What modern violinist could play satisfactorily the music of Cartier (the representative of the old Violin School at Paris), whose works were once studied and played as Rode and Kreutzer are now? However, Guhr is busy writing a book on Paganini's style. I should like to know whether he ever did anything from genuine impulse, and without some external motive. He and Paganini were at Cassel at the same time. . . .

Who has been maligning me? I am an old offender, for I shirk visits even to people I really like. I still owe a number of first calls here. Mentally I never was better, and I am pretty well in other respects, but Heaven knows how I spend my time! I never see anyone from week's end to week's end.

The real lover of Truth is indifferent as to the direction in which he seeks it. Truth is the same everywhere. If you find it in one thing, everything else is made beautifully clear, and existence becomes pure joy—but I should like to see the man who could express all this! For Truth lies not in the Individual, and there is no word for the Universal. Thus we have no expression, no word for *guiltlessness*, for it originates with *guilt*, so it is only by the negation of the word that we can indicate the antecedent condition. We have the word *Individual* to signify something separated from Unity, for even if I say *all*, it is none the less an abstract term, inasmuch as I oppose to it every individual thing; a negation it is, and ever will be, just as *guiltlessness* (*Unschuld*) is the negation of *guilt* (*Schuld*), and the consciousness of *Non-Unity*, of separation, is the negation of *Unity*. I should like, one of these days, to write to you on the subject of Triads, Keys, and the like; but I fancy you would classify my theories with calculations of Temperament and other edifying matters (which are *nothing* in reality), fit only to dovetail with Tauler's Second Sermon on Easter Day. I often marvel how men like Chladni and others, who have spent so much time in the really meritorious investigation of individual points, were so far from any craving after Unity as the one thing needful as to be actually callous on the subject; they remind me of those musicians in the thirteenth century who had none of our antipathy to a succession of fifths, for the simple reason that in their ears it was no succession at all. Music so written is like a language composed only of substantives; the fifth, good enough in itself, has remained; the immediate succession (which in fact is not a succession) has been brought about. But surely no language ever began with such words as *indeed, meanwhile, nevertheless*, &c., nor did *guiltlessness* (*Unschuld*) come before *guilt* (*Schuld*), *separation, definition of the individual.* It would be interesting to know how people in those days would have listened to one of our modern compositions—whether or no they would have picked out the fifths, as if they had been raisins in a cake. They had been singing mostly in fifths, and after that in fourths, for a long time; it is scarcely credible, that they

should never have learnt to do more than feel about amongst suitable and unsuitable intervals, and that the youngest of our pupils in Harmony could have enlightened the ancient masters, the very moment he appeared on the scene.

Did you read of the reception given to *Faust* in Paris? I daresay it was a poor performance, but still I am surprised that Fétis and Castilblaze (the first of whom generally expresses himself sensibly enough about music in the *Revue*) should find absolutely nothing in it. Even supposing all the public criticism to be well founded, that is only the reverse side; the other side seems to have escaped their notice—or was it effaced by the performance? People have no right to pass a verdict under such circumstances.

Yours,

M. H.

19.

CASSEL, *September* 10*th*, 1830.

DEAREST HAUSER,—

. . . Politics are bursting upon us, and there is but little time for quiet thought. I like to go back to this time twelve months ago, when we were together. Not that I forget how unwell I was, but one's memory clings more to the pleasant incidents, and the gloom of bygone days disperses, unless it was connected with wrongdoing. Thus I have often wished myself back in Italian towns, from which, feeling ill as I did, I would fain have escaped when I was there. But all the unpleasant part has faded away from my memory, and only the attractiveness remains.

14*th*.

I am always pining for a letter now; a few affectionate words would be a godsend amidst this Babel. No doubt matters are assuming a serious aspect, but the rubbish people talk about it bores one so, that I often feel inclined to cry out "for one grand thought to refresh my spirit with!"—something plain and simple. The last stale nostrum is repeated over and over again, till one is dead sick of it; all that is repulsive is made ten times more so, the air becomes poisonous, and it is impossible to be one's real self in such an

atmosphere. Here we have been quiet enough hitherto, and if we are to have many changes, they will be effected without much stir. I have just heard, indirectly, some rather disquieting news from Dresden, and shall feel uneasy till I know from my friends that the panic is over; beyond this, the inhabitants are in no danger. The papers will have told you the facts before you get this. The *Kurfürst* arrived here safe and sound yesterday. . . . I am well in mind and body, though I must own I fancy sometimes I might change for the better, and go elsewhere—but where? "Ay, there's the rub!" How about the good people of Camaldoli, near Naples? But when the ecstatic visitor raves about that quiet Paradise up above, and sighs to live there, the *Monaco custode* says: "That's what everybody thinks who comes here only once." It's the old, old story, the whole world round. Do not mistake me! To fly away to the mountain tops is not my dream; that's for romantic youth. Give me a peaceful resting-place—I don't mean the last of all—but one where, for a few years, I could enjoy the "friendly habit of existence." Alone, but not too much so, for we must have our dear ones about us. Lotus Land is what I sigh for. This is Sunday, and my visions of bliss cost me nothing, and hurt nobody. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

20.

CASSEL, *March*, 10*th*, 1831.

DEAREST HAUSER,—

Do contrive to stay in Vienna, at all events for the present; whichever way one turns, it's an uncertain look-out. To be sure, our theatre goes on just as usual, but yesterday the *Kurfürst* went to Hanau, where, to judge by the preparations, he intends to make a long stay. I shall be surprised, if retrenchment is not the order of the day. Half of His Highness's stud has been sold by auction—with one and a half million *thalers* for annual income, they must economise. (N.B. One of our set here would not face this, and has left.) Ferdinand Spohr caught a chill, and died yesterday, after two days' illness. We were good friends and neighbours for long

years together—but alas for the poor wife and children! They were such a happy, contented family. Sorrows never come singly. Only two days after Spohr's silver wedding, his daughter Ida lost a little child of three months old, and four weeks afterwards, his brother is taken. We used often to tell Spohr, half in jest and half in earnest, that everything went too well with him, and that a little trouble is part and parcel of our lives. No lack of that now! It's easy enough to preach in that fashion, but when troubles do come, one feels so sorry—so very sorry. And yet it is true, in the deepest sense of the word, that sorrow is a part of our life. We must be abased before we are exalted. Grief is a kind of Chemistry, it dissolves everything that is transient. . . .

The publishers have petitioned the Diet against piracy, for a protection of their copyrights. It is rather funny that I, amongst other Composers, should have received a sort of lithographed letter, asking me to support this petition. Now although no publisher will ever print anything of mine gratis, I am going to appeal to the Diet against the rascally *reprinters!* Oh that it were against the *pre-printers!* Curschmann has invited me to Berlin, to hear the Passion Music at Easter, but that is a matter of fifty *thalers*, and I have none to spare. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

21.

CASSEL, *April 9th*, 1891.

DEAR HAUSER,—

You ought to know something about the tottering condition of our theatre. Last month a Bull was hurled at us from Hanau (or rather from Sachsenhausen, as that is the real residence of our Most Gracious Master) declaring that the Court Theatre was actually to cease to exist on the last day of March. I fancy an earlier one must have been issued. Every artist who could not show a written contract was to be sent about his business at once; those who were engaged by contract, or held their appointments for life, were allowed a fortnight's time to consider whether they would be satisfied

with two months' salary,—Hobson's choice,—it was that or nothing. A serious dilemma no doubt, but the cloven foot appeared. The passage about "that or nothing" had been added in the Prince's own handwriting. Hereupon Feige, the Director in Chief replied—not like Charles the Coward (*der Feige*), but like Charles the Bold—that he could do nothing with this order, that the representations must be continued as a matter of right to the subscribers, that contracts must be kept, and that life-long appointments could not be cancelled. The Ministers argued in the same way, and the performances went on as before. In the answer to Feige's letter, he was sharply reprimanded for his hostile attitude, and told that there had been no idea of closing the theatre, and that he was only requested to draw up some scheme for curtailing the expenses. These two documents, which directly contradict each other, were read aloud at one of the general meetings of the company, and left for inspection, with the autograph signature, "W. K." Besides that, it was stated in the second paper that all the orders given in the first were to be strictly adhered to, so that the theatre was still to be continued, whilst every member of the company, with or without contract, was to be sent about his business! It gives one a headache to try and make any sense out of all this; mere crazy malice, nothing more nor less. The next thing that happened was an appeal to us, whether we would waive our rights, in consideration of receiving two months' pay. This, as you may well suppose, nobody was inclined to consent to. Some of the actors and singers, it is true, were inclined to cancel their contracts in return for a stipulated sum, but that was so far in excess of the two months' pay, that I should like to see His Highness's face, when the conditions are laid before him. Everyone who knows anything about the matter declares that, come what may, he cannot break our contracts. For all that, the theatre is in a critical state, and may go to rack and ruin. The Guards, it seems, are to leave for Luxembourg, and half our orchestra is made up of hautboy players from that division. The residential scheme for Hanau will probably come to grief, for His Royal Highness is not wanted there either. He spends much of his time in

Sachsenhausen, and is getting stupider and more venomous than ever. When majesty is represented by such a ne'er-do-weel, who can wonder that the people get restive at last? It is only the majesty of the idea that saves him. . . .

A Gala Concert came off on Easter Monday, and in addition to some of the stock and show pieces, we had Maurer's Concertante for four violins. It was finely played by Wiele, Spohr, and two of his pupils. Spohr's Nonett was substituted for the Symphony in the Second Part. We began with Cherubini's rigid but exquisitely clear Overture to the *Medea*. A few days ago, *Fidelio* was repeated. I once thought that opera heavy and overcharged; now, barring a few knots that I cannot unravel, the whole work is transparent to me—though I cannot call it quite beautiful from first to last. One may say of Beethoven: He loved much, to him much is forgiven—whereas, our latest composers of romantic opera sin to their heart's content, and love very little. It is safe to say of such operas, that they are "romantic," for classical they certainly are not. "To set to music" is a very significant expression.* . . . Music only breaks up mechanically separated particles, and substitutes for them a chemical fusion. As, in the cycle of life of the *clairvoyante* of Prevorst, the sum total or result of everything negative and positive, experienced by her during a whole period, is expressed by a single word or sign, not as a mere result, but rather as the product of conscious factors, so should it be with music. It should continually change and interchange, mingle, yet not submerge every word of the text. In a pickle like this, the cucumber must be pepper as well, the pepper must be cucumber, the vinegar must be pepper and cucumber at the same time, and if the text says *joy and sorrow*, when once it is set to music, there will be no singing of *joy* without *sorrow*, nor of *sorrow* without *joy*. The music to which words are to be set must, of course, be *composed*, by which I mean pieced together, like a mosaic of separate notes. The composition, however, must be nothing but an exposition of something ideally present, something not composed, but

* Here follows a passage involving an elaborate play on the word *setzen*, to set, which is quite untranslatable, and is therefore omitted.

felt to be one and indivisible. Now this unity will be instinctively felt by one composer to lie between this and that particular chord; by a second, between different periods; by a third again in the same way, between the Acts of an opera. I daresay a few fifths might escape composer No. 3; No. 1 will make no fifths—and no music either. Still, the unity between one Act of an opera and another will be more readily felt, even by second-rate composers, than the unity between one and another period or piece of music, for an Act of an opera is an omnium-gatherum of all things between heaven and earth, so that one Act cannot but be related to another, if it is not a mere repetition of it. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

22.

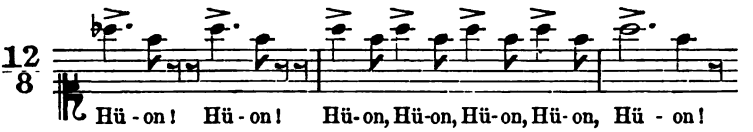
CASSEL, *May 16th*, 1831.

. . . We tried Cherubini's *Faniska* once more, but it was no go. The libretto is irredeemably bad. It is a palpably ridiculous effort to outbid *The Water Carrier*, and what a clumsy device is that poor puppet child! I did not witness that other monkey performance, but I fancy it is far less repulsive than the changeling who, in order to save her blessed parents, is drilled in the arts of stealing, lying, and cheating, while we are supposed to fall in love with her for doing these things. The music is here and there very beautiful, but at times mere rubbish, forcibly adapted to the situation, but not arising out of it. We take it quite calmly in Italian operas, when the whole tribe of *Senatus populusque* comes to a standstill on the stage, to enable each one in turn to sing an Air,—in fact, the whole texture is so loose, that it admits of any amount of stretching, and will stand a good many anomalies. Cherubini, however, after accentuating every detail, every movement of every character in *Faniska*, leaves them all *suspendus* on the stage, putting into the mouth of one alone an unnaturally long solo, at the expense of others in whom we are equally interested. Beautiful as the music is in parts, I cannot quarrel with the public taste which condemns the opera as a whole. Let the

composer's name ring ever so true, it is a silly thing to revive worn-out operas. I think it is a mistake to say they are obsolete, because they are no longer to be found in the *répertoire*; they are merely undergoing a metempsychosis, for we hear them repeated thousands of times in the music of other composers, and this very Cherubini has, by his actual imperfections, exercised an undue influence over the modern opera. Such pieces of music as the Trio in *The Water Carrier*, and others like it, are not often imitated, but we have enough and to spare of the romantic solos for the violoncello, of the general pause to excite expectation, and similar devices in the shape of anatomical preparation of sentiment, of harmonic progressions without any sort of *Cantilena*, &c. Only, there is this difference, that in Cherubini the music never quite ceases to be musical; as an Italian he cannot change his skin, and he cannot quite get rid of his Italian style, however, he may choose to modify it. Spohr is an exception amongst our modern operatic composers,—the only exception. Music with him must, before all things, take definite shape, *i.e.*, it must be connected; the term *passionate* may be ever on his lips as a favourite catch-word, but the good sense of this creative artist enables him, perhaps instinctively, to see that mere passion has not in itself a shred of æsthetic interest. What possible pleasure can there be in seeing a man suffer? Why, even an unrestrained display of the passion of joy on the stage is offensive. I am thinking of Sandrini's delirious and unbridled outburst in the recognition scene in *The Swiss Family*. People called it "Pure nature!" "Spontaneous impulse!" and it was voted enchanting, wonderful! It went against the grain with me. True, I did not know what was wanting in it, for I too believed, or thought I believed, that passion was the sublimest thing in the world; and yet this sublime passion only made me feel very uncomfortable. *Now* we know well enough that the representation of passion is not the sublimest thing in the world, and that it is outside the scope and intention of Art. She ought to represent not the Sensuous, but the Super-sensuous. We derive no pleasure from the sight of suffering; we like to see the victim rising superior to it. Suffering is to some extent merely the *burden*

by which the *strength* (the moral strength) is expressed; this latter quality, as something super-sensuous and purely spiritual, is not capable of being represented, but it becomes evident, when I have before my eyes the picture of a man in such suffering as would crush a merely sensuous being, and yet perceive that he retains, in a certain degree, his composure and dignity. As with suffering, so with joy. A high degree of passion is, I think, admissible, but not the *highest*, for the maximum can only be opposed to the minimum of moral strength, and when that is *nil*, the æsthetic interest is *nil* also. This feeling is not confined to the stage. It is when we see the storm of turbulent passion stemmed, and its force diminished, that our larger sympathies and affections are aroused, for then we recognise something superior to feeling—*i.e.*, free-will, independent of instinct and blind necessity. . . . I think what you say about Seydelmann's acting is perfectly correct, and my remarks do not in any way contradict it. So far from being called upon to repress his bursts of passion, he is encouraged to let himself go, and to convince his audiences that the transparent calmness behind only veils the energetic powers that are being held in check, and is not a sign of indifference or want of feeling. But do look at our tragedians, raving and ranting in soliloquies a yard long, as if Shakespeare were to be treated like a modern playwright! At the very beginning, they gasp as if they had lock-jaw, and their first lines betray their misconception of the Poet's meaning. Can't they see that it is not meant to be spoken in that way, with nothing but notes of admiration and exclamation—that perhaps there is something more in it than *mere* passion—that passion, in fact, never uses so many words, but only seeks to vent itself as best it may, and not in far-fetched, all-embracing similes and comparisons? Our dear good Frau von M., for instance, plays Bach's Preludes and Fugues with any amount of passion; it is quite allowable in *Rondos charactéristiques*, *Grandes Valses pathétiques*, and things of that kind by Kalkbrenner, Herz & Co., but it is an excruciating and torturing experiment upon Bach. Doesn't it occur to you now and then that Beethoven sometimes represents passion too nakedly; in

his last works, for instance—the Choral Symphony in particular? When I was at the rehearsal of *Oberon* to-day, a passage in one of Rezia's Airs struck me as being quite delightful—so "fervid," as you would say:—



Now that the thin varnish of novelty has worn off, the opera seems, even in these few years, to have lost almost every attraction. I positively suffer pain when I hear it; it is so dreadful to think of the martyrdom that poor sick man endured, the last few weeks of his life, in the effort to get one more work finished. Sometimes he took it easy, and wrote the merest rubbish, sometimes he lost his senses altogether; now and then there is a refreshing glimpse of life. But when all is told, it depresses me. It would be cruel to over-criticise this opera, but a hundred lashes are not one too many for Theodor Hell, after his shockingly bad translation. . . .

You ask me, if I have given up my "Harmony." Certainly not; and though it may not actually go forward paragraph by paragraph, I am not discontented with what I have done already. I have just made a careful study of Apel's *Metrik*. Before his time, Theory was in a very bad way, but now the bundle of dry fagots has developed into a living tree with trunk, branches, and leaves, though some of the roots still remain to be traced. My vein of composition, though not quite dry, is choked with sand, and nobody buys my wares. Have you heard that the Italian Opera at Dresden is coming to an end? If this is the way of the Dresdeners, away will go the herd of visitors to Florence on the Elbe, in search of another Florence we know of. That would be a bad job, for if we are to find a likeness between the two, not the least similar feature is the gratitude which the city on the Elbe, like the city on the Arno, owes to outsiders. I do trust we shall not be forced to go to Hanau, but it is whispered again that we shall. Do you ever manage to see an account of the

proceedings of our Diet? They are quite in the orthodox parliamentary style, with their Hear! Hear! Bravo! Laughter, &c. We have some really good speakers, and there are able and honest men amongst them. About 200 tickets of admission are given away to strangers. Spohr goes very often; he is a great "Liberal." *Excelsior!* is the motto. *Brauskopf* must cave in—which is generally the way with this much-extolled Liberalism. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

23.

CASSEL, *November* 12*th*, 1831.

DEAREST HAUSER,—

We rejoice that you are coming after all. If you possibly can, send a courier, male or female, or anyhow a few lines by post, from Frankfurt, warning us when to expect you—though we do expect you already. When I once get you here, we can argue as much as we like, so I shall leave everything till then, and save my ink. There are one or two things, however, which must be said. Your Munich letter was a great pleasure to us, independently of the good news of your intended visit here—though I can hardly distinguish between the two kinds of gratification; pleasure is indivisible. If our theatrical outlook were not so gloomy as to extinguish every hope of brighter prospects (my sentence ought to have begun, *As* our theatrical outlook *is* so gloomy, &c.), I should be less pleased to think of your remaining in Frankfurt—but twenty miles are better than a hundred, anyhow. Here there is no real hope that the theatre will continue. The *Kurfürst* withdraws his subsidy at Easter, and his son is very hard up. We have dozens of committees, newspaper articles, &c., but not a farthing in the treasury. And then they go on saying that Heinefetter wants to come back again! and the Italian Opera still flourishes at Dresden, &c., &c.

Do you happen to know one Wieninger by name, a merchant in Vienna? I received a very enthusiastic letter from him a few weeks ago, in which he tells me that my G minor Mass was admirably performed in St. Peter's on the 16th October last; he declared that the effect was quite unique, that he

had been besieged by connoisseurs, who knew that he provided music for the Church, and were entreating him to ask me, whether I had written any other Mass. He wants to know my terms for a Mass written specially for him, and suitable for a small orchestra (quartet, two hautboys, trombones, trumpets, and drums). I should like to have you here for St. Cecilia's Day, the 22nd, though our music will be no great shakes. I can't shirk the invitation to the supper after the concert, and I might enjoy it, if we were there together. Malsburg is in sumptuous quarters, rent free too, for he has become *Marschall* instead of *Oberstallmeister*. This looks rather like exchanging horses for donkeys, as he has no one but underlings to manage now, but of course in point of rank it is no degradation. There is a little pianist here just now, Clara Wieck of Leipzig. The girl plays very well; she is twelve years old, and quite a child, except for her playing. Her father means to take her to Paris and Vienna, and after the tour she is to come here for a time, and I am to do the needful for her in composition. It is still a long way off, and it may be her father is not in earnest, else I should prefer to say No, for I doubt any pupil having really profited by my teaching. To be sure, they have often themselves to blame, but failure is also attributable to the fact, that what I should like to teach them is the opposite of that which they wish to learn. We live in different ages, they think themselves cramped in the element which I think proper for them. *Freedom* is their cry, and they echo the words of Alba in sober earnest: *What is the freedom of the freest? To do right!* My precepts would not interfere with this,—but we seldom understand one another. Add to this, the railway speed which is now the fashion. Time was when six years were allowed, and now six months are thought excessive for preliminary study! And students, after six months' apprenticeship, aspire to write Fugues, without the faintest notion of the proper relationship of chords. The treatises on composition, used by our forefathers, are so utterly vague on the subjects of rhythm, melody, and musical construction, that it is obvious they cannot have known much about theory, but this very defect goes far to prove a healthy condition of Art itself, for the musicians of those days hit the

right mark, without any rules to guide them. When our pupils begin to have a glimmering of harmony, then, and not before, begin the real troubles of the teacher, for they produce compositions in which it is hard to distinguish between head and tail, and there is no middle at all—and how can we wonder, when even our finished composers often do the same? In former times the middle part was all in all; they rushed at once *in medias res*, and when it had lasted long enough, the music ceased without any regular close. Running water can only be kept within bounds by some external check; if old composers were all river, moderns are all bridge. Mozart divided the water from the dry land, and saw that it was good, and planted thereon green herb and grass—but nothing grows upon bridges.

If you see Alois Schmitt, perhaps he might give you the librettos, but if he hesitates about it, I shan't care; I should be glad to get rid of them. Even if I were more in the humour for operas, one is too commonplace, and the plot of the other is too involved. A libretto should be as light and porous as a sponge, so that it can be saturated with music; it must not only tolerate, it must cry out for music. It requires a special faculty, to distinguish between words that suit music and words that do not, *e.g.*, there are dozens of songs, such as Tieck's, which—however musical they may seem—are not really *songs*, because they have their music already in themselves, if I may say so, and require no other. The poem should be *akin* to the musical setting, and to my thinking, this *kinship* must express a polar relationship. Further than that, the poem, demanding music as its first necessity, must bear the sacrifice of every separate detail, as it melts away in the dissolving warmth of melody. It is a solecism to speak of music being set to verses; verses should be set to music.

7 *p.m.*

The curtain is just rising for *Egmont*, but the cold which I caught a few days ago keeps me at home. I don't know what other people think about this fine play, and Beethoven's fine music to it; but when the curtain falls, I am in no humour for Beethoven; and when the *entr'acte* is over,

I hate to hear the actors talk—just because the play and the music are both so good. The very fact that they are on the same high level prevents either from being subordinate; but neither can they both be first; and as at a play, the play is the thing, I should almost prefer inferior music for the *entr'actes*. I listen complacently to the same music—the same good old symphonic movements, adapted to entirely different plays—and I am not over partial to the introduction of specialities, even when they are first-rate, still less if they are poor. Lessing's Essay on Incidental Music for the Theatre is often quoted; his argument amounts to this, that cheerful plays demand cheerful music, and *vice versâ*. In his day it was still a moot point, whether mere instrumental music could express anything; so, with all respect for his authority, we get very little out of his teaching. Composers of the first rank (with the single exception of Beethoven) have been as shy of setting to music such great plays as *Egmont*, as poets of the first order (Goethe excepted) have been shy of writing operatic poetry. (Are Goethe's operas too good to stand being set to music, or is there some inherent defect in them?) They avoid each other for the same reason; each man is necessarily original, if he has the right stuff in him.

My paper is at an end. I am expecting a few lines from you, dear Hauser, to say that you are soon coming.

Yours,

M. H.

24.

CASSEL, *January 8th*, 1832.

DEAREST HAUSER,—

Since you left, I have had a great deal to cheer me. I put it all down to your account. First of all came your letter from Cologne, then the glorious Bachiana, and to wind up with, *Asmus*. *A propos* of this last, it came just when I had a regular aversion to books of all sorts, and the bare sight of them made my head go round, for which brand new malady, invented and brought to perfection by your humble servant, I mean to take out a patent in Vienna. Well! *Asmus* was the

only reading I could manage, for it is a book one can read with the heart, as if one were a somnambulist. Not that I walk in my sleep, only the head has very little to do with it; it goes down like balsam and honey. And then those sacred Cantatas of Bach's! Did you ever hear that supremely beautiful one, *Gottes Zeit ist die beste Zeit*, with that inimitable chorus in F minor, *Es ist der alte Bund*, the soprano solo, *O komm!* and the Finale? His boldness, his depth of imagination, reminds me of Beethoven, and then he has such wonderful self-control. The Litany is magnificently and unspeakably tedious, as I think such things ought to be; nobody can help it, lengthy it must be. One might almost say (taking it in connection with other things, else it would be meaningless), that with the introduction of the *Sonata-form*, music left the Church. The special feature of the Sonata-form is the division of the work into movements that contrast with one another, whereas in the *Fugue-form* one thought predominates, and whatever variation is introduced, that one thought can be felt throughout, unchanging and unchanged. Comparisons are liable to be misunderstood, but I should call the Fugue-form Catholic, and the Sonata-form Protestant. It might be objected (but not forcibly) that the Fugue-form is peculiar to Protestant Bach, and the Sonata-form to Catholic Rossini and Auber. Objections of this kind do not amount to much; the fugue may seem as Protestant as it likes, you must look beyond that, if you want to see anything properly. From so fat a spider, threads without number can be spun, though it would be more to the point to say, one single thread. That particular C minor passage in No. 2 in D minor sounds harshly; at first I thought it all wrong, and I still agree with you in thinking it ugly; but Bach now and then likes to play with his words, and, in the passage "Thou smitest them," he may have meant to give us a swashing blow. The same passage is repeated later on. We don't get such a knock-down thrashing, only a gentle reminder. Much of this kind of detail painting shows, I think, in a touching manner, Bach's child-like *naïveté* in unison with his colossal power, for he achieves the highest artistic results, and carries them through with such an unerring instinct, that there is never any hesitation nor

collision. It is forbidden fruit to the critics; they fall foul of passing notes even in passages such as these, and smile with stupid pity at the awkward and childish treatment of the text! "If," they say, "a composer were to write in this way now-a-days, how would his work be received?" Very badly, I daresay; and quite right too. We respect Holbein's Madonna just as she is, but if one of the artists now living in Cassel wanted to paint a Virgin, and were to introduce in his picture our *Bürgermeister* Schomburg, surrounded by his family and any stray friends that happened to drop in for tea, why we should call it grotesque, and say it was in bad taste. The motive is everything in such a work. But I wanted to sum up all my pleasures, and I am still only at No. 1. Next came your second letter from Frankfurt, and the news of the eighteen hundred *thalers* at Leipzig. Come what will, it is a good thing to have a roof over one's head, and I applaud your acceptance of the post. There is always, to my mind, a kind of romantic halo about Leipzig, and I should hope that during your stay there, you may experience the same feeling. It would be no easy matter for you though; with me, Leipzig is my boyhood's earliest impression, a fairy-tale of old times. My father, when the King of Saxony employed him as an architect, always managed to come to Leipzig at the time of the Michaelmas Fair. I often accompanied him, and the days that we spent there naturally made me think it a paradise. Even now, when I sniff the familiar Leipzig-English tar, the odour of a long vanished boyish bliss steals over me. I fancy that even at our time of life, half the charm of travelling consists in that delicious laziness, which carries no reproach with it at such a time. But recollect what it was to one during the first fifteen years of life! no lessons for a fortnight, and all the glory of an inn in a strange town, a civil waiter, answering every touch of the bell, and bringing up any amount of good things, and then the Fair and the dear, good father, whose highest joy it was to see us beaming with delight. It was too good to last! Yet even Leipzig may have its reverse side; its small beer, its Schneckenberg, and its Protestantism. But, after all, a town is a house for us to live in, and the street is the window through which we look.

There must be lots of delightful old bookshops, and all the *new* rubbish at first hand. If this is the first outcome of the Freedom of the Press, let people look to it; they may easily go too far. The Freedom of the Press is a charming hodge-podge. Supposing a man had a happy thought, there would be room for good jokes about released pamphleteers, gallows birds, &c.

So Bach's *Passion Music* is to be done at Frankfurt next April. *Good!* "The mobled Queen is good." So let's be off to Frankfurt together by the *Eilwagen!* But before that, you must whistle me a tune here in Cassel; perhaps you will write a line from Stuttgart, either to Spohr or to Feige—better say both, so as to get a definite answer. I gathered from your Frankfurt letter, that ours of the 23rd December had not reached you, for you said Nebelthau was the first to inform you that I was still far from well. Now, however, I am on the mend. There's not much to cry about in the missing letter, least of all in my contributions to it; I wrote the beginning, Constance the end of it, and there was no middle at all. I wanted you to get an answer to yours from Cologne, by return of post. We have often played the Chorales through; there is too much <> <> <> in them, and of course, to be heard properly, they should have the full number of voices assigned to each part, but it is a good idea nevertheless, and it teaches us the sound of them. They strike me as being almost all equally good; the second, with the Canon in the bass, is really beautiful; in this, too, the peculiar effect of the pedal is turned to the best account, as the bass is in octaves throughout. This is not solely due to the low position of the bass. Just as in pianoforte arrangements, the effect of the contra-bass is got by doubling the parts—otherwise it would sound like a cello, no matter how low the position may be. This seems to have escaped the notice of some of the adapters, so please put it into the *Innsprucker Blatt*, and make it generally known. You ordered for your own use a copy of *Tu es Petrus*, and I foolishly kept it back for our Cecilians, thinking there was no time to make a fresh copy, and reckoning on your return here to fetch your own property. The Bach *Kyrie* too has

got no farther; it is "Lost in thought," like the property of that gentleman who advertised at the office: "lost in thought last Sunday, a red cotton umbrella." For all these reasons, it is more convenient to go straight to Leipzig from here, than by way of Vienna. Pre-supposing that it is not disagreeable to you, I shall be glad to know that you are in Leipzig. It seems so near to me, and the way is so familiar, that I can bridge it over in thought, more easily than I could the intervening space between this and Frankfurt. I have not repeated my visit to the theatre, and I have confined myself to an occasional walk beyond the gates. We have just had another Subscription Concert; such a stale, vapid programme! Barring Spohr's D minor Symphony, it was the old, threadbare rubbish, wearisome alike to singers, players, and audience. They might almost have let it alone this winter; there's no spirit in it, they care for nothing but the Freedom of the Press. . . . The new tax has caused some wild and turbulent scenes in Hanau; but against whom are they raving? for nothing is done without the consent of the deputies, and they are the people's chosen representatives—in fact, they are the people. So the people are contradicting their own wishes. . . . You must write to me soon; I want to know what you are thinking about in your home paddock, how long you remain there, when you think of leaving, where you are going to, and what your plans are between this and August. I see no prospect of our theatre going on after Easter, so I shall be master of my own time. Best regards to Seydelmann; Molique will have forgotten me. Wieck wrote to Malsburg from Frankfurt. Ries is the only one he is satisfied with. Schelble is in his bad books, because he would not once allow Clara to play before his *Verein*. A pretty sort of figure Brother Herz would have cut after Sebastian! Find out, if you can, whether Benedict is back again in Naples as a married man. The old horse is tired. Let me be short but sweet. Addio! Addio!

Yours,

M. H.

25.

CASSEL, *February 26th*, 1832.

MY DEAR HAUSER,—

. . . Spohr has written two new Quartets, and is at work upon a third. Ours is not an age of poetry and art. If any of our contemporaries shows artistic power, it appears in his own poetical age—*i.e.*, in his youth; once let him pass that, and be overwhelmed in the great vortex of society, as it now exists, and he is done for, or pretty nearly so. Cherubini had very soon got to the end of his inspirations. Boieldieu and many others had written themselves out by the time they were forty. Handel was not far off fifty when he wrote his first Oratorio; Haydn was seventy when he wrote "The Creation," a work which at any rate is not wanting in originality. It was the same with the Italians of the earlier school. Mind, I do not wish to infer that these people had lived through no inner history of their own, or that they remained children up to old age. As the child knows that it is physically of a different sex from another child, and feels the pain of separation, so of necessity he becomes conscious of his isolation as a human creature, no less than as a man. Marriage cures him of the latter, and he is freed from the former by the contemplation of the all-embracing Divinity—that eye of love which even his own aversion can never cause to turn away. I do not know whether a people *as such*—*i.e.*, a nation, could ever reach this point, nor if it did, whether it would not, *ipso facto*, cease to be a nation, since it would have recognised the emptiness of all distinctions. But, in any case, it seems to me that Art is Youth—the youth alike of the individual and of the nation; in a youthful nation even an old man retains his youth, and if he be specially gifted with the artistic faculty, an artist he will remain to his life's end. Had I a son, I would rather he were not an artist, even if he showed very decided talent. As long as he was young he would be poetical, but later on he would lose it all, and have nothing left but the melancholy scaffolding of routine. It is perfectly natural that clever young fellows should refuse to believe this, but let them show me a work in any one branch of art, taken from

the last thirty years, that can compare *as a whole*, in finish and beauty, with one out of the good time. At first the brew is fermenting must; afterwards the drink is mawkish enough, unless well stiffened with brandy.

At the Subscription Concert yesterday, we had the bass Duet from *Il Matrimonio Segreto*, following on a song from the *Vampyr*. After one had suffered on the rack of Lindpaintner, Cimurosa's music seemed to float down to one like the spirit of peace. Passion torn to tatters, piles of dead material—that was No. 1. Grace, beauty, easy organic life—that was No. 2; the orchestra was quite transfigured. Heaven knows what people are aiming at with the full orchestration now in vogue! Does such a thing as *Euryanthe* sound well? Does it sound at all? From what source is the sound to come, I should like to know? The band has not a single note of healthy music to play, the middle parts have absolutely no melody, and the first violin hides it away behind the bridge. Föppel sang the bass Air from *Faniska*. The crystal clearness of Cherubini was a thing of the past, when he wrote that opera; it is stiff with peculiarities—to such an extent indeed, that he has an unwholesome influence on the geniuses who imitate him. It is easy enough to remember and imitate a stiff, dead thing; a free and flowing style is more *piquant*, and if the sauce is good, it is no easy matter for the palate to distinguish all the ingredients that have been used. Now-a-days the mind ossifies as well as the body, when we grow old; we are such dried up mummies ourselves, that the study of bones is a comparatively easy task. We were talking only the other day about our break with H. whom we used to like so much. For a time, people can live together well enough without any intimate knowledge of each other; one always has to work one's way in from without, and when that is accomplished, it often appears that no real harmony exists; besides, the mere fact of getting older and bonier makes it more difficult. At first things went on swimmingly; by-and-bye everything was too *short* for one Philistine, and too *long* for the other. I take it, we were more like the former, H. more like the latter. Perhaps I too much resemble the goose that can't quite make out whether he is a goose or a

goose's liver. The ruin of friendship comes of the avoidance by consent of all topics that bear, even superficially, on the subject that most deeply concerns us. Banish real seriousness and real enjoyment must go too, for a good hearty laugh together is out of the question.

I expect to get leave when the holidays begin, but my plans are unsettled; travelling has its great drawbacks as well as its pleasures, and then its pleasures are so fugitive! I like arriving at a new place well enough, but as soon as you have arrived, it is all over. It is like a sensual pleasure; once your hunger is satisfied, you no longer care to eat. Besides this, the luxurious way of travelling now-a-days makes all journeys prosaic; we get into a railway carriage and reach our destination without adventure of any kind. Now, give me good weather and an old friend to jog beside me, and I will take a walking stick instead of the train,—but to start alone, I ought to be more attractive and sociable, and a travelling companion who is not quite in harmony with me is worse than none; so I must stick to the train, I'm afraid.

I daresay I shall only pay my mother a visit. My instinct leads me to avoid the horribly clever and enlightened women one meets everywhere; why won't they stay at home, mind their own affairs, and let Providence do the rest? One of the most repulsive signs of the age is the way women haunt Parliamentary debates and jabber about politics, and then row the cook if the soup is burnt. Housekeeping, forsooth, is quite beneath their notice; why should they bother themselves with it? By-and-bye, the husband too, immersed in the household of the State, will become indifferent to his own. I maintain that the infinitely little is by virtue of its infinity of the same value as the infinitely great. He who could have managed one could have managed the other too. But let the cobbler stick to his last, he can do nothing better for the world's history. He will not make a great sensation, neither does this 22nd March, and yet it is the first day of the fairest season of the year. . . .

26.

CASSEL, *August 25th*, 1832.

WELCOME to Germany a thousand times! To think you are only a day's journey from here! Leaving this at 5 a.m. I should reach Leipzig at 3 p.m. the next day; that in itself is a pleasant thought. Your letter from England was quite delightful. I read your thoughts as in a looking-glass. The sea-breeze suits you best, you get a trifle foggy in London. I wanted to write to you long ago, but where were you? Since you left, I have been uncommonly well, so that I am hardly in touch with those universally discontented people, who begin to doubt Providence, because the censor happens to have cut out a particular passage in the *Constitutionsblatt*. Why, blanks are positively refreshing now and then, and free spaces are better than any number of leaders on Freedom! I wish you had been with me in Italy, and I had been with you in England. It's no use discussing a place one has visited alone. One single recollection of a moment spent together is more vivid and lasting than a description which must begin and end with words. How do you like Leipzig? Of course it won't be London, Vienna, or Frankfurt. I rather advise your living in the suburbs. Leipzig proper seems to me to be the haunt of mercantile Philistines, though I admit one cannot judge of a town until after a few years' experience, when one has made acquaintance with *Senatus populusque Kuhschnappeliensis*. . . . No formal resolution to give me an *exeat* has yet passed; some applicants have been refused; as Hasemann and I had medical certificates, it was thought inhuman to refuse us—more humane to come to no decision at all. However, I am in good health, and so I have reached the goal of my journey without the bother of travelling. I should like to have seen my mother, but that would necessitate a journey to Töplitz, which would bore me. She is now thinking of bringing Julia here with her, but I doubt that coming off—the winter will be too far advanced. The re-opening of the theatre is indefinitely postponed. Spohr is now writing a Symphony, suggested by Pfeiffer's poem, *The Consecration of Sound*. The poem opens

with a description of the origin of the phenomena of sound, leading up to the various musical episodes incidental to life: The Cradle Song, the Serenade (!), the Dance, the War Cry, the Battle, the song of Victory, at last the Dirge. No *Kyrie* or *Gloria* of course; that's out of date with the moderns! When Spohr first told me, that he intended to write a Symphony on this subject, I stated many of my objections to it in a written article; indeed, there is nothing rational to be said in its favour. However, the work is all but finished. I entirely commend Spohr for refusing to be diverted from his purpose by merely theoretical considerations, which are not in harmony with his creative instinct; but his loyalty to this subject springs from a morbid feeling,—the theme is radically unmusical. It is questionable whether he was attracted by any vital interest in it; he wanted some spur, some incitement to compose; the old spontaneity begins to fail him. If music has to be forced in this way, what is Art but a milch cow? At the end of September, we are to have a grand Concert in the church. Part I.: two Psalms, by Spohr, and a Symphony (the new one, I suppose); Part II.: the First Part of *The Passion Music*, for which we have already had one rehearsal with chorus, enough to show that we want many more. Are you aware that Schelble has been invited to fill Zelter's post at Berlin? Do you think he will take it? They say it's not very lucrative. I am sorry for the Frankfurt *Verein*, if he goes. Have you rummaged through the *Bachiana* in the *Thomas-Schule* at Leipzig? When you know Weinlig well enough, commend me heartily to my worthy but phlegmatic friend; he is a favourite with me, and at one time I attended his lectures. Music is nothing but an alms here just now; Concerts are being given by the remnants of the diminished forces of the theatre, but the members of the orchestra are forbidden to join them, so that they are obliged to sweep every nook and corner for anything in the shape of fiddle or flute. Of course the receipts are nothing to speak of. We have frequently heard the last published Quartets of Beethoven at the weekly Quartet meetings, organised by Wiele and Hasemann. They jarred on me more than I can tell you, not the first time, but

the oftener I heard them. That objectless rambling about is so painfully depressing, that it is hard to get on at all without a release by Mozart or Haydn directly afterwards: *In seiner Ordnung schafft der Herr.* Freedom appears only within the sphere of limitation. I could say more on that subject, but it is clear to my mind that Art has lost nothing by Beethoven's death. Experience shows, I think, that the premature death of a great genius is a rare event; it generally occurs at the right moment. Compare Mozart's *Titus* with his other operas and you will find it far more old-fashioned—*i.e.*, far more in unison with his own time; it has but little of that brilliancy and strength which, in his best work, conquered the opposing forces of the age. His last three Quartets are not comparable to the first six; with all their beauty, they have an old-fashioned ring about them, which the earlier ones have not. I won't conclude, I will only leave off. Let me know how you are.

Yours,

M. H.

27.

CASSEL, *November* 16*th*, 1832.

. . . To-day I send you the sad news (if you have not already heard it) of my dear mother's death on the 15th of October last. She fell ill after her return from Töplitz, got better, then worse—for her sixty-eight years told against her—so that when I heard the first news of her attack of partial paralysis, I was prepared for the worst. Well, she is gone before; we shall follow. Cassel was declared free from cholera several days ago. It never was bad here. Perhaps you read in the newspapers, that we failed to get the Grand Duke's consent to a performance of Bach's *Passion Music.* We had three big rehearsals, however. Our chorus was nothing like so good as the Frankfurt one, and the performance was generally inferior; but we were highly delighted, and I now know the music for the first time. The *Passion* must not be criticised as a beautiful work of art. It consists of two chapters of *St. Matthew*, read in a higher

language, which expresses the feelings of the hearer as well as the story itself. The form is quite accidental. I consider the *St. Matthew Passion* a later work than *St. John;* it shows more of Bach's self-abnegation as a composer. In the earlier *Passion*, the cries of the people are often spun out into choruses longer than their import warrants; when the intrinsic truth of the subject is sacrificed for the sake of the musical form, the form becomes an empty thing which has no claim on our favour or indulgence. The measured recitatives and airs, which embody the reflections, are on a different footing; here we are reminded of the chorus in Greek Tragedy, with its strophe, anti-strophe, and epode; this is reasonable *combination*. It is always the same manifestation of one truth, the expression of which in form is essentially the same as it was two thousand years ago. There is a story written with giant letters in the History of the World, our World (for the great Universe, indeed, it is only a local story), but the writing is too colossal, you can't see the word for the letters. These letters are our Cathedrals, the Gothic Churches; their construction is essentially the same as the wonderful construction of the Fugue. The expression of Christianity, as it was accepted by a young and powerful soul, fell in, here in the North, with Nature in undiminished strength; whereas, in the South, it had a struggle to conquer the most refined sensuality. Sculpture, oratory, and architecture, with prevailing horizontal extension (*breadth*), and the symmetrical arrangement of opposites which it gives, are pre-Christian arts; painting, music, and architecture, with vertical extension (*height*), which allows of no return to the same dimensions, are Christian arts. However prejudiced antiquarians may be in favour of ancient music and painting, I am thoroughly convinced that these arts, as compared with the other glories of antiquity, are as insignificant as our sculpture and our oratory would be, by the side of Phidias and Demosthenes. What is the one Michael Angelo and a handful of his pupils, as compared with the number of fine painters in that age? A grand and noble passion for the highest ideal gave rise to the Gothic Cathedral of the Middle Ages, and yet there was a dash of unchristianity in it all. Exclusive love is not the

all-embracing unity of Christian love. *Love* binds, and lasts for ever; there is a time *to be in love*, and then it ceases. Hence our Cathedral generally wants a second tower, perhaps more. Now-a-days we dare not any longer build in the Gothic style, for people would say we were apes or hypocrites. Goethe, you know, a man incapable of lying, never repeated his *Werther*, nor wrote another work resembling it, yet *Werther* remains true for all ages, and so too does the Gothic Cathedral. The energy of the Germanic period was not confined within the limits of Germany; Italy, the classic land, received from us the Gothic style and the *Fugue*, for the fugue is to music what the Gothic style is to architecture, the *Sonata* corresponding in form to the Hellenic. But neither Cathedral nor fugue could endure in a soil foreign to their nature; they enlarged their area, they acquired breadth, and lost height. By degrees, our enthusiasm lost its energy, and we experienced a reaction from Italy. Architectural forms, debased by the Romans, found acceptance; the German fugue made way for the Italian sonata, a form of music which includes the symmetrical arrangement of opposites, the very expression of which is, duality. The sonata admits of more intrinsic beauty, but it has not the gloomy depth of the fugue. One we call classic, the other romantic; but so long as we merely keep the two separate, and distinguish and compare them, we fail to realise the full scope of Art. All that was truest and most beautiful of either period, was equally clear and equally deep. An enthusiast for Bach will put his recitative on the same level with his other work; I beg leave to differ, for I think the inequality of his recitative quite natural. For recitative, as well as opera, is in the main Italian,—*i.e.*, Greek.

> "Thou that wouldst the Poet know,
> To the Poet's country go!"

Bach had certainly heard but few Italian recitatives, and he paid very slight attention to opera. His recitatives have too large a range, especially those assigned to the Evangelist as Narrator; in strictness, they should be merely a higher kind of declamation. Our *répertoires* prove in a general way the

non-existence of German opera: for one German, we have twenty French or Italian operas. Is it only because the German operas are too good? I doubt that fact; the fault lies elsewhere. There is too much somehow—too much music, too little speech. Italians and Frenchmen, with their classic origin, are born speakers; the most commonplace among them could make a better extempore speech than the majority of our learned pundits. As a makeweight, we have our Symphony, Quartet, and Sonata, which they have not got; we are radically and intrinsically more musical. I must write to you again, for I have rambled so in my discourse, that but for the late hour, I should like to fill another sheet or two. As for those posthumous works of Beethoven, I have heard them often, and heard them well played, and I never mean to hear them again. Upon that subject, more anon! Much as I should enjoy another visit to you, I cannot get leave just now. I suppose it will be different some day—at present we are so free, that we cannot stir! Constance wanted to enclose a note, but she must wait for my next. We have regular Concerts every Sunday; Rosner and Föppel, Föppel and Rosner, ring an everlasting change. I will tell you, when I write again, about Spohr's Symphony, the last new thing here. Constance joins me in kind regards to your wife. I am well as ever, and in good spirits. Nebelthau has gone and got married. Spohr is off to attend his parents' Golden Wedding.

Yours,

M. H.

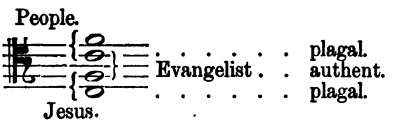
28.

CASSEL, *April 19th*, 1833.

. . . Our performance of the *Passion Music* was, everything considered, not so bad after all; could we repeat it soon, it would go very well. The choruses went best; the solo parts are too difficult for our singers, let alone amateurs. Barring yourself and Schelble, I know of no vocalist capable of singing such music, so as to make it seem the utterance of his own heart; generally, one is constrained to think of the task itself as of something quite apart from its performance, or from the attempt to perform it. The recitatives were sung from Schelble's arrangement, which I approve of very

highly in the main (though I may take exception to a few details). If that is as much as to say that I disapprove of Bach's recitatives, the censure must not be held to apply to the individual composer. There is an individuality of time, an individuality of place (climatic), and an individuality of the individual; and the last is subordinate to the other two, and is not responsible for their deficiencies. The recitative is by nature Italian (Græco-classic), and the words predominate over the music. Bach had no inducement, from within nor from without, to become acquainted with operatic music, the native home of recitative. As recitatives, his own are imperfect, for in writing them, he left his sure ground, his native German province, to set foot as a pilgrim in a strange land, where he was not sure of the language. If this holds good, when applied to his recitatives generally, the passionate restlessness of those allotted to the Evangelist is particularly objectionable. Were a Disciple called on to write the history of his Lord and Master now-a-days, he would set about his task in a very different way to the Evangelist. Every tenth word would be one of praise for his Master, or of contempt for his opponent. The Gospel bears no trace of this; nay, the whole style of description is such, that to supplement the narrative with any similar matter would be impossible. Even Homer talks of "The *god-like* Achilles," "The *insolent* suitors." The Evangelist alone tells a plain tale; his is the only style which is purely objective. He says "Jesus," "Judas," not "The *compassionate* Jesus," not "The *treacherous* Judas." In strictness, this complete suppression of feeling makes the words of the Evangelist *unsuitable for music* (without subjectivity there is no music), so long as he does not introduce another speaker; and as the Gospel words must of course be used in the musical setting of the Passion, they ought only to have clung, so to speak, to the outmost edge of the music—in fact, they should have been made as colourless as possible. Not because they are subordinate to music, for they are *superior* to it; they transcend the earthly sphere *in which alone Art is possible.* It is only when the Gospel says "He spake," and the words are caught up by

other singers, that full musical expression is in its right place. Bach's treatment of the recitative of the Evangelist enables the same singer to undertake different characters. He did not distribute the parts because he thought it necessary to separate calm from passionate narration; he simply followed ancient tradition. The arrangement here given is taken from the earliest Rubrics of the Church, in which the part of the Narrator is given to the baritone (or middle voice), that of Christ to the deep bass, and a single voice (tenor) takes the top part, which represents other persons and the people at large:—



Yours,

M. H.

29.

CASSEL, *June* 19*th*, 1833.

DEAR H.,—

I send you all that I got at the auction—little enough in all conscience—but with the exception of Opitz, I have everything the booksellers have not. They started the book at twelve *groschen;* I bid up to a *thaler;* it was bought by a commissioner, who had *carte blanche*, for two *thalers* twenty *groschen*. Fortunately, I had made up my mind to have the Chorales at all cost; but for that, we should have lost them as well. It really was a remarkable auction, especially as regards the appendix to the catalogue. Fancy Schubert's *Ansichten* fetching two *thalers* twelve *groschen!* You can get them in any shop for half the price. The Arnim things, and modern romances of that kind, went at the ordinary market value, sometimes above it. Although I marked a number of things for myself, and determined to give a pretty good price for what I wanted, I got next to nothing. I send you Peretti's Mass for the fun of the thing, just to show you how people may be caught by a title in an auctioneer's catalogue. I hope that the Bach catalogue was duly returned to you and that it

is safe in your keeping; I sent it off on the 19th May, with some "Fugitive Essays," which belong to Wolf, so please let me have them back again. . . .

I hear scarcely any music; we have had no String Quartets for an age. The usual *Kränzchen* never met last winter, except once or twice at Spohr's; on one of these occasions, we heard his new and beautiful double Quartet. Wiele and Hasemann had undertaken a regular Quartet, but from the first they gave us an overdose of late Beethoven, and though they themselves raved about the beauty of it, it hastened the collapse of the whole enterprise. . . . It is strange, that a man should become one-sided in the very effort not to be so, and limited in his views, because he cannot endure limitation, and aims at being original and unique. None but God Himself can exist apart; everything else depends on everything else, and alone it is but a forsaken, solitary thing, inconsolably wretched, or bitter and morose. And then those movements, intended in certain passages to convey a religious meaning, and to direct the thoughts of the listener immediately to God! They have no intrinsic truth in them; they are more like dreams than realities, and they generally end with the re-awakening to a renewed feeling of desolation, or in a deafening dithyramb, without a spark of real cheerfulness in it. The condition is in itself untrue, but it is expressed with such astounding truth as must compel our admiration of this colossal genius. Perhaps it would be safe to say, that he who cannot understand the Infinite in the Finite, and if he happens to be an artist, represent it so, will never move freely in the Infinite, will always feel himself cramped there. The Universe is dark to us, and our feeling about it is equally dark, nor has it any medium of thought and expression.

Is your summer as fitful as ours? In May and June we had twenty-four degrees of heat, and now we are shivering all over. The hotter I am the better, and my recollections of Italy would be pleasanter, had I been roasted instead of frozen. Oh, for a good scamper over the hills and far away, to put a little life into me! But the weather is so odious, it might be mid-winter. After all, that season has one advantage over the summer—viz., that you feel the spring coming.

Solger has just sent me *Sophocles*, and I am reading certain passages with great pleasure. A *nation* to whom such tragedies were congenial in matter and style has a claim on our veneration; their feeling for rhythm was no mere arithmetic, but part of their being. The Greek needed no theorist to point out to him that mere imitation of Nature is not Art at all; even if they had taken as much interest in the Wolf's Glen as we do, they would hardly have cared so much about seeing a live owl in *Der Freischütz*, instead of a paper one. Is Marschner's *Templer und Jüdin* in your *répertoire?* We had a performance of it the other day. One cannot deny that he is a man of some talent, and he holds his own amongst our living operatic composers. Lindpaintner, Ries, and Reissiger are pretty high up. (Spohr belongs to another class.) But it is Purgatory to have to sit through constant repetitions of that opera. Fancy Scott's calm and noble Rebecca tearing passion to tatters, and screaming herself hoarse upon the stage! Milder happened to be amongst the audience, and she told us that Spontini, with all his madcap ways, had never dealt so mercilessly with his *prime donne;* they might whistle for her, if they wanted her to sing such music! No doubt this opera is in keeping with the requirements of the time; but I marvel to find in the work of a composer of many operas, and one so well versed in stage matters, such mismanagement of effective situations, such inordinate length and such exaggeration. This last feature again is the outcome of an age, at heart more prosaic than poetical, and therefore conventional in expression. In the same way, Lindpaintner used to write good Overtures; but after studious imitation of favourite models, he has succeeded in prefacing the *Vampyr* with a bad one. *Aber alles das in Liebe und Güte Herr Oberförster.* ("But it's all kindly meant.") Leave *hopeless* people alone, and be merciful! We are only concerned with those who have some good stuff in them, which we are thankful to recognise, and as to which decent folk are agreed beforehand. Constance joins me in kindest regards to Madame, as well as yourself. Do write soon.

Yours,

M. H.

30.

CASSEL, *October 24th*, 1833.

. . . I have been a month over this already, and for a week past my eyes have been so bad, that all reading and writing has been strictly forbidden. This *régime* forces me to recognise the fact that we modern Northerners are the slaves of our books and our pens. When I am like this, I had rather be an Italian than a German. If, when I was in Italy, I took it into my head to pay an Italian a visit, the gentleman as a rule had decamped, and his wife would meet me with *È andato in piazza*, just as one of us would say, "He is gone to the law courts," or "He is at his office." They chatter and gossip in the Forum, just as they did 2,000 years ago; talk is reading and writing to them —and they have the sun, whilst we have only stoves. Well, you must do at Rome as the Romans do! it's all for the best. Looking over the register of my letters the other day, I found that I had proposed a visit to you; there is nothing I should like better, but I am not flush of spare cash just now, for this summer I gave hardly any lessons. Besides, the re-opening of the theatre would make it impossible, so in default of meeting, letters must serve our turn for a bit. I enclose herewith the operatic MS., and wish to heaven some composer would take a fancy to them! I gave ten *Louis d'or* apiece for them, and would gladly take less. I sent them to Lind-paintner, but he returned them. As you want the Songs, I send them without further ado. To feel and to recognise whatsoever things are beautiful, true, and good, however and wherever they occur, is a greater pleasure to me now than the laborious production of second-rate music. The song I like best is *Komm heraus*, the shortest and least mannered of the lot; if I did not know who had written it, I should never guess. You do not quite understand what I said about *composition*, most likely because I did not express myself clearly. I think it incontestable, that an artist attains form by combination, by something within the domain of the senses; the lines on his canvas must be of his own selection,

the picture cannot be coloured organically from within, he must blend his notes together, to give form to melody and harmony. All this, to be sure, is only external, for a composer, if he is bent on producing a work inspired with real life, must first of necessity have brought before the eyes and ears of his mind, more or less vividly, the outlines of the picture. The result will never be anything but an imitation, more or less successful, of this ideal; it is not Nature embodying herself. On the other hand, a work of Art ranks *higher* than Nature's product, for the genuine artist will not aim at a reproduction of the individual existence, as it lives and *dies* in Nature, but at a reproduction of the idea of life itself, as it appears in each different manifestation. I agree with you in thinking that Phidias and Apelles had not, in the first instance, to invent the ideal of man; all that they did was to look with clear eyes at what was before them, and to give it form. Assume, if you will, that our first parents were perfect types of humanity, how would that have assisted the sculptor and the painter, had not perfect form existed already in themselves, as it still does in us? But for this, how could we know that Beauty is beautiful, and the Unbeautiful a declension from what it ought to be?

Nebelthau and I paid a visit to the wild beast show at the Fair the other day, and we saw a rare good collection of lions, tigers, and other animals of the majestic sort. I really cannot call them *beautiful*, unless that epithet applies to a full mane and a dappled skin. Nebelthau asserted that a dog or a horse has a stronger claim to the distinction than any of those brutes. I am sure he is right, for reasons stated elsewhere. Horses and dogs, tamed and domesticated, are, to a certain extent, *humanised* animals; the others are only beautiful in Art. A carved or painted lion has a majestic Jupiter expression, which is foreign to the real lion, trapped in a forest. In him there is nothing but savage impulse, which cannot be beautiful anyhow or anywhere; whereas, in the domesticated horse or hound, impulse has already been checked; even if we may not call it free will, still mere instinct is broken, and the beast, in a certain sense, has ceased to be only a beast. It is the sculptor, who lifts the

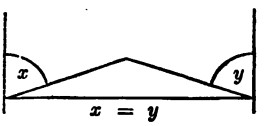
creature out of its own limited circle into the sphere of freedom and rational law. The most faithful of animal painters is conscious of this, and achieves his purpose without overlooking the characteristics of each several species; just as the sculptor can make a bust a close likeness of the original, without descending to the repulsive fidelity of a plaster cast—the exact reflex of the individual, and of *the individual only*.

October 28th.

More interruptions! It really is not my fault, that I cannot this year make up my prescribed quantum of letters. Spohr came here to correct the proofs of his new Symphony; his eyes were bad, and he was anxious to get the work finished, so I felt bound to help him. Now, I suppose, I shall be late for to-day's post too, and my last date won't fit with your arrival in Leipzig. You are expecting a letter about the Triad, and I have not yet said one word on that subject—at least, not directly. Such comparisons as you speak of—*e.g.*, the comparison of the scale of colour with the musical scale, are indeed worthless. Here, only the other day, some one applied to Government to assist him in carrying out a new idea—nothing less, in short, than a new Art, which he said he had invented—the Art of producing music by means of colours. Red was to be Love, yellow, Hatred, and so on. These worthy people have an odd idea of music; they think it is just a pleasant sort of see-saw, a welling and swelling of tones with no definition and no form at all. I can quite understand, that it is not so easy for them to get an idea of the form which whole compositions necessarily assume, for form is easier to recognise in Space than in Time, where, though it produces its full effect, it is more diffuse. But I do think it stupid of them, not to perceive the strict regularity of the forms of harmony and chords. No definition can be understood without opposites; if the definition cannot be understood, there is no intelligible form, and without intelligible form, there is no Art. Musically, we get this opposition in the Prime* (octave), and the fifth,

* The fundamental note of a Triad.

unity and duality; Architecture has it in the vertical and the horizontal; Metre in Arsis and Thesis, its first and second; Rhythm in long and short—*i.e.*, the whole and the half—$\frac{1}{1}$ $\frac{1}{2}$. Painters and sculptors are concerned with given objects in Nature, which have these definite proportions *in concreto*. In all the varieties of architecture and music, in every age, and among the most differently constituted nations, the elements are found to be, always and everywhere, the vertical and the horizontal, the tonic and the fifth.



An oblique form is simply incomprehensible, and can only be made use of in architecture, if it is *opposed* by a parallel form, whereby the deviation from one vertical line is negatived by a deviation from the other. It is this that makes form itself intelligible, though its component parts are not so. The mutual resolution of opposing definitions is what I call the *third*, and this is why I say that everything *actual* (true) is a third. I have also called reason a third, for here it is the resolution of feeling and understanding (unity and duality), and so, once more, everything that is true is reasonable, and *vice versâ*. As both dimensions are contained in each other in the body, and as the body is the limit of form in space, because it contains the opposites in itself, and there is nothing else that it could contain, so the tonic and the fifth are combined in the third. Musical definition cannot exceed the third, not from any insufficiency, but because it is impossible to go beyond. The third includes each definition, for you cannot get further than what a thing is, and what it is *not*.

The feminine principle is *formative*, and defines form. In all the phenomena of life, we meet with the joint co-operation of two principles, one that loosens and another that binds; the one is alternately defined and settled by the other. These are Melody and Harmony; Melody is masculine, Harmony feminine. *German* music is essentially *melodic*, consisting as it does of concordant successions of notes (Fugue); *Italian* music (akin to the principles of Hellenic art), consisting of successive harmonies, is essentially *harmonic* (Sonata). Things are not always what they seem; Italian music,

because it remains longer *on the same chord*, is more peremptorily fixed, and is therefore harmonic. The *Recitative*, based upon the chord, is genuinely Italian—so too is its ally, the *Recitativo parlante*, which is a prevailing feature in good Italian Opera, making it easier and more *vocal* than the German, with its *purely musical* (or as people call them, instrumental) phrases, ever can be. The earlier Italian Church music, consisting wholly of Canons and Fugues, is not metrical, but purely rhythmical; in my opinion it is as little indigenous to Italy as the many Gothic churches we find there. We have shifted our ground—at least those of us have who tortured our brains to prove that all music emanated from Italy; for Baini, in his history of the Papal Choir, published a few years since, mentions but one master, Costanzo Festa, as immediately preceding Palestrina. I quote Baini's own words: "The first attempts at regular vocal music, such as the *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, &c., which make up what they called the Mass, came from *Transalpine* Italy, and in particular from Belgium." Now, assuming this music to be in the main melismatic and not syllabic, as I affirm Italian music to be, that does not contradict my statement, for it is not really Italian. On the other hand, opera came to us from Italy (the first efforts were made at the close of the year 1500), and that is essentially syllabic. Words are *necessarily* the first consideration, seeing that opera has to solve an epic as well as a lyric problem. Church music ought to have, on an average, more tones to one syllable, and opera more syllables to one tone; let us call the former melismatic, the latter syllabic.* The first is epico-*lyric*, the second lyrico-*epic*. But all this is part of the province of Art, and Art cannot admit of abstractions, pure and simple, of absolute fluidity or abstract fixity; it brings about a *solution* of both. The introduction of evil into the world was a necessity, if good was not only to *exist*, but *to be developed*. The return to goodness, *through the medium* of evil, stands in the same relation to goodness without a medium, as the Triad to unison—as the state of the conva-

* = {Sound, Feeling, here generality preponderates. = {Language, Meaning, here speciality preponderates.

lescent to that of the man who has never been ill at all; the convalescent is *conscious of health*, you know. This return must not be understood as a mere retrogression from duality to unity, for "no man can enter the second time into his mother's womb." When I have once struck g to c, it's no use my omitting g and playing c alone, it will never satisfy me; for whether I confess to or suppress the note, there my g remains; the hollow interval of a fifth goes sounding on until I add an e to it (2 × 2), until I make bad *bad*, and *negative* negation—(to recognise duality as duality, I must needs adopt the standpoint of unity)—and by this process, the Triad, although containing the fifth within itself, has a quiet and calming effect. Intellect may kill feeling, reason may be the *death* of death. Superstition is the child of feeling, unbelief the outcome of the understanding; the faith of reason never wavers. The grain of seed rests in its obscurity, but when once it has begun to germinate, it never rests again, until a new grain of seed starts into life—so that what was first of all the productive power becomes the product. Leaves and blossom fade away, but the matured seed lasts as long as the first germ; it is the same thing in another form, the beginning and end in one.

You told me to write just what came uppermost, and I have done so. . . .

Yours,
M. H.

31.

CASSEL, *November 29th*, 1833.

. . . You may criticise a thing in two ways: (1) You may weigh objectively the conditions antecedent to a finished work of art; (2) You may weigh subjectively the conditions which are indispensable, even to make a work tolerable. In the first instance, you will have to be niggardly of your praise; in the second, you will become odious to yourself and others, by your eternal fault-finding. Yet here there will be always *something* to praise. A true critic, I think, would combine both methods. In the end it amounts to this,

that we approve of something which has actually been *done*. I have had to go through the list of our actresses lately, to get hold of a singer to take the Duenna parts, and it occurs to me that I could happily dispense with those bits of theatrical furniture. Old men and women hold their own in pictures and plays; old men do very well as statues and in the opera, but old women do not. I think it is Winckelmann, who says that an old man's head may be beautiful, but not an old woman's. Greek sculptors dealt with old men exclusively. Similarly, there are operatic fathers, but no mothers; I remember only two exceptions to this, the old nobody in *The Swiss Family* and the veteran aunt in the *Matrimonio Segreto*. An old High Priest is a standing dish in a certain kind of opera, but fancy the High Priestess in the *Vestalin* figuring as an ancient lady! Why, even Niobe, mother of sixteen, is always represented as a beautiful matron. Plays cannot go on without a mother, she is a *sine quâ non*. Here, too, the conjugal relation is less out of place than in the opera; birds do not sing at or after breeding time, but before. The real exponent of opera is Love, all the rest are mere co-efficients; they retard instead of helping the action, but without them the thing would go off bang, like a powder barrel fired by a spark; they are the chemical and mechanical accessories, and the delay they cause is artistic, for it ends in a good blaze of fireworks. Have you heard that the Electoral Prince of Hesse has dubbed Spohr a Knight of the Lion? It gratifies me to see quiet, earnest men, intent on doing their duty thoroughly in their own way, getting on as well as parasites and intriguers (except in worldly ways, of course they always get on better). I see Mendelssohn's *Lieder ohne Worte* are advertised, but I have not got my copy yet. What is it all about? Is he really in earnest? To be sure, in strictness, pure Lyric has no words, but that means no intelligence—no form, therefore no Art. The vowels are the lyrical part of the Alphabet, and I! Eh! Ah! Oh! Uh! Ai! Ei! Au! would be lyrical expressions, but a really proper syllable (*συλλαβη*—something taken together) presupposes the intelligible limitation of a consonant—b a ba, and a b ab—there's a learned combination for you, you want nothing better! A is the

husband, b the wife, and ab and ba are their offspring, boys and girls. Why do animals growl and bleat in vowels? It is because they express only what they feel. N.B. This has nothing to do with Mendelssohn's *Songs*, it's only my fancy. Still, Songs without Words must be uncanny, I think; I am not very fond of Crescentini's Solfeggios, because they seem to me to tax unduly the singer's power of expressing what he feels.

I am now whistling with Papageno for the third time; to-day is Thursday, the 5th December, the anniversary of dear Mozart's death! Away goes my letter, or rather the sheet that ought to have been one; it's my harpoon to catch your whale. Oh, for some dainty bait to tempt him! but I am dry as a bone. Just when the travelling fit is on me, I cannot rationally expect to get any leave, and oh, how this weather oppresses me! Dark above, rain midway, slush below; I get so muddle-pated that I should like to bolt from Cassel and myself too, if I could! Have you any *old* Italian operas amongst your music? I mean, by people *before* Jomelli & Co. I wish I could get hold of Peri's *Eurydice*; that would do. I lately found out what I wanted to find out (for I felt almost convinced of it, *à priori*), that the so-called Operetta, or *Singspiel*, is not derived from the same source as the Recitative Opera. Adam de la Hale, a Netherlander of the thirteenth century, anticipated by three hundred years in his *Singspiel, Li Giens de Robin*, the first Italian Opera. It was a drama with songs interspersed. Have you read the Goethe and Zelter Correspondence? Zelter is a clever, sound-hearted fellow. Addio, dear Hauser. With kind regards to your dear wife,

Yours,

M. H.

32.

CASSEL, *February 24th*, 1834.

SOMEBODY or other made it a rule never to open his letters without having a pen at hand, so as to answer them then and there. It would be all very well, if one could take one's head and heart, and put them straight away into an envelope; but to translate what is going on there into words, however poor, is a task that I seldom feel inclined for whilst reading. Still one should never procrastinate; as it is, I have missed two days' post, owing to the rehearsals of *Hans Heiling*. The music, by the way, is rather disappointing; it vexes me to see a clever fellow setting to work at his fifth or sixth opera, without the faintest notion of aiming at anything really artistic, or of clothing his ideas in a suitable and intelligible form, so that we may not be smothered by a dead weight of materialism. The libretto is irredeemably bad; if Germans want to talk about inferior books of words, they have only to look at home for first-class specimens. They may ransack French librettos, and hardly find one so bad as the best of the German. Morality aside, such a false patchwork of art as *Hans Heiling* is immoral in itself, whatever it may contain.

CASSEL, *February 24th*, 1834.

After this long preamble, perhaps I ought to begin a fresh sheet. Now that our short holiday is over, we are wildly busy at our theatre, where the new company stands in such sore need of drilling in the old as well as in the new operas, that it's getting quite too much of a good thing. Just a word about the *Encyclopædia* business! There again, my dear fellow, you overrate my capacity, as you have often done before. My ideas about the form and arrangement of the work are still hazy. I can think of no plan likely to square with my design, which presupposes all that we know already—everything in the shape of material,—and leaves nothing to be done, except to unite what is apparently divided. Here, as everywhere, the maxim would hold good: Remember that every part is part of a whole (*Mit dem Sinne für das Ganze das Einzelne thun*); but I never

could cure myself of a distaste for details, and my very hatred of the abstract makes me fall back again into abstract generality. I seem to myself like the *Homunculus* in the Second Part of *Faust*, the idea of a living, actual being, but one which still has to come into existence, to *embody* itself—a process it fails to achieve! As a matter of choice, I should like to write reviews on musical topics, supplementing them here and there, as the fancy took me, with casual remarks of my own on different matters; of course, I should be obliged to leave long-winded historical articles to others. Still, I delight in thoroughly exploring a period of history, unravelling its inmost character and comparing my work with that of higher exponents. Do give me more particulars of the design of the work; has there been anything like it before?

I have found a rare good book lately. I have not finished it yet, except in the literal sense. You really must get it too. It is B. Hirzel's metrical translation of the *Sacuntala*. One breathes an ethereal atmosphere, that frees one from all the burden of one's being. What a healthy tone! What moral purity and delicacy! What lofty ideas of the sacredness of civil and religious laws! What wisdom—and how easily bestowed! I am a different being, when I take a turn in this garden, where I can exchange our stunted pear-trees for glowing, fragrant lotus flowers, powdered with gold! I have got another pretty book for you to read, Ghiberti's Chronicle of his native city, which is really not a Chronicle at all, but a collection of stories about artists, written at a time pregnant with great events. I got a German translation of Vasari to help me; but the bookbinder is still at work upon it, and he has only sent me the first of the six volumes. You are a lucky fellow, to live under the roof of a Brockhaus: we have to wait a fortnight for what you can get by stretching out your hand for it. Best thanks for Mattheson and Hermann; what do I owe you for them? Let me know, for I am heavily in your debt already. I shall soon send you back Fux, but please let me keep the dear old gentleman a little longer. The only thing that makes his book inadequate to the age in which we live, even for counterpoint alone, is, that he has no conception of what we call *tonality* (*Tonart*).

He certainly leaves unexplained everything that it would give him any trouble to explain, at least, as far as I have got. Mitzler tries to be useful now and then in the notes, but he rarely hits the right nail on the head. You talked of a piece of music in your last letter, *Schneider's Verherrlichung*, but it didn't come. I am glad you liked the Goethe and Zelter Correspondence. I don't care to discuss it generally, they talk such rubbish about it, and I loathe that hateful epithet, *interesting*. When I come to the part where good old Zelter, after hearing of Goethe's illness, smothers his anxiety, and writes jauntily to his friend, while the tears are coursing down his cheeks, I find my own eyes filling, and I positively cry with delight over Goethe, Zelter, mankind, friendship, and every other good thing. Is not that something better than *interesting?* . . .

Yours,

M. H.

33.

CASSEL, *June* 16*th*, 1834.

DEAREST HAUSER,—

I don't happen to have any rose-coloured note-paper at hand, and Cassel is not Leipzig, where you can buy it according to the humour you are in at the moment; but it was really good news to me, that you had given up your seaside plan, for I should have found it difficult to join you. I know heaps of people addicted to sea water, fresh water, and mineral baths, and they are none the better and none the worse than they were before, so I am quite content to stay where I am.

> "Study the world, the great world and the small,
> But 'As God pleases' is the end of all!"

Such logic leads, to be sure, to what Schoolmen would call a rotten conclusion. I don't mean that, but I know you feel as I do; when all sorts of obstacles arise, I lose confidence in my scheme and don't care to carry it through. However, if I could get to you, I should not be averse to trying the good waters of the Struve, as it flows through your garden; anyhow, a taste of them won't hurt me, for I am not a bad

judge of my own constitution, and soon see what suits it. The influence of circumstances is undeniable, but if it tells against us now and then, it tells for us too, when everything fits in and "goes of itself," as we say. That's when composers are at their best—not when they are in a state of frantic agitation and mad to astonish the world. Buds make no noise, to speak of, when they burst open, and yet something higher is at work than the force which cracks Etna. . . .

It makes one envious to hear Schelble play; that fellow seems to be part and parcel of his piano. . . . We unchained *Robert le Diable* again yesterday, but he makes few converts, which is creditable to the public. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

34.

CASSEL, *August 4th*, 1834.

DEAREST HAUSER,—

It is the old song over again; ever since I left Leipzig, I have done nothing but write to you—only not with my pen! I was so obstinate about coming away, that I scarcely knew the motive myself, and indeed it would be hard to discover it in detail, seeing that I had every inducement to stay where I was. I can only hint at the reasons which made me fly. I had a sort of dread of exhausting the present moment. You know the way one says to children: "Leave off, while you are still hungry!" so that they may master an appetite which grows the more, and gets the more tyrannical, the better it is satisfied. I can stay longer in society which bores me than with people who make me feel too happy. Is this a healthy or a morbid state of mind? I hardly know. Morbid it would seem to a jovial, healthy man, with a keen enjoyment of life—so I daresay it is something between the two; disease against disease—an antidote. I owe to you not only the happiness that I experienced in being with you, but also the goodness and kindness of your

acquaintances, who received me as they did, because I was your friend. For myself, I know that I make so unfavourable an impression at a first interview, that I have little chance of getting a second; hence my aversion to fresh introductions. What a paralysing feeling is self-consciousness, the seeing and hearing nothing but one's self! I am only at one with myself amongst people who know my clumsiness, and can still tolerate me; I should call this feeling Personality. But so long as a man is disconcerted and ill at ease, his best faculties are centred on the observation of trivial things, instead of working outwardly, and in that frame of mind when the outward behaviour seems utter stupidity, one may be making the subtlest observations *à propos* of one's self, internally. Of course, the other person has the right to say, "A penny for your thoughts!" . . .

Yours,

M. H.

35.

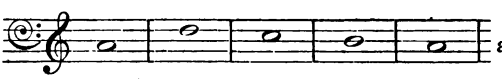
CASSEL, *September* 11*th*, 1834.

. . . Benedict has now regularly settled down in Naples, where he married his landlord's charming daughter; I knew her in her maiden days. They have several little Neapolitan Benedictines already. He has struck out a new line for himself. If I were married, and had a home of my own, I would rather settle in Germany. Call it *ultramontane* in whatever sense of the word you will, still there is a downright positive element, which you look for in vain in Italy, something that makes Sebastian Bach Sebastian Bach—that adds solidity to Mozart's Italian grace—that is almost the whole life of Beethoven. Let us call it the German element of *Faust;* Gretchen and Mephistopheles. I really cannot say whether I could part with it for ever, whether any other substitute would satisfy me; it may be that living in association with others, who were also forced to do without it, would enable me to realise its presence. Consider what is implied in an eternal farewell to Quartets, Symphonies, Sonatas, with nothing to compensate one but Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti and

Co. I am ready enough to take these fellows under my protection here, acknowledging their positive merit, as compared with the poverty of what our German composers call operatic writing; but an overdose of their music is a real penance.

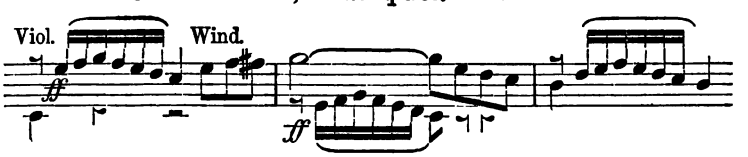
I marvel how you got through my diary. I couldn't get on with it at all, it stuck fast in my teeth like a stale roll. But you forgot to send me your English diary, which I expect by an early post. I promise to keep it secret, but I cannot let you off sending it. I admire Palestrina's Mass, and have finished copying the Gloria. I wish I could get hold of some of the music of Palestrina's contemporaries, or of his immediate predecessors. Perhaps you may have in your library some examples which, if compared with Palestrina's, would show the distinct reform that he achieved. I could see it for myself, had I found, as I expected, that the Mass was like his *Stabat Mater*, and that instead of the flowing fugue form, in which the words are merged, he had made them more intelligible by allowing all the voices to give them out simultaneously. This often happens in those numbers of the Mass where the text is full, but it is less prevalent than in the *Stabat Mater*, or in those two delightfully refreshing numbers of Palestrina, given by Kühnel in his *Musica sacra*. After the austere opening in the *Stabat*, I shook myself free of all the music of the dominant. It is possible, that the predecessors of Palestrina differed from him in preferring to work over a *Canto fermo*, assigning it to one vocal part and treating the others canonically; I dare say it often sounded dull and constrained. *Here*, however, there is no stem round which the flowers may wreathe themselves; there is no *Canto fermo*—all is free—yet from no discernible point of view can I call this musical tissue a perfect form of Art. Variety, yes; Unity, no. I find unity in the fugue; it is inherent in the theme, which is the same all through. In the sonata (the form of which, speaking altogether generally, contrasts with that of the fugue) I find unity in the *total*, which is halved through the change to the dominant, and, no matter how far the subdivision is carried, unity is preserved none the less (tonic, dominant, tonic); but given a mere conglomeration of verbal

rhythms, what am I to take hold of, supposing the dog has no tail? This arises from our having no strong intellectual grasp of such works, for even if we hear them two or three times in the Sixtine Chapel, what use is that? Baini can talk about them. We have no standard, whereby to differentiate the best works of this school from the mediocre and the third-rate, and though we may like one composition more than another, it does not follow that our opinion would coincide with that of the people for whom the music was written. For all that, I was pleased to find that Baini agrees with me in giving high rank to the *Stabat*, the *Improperia*, and the *Fratres ego enim*. I have recently unravelled the mystery of *L'homme armé*, the tune so frequently introduced in old Masses. I often make it a theme for my pupils' contrapuntal exercises in major and minor—



and I now see that it is the theme of the *Kyrie* in this Mass, for the *Kyrie* is still a complete fugue in the older style. It is further observable, that these two deep parts are constantly rising above and sinking below one another, so that they act alternately as bass to each other. . . .

I was present lately at an orchestral rehearsal of *Otello*, and was fairly enchanted with the music. To tell the truth, certain long-drawn passages from the grand *ensemble* scenes moved me almost to tears. The work is soundly and healthily developed. Call it living—organic—anything you choose; why not say "Beautiful!" at once. They *are* beautiful, those free notes ringing out above the orchestra! And then the orchestration—how little is wanting to make it excellent! I declare, that quick movement in the first



Finale is worth more to me, and stands on a higher level, than all the laborious contrapuntal devices of modern times.

As for the freedom of the vocal parts, it is the Forum compared with a study. These Italian rascals are endowed in a very high degree with the true instinct of Art—they don't piece their music together, the *whole* is a direct inspiration; all they have to do is to find the centre, and to divide. You will see more of my opinions on this subject, *implicite et explicite*, in the stray Essays—so clumsily put together by the bookbinder—which I am sending you. If people could but be got to understand things historically, they would perceive, from the fact that French and Italian operas keep almost exclusive possession of our stage, not only that Italians and Frenchmen are operatic writers, which we are not, but that operas are from infancy upwards their only study: Composition with them means, writing Operas. Our fellows stick to Concertos, Symphonies, Quartets, Sonatas; later on, one of them tries his hand at an opera, and gets some silly fool to write a *Vampyr* libretto, on to which he hangs his Symphony and Quartet music. Naturally, it pleases the public about as much as the operatic music that Rossini puts into his six Quartets; one is as bad as the other. I don't mean to cry up *Otello* all through, for there is some unspeakably poor stuff in it; I am only referring to its good points.

I embarked, the other day, on the Mythological Lectures, and was at first delighted with what I read; but as soon as the stream began to widen, I made for the shore. All the early part, which is an echo of many of my inmost feelings, was very sympathetic to me. So far as I have gone, the worst blunders have been corrected; the handwriting is rather illegible, but one must not look for knowledge of particular terms in a copyist; in all the common words he is accurate enough. I enclose *Die Metamorphose der Pflanzen*. I have only the last edition of Voss's *Homer*; of course, I should prefer the first, if only for the type's sake. Oh, those horrid small letters to the substantives! It is quite intolerable of pert individuals, to take it upon themselves to improve what is generally accepted. In spite of Jean Paul's praises, I never could stand Wolke's purification of the language, and now his book is clean forgotten. You must be *borné* indeed

to tell a nation it does not speak its own language correctly. We have just such a donkey here at the Lyceum, a German, who works hard to prove to his pupils that Frenchmen don't understand French. I have been reading St. John's Gospel in Greek; my copy is included in a little handbook of the Greek language, based on Hamiltonian principles, by Dr. Tafel, published at Ulm in 1831, price 14 gr.; the translation is interlinear, word for word. I rather like the plan, although I am not a complete novice in Greek, for it brings out the subject-matter vividly, before one goes on to the grammar and the classification. I used the crib for the first few chapters; then I found it was getting easier, even if I covered the translation with my ruler, and at last I could do without crutches altogether. The worst of it is that, though I can read the Gospels glibly enough, and understand them verbally, I come to a dead-lock over the first line of the simplest of Æsop's Fables. I fancy the Biblical Greek is not the real orthodox Greek, for there are lots of particles in this which cannot be literally translated, μεν and δε, for instance, connecting the premise and the conclusion; in the Bible you find nothing of the kind. Luther translated almost word for word; he used no paraphrases. I should like to know what philologists have to say to the matter. Had the Evangelist a language peculiar to himself, or did he use a local dialect? Was it, not his mother-tongue, but a mixture of Greek and Hebrew? The date will not account for it, for the writers of that period wrote like the ancient Greeks. I am talking as an ignoramus, but that is the very reason I should wish to know. An interlinear word for word translation of a few chapters of Herodotus, Xenophon, and Plutarch would be a real help to me. To be sure, one must bring a certain amount of intelligence to bear upon it, but then—with a great difference—it is as if one were in the country, and could pick up the language by ear. Of course, schoolboys are supposed to learn logic from their Latin, and therefore masters oppose this method; but if one only wants to learn the language, that is a matter of indifference. . . .

There is not one sympathetic soul here, with whom I can chat about music, art, the current operas, the daily news-

paper; not that I always want a new thing—old subjects are well enough, they often strike one in a fresh light. But I can't be for ever at my desk, pen in hand—and, after all, writing only whets the appetite for talk. It is impossible to talk to Spohr, he is so hardened with prejudices. I seldom come across N. now. He, too, has very little of the give and take about him; little as I relish an argument with a man flatly opposed to me, I think it equally poor fun to talk with one who is always in the same lobby with myself. It takes two to a discussion. Talk begins with difference and ends in unity; an agreement must be possible—if not, it's mere chatter. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

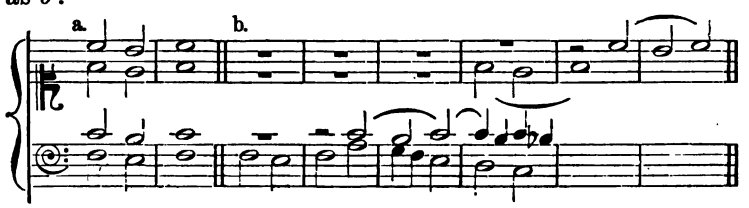
36.

CASSEL, *October 2nd*, 1834.

. . . While copying from beginning to end every note you sent me of Palestrina's, I have cleared up many doubts and difficulties, and verified many an hypothesis (well founded on something else, of course). All theoretical knowledge is useful only to yourself; you cannot communicate much of it to others; if you could, everyone who thinks he has discovered some novelty, would soon convince himself that hundreds before him possessed the secret, for "there is no new thing under the sun." Surely, these compositions of Palestrina's still belong to the Germanic principle of Art (if I may coin such a name); in strictness they have—don't misunderstand me!—no *tempi*, they resemble plants in their irregular growth, they are mere evolution, without symmetrical effect. I say this, with reference to a passage in my Stray Leaves on the main difference between animal and vegetable organisms. Still, this *genre* lasted on as long as we had any Church music at all. I have a Mass by Alessandro Scarlatti, which stands in about the same relation to Palestrina as Virgil does to Homer, yet fundamentally the style is the same. Now if we put the operas of this same Scarlatti by the side of Mozart's, we shall find about the same difference as that which exists between Palestrina's and Scarlatti's Church music—an earlier and a later

development of the same species, not a substantial variance. But Scarlatti's operas and Scarlatti's Church music *are* strikingly at variance with one another, and this too without reference to date and age; they differ intrinsically and substantially. Scarlatti wrote like a German for the Church, and like a Greek for the theatre; he rendered unto God the things that were God's, and unto Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's. I don't say this in order to magnify Scarlatti above other grandees, for I daresay others of his time did the same (Leo, for instance), but more for the sake of contrast, and to have a definite object, so that I may make my calculation with well-known factors. We cannot get this contrast in older composers, for they had no theatre; we cannot get it in the more modern, for they have no church.

If these two *genres* are kept carefully apart (and like all abstractions, they have no *real* existence), we shall find the essence of one to consist in the singing of the *same* passage by several voices, each according to its separate register, the tenor and soprano therefore ranging a fifth higher than the bass and alto. As this cannot occur *simultaneously* without the passage showing bare unity (8ve) and bare duality (5th), it follows that the parts move *after* one another, not as *a* but as *b*:—



If the essential feature of the latter *genre* is melody, that of the former is harmony. In this instance, therefore, several voices would have to start together, and consequently with *various* melodies:—

Metrical definition is made possible, however, by the circumstance of the voices starting and ending together, for there is

no metrical division in the genuine (old) fugue, if we do not rely on our *harmonic* ear; every voice begins from 1, and thus 4 voices, following after one another, stand metrically one above the other, as follows :—

1 2 3 4
1 2 3 4
1 2 3 4
1 2 3 4

so that apart from the first and last bar, no definite metrical value can be assigned to any other voice, because each of them includes several metrical values in itself—in other words, the fugal movement has no caesura. Contrast this with the other *genre*, where the voices range over one another, thus :—

1 2 3 4
1 2 3 4
1 2 3 4
1 2 3 4

so that at 4 there is a section. Bach's supremacy in fugue consists in this—with him it ceases to be the abstract fugue, the feeling of metre is never held in suspension, Arsis and Thesis are clearly reconizable throughout in a narrower or broader significance, without one single part being made subservient to another. That characteristic is a mark not only of Bach's genius, but of Bach's time. He stands exactly midway between fugue and sonata; before his time the fugue prevailed, after him the sonata. If we compel ourselves to study the greatest and most finished artists of every age, we are above the miserable necessity of praising and blaming; then it is nothing more than a moment of history, the inevitable outcome of a natural succession of things.

October 8th.

I had been eagerly on the look-out for a letter from you, for days past, when who should appear with it but the beloved Felix Mendelssohn? I am delighted to think that this name now represents a person to me; now I need no longer try to imagine him, apart from any individual feeling of my own. When you say "Felix" now, it will be no mere sound, but an echo. He was with me from Monday until the afternoon

of Tuesday. Here is the programme: He came to me at 9.30 a.m., and an hour and a half afterwards we went to see Sontag, and I left him alone with her to arrange the engagement business. When that was over, he returned to me. Sontag had been encouraging; he was to see her again that same evening. After some to-ing and fro-ing, he went through my Mass, for the sake of the *tempi*. I am as little satisfied with it as anyone, and cordially agree with him that the orchestra should be handled quite differently for the church: it should be treated in the Allegro, or rather in the more animated movements (for it is just the Allegro character that ought to come out) in the same spirit as in the slow Graduale; but how is that to be done? One must do it, to answer the question. Our instrumentation, as a rule, sounds too meanly in a church, particularly when the strings are rather weak, though we are much better off than the people of Dresden, whose forces consist of twenty-two fiddles, four basses, four cellos, and four violas. In 1826 Neustadt had sixty fiddles and about the same number of basses; that is quite enough to secure a fine effect for the good numbers of the Requiem, and the incense, &c. comes in well; but we must not look for such occasions often—it ought to sound ecclesiastical, even with the means available for ordinary service. No one expects anything out of the way on such days. There is good stuff in the thing, only it is not harmonious; the strings are inferior as compared with the voices and the wind, and therefore they should not be prominently brought forward; all that should be required of them is to keep well together. But enough of this for to-day! Felix and I were together until 2 p.m. when he went to dinner, returning to me at 3 o'clock; I wanted to go to him, but he preferred coming to me. He brought me the corrected proofs of his Overtures to *The Hebrides*, and *Meeresstille*. I asked him to play them over again to me. I liked *The Hebrides* much the best of the two; as it was the newest, he did not mind. I shall urge them to do some of these things at our Subscription Concerts; I really long to hear them. He was shy, at first, about playing me his *Lieder ohne Text;* they were only fit for ladies, he said;

but when Constance came in, there was no help for it, and he played No. 1 very beautifully. By this time it was 4 o'clock, and we went off to Spohr's; there we had to sit through the stale old commonplace talk about music for the few, music for the million. Such drivel as that, all on the surface and no heart in it, was wearisome to the soul of Felix, though he properly enough bottled up his wrath until we got outside the house. There may be times when it is right to argue, but as a rule it leads to nothing, and I think it's best to say straight out, "I don't agree with you—*basta!*" and get on to the fine weather, over which we shan't squabble. Spohr well over, we went to the Hopffes. Henrietta was not at home; we met her on the way back. Felix then went off to Sontag, to get her final answer, but he returned in half-an-hour, wishing all actors and actresses at the devil, for she had changed her mind, and wouldn't treat with him on any terms. There was no time to be lost, so I advised him to get one of our disbanded sopranos. He caught at my suggestion, and we posted off at once to see the lady. Of course the nest was empty, and the bird over the hills and far away! There was nothing for it but to go home and have tea together. Would I show him some of my music? I lighted on the Violin Duets, which he took up and examined. I am gratified, if others approve of a little bit of work turned out to my own satisfaction—the more they praise it, the better I am pleased; but when my conscience whispers to me that the work is not up to the mark, I have an inward conviction —*quite another thing to criticism*—which I prize more than my own composition, though as compared with others it may pass muster. In that frame of mind, I should reject any compliments about my Mass, even if it were as good as one of Cherubini's. Felix liked the Duets better than the Mass, and I think he was right. He went home to bed at 9 o'clock, and turned up next morning at Spohr's, who had fixed 8 a.m. as their hour of meeting, to talk over the new Oratorio. Felix played it marvellously. You would have thought from the correct reading, the certain and vigorous execution, that he was improvising. Three hours afterwards, we were joined by Frau von Malsburg, and Stumpf, the

London harp-maker, an old acquaintance of Felix's. As the lady had wished to call upon him in Düsseldorf, he felt bound to pay her a return visit, and this came off at noon. She worried him to play something, and, bored as he was, he sat down and played a *Fantasia* (already published), and some of the *Lieder ohne Text.* The Spohrs and the Hopffes were there. We dined at the *table d'hôte* together. Spohr came afterwards, for a chat and a stroll in the garden. By 4 o'clock the fun was over. I smarted for it, for a bad headache kept me in bed until 10 a.m. this morning.

It was lucky for me, that I had Felix quietly to myself the first day! on the day following, he was very much in request. But as we came away from Frau von Malsburg, he said: "Shall we go to your house for a little?" which pleased me very much, though, alas! it was past dinner-time!

I am so glad that you too have begun Greek, though I fancy you are not such a novice as I am; all you had to do was to clear the shaft—I had hardly got beyond the first few letters, which are so often used as mathematical formulæ. The proverb says that the beginning of all things is hard; they might have reversed that—it's easy enough to begin—perseverance, sticking to a thing, there's the rub! Where can I find a teacher, who would do just what I want, who would teach me grammar, where it is absolutely necessary, and let it go at the right moment? For grammar is often a *sine quâ non;* and yet one can hardly learn it for its own sake, beforehand. After dabbling with the Greek Alphabet, I am dabbling with Greek Art. I have just learnt, that there is a depôt here for the loveliest casts from the antique. I have bought the *Discobolos* and the *Kneeling Venus of the Vatican;* the first is reduced in size, but the other is modelled from the original. Why cannot I conjure up those figures before you, instead of talking about them? They are really quite exquisite. To see the idea of Beauty and physical perfection animating the dead stone through and through, is enough to set one's heart beating. A perfect statue is really a bit of Infinity, for every time you shift your point of view, a new form presents itself, one possibly never dreamt of by the artist himself. Every member of the circle around a statue

sees something different, and yet they can all say, Divine! Did the ancient sculptors study anatomy as zealously as ours do? I think not; I doubt if they flayed and dissected the human body to find out what was beautiful, to learn the way of representing it. This *must* be done now, I suppose, because the Paradise of Art is Paradise Lost, and your modern sculptor must earn his bread, if there be any to earn, in the sweat of his brow. It was their task, as it is ours, to learn the art of finished expression; but they knew absolutely nothing of the moil and toil of our modern system. We have not lost the ideal of Beauty; if we had, we should be insensible to the claims of Jupiter Olympus or Apollo Belvedere; but ours is a more feminine and passive feeling than theirs. I suppose it is this that makes us weep over the Beautiful. I can stand Tragedy, but Beauty upsets me in a moment. I loathe the Iffland-Kotzebue emotion which drowns the pit in tears, though, if I am in good spirits, it diverts me as a farce would—but let Iphigenie speak, and I do the water-cart directly, though an effect of that kind was never intended. This is entirely due to the influence of Beauty, but I am an easy victim from another quarter. Let me give you an example! You remember that passage in Kleist, where Count Wetter von Strahl, though madly in love with Käthchen, has to treat her roughly and rudely? I daresay Kleist chooses subjects for his plays, which, artistically considered, may be morbid, but he carries them out with an energy and an earnestness such as we seldom meet with. If Goethe is right in saying Kleist won't do, Tieck is also right in contradicting him, and Goethe allows Tieck's verdict to be "very good-natured." (See *Goethe's Werke*, Vol. xlv. *L. Tieck's Dram. Blätter.*) To my mind, Goethe's harmonious solution of everything opposed to his own views is the most beautiful thing of all. He has but one pet aversion, from which he shrinks instinctively, only alluding to it very briefly and when he cannot help himself; you will find it mentioned once in some of his letters, *à propos* of the painter Hensel. In *Erwin* also (according to Anselm) it is held up as the one thing to be *utterly rejected* both in Life and in Art. . . . Faust, with all his iniquities, is not carried off by the Devil; he mistook

falsehood for truth, but he always yearned for truth, and falsehood, once he had seen through it, never mastered him for a moment. Let the Devil take *hypocrisy*, if he likes it!

October 10*th.*

For fear I might forget to ask you, tell me in your next, where you got *Paolucci Arte prat. di Contrapp.* from, or whether you possess it yourself? I want to get together, gradually, a series of authentic compositions. Rather oddly, Forkel has two specimens of Josquin; one of these, an Elegy on the death of Ockenheim, his master, would be very effective; the other, a Benedictus, with a quaint, dry theme treated like a Canon, sounds hundreds of years older, and is as dull as ditch water. Mouton and Pierre de la Rue are tarred with the same brush; except for the gaps in their harmony, it sounds all right for a bit, and then it ceases to be music altogether, you lose the very foundation of tonality. Forkel too is full of misprints; whose fault that is, I cannot say, for much of the notation may have been misunderstood, and may have been changed by transposition. An edition of Palestrina, based on Baini's scores, would be a great boon, for it would serve as a key to the music of that period. We do not want the entire works, but one volume of Masses, one of Madrigals, &c. Have you subscribed to Gabrieli? I am afraid ten *thalers* are beyond me, though I daresay he is worth the money. But I hope we shall have less talk and more music.

October 12*th.*

I am always haunted, especially at this time of the year, by a longing for Italy; it is not a morbid feeling, although if it were consistent with reason and duty, I should gladly pack up and be off by the next train. But it is yet a deeper joy to be there in spirit, and to drink in with the mind's eye all the beauty of the South. Some time ago, I used to pass most of my afternoons in our beautiful *Aue*, sipping my coffee there quite alone, and reading Goethe's *Italienische Reise*. That is Italy, and a good deal more besides. I cannot remember, during the whole of my stay there, such transparently happy hours, such peaceful surroundings, as those which I enjoyed

over my book in the *Aue* at Cassel. A man so harmoniously organised, so cultivated as Goethe, is more to me than a beautiful country; Goethe outshines Naples. *Kennst du das Land* vibrates in our hearts—not so the lovely sights and sounds of Italy; but then you must have been there. I read through your English diary without stopping, just as you wrote it; it is far more dramatic than mine, which is rather of an epical nature (Herder says tediousness is part of an Epic). I used yours as an outline, and when I had filled in the adventures you told me about yourself, the picture was pretty well complete. . . .

Friday, October 17th.

I began a new sheet, but must stop short, for, contrary to expectation, I have to attend a full rehearsal of *Romeo and Juliet* this afternoon. . . . I had heaps of questions to ask you, and lots to talk about, but am too much fussed to think of or remember anything. One thing I do recollect is, that a few days since, I survived a birthday. It's rather nice to feel that one has another 364 days in front of one, without getting any older. I shall send you back the Palestrina things, and your English Diary, as soon as I can. *Arteaga* is fearfully dull reading. He is crammed full of what the Italians call philosophy. Baini too declares that every single pause in Palestrina is full of expression and *philosophy*. I must stop. Farewell. Kindest remembrances.

Yours,
M. H.

37.

CASSEL, *November 24th*, 1834.

DEAR HAUSER,—

. . . Last Sunday we had a performance of *I Capuletti*: though the audience were roused by some striking passages, they were not altogether pleased with the music. I must own that the simple grief of the two lovers in the first *Finale* affects me more than I can tell you, and this is not merely a first impression, for the oftener I hear the music, the stronger is

the effect on me. It is the right thing in the right place; something of that kind must have happened; it must have been a little different here or there, but in the main the composer has hit the mark, as he generally does in emotional passages. There is no mistaking the passion of the two lovers; Bellini himself was a lover, when he wrote that opera in the current fashion of the day. All besides that is a mere scaffolding, an easel to put his picture upon. It is like a cold pie; you leave the outside crust and pick out the goose-liver and the truffles. The opera is full of human incidents; each of us feels and sympathises with what is going on. Hitherto, some good genius has screened the Italians from the diseased art of the *Vampyr*, though it has infected even the writers of the French school in *Zampa*, *Fra Diavolo*, and *Roberto*. Only let the *prima donna* appear, and she is received with a general shriek on the chord of the diminished seventh, which crushes out every sense of life like a nightmare. Perhaps the French will get free of this; we are still in the thick of it. That precious *Fürstin von Granada* is a beast of the same sort, let alone her many other repulsive points. . . . *Meister Heiling*, who comes on to-morrow, is another of the same family, but he is even tamer and lamer than the rest. The maid would like to dance a bit, and her master won't allow her—there's a tragic motive for you, with a *tremolo* accompaniment running through all the twenty-four keys. The poet knows how to introduce his characters well too—*e.g.*, the first tenor, who would gladly sing, only they won't listen to him. They tell me that Schmetzer is engaged, and that he and Pistor are to have 4,000 *thalers* between them, besides a good establishment and maintenance. What folly, if this be true!

> "Seek the unpolluted East,
> On the air of Patriarchs feast!"

See *Divan*, p. 1. It's much better than writing or reading a letter like this. How is the Greek getting on? Do you make progress? . . . I read in the new musical paper of Leipzig, that we are to have a new Fairy Opera by Richard Wagner. Is it true? How is Franzilla Pixis? I am raining questions upon you in my hurry, that means that I want answers. Addio, addiissimo. M. H.

38.

CASSEL, *January 2nd*, 1835.

. . . My best New Year's wishes for you, your wife, and children, and now let me answer *seriatim* the questions in your last letter. Before that, however, accept my warmest thanks for your kind and delightful present, which came exactly in the nick of time. To get a thing at the right moment is almost as important as to get the right thing. I have copied the *Lamentations*, and learnt a good deal from them. Though right enough in its own place, it is not music which will endure as a work of art. Now that I am better versed in Palestrina, I am more than ever convinced that *this* is sacred music, and that all other music is something else—even Sebastian Bach's. Of course, such assertions are always apt to be made too strongly—it does not matter, for they may contain the elements of truth notwithstanding. I would add, without pretending to go deeply into the subject, that this music, like the Catholic Service itself, especially in Rome, is to my mind akin to the old sacerdotal spirit; to some extent it sings itself. Were it accompanied by an orchestra, or by an organ even, there would be a difference, an opposing force, compelling the mind to work, to seize and to contrast those differences, which may be eminently useful in a work of art as such, but are prejudicial to Church music as such. We really cannot argue, that the restoration of the better part of early music depends simply on the omission of what is injurious to its effect, upon the absence of instrumentation, or of certain harmonies, &c.—or, in short, upon any negative condition. The result of that would be a mere masquerade, hopelessly out of its place here. Some observations made, I think, in my Stray Leaves, on Spohr's *Last Judgment* might—or might not—be to the point; I really don't know. But Palestrina's music varies greatly. Baini credits him with ten different styles. Confusing as this may be at first, a close observer will easily detect three. In the *first*, which *to our ears* is wanting in harmony, he was still in touch with his Flemish predecessors; the melodies,

thick and close on one another, go their own way without producing chords; from the harmonic point of view, they are dry, clumsy, and unyielding, and they are treated throughout in Canon and Fugue fashion. The *second* style is the opposite of this, for it consists merely of the simultaneous motion of all the parts, and it is like our own Chorale; here the vocal writing is always well adapted to the voice, though here, too, the condition of melody is like that of harmony in the Chorale, more negative than anything else; it never disturbs by any incongruity, that is all. In his *third* style, both the others combine to form the best and the most beautiful music that can be imagined in this sphere, and I think it is this which has raised Palestrina to so high a pinnacle, for all time. The crowning example of this style is the *Missa Papæ Marcelli.* Still, there are very fine things written in the second style—the *Improperia*, for instance, published in the *Musica Sacra* by Kühnel. How I revel in its simplicity! Is it not a pity? We have a pretty little Roman Catholic church here; the nave rather reminds one of Palladio's Venetian interiors; but the organ is in the hands of a stiff old Vicar Choral, who is unable to play two chords in combination correctly. What with the organ and the bleating choir, the noise is perfectly intolerable. And all the time we have Grenzebach here, a rare good hand at that sort of thing, a man who knows the *Temperirte Clavier* almost by heart, and who pines for an organ-loft from year's end to year's end! That's not all. We could easily pick our forces, and form an excellent choir out of our two *Singvereine*, and then we actually possess these unique pieces of real Church music—and they are not so tremendously difficult for musical people. Of course they must be sung, and not screamed, as so many suppose, when they see *Alla breve* at the top of the page. But with all this at our command, we get on like the people in that song, *Die Mutter schickt den Jokel 'naus:* that wretched Vicar Choral vexes his own soul and those of others; Grenzebach is kept out of his organ-loft; we have nothing but cacophony in church, and the *Singvereine* torment themselves with hopelessly unvocal music, which would only be endurable with the orchestra that they have not got. So it goes on. I

think *you* might mend matters; we want some intermediary. Why don't the clergy make it their business? I ask myself in amazement. They have had their church completely restored, the architecture is very pretty, they have pictures too, some of them very good indeed—but you would think that the very Devil of Discord conducted the music. I have been ruffled by similar experiences in the Italian churches, where it is still more beautiful, so long as everything is quiet, but once let go the organ, and the Devil has it all his own way! I remember being present, one New Year's Eve, in a lovely Gothic church at Florence; it was splendidly lighted, and crammed with people in every niche and corner. So long as the organist held on a full long chord in C major, I felt quite happy, but suddenly it was merged in the Duet from the *Barbiere: Dunque io son.* The man played it from the beginning to the end, for which, however, I didn't wait. Now let me answer your questions. . . . No copy of *Ali Baba* has come to hand; besides, we prefer to stick to our worthy German masterpieces. *Adlers Horst* was to have been revived in January, but our *prima donna* fell ill. That work, and others like it, belong to what Goethe calls "the literature of despair." Tieck's pleasing novel, *Die Reise ins Blaue*, which is published in this year's *Urania*, deals with this theme; I am too slow a reader to take it all in at one breath, and as I was bound to return the volume at once, I had no opportunity of reading it again. The effect produced by a regular poet, like Tieck, is quite unique; the farther away we get from the work, the more we see in it. Why, what a space is filled by *Werther*, *Faust*, *Wilhelm Meister*, each really taking up the whole room! but the circles intersect one another without disturbance, like those made by stones, pitched one after the other into the water. How can all that be contained in those few books? we ask ourselves afterwards. But it really is not contained in them; it is the living, life-giving idea in them, which works on for ever. . . .

Your devoted

M. H

39.

CASSEL, *April 3rd*, 1835.

. . . Bad weather and headache combine to make me a poor correspondent. I forwarded the letter to Mendelssohn without any additions to it, I was not in the humour; even writing to Your Worship was labour enough. Besides, I think, or I should rather say fear, that I am too slow and old-fashioned for Mendelssohn, who is the incarnation of activity and originality. We are to have a performance of his Octet at Spohr's house, next Sunday morning; Nebelthau has got it. Barring Mendelssohn, I could count on my fingers the living composers, whose novelties I look forward to with any pleasure. A few of Chopin's *Etudes* have given me a good opinion of him likewise; but even there, I have something to get over—a dash of French Romanticism, from which Mendelssohn is perfectly free. What a truly edifying Symphony is Berlioz's *Episode de La Vie d'un Artiste*, with its procession to the gallows! I wonder whether you have heard or read anything of that man? They are for ever dinning him into my ears. "Wait a bit! When that genius has sown his wild oats, you will reckon him a classic." A queer sort of genius that, which starts with Gallows Symphonies! Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven began with bright, clear Pianoforte Sonatas. Of course, I don't deny that Berlioz and Co. have talent, and very great talent too, but they lack the artistic sense. If I differentiate Poetry and Art as correlative with Subject and Form, a difficulty is cleared up, and I can determine from what point of view a thing is valuable, and from what point of view it is unsatisfactory or despicable. In conversation, Poetry and Art mean one and the same thing, they are convertible terms; but in the narrower sense, they are opposed to one another, and perfection consists in their amalgamation and in their unity. Perhaps Härtel has already told you, that we are going to have a performance of *Ali Baba* on the 20th August, the Prince's birthday. . . . I heartily con-

gratulate you on your acquisition of the red varnish of Stradivarius; so shamefully ignorant am I of the state of the fiddle market, that I did not know such an article was to be had. I lately found myself described in a Musical Handbook and Encyclopædia, as a distinguished violinist; I wonder where the writer got his information. He says that Mozart was an eminent composer, who wrote a good deal—*Don Juan* and some Rondos, for instance. The whole book is full of this drivel. What is the use of such creatures? To make waste paper, I suppose. Jean Paul takes the lady-authoresses under his wing, and says that a good housekeeper should, as far as possible, make everything that is used in the household—so you cannot blame her, if she makes waste-paper too.

We are to have Spohr's new Oratorio on Good Friday; Rochlitz is coming to Leipzig to hear it. You really ought to join us. I have only heard portions of the work, and but a few of the solos; much of it is very good, and it is written with more freedom than is usual with Spohr. It is sure to be very effective. There is plenty of sentimentality, that we must admit, and I allow that it's our own fault; sentiment is the inseparable individuality of the age, and of the individuals reflecting it—the poem itself is not free from it. Differences of opinion between Spohr and Rochlitz are an old story; of late years, these discussions became rather too hot, and Rochlitz was not always as temperate as he might have been. Spohr had composed his Oratorio to a text worked up by Rochlitz some time before. He had kept it in his desk, and as all letters on the subject had ceased, Rochlitz probably thought that he had abandoned the work, and, acting on that belief, offered a new adaptation to Mendelssohn. Now Mendelssohn had chanced to see Spohr's Oratorio here, when it was all but finished, and this gave rise to a brisk correspondence between the composer and the librettist. Rochlitz, with a vehemence quite unusual in that worthy man, urged Spohr to recast his music and adapt it to the new arrangement. This is all the more curious because, as an author, Rochlitz is very dispassionate, owing to his freedom from prejudice, and so he gives full scope to others, whose views do not coincide with his own. But where No. 1 is affected, the best man among us

becomes a partisan. Rochlitz sent back the unopened score to Spohr; amongst other things, he said that Spohr only treated the subject as an artist, whereas he (R.) could not forget that religion was concerned. It would be another thing, had Rochlitz objected altogether to Spohr's music, as sacred music; but if he accepts it—and he does accept it, for else he would not have offered him a second Oratorio after *The Last Judgment*—then he must let Spohr, the artist, have the upper hand. Are we to lock up Art in one drawer and Religion in another? If Spohr does his best as an artist, his music will be as religious as it can be, at such and such a time and under such and such circumstances. He will not mend matters by denying his own nature, or, in this instance, his own views and convictions, for it was not a question of the music itself, as Rochlitz had never seen a note of it. *Ma basta!* Rochlitz caved in at last, and he is coming here. One point of dispute was his wish to avoid, in his new arrangement, the introduction of Christ as a character, surely proper enough in itself—but how are we to escape it in an Oratorio which is treated throughout as a complete drama? Rochlitz thought that Our Lord's words should be assigned to a special chorus, "in the style of the ancient Church." Does he mean the Church of the fifth or of the fifteenth century? But even were it the latter, how laboured and artificial would it seem, compared with other music, not written in the style of the ancient Church! I certainly do not hear the Christ singing in Bach's *Passion;* there I must have pure white, no colour,—violet, purple, nor any other tint. But then He must not be introduced as a character in the drama; or, if He is, we shall have to put up with solo treatment, which even at the best is an inevitable evil. Mendelssohn, they tell me, has also written an Oratorio, which is to be performed at Frankfurt next autumn; can you give me any particulars? When he was last at Cassel, he wanted my Mass in G for a performance in Düsseldorf; nothing came of it, however, and I dislike putting myself forward, else I should have sent it to him long ago. That's the reason I am so glad, when my things are in print; then I can wash my hands of them altogether. André has bothered me so often lately, that

I set to work to write some easy Sonatas for piano and violin. The first two movements of the first Sonata are so easy, that even I can manage them; the third is more of a poser. Now I have written the first movement of the second, and that's more tiresome still. I got annoyed at this *crescendo*, and have done nothing more to the music for the last fortnight. Some day or another, I may take it up again, and go in once more for the free and easy. I return, with best thanks, the examples of the seventeenth and eighteenth century writers, most of which I have copied with my own hand, besides your fat volume of Motets—rather stiffish music, but we must respect it, particularly as there are twenty-four of them, and each as like as one egg to another; I suppose that must be put down to the age they were written in. I have not yet seen anything of Winterfeld's Gabrieli. Cassel is badly off for old music. No one cares to order such an expensive thing at a venture, and I am rather shy of buying books without seeing them. They sent me Goethe's Correspondence with a Child, the other day, but the price, five *thalers*, was beyond me, and I thought the Child's answers too gushing and too *spirituel*. Give me the letters of people, who have something else to do besides letter-writing! Again and again I have tried the Rahel Letters; it is a hopeless task—you may as well ask me to drink punch undiluted. . . .

I am struck with what you say about conductors; a first-rate leader ought to be a really clever man, though, alas! we know from experience that, given a man with a certain amount of stupid audacity and unselfconsciousness, he often achieves more than a skilful, intelligent musician! What a piteous spectacle is our friend Baldewein at the conductor's desk! Once he has got the *bâton* in his hand, he never loses his self-consciousness, and his double-ganger keeps him in a state of everlasting bewilderment; he has to conduct himself as well as the music. Now, Spohr, on the contrary, is at one with himself, *he* has nothing to conduct but what lies outside him. Baldewein insists on never-ending rehearsals of the most familiar operas, because he has to learn how to accommodate his beat to our playing. I am highly amused at their wanting to make a professor of Felix. Here is one of the very few who

can do something original, and they are going to set him down to play the schoolmaster! I really could not forgive him; no, not for a million. And he would have to lecture too! I never could make up my mind to teach even two pupils at a time. In old days, I attended lectures assiduously, though I never got the slightest good from them, and the fault was not Weinlig's, who was a first-rate hand. Music cannot be taught in this way. Youngsters must write and compose exercises; the oldest way is the best—few words, and not too much reasoning. So long as a pupil is satisfied, the teacher had best stick to "Don't do that! It sounds bad. It is forbidden." If Mendelssohn could have prolonged his visit, I meant to have made him tell me about Zelter's method. I know very little about him; what I have seen of his music struck me as rather of the *dilettante* order. I hardly like saying that, but I know of no other expression. It was not like Bach nor Mozart, it was not like the Italians either; it had a dash of the Mannheim *School of Music* about it. . . .

Yours,
M. H.

40.

CASSEL, *April 17th*, 1835.

. . . This evening we are to hear Spohr's Oratorio, *Calvary*, and the church is to be specially lighted for the occasion. I think this work quite equal to *The Last Judgment*. The style is the same, though the dramatic character of the poem calls for a different treatment and the introduction of more formal Airs. There is a good deal to be said in favour of Rochlitz's view, that Our Lord's words ought to be given to a chorus. True, it involves a dramatic untruth, but dramatically it is more appropriate, and be the composition what it may, actual truth would not then be demanded—for in that case, the chorus is the representative of the people (the audience, I mean), who are repeating to themselves the familiar

words of Scripture. The Chorales in the *Passion* fulfil the same office. I think it a very hazardous venture, to entrust any one individual with the representation of Christ; it is jarring to be reminded by composer and performer of Nadori, Azor, and Co. You cannot argue with Spohr about such subjects, for he sets it all down to cant and hypocrisy. This perversion of his seems to me almost ludicrous; to drag down what is pure and holy to the level of sickly sentiment, that *is* hypocrisy, if you like. No one ever suggests that Spohr is given to cant. I only speak generally. The Oratorio, I have no doubt, will soon be given in Leipzig. It is impossible to talk properly about music which only one of us knows. Rochlitz has not turned up, I hear, but Spohr's old father has. He is a hale, tough octogenarian, and is not sorry to leave Gandersheim, his old home, for his conversion to homœopathy has brought him into great trouble as a country doctor. The new Lexicon of Conversation slips out of the difficulty cleverly enough; it has two articles about homœopathy—the first by an homœopathist, the second by an allopathist. Let them fight it out together; after all, it's the best way. Still, it is funny enough to see a doctor, who up to his seventieth year was a steady allopathist, veer completely round, and in his eightieth year inveigh against allopathy as strenuously as the youngest homœopathist. But it beat cock-fighting, allopathic or homœopathic either, when he said he could cure good Frau Spohr from Gandersheim, and she, hypochondriacal as she was, and all but melancholy mad, was obliged to draw up a daily bulletin of her health in writing (it was done with her knowledge anyhow, that I know), so that she was driven round and round in the fatal circle of her own illness, instead of having her mind distracted, and went on getting worse and worse, because she believed it all. It is, however, peculiar to the men of the Spohr family, that they have no organ for nervous illness. Curiously enough, Spohr as a composer has more nerve than muscle; this is not in harmony with the rest of his character. How Mendelssohn does cut about! He writes to Spohr, that he means to take a trip to Spain (or Portugal) this summer; have you heard anything about it? We had his Octet lately; like everything else of his, I thought it very

interesting and charming, even after the first performance. I hope we shall have it again soon. But I have not yet altered my opinion, and I think that Spohr, by treating his eight people as two Choruses, or, strictly speaking, as a double Quartet, although perhaps the second should be less subordinate to the first, has succeeded better in fixing a *genre* of composition than Mendelssohn, who does not divide his eight into halves. This mere plurality of his seems to me better fitted for the regular old Fugal than for the Sonata *genre*. It is confusing to me, to think of Christ and His Twelve Apostles as thirteen individuals, seated together at a long table; but when once I have seen Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper*, with Christ in the centre, and twice three Apostles on either side of Him, I take in the whole scene at a glance, and feel quite satisfied, because everything falls into its proper place. To introduce symmetry in this way, and then to conceal it again, is a wonderful stroke of Art; the effect is perfect, but not one in a thousand can tell how it is produced.

Evening.

Our Oratorio went off brilliantly. Spohr surpasses his fellow-composers in the finish of his work as a *whole;* so true and genuine is his artistic instinct, that he will not tolerate a passage unless it blends harmoniously with the whole—there are no breaks anywhere. If one hears the numbers in detached fragments, as one does at the early rehearsals, many of them seem poor in thought and invention; but when they are all welded together into a whole, one sees the appropriateness of each part. Enough is as good as a feast; more would have meant too much, and it is for this reason that I like his two Oratorios much better than his Operas. . . .

Let me inflict on you a passage I dotted down in my note-book this morning! It ought to be compressed, it's too discursive—but here goes! "It is a matter of everyday experience, that the realisation of some expected happiness is an utter disappointment, and that the evil we dreaded, when once faced, is tolerable after all. In either case, our presentiments need not have been false or exaggerated. The

good thing may be intrinsically as good, and the evil as intrinsically evil; yet when we are face to face with either, it does not make the expected impression on us. Perhaps this is the reason. If we fancy some imaginary good or some imaginary happiness, we are generally in a condition to which it offers a contrast. The forecast of bright sunshine on a gloomy, rainy day, the dream of an Italian spring and southern vegetation, that visits us during the long northern winter, awaken such a yearning that the actual reality could never fulfil it, because when we once enjoy the fruit of our hopes, the chief stimulus is withdrawn, the condition of abstinence, the want of what we desire. If we would enjoy to the full the realisation of our hopes, there must still be a consciousness of the void; but as a fact, only one of the two conditions is present, and the want is less oppressive than when we face it from the standpoint of superfluity, and the superfluity is less delightful than we hoped it would be from the standpoint of want. So is it with all our hopes and all our fears." There is more, but I get prolix and tedious. The long and short of it is, that our only complete satisfaction lies in self-abnegation—I mean in those things which are classed by Epictetus as οὐκ ἐφ' ἡμιν, things which do not depend on ourselves, and in which we are not free agents. If, however, we are half-hearted in our renunciation, then let us revel in expectation, in the swelling bud, for once let it burst into flower and the joy is soon gone. I have one real joy—your letters; for when I have got one, I delight in looking forward to the next; I gain something, and I forfeit nothing. The joy of my expectation is not dissolved in its fulfilment.

April 19*th.*

More bad news! Bauer died suddenly last night, from a stroke. He had been ailing for some time past, and looked very much changed, but who would have thought it? I won't say any more. I am very sorry for it, and so will you be, apart from your sympathy with those he leaves behind.

We met but seldom, and yet it shocks me to think that for the few short years remaining, we cannot meet again. I remember driving to Dreyssig's funeral (he was a dear friend of mine, an organist at Dresden) with Theodor Weinlig, and sitting mute in the carriage for ever so long, till he said quite phlegmatically: "How *silly* it is, that we should have to meet on such a stupid occasion!" I like that sort of speech; it often suits me best. We had Mendelssohn's Octet again to-day. Next time I mean to resign my third violin, and to listen; else I shall never be able to judge the work properly. Spohr's change of style since he wrote *Die Weihe der Töne* is noticeable; time was, when he rejected external, objective motives, and now he approves of and adopts them with equal ardour. The abiding test of an artist will ever be the unconscious, and, as it were, instinctive feeling; and Spohr's instinct is so unerring, that it works on spontaneously, heedless of the critics and their fine-spun reasons. Did you hear the Symphony? How did you like it? Putting the man out of the question, I am dead opposed to the *genre*. A work of art should be its own key of interpretation, explaining itself by a medium adapted to that purpose; notes, not words, should explain the secrets of a Symphony. I don't forget that Tartini is said always to have read a Sonnet of Petrarch's, before he sat down to compose. That's a different thing altogether; it is purely lyrical and subjective. But songs of birds, cradle songs, dance music, martial music, and funeral anthems are disjointed subjects, distinctly opposed to musical unity, and they will not blend with one another. To be sure, the composer may say, That unity is in *me:* it is I who pass in review all these various subjects, and it is I who am the same in all—we will concede this, if only to cut short an endless argument. The real question after all, is not whether symphonic treatment is an utter absurdity, but whether its centre corresponds with the centre of all that is best in Art. The so-called melodrama is another *genre*, which cannot hold its own. Take, for instance, Benda's *Ariadne* and *Medea*, or certain parts in modern operas, La Muette and Yelva. Of course, these last two do not labour under the reproach, that as the situation is musical,

it would be more natural for them to sing; Fenella and Yelva would gladly sing, if they could only speak. But the objections do not stop there: (1) Music is forced to represent objectivity and thought instead of mere feeling; and (2) In dialogues with the dumb Fenella, musical sentiments have to be held in abeyance, until the persons who can speak have said their say. The word that excites the girl may come first, but until the whole sentence is run off the reel, she is not allowed to feel anything. A mute amongst people who can talk is rather revolting, and makes one feel on edge artistically. The Italian pantomime, with its clown, harlequin, pantaloon, and columbine, is pretty and diverting enough; it bears the same relation to Auber's dummy that a marble statue does to a figure in wax.

I should like to have *Die Metamorphose der Pflanzen*, and the Italian Diary, if you are not using them. Strange that the former should be omitted in the big edition! I remember too, in the pamphlets on Morphology, important essays which I fail to find amongst the posthumous papers; of course they do not belong to them—but you find the *Farbenlehre* there. Who is the Mr. H. described by Mendelssohn in the sixth volume of the Zelter Correspondence, as having said that it was all up with German Art? Your name appears a few lines before that passage; does he mean you? I am amused at his supposing he had found, in the neighbourhood of Pozzuoli, the place where Goethe wrote his *Wanderer*. I thought of the lines up above, by the Arco Felice, through which one passes on the way to Cumæ—and now Goethe betrays the fact, that they were written fifteen years earlier in Frankfurt-on-the-Main! Still, nothing gives one more completely the feeling of Italy; it breathes the sunny and silent loneliness of that very region. One can almost see the great cacti hanging over the rock, and hard by, the quiet, indifferent *contadina*, who cares nothing about the ruined columns around her. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

41.

CASSEL, *June 27th*, 1835.

. . . For a long time, Spohr has only taken pupils who have got beyond making fifths, or else are ready-made contrapuntists; their fathers are generally musicians. I do not know how it is, but they very seldom pay me a call; not that I mind it, except that one may be pinched for the want of spare cash, if some little extra is wanted, to vary the daily bill of fare. Our actors have now been on furlough for nearly a fortnight. I fancy Spohr, who is on his way to Holland, is still with Mendelssohn at Düsseldorf; I know he meant to spend some days there—he is very devoted to Felix. After Düsseldorf, he is going to Scheveningen for sea-bathing, which he has been advised to try, as a remedy for internal spasms, brought on by the slightest chill; he has suffered a good deal lately. Our people are scattered about, Heaven knows where! I can't pretend to care about second-raters. . . . Mdme. Voigt, as a woman and as an artist, quite charms me; her pianoforte playing is a rare treat—full of feeling—no sentimentality. If she were here, I should take up my fiddle again, and play no end of duets with her. Her method of expression is my *beau idéal*. She keeps a great deal to herself, she would rather say too little than confess everything; that's what I like; only you must be made to feel that this restraint is not want of power, but reserved force. First of all, we played one of my Sonatas here (the third), and then all three of them at Frau von Malsburg's. There was a *matinée* at Spohr's on the last day of her visit, when she played a Beethoven Sonata, besides taking part in a Trio. She surpassed herself in both, spite of the stiff Streicher. I completed the two last movements of a second Sonata this week; the first I finished and put by, ages ago. No. 2 does not fit No. 1, which I called a Sonatina, a name I could not give No. 2 without affectation; but then I can't call No. 1 a Sonata, though I might have done so long since, when all sorts of things came out under that title. . . .

I did begin Winterfeld, but had to drop him again; never

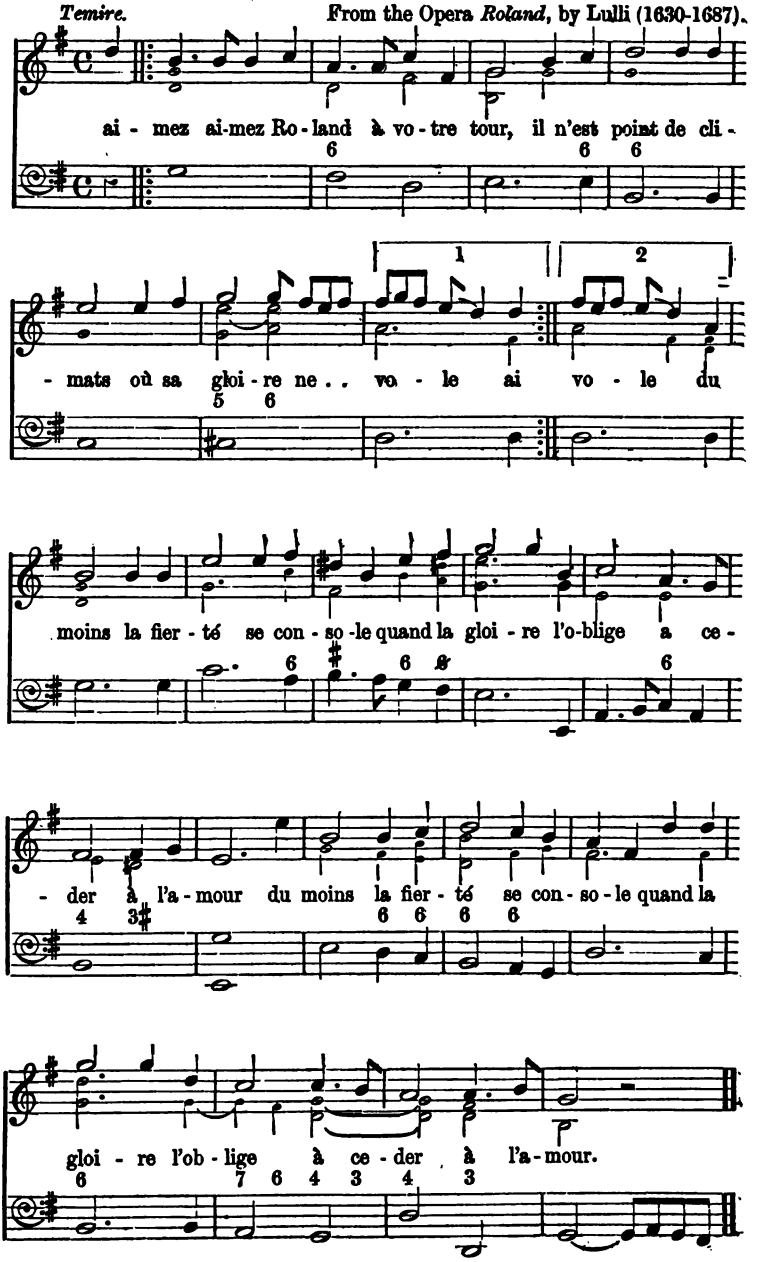
mind, it's a pleasure to come! I liked him from the very first. He is not in the least impatient to get forward, as he leisurely unrolls his canvas and displays before us the Venice of the seventeenth century, the time, the place, the circumstances that gave birth to his beloved master, Gabrieli, and for which Gabrieli, in his turn, had to work. Describing a brilliant marriage *fête*, he mentions a twelve-part Madrigal which, judging by the text, must be the same that you and I worked at so zealously in the library, when you paid us that short visit at Cassel in 1826. Do you remember, how we two made a score together from the parts? I copied it out fair, a short time since, though I still keep the original draft, half in your handwriting, half in mine. With this exception, I find nothing specially interesting in the way of music, so far as I have gone; but one of these days, I shall take up the volume again, and I promise myself many a fresh discovery. You shall hear, if I find anything. Winterfeld worships Gabrieli as ardently as Baini does Palestrina; if they came to blows over it, damage might ensue! That's as it should be—I don't mean the damage, but the Platonic passion. Without it, what would be the good of science? How could it live? If everyone loved humanity alone, and no one sought a lady-love for himself, what would become of mankind? Thirty years would see the world out. . . . I am glad that Klengel has accomplished his *Opus*, for I doubted whether he would ever live to finish it; so far as I know, it is not a second *Temperirtes Clavier*, but just Bach's 48 Fugues multiplied. No pay can compensate Klengel for the time and labour he bestowed on them, but surely the publisher's heirs might profit, if he himself did not. It is a first-rate work, especially the Canons—the Fugues, on an average, are hardly so good. All the world agrees, that no one except Klengel is equal to such a task, which, apart from talent and *savoir faire*, demands the most passionate and absolute devotion to music of this particular *genre*. Klengel answered all these requirements. Opera, symphony, quartet, sonata, everything that was not *bonâ fide* Canon, from the first to the last note, seemed to him unworthy of notice; he despised all other varieties, as musical parasites that drained the vital sap of Art. . . .

Rüdinger, who combines, as you know, the duties of a member of the orchestra with those of acting secretary to the theatre, sent me a few days ago Lulli's Opera, *Roland*, which he discovered, when he was making up the catalogue of our theatrical library. One is repelled at the very outset by the tiresome four-cornered notes, the French G Clef on the first line, &c.; on closer inspection, however, I found that it contained the tenderest and most deeply-felt passages,—full of a certain *sensibility*, which is only known to us through Gluck (for our experience reaches no farther back), but which, in my judgment, seems to have its root *here* or even earlier. No doubt, the monotony prevailing throughout the whole work would be intolerable to us even for half an Act, apart from all prejudice in favour of the modern as contrasted with the old school. Here, as in all else besides that time has developed, we see first, indifference to all difference, then mere contrast, then separation, and finally combination. Of course Lulli's operas themselves show the progressive influence of time; they contain *Ariosi*, even Airs of a kind, Duets, besides Recitative, which again with him rather resembles *Arioso* in its approach towards Cantabile. So completely did he separate the Recitative from the formal Air, and so palpably did he despise the former, that it often fell to the lot of the copyist to add notes to the *Recitativo secco*. This certainly was the practice fifty years later, and things must have come to a pretty pass, to stimulate Gluck to act as a reformer, and to invent a kind of Recitative which combines unity with variety. . . . I enclose a little bit of an *Arioso* from *Roland*, the first that comes to hand, by way of illustration. The greater part of it is written merely with a *Basso continuo* and "Violons"; the instrumental movements are in five parts.* The first violins, I expect, must have been tuned a fifth higher, for their parts, generally speaking, lie high; then we have Treble, Mezzo-Soprano, Alto and Bass Viol, though the middle parts, apart from a few canonic imitations, are merely filled in after the usual manner of Thorough-Bass. †

* Les Violons du Roi were the King's private band.

† This was the practice a hundred years before Gluck, and it was still the fashion when Gluck arrived in Paris.

Temire. From the Opera *Roland*, by Lulli (1630-1687).



The Choruses are tediously long, and wearisome, owing to the repeats. Gluck has proved himself distinctly a creator or reformer, by making the chorus take a part in the representation. The older choruses seem to have been meant to resemble, to some extent, the Greek Chorus; this, of course, was no longer appropriate, and so they became *fade*. Roland's part, with the exception of the Recitative, is genuine bass music; it is sung to instrumental accompaniment, which, with few exceptions, is written above it in figures. His rage in the Fifth Act would seem quite comical and Philistine now-a-days. Music should only express the feelings of the heart; it easily becomes old-fashioned, because something of merely temporal interest always gets woven in with it. Embellishments and accessories of all kinds go first; voices always remain the same—instruments change. It is the same with Colorature and Instrumentation. There is nothing of either of these in the enclosed extract, and the music is as fresh as ever. Let me hear from you soon!

Yours,
M. H.

42.

CASSEL, *August 17th*, 1835.

. . . Anyone above the rank of a superficial critic will think *Ali Baba* a remarkable opera. I am satisfied that it is a *pasticcio* of both Cherubini's styles, early and late, and I am interested in watching the changes which age has brought upon him. There are numbers in which he appears at his best, and there are others almost more dry and glassy than the dry parts of *La Dame Blanche*. The Introduction to the First Act is lovely from beginning to end, but it is followed by a Romance which, though carefully and elaborately orchestrated, is thin and poor in invention, and dry in effect. The overture is nothing but a draped skeleton, though the drapery is rich enough. Felix Mendelssohn was here on the 28th July, his parents with him, on their way from Düsseldorf to Berlin. Feeling a little out of sorts, they rested here for a

day, which I spent with Felix, much to my gratification. But what is the use of one day? I am no good at thinking or talking off-hand, and Felix is just the man with whom I should like to discuss many things that do not lie upon the surface. With all his fine individuality, he has plenty of the give and take about him; like me, he is only intolerant of mere prejudice. You are aware that he is going to Leipzig for the winter; he told me that he should feel quite deserted, if you went away. Düsseldorf has made him loathe upstart provincial places, and there is plenty to justify him; I would rather he went to London, Vienna, or Paris. I should not be sorry, if, as an artist, he played the prodigal for a bit; that damages only the poor and needy—he is well enough off. On the other hand, of course, it would be pleasant to keep him near us. I liked the *Melusine* Overture very much, when I heard it on the piano; rich as it is, the main features make the whole work easily intelligible. The new *Songs without Words* are exquisite.

I think I told you, in my last letter, that we had "the prospect of a journey," as Goethe says in *Werther*. Well, we managed our Hesse expedition to the satisfaction of all concerned, tramping or riding, just as we chose, for ten days straight on end. We took for our goal certain remarkable Gothic churches and chapels in Frankenberg, Haina, and Marburg. We also lionised old Fritzlar (called Friedenslehre, *doctrina pacis*, on an old triptych in the Cathedral), and, afterwards, Bad Wildungen, which would soon make a name for itself, if it were anywhere else than in the Duchy of Waldeck. Why not start a Company, and make it the fashion? It has eight valuable mineral springs, only two of which are in use at present; with proper care and supervision, these would improve in quality and strength, though even now they are in excellent repute with the visitors. We gave a whole day to Kloster Haina, with its interesting but rather ugly church. Haina is an asylum, containing four hundred lunatics, and fifty who are not quite mad, and who are there to look after the Institution. There is no town or village, but only an extensive cloister. Owing to the notoriously dissolute life of the resident monks, the monastery was abolished by the Landgrave in the sixteenth century,

against the will of the Pope, who sent a deputation to demand its restoration. On that occasion, the poor and sick who had been installed in the monks' cells, after their expulsion, were mustered in a large courtyard, and the delegates had to decide, whether the poor creatures were to be turned adrift, or the pampered gluttons taken care of for their sake. So it remained a hospital, and now it is chiefly a lunatic asylum. We happened to arrive there on a Sunday morning, when all except the most dangerous lunatics are allowed their freedom. It's rather uncanny, unless you are used to such company, though the poor creatures seem in the main happy enough, each one ignorant of his own folly, and laughing at that of his companion. Looking on at the scene, I began to wonder if I had a bee in my own bonnet. I soon had enough of it. There was a man there who had been in chains, as a raving lunatic,for nineteen years, and who, for the last month, had been allowed to wander amongst the harmless ones; we talked to him for some time. No one would have thought him mad, he spoke so cheerfully and intelligently; yet, of course, he had his *idée fixe*, and, like the rest, laughed at us for not believing it. In fact, he insisted that the patients who were chained were really the most sensible of the lot, for they alone knew what they wanted. Such sights are not for every one; we should keep away from them. Probably everyone is a little cracky, who, whether in Life or in Art, insists on a state of isolation for himself; such isolation never bodes any real good. The noblest artists, and those whose lives are noblest, are the least isolated of all. How rarely, in Goethe and Mozart, do we come across an expression which is not taken from everyday life! The more gifted the man, the more universal is he. Our next halt was at Frankenberg, the dreariest place in the whole world, though according to the chronicles of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, it is said to be one of the wealthiest towns in Germany. Close to the church, a good specimen of Gothic, is a small chapel, unquestionably a gem of its kind, owing to the perfect finish of its ornamentation. A short time since, some of the pupils of the local Academy made accurate drawings of it, so I hope we shall soon have an engraving or a lithograph.

Nebelthau's people put us up for five days at Marburg, where we had a rare good time of it, exploring the lovely neighbourhood. The Church of St. Elizabeth impressed us chiefly as being, for once in a way, a finished thing. The outer *façade* is plain to a fault, for ornament is a *sine quâ non* of Gothic architecture; its forms, on the whole, are not beautiful, and they must be veiled by elaborate ornamentation, rich enough to absorb the attention of an observer. It's no good saying this to fanatics, but they are about as reasonable as the good folk of Kloster Haina. I am as fond of Gothic architecture as anyone can be, but I am not blind to its limitations, and beyond these I do not go. . . .

My relations with Rochlitz are a little strained; he complains to Spohr that he cannot make me out. This means that after our first bow, we got no farther. I daresay his letters on the burning question of the Oratorio contributed to this state of things. I did not like them. It may be that I had rather have such oracular people as that printed in books and ranged on my bookshelves, than alive in the flesh before me. I don't say this to their detriment, but in my own depreciation. I often liked his conversation, particularly when it related to facts; but I would sooner try to stop a mill-wheel than have to talk to him. . . . I have finished my three Sonatas for Pianoforte and Violin, and as I intended them from the first to be quite easy, they are at any rate not difficult, and contain no stumbling-block of any kind for a tolerable *virtuoso*. I wish the first were a trifle less *à l'usage des commençants*. It does not altogether suit the other two.

Spohr has just got another pupil straight from New York; he wants Counterpoint as well as Violin lessons. He can hardly speak a word of anything except English, and a very little French. I hinted at the difficulty of communicating with and understanding one another, but he said: *O ça aller tres bien—moi je écrire et vous-éffacer* (with a strong English accent on the *éf*). . . .

Yours,

M. H.

43.

CASSEL, *December 6th*, 1835.

. . . Schelble asked me the other day, whether I had anything set to German words, so I sent him a Cantata, which I wrote ages ago for our *Cäcilienverein;* it is still a favourite, and often appears in their programmes. I did this simply to please him, and I heard yesterday that they have had a performance of it. I think we want more of such secular work—*cheerful* on the whole, not written with a set purpose; it is all the more welcome, because one cannot persuade oneself that there is anything in the Church music of the present day. I heard *Jephtha* yesterday, an Oratorio by B. Klein, which was sung by the Wiegand *Verein* with pianoforte accompaniment. I admire it generally as a sound, well-written work, only I dislike the close imitation of Handel, both in choruses and airs—it makes me uncomfortable. We are not quite sincere in our day; it is impossible to ignore Mozart and all his contemporaries, and when I am perpetually reminded of *Judas Maccabæus, Israel,* and all those things, I feel that I had far rather hear a so-called original work than this mere imitation, however skilful it may be. You cannot carry the deception through, and consequently the modern style is thrown more prominently into relief, whilst the antique is too palpably a bare mask. A composer, or indeed any artist who indulges in this sort of style, is constantly lowering himself to a very inferior class. *In this respect,* Spohr's music, after all, is still the best, for there is no trace in it of a set purpose to ignore either his own individuality or that of the age—nor do you ever see this tendency in first-rate works. His Oratorio is almost our only novelty of late. We have just had a performance of Auber's *Lestocq,* a work which you know. It seems to me one of his weakest operas; the music everywhere hinders the development of the subject. We shall have *Le Cheval de Bronze* on New Year's Day. Our present Company is pretty bad; but the worst of it is, that we think it pretty good. . . .

7th.

Your welcome letter just arrived. I like it because it comes from you, not altogether because of what's inside it. Yes; I wish something could be done, but here we are at a dead lock, for no outsiders are allowed, and while Föppel's contract lasts, no one else has a chance, for he is actually a star in our present Company. It is hardly conceivable that man, the image of God, should turn out such a bad singer; but we have abundant proof of it here. Stein is our first tenor, and Dettmer our *basso profondo;* such monstrosities are happily rare. It is difficult to understand, how people so constituted can possibly get on; but they succeed little by little—they are accustomed to themselves. Still more marvellous is it, that the public, if you serve it long enough with such fare, ends by applauding it. I daresay they will see later on, that there is nothing in it, but in the end custom will be too strong for them again. Once on a time, when Rossini was passing through a little Italian town, they prevailed on him to conduct one of his own operas. The performance was tolerable, barring the chorus. When they got too wild for anything, he addressed them thus: *Cari amici, sarebbe ingiustizia di pretendere di voi una maniera di cantar artificiosa come dai virtuosi, ma, per grazia, fate mi sentir almeno una voce umana.* As for the first tenor, a moustachioed dandy, who was very conceited, and wanted to persuade him that a certain passage was ungrateful to the voice, this was all he got for his pains: *Caro fio (figlio) men baffi—e più studio.* Here, too, the *voce umana* is what we are pining for; some are a trifle better than others, but there is no real comfort with any. Pistor must and will be our *prima donna,* a position Nature never meant her for. In serious parts she lacks dignity; in comedy and Vaudeville she has no lightness nor *abandon,* and yet she has real merits of a kind, *ma non tira sangue,* as Gluck used to say of correct music, without a heart in it. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

44.

CASSEL, *January* 31*st*, 1836.

DEAR HAUSER,—

I was expecting a pupil at the very moment when your letter arrived, so I refrained from opening it until the lesson was over. That is an old habit of mine; I have a fancy for dabbling with this and that, merely to prolong the pleasure of expectation, when it is sure to be fulfilled. To-day, however, the pupil sent an excuse, so I read your letter three times through, without any interruption. I like your short letters, and I like your long letters, but the longer the better. You see so much of life in a short time; I see just as little in a long time. I sometimes sigh for a place where more is going on,—though I do very well here too, where little or nothing goes on. But a man creeps too far into his shell, and thus he unlearns the language that makes him intelligible to others. I am often surprised to think how many things, old and new, pass by me unnoticed, including heaps of books and music which I never look at. I generally do my part in the orchestra as a mere automaton; though I may not actually play wrong notes, I can think about all sorts of other matters, and follow out my own thoughts, to such an extent, that now and then I am on the look-out for a certain passage, or I take it into my head to notice some particular bar, that has been played ages ago. It's very odd; surely my fingers cannot do their work quite alone! When that happens, there are two of me; it is as if I were a steward or a lieutenant, with an inferior officer under me. I ought not to be so self-absorbed. Another result of it is, that life becomes far too short, it dwindles away so imperceptibly; the event of years ago seems a thing of yesterday, if a past decade is as nothing, ten years hence it is all the same,—old age is upon us,—and then, how much shall we have lost! These are foolish thoughts—they do not easily take root in the minds of people who have anything to do — they are too morbid to be entertained by a wholesome nature. A man should feel himself to be an existing, not merely an ephemeral part of his present circumstances. I hear everyone talking of *work*, an

expression which does not suit any one of my employments. When I am fiddling at an orchestral rehearsal, I can hardly call it *work*, and when I am giving lessons, I am giving lessons, and I can't call that *work* either. And if I really have something in hand, a composition, for instance, I am harrassed by a feeling that mine is only an idle life after all, and that I ought to supplement it by some genuine labour. Hitherto, I have failed to get real work, such work as is a genuine pleasure to every mechanic,—especially to masons, who, I fancy, are the happiest of all. A man who has added a brick to St. Peter's, or to Strasburg Cathedral, can go to bed happy; he has done his share of the whole, however small it may be. A tailor does not do so much; a cobbler rather more, because he reminds one of Hans Sachs. Do you want to know what I am about? Nothing. I must write it with a big N, it's a substantive. I am dabbling in so many things, that I can't find a name for them off-hand. Teaching is really nothing, and yet, silently, one is apt to make a merit of it. I only give two lessons a day, one at 8 in the morning and the other at 4 in the afternoon, so that had I a genuine interest in other pursuits, I should have plenty of time for them, between rehearsals. I have heard of a book, in thirty-five volumes, called *The Leisure Hours of Schlözer the Jurist*, and certainly that man had fewer leisure hours than I have. Goethe's song, *Da droben auf jenem Berge*, was written for me and the like of me—storm and stress half my life, and the other half dreamt away in repose!

The other day, I had a mind to read Platen's last work, *Die Abassiden*. I like his earlier poems, particularly those which are written in the ancient metre, so that I began my task with a prejudice in his favour. When half way through, however, I returned the book to Bohne, with a request that he would take it back at half-price. It is poor in invention, the versification is bad, and the execution clumsy. I wouldn't have believed he was the author, but that he is alive, and does not disown it. Yet another Prologue too, in which he speaks of his immortality! He uses the eight-line stanza, which formerly suited him well; but here the whole effect is poor, whining, tame. That stanza is so easy

too; in old days, he used to make every word fit, both in sense and sound, the most difficult forms of the Ode. Now, although Platen has been rather blown upon in Germany, I think it was not fair of him to go and write his poems far away in a beautiful country, where there was nothing to disturb him; to speak plainly, that sort of thing can't last. If we pay him to sing, he ought to sing for us. He shows it himself in two very beautiful poems (pp. 47, 48). If you have his Works, do look at them; taken together, they are perfect in rhythm and meaning. The first begins, *Ich möchte gern mich frei bewahren*. . . .

Talking about artistic representation and people's insides, a reflection occurs to me, which I may as well put down here, for I think it will hold good. Plastic art can only succeed, æsthetically, in representing such subjects as are intended by Nature to be seen; entrails are excluded. I think there is a picture of Poussin's in St. Peter's, representing a Martyr, whose bowels are being twisted out of his body by pulleys. The idea is absolutely revolting in itself, for bowels, however you may treat them, are not a subject for Art. How am I to idealize a sausage? It may be supposed that we are worked upon by the general odiousness of the subject; but nuts and turnips, and those sort of things are harmless; so long as the subject is not by Nature external, there is no pictorial effect. Fruit, flowers, and foliage are very good subjects for a picture, but that which is merely external is as little artistic as that which is merely internal; the real mission of Art is to represent the internal, manifesting itself through the external. "This is what I wanted to say" (see the final sentences of Herodotus' periods) "about bowels, Art, nuts, and turnips. Now I will speak, and tell about the Ethiopians, as well what I saw with my own eyes, as that which I heard from the priests there." But as I have seen and learned nothing, I will talk of something else! I think the most remarkable thing about the Berlioz Symphony is, that it was performed in 1820, and that it must have been written earlier, long before the July Revolution; before Victor Hugo, Balzac, and all the rest of them; before Heinrich Heine too, whose flabby, yellow, leather-cheeked Marie seems to come to life again in the last movement.

You remember how the first strain of longing occurs again in *The Witches' Sabbath*,—its purity destroyed,—a thing to scoff at? To mention another point, the meaning of which is quite different,—it was earlier than the compositions of Beethoven's latest period, which, I think, dates very decidedly from the E flat major Quartet (published by Schott, of Mainz). Now, with all the marked difference of the two styles (and I fully admit the difference) there is a sort of kinship in the way they are brought forward, though I do not pretend to define it accurately. In a word, there is a certain direct egotism of feeling, a sentimental *laisser aller*, which is the very existence of compositions of this kind, to which they owe all their form, or want of form. Mind, I do not say they are altogether without form, but I do say that very often it is but faintly defined. As I never remember my old letters, it is quite possible that I might be repeating myself for the third time, if I were to enter on a further disquisition on what I hold to be the conditions of Art. But this much I will say. If I am to see a bull-fight, or any other such violent struggle, and if I am to watch the spectacle in peace and comfort, give me, if you please, a seat outside the arena, a proper circle and a barrier! With your modern Art I am down amongst the wild beasts in a moment—there is no barrier—all is open—and I have to endure, prospectively, the agony of being impaled on the horns of one beast, or gored by another. I should like to see one of these realistic composers try his 'prentice-hand on the story of Laocoon. Fancy what tortures we should have to go through! The only good result would be, that it would drive us to look at the original in marble, to see what Art is, and what it is not. There is too much hap-hazard, too much subjectivity in this modern style; I marvel how these little people manage to grasp the subject firmly enough to reduce it to notes, without its changing in their hands, or vanishing altogether. I daresay it often has more form internally than we can see, but that's not quite enough for me. I want something that shall be intelligible not only to this or that composer, who happens to be in this or that state of mind,—something that shall harmonise with the tastes of the ordinary run of mankind, that

shall be what poetic algebra is to prosaic calculations with concrete numbers, the one holding good for an endless variety of conditions, the other for a single and special case. But to go back to Berlioz's Symphony! Surely, the theme is throughout more musical and more poetical than the theme of Spohr's *Consecration of Sound;* it is the outcome of one heart, one thing suggests another, whereas in Spohr's work, there is absolutely no sort of fundamental connection between the movements. The poet chooses, hap-hazard, certain occasions on which music is customary, and the composer treats one to a musical reproduction of them, in the same order. So the Symphony seems to me to lack the genuine consecration, and though it may contain a great deal that is beautiful, the idea of the whole is inartistic. . . . I have not yet got the faintest idea of all there is in the Berlioz Symphony; a modern pianoforte arrangement of that description is quite beyond people like me, though I mean to get someone to play it to me, as well as it can be done. Works of such magnitude, however, are even less endurable on the piano than with an orchestra. It seems uncanny to a degree. To pass from one extreme to another—from Philip drunk to Philip sober—I have parted with my Sonatas to Peters, who has written me very agreeable letters about them, though I can't say the pay is excessive. I get twelve *Louis d'or*, which, with the agio deducted, comes to twenty-three *thalers* apiece, the same amount that I received for my first Sonata. . . . I have kept Spohr's copy of Martini for years, and am in no sort of a hurry to give it back again; it suits my study as well as his, and though I may not read it oftener, I value it more. It is the folio edition, of which only the first two volumes are published; the quarto edition has a third volume. The work, if I mistake not (I am too lazy just now to examine for myself), goes no farther than the barren field of very early history, and tells us nothing but what we already know from others, who, however, learnt a good deal of it here. But please don't think that I have read these fat volumes through—fat volumes never were much in my line! The first book I ever read in my life was *Yorick's Letters to Eliza*—that was in my very youthful days, and it had a

special attraction for me, as it stood in my father's library, because it was a little thin book in good print. This was its charm. I doubt if I could have been interested in the contents, at that time of life. My next book was *Moritz*, a novel by F. Schulz, and this interested me immensely. I was a little older perhaps—and it is a book that I still turn to, now and again. At first it was the story, the subject, that was so attractive. Now, I can appreciate the real excellence of the workmanship, and when I find Goethe, and other worthies, praising F. Schulz, and lamenting his premature death, I feel a thrill of pleasure, for I am reminded of my early boyhood. Besides, it is pleasant to see anything that one loves praised and recognised by others; the reverse painfully undermines one's affection. As yet, I have only looked at Handel's operas superficially; if they had been on view in Spohr's house, I should have got at them long ago,—but he keeps them in a chest along with other *curios*, such as the two-part *Inventions* in Bach's own handwriting, and similar treasures, which he is chary of showing, though he makes no use of them himself. His is a noble, actively benevolent nature; if you go to him in trouble, he will do all he can to help you,—but he is not open-handed. Everyone has some good points, no one has them all; but that does not apply here, for a close fist may rank among the virtues. I have not yet got through my Winterfeld, which I did not begin exactly at the right time; besides that, he is too diffuse and wordy, too grand and oratorical, although he has a certain charm. In his description of the grand *fêtes* given by the Venetian Doges, I seem to hear the very voice of one of the reverend Signiors. His style is rather picturesque and poetical than historical or scientific, but one is in good company, and that in itself is a pleasant feeling. I have a curious respect for book-making, for never in all my life could I succeed in making a book. I may not get much good from it, but if it is done properly, as Winterfeld does it, I say to myself: Here is a man, who has in full measure what you have not, with all your knowledge of a great deal that has never yet appeared in print. In the formation of plants, two kinds of forces are active—the vertical and the

spiral tendency; it is the same with all production. My style has too much of the vertical, and too little extension laterally. I think Jean Paul (what ages it is since I read him!) believed æsthetically that nihilists were feminine genii; but the feminine principle, or whatever you like to call it, is really *formative, form giving*. It is what the spiral tendency is in the vegetable kingdom; it is in a certain sense artistic, as the masculine principle is poetical, and corresponds to the vertical tendency. Now, as neither tendency can operate without the other, original sin lies neither in the one nor in the other; it is not in the things separated, but in the separation, in Nature, which divided man into man and woman, whereby, however, the natural man first became possible. Nature is God's rib, the artist who puts into shape His poetic thoughts. . . .

I must now come to an end. I dare say I shall find that I have forgotten something I really wanted to tell you of, and that, on the other hand, I have written a good deal of rubbish. *A propos* of rubbish, I often write about well-known people and public affairs in an off-hand way, because I know you will understand; but I should not like anyone else to see my letters. I was going to say, burn them; but perhaps that's not fair, as I know I should not do that with yours, even if you asked me to. Still, I do wish you would put them away in an old box that nobody could get at. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

45.

CASSEL, *January* 14*th*, 1836.

. . . Like you, I have long ceased to derive the slightest pleasure from our Opera; at its best, it is only mediocrity, and there is not one of the women who inspires the slightest emotion. I shouldn't mind, if it were only for one season, but we shan't improve matters in a hurry, so long as we stick to our precious stall-fattening system. I was told, the other day, that our theatrical stars cost us 6,000 *thalers* in one year, and in return for that, we have not seen anything that was even tolerable. Our salaries are not high enough to attract a

staff of permanent singers, for these confounded experiments with nobodies, coming to us from places we have hardly so much as heard of, swallow up every farthing. Bad singers are false economy. I daresay good ones would cost us an additional 5,000 *thalers*, but then they would realise 10,000. The Dresden people told me lately, that Schröder-Devrient, with her annual salary of 4,000 *thalers*, was the cheapest of singers, for she invariably filled the theatre, whenever she appeared. I think our newest opera, the *Cheval de Bronze*, is an improvement on *Lestocq;* but liquor from Auber's cask will always run pretty much the same—the only difference is in the brightness or muddiness, the thickness or thinness. One sample of each sort is enough for me, I am by no means anxious to taste them all. I don't at all mind *Fra Diavolo*, as light operas go; among the numerous modern works of that class, with rascals for heroes, I like it best. A German would never have let pass the opportunity of introducing Fra Diavolo with a diminished seventh every time he comes on the stage, but here he trips on as daintily as a fine nobleman, and therein lies "the humour of the thing," as Pistol says.

Yesterday, I read, for the first time, and with great delight, Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale;* I have read but few of the less popular, and not one of the great historical plays. There is a time for everything, and it was only the other day, that I enjoyed my first introduction to Goethe's *Campagne in Frankreich.* I fancy that many would be bored, and think it poor reading, and no doubt any other man might have rendered it much more amusing to the world at large, making the terrible more terrible, the piteous more piteous. Goethe describes it, as he describes the Roman Carnival (not as regards the subject, but the manner); he lets the incident itself speak to us. The reader need only imagine himself in the situations described, and then he will feel what those poor fellows were obliged to go through. The events subsequent to the Campaign, the Siege of Mainz, and other episodes, are so fully and vividly portrayed, that we get a perfectly clear picture of things in general. Just consider the difference, had Kotzebue or Reichardt undertaken a similar task! The result would have been about as luminous as the tiny light

of a glow-worm on a dark night. I came across a curious book of that kind lately—viz., Nikolai's *Reise nach Italien* (*Journey to Italy*), which he makes out to be, in every respect, the most God-abandoned country on the earth. He published it "as a warning to every one who longs for Italy, or intends to go there." As for earlier travellers who disagree with him, they are either all fools or persons who deliberately try to mislead others by descriptions, in revenge for having been taken in themselves, but from henceforth, he hopes that no one will be so foolish as to undertake the journey. If he stops people from going, Rome will have 30,000 lodgers the less, for that number represents, on an average, the temporary, foreign residents in the city, not to speak of Naples and Florence. I laughed a good deal over the many frauds practised upon him. His ascent of Vesuvius cost him over fifty *scudi;* I did it handsomely, from Naples, for two. He had in his train half the people from the village of Resina, who went with him to the top; whatever they asked for he gave them, even if they asked ten times too much, though not because he was in a good humour. He is venomous and bitter to the last degree. Not content with libelling the people, he sneers at and vilifies the town, the climate, the country; it's all as bad as possible, and even where it's most beautiful, it's no better than anywhere else. Well, this is amusing for a bit, but it does not last; yet somehow or other, the book has reached a second edition . . . H. wanted me to give my Sonatas an additional title, and chaffingly suggested *Charmes des Jeunes Pianistes, Papillons, &c.* He thinks, and rightly too, that another name is an absolute necessity, for this is the age of all that is characteristic in Art, as opposed to the age of universal Beauty. I don't mean to quarrel with those, who by their natural disposition, youth, and habit of thought, have a tendency to write this *Musica caratteristica;* but where there are no such conditions, and it is all affectation, I feel an indescribable aversion to it, because it is neither fish, flesh, fowl, nor good red herring. I can tell at once and by instinct, whether this deviation from normal rules arises from the poverty or the wealth of the inventive faculty. I have turned schoolmaster again, for Spohr's pupils, and others,

come to me. It improves my income, and that is about the only good result of it, for they learn next to nothing. I cannot teach, except with the intention of purifying their taste. The strict, the *gebundene Styl*, is in fact the natural and healthy one; that deviation from rules which, for the sake of passion, is opposed to it, is a secondary consideration. I don't say it is necessarily bad on that account, but surely it would be irrational to make a beginning with it; yet but few now feel the truth of this, for they take the second style as their basis, the first being to them a Philistine servitude. To many a one, however, it does become clear, and he goes on and prospers, whereas the others never get out of the fog.

The other day, I had to review a Symphony, which had been sent to Spohr by the Philharmonic Society of Amsterdam, and which he could not attend to on account of a wedding. It gave me an opportunity of explaining my views a little. I wonder whether it has fallen into the hands of any intelligent person who is interested in the subject. That's why it is a good thing to print—not that thousands may read, but because among them, there may perhaps be one or two whom it may interest—that is, if they light upon it at the right moment. At least, I have always found this last a necessary condition. I believe it is always the same thing that interests me fundamentally, under a great many different forms. It is not the love of change that drives me from one to the other, but a desire to find again the one in the other. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

46.

CASSEL, *February 20th*, 1836.

. . . It appears to me there is an affinity between the falsetto voice and harmonics*—particularly the harmonics of wind instruments, inasmuch as we cannot control harmonic notes so well as natural notes. The "partial tones" are still

* The falsetto voice consists of harmonic octaves of the natural voice. All the notes above the lowest octave on the flute, flageolet, &c., are harmonic octaves, twelfths, and double-octaves of the lower notes. Hence the German technical term "Flageolet-töne" for harmonics generally, and especially for the artificial harmonics produced by violin players and harpists.

less manageable. Therefore Schelble got two violinists to play the solo in Bach's Passion, as a mutual check to the individuality of either. A violinist, when playing harmonics, cannot do much with the tone; he may increase it, but it will remain dead, on account of its absolute and unchangeable purity. An animated intonation is no more mathematically pure, than an animated beat is strictly metronomical. That is the reason it is so difficult to play the violin to a pianoforte accompaniment—it is not, as scientific men suppose, because of the equal temperament, but because that detestable thing, the piano, never varies from its fixed rigidity of tone, so that there is no difference between the leading note and the minor ninth. It is a matter of easy calculation, that in respect of C, C sharp is lower than D flat; but if I use C sharp as leading note, and D flat as minor ninth, my first note is far ahead of the other; consequently, it is not the slight deviation of temperament which baulks and disturbs the violinist. Mathematics never give life to a performance, though, to be sure, the artist should always keep in mind the mathematical principle. Had I no natural consciousness of the *pure tone*, how could I recognise the sharpening of it as the leading-note—its *flattening* as the minor ninth? The feeling of what is right and good is probably, in all cases, the unconscious consciousness of our own being, as it came from God's hand, and whatever harmonizes with it, after its kind, is good. If we ourselves are in harmony with it, it is well with us; we are like two strings, brought out of dissonance into unison. Here, as a rule, we must be glad, if we are but fairly in tune with ourselves. We are like two strings, when they reach unison, after their dissonant vibrations—we must put up with a tolerable Temperament. To be sure, my instance of unison is utterly misapplied, for unison cannot be tempered, and the nearer we approach it, the more palpable does the difference become. But a fifth can be diminished to some extent, some of its purity being of course lost, though with so slight a deviation, that we still get fairly good music. Now I come to the Temperament of the voice! Do you know that Spohr maintains, that the singer should learn intonation from a piano in equal temperament?—!—?—:—;

what marks of admiration can I use? The fitting exclamations have yet to be invented, for where does a pianoforte tuner learn to temper but from a tempered keyboard? And why should the singer cultivate Temperament? I suppose the answer is, to enable him to sing music, which is entirely opposed to the nature of song—for he has no need of it in good vocal music. Thanks to the indestructibility of natural organisation, it cannot be learnt. But it will be urged that because the instruments are tempered, therefore singing to an accompaniment makes Temperament a necessity. Gracious Heavens! Would that there were no other differences in *Robert le Diable* but those that are the result of Temperament! We, at all events, cannot get it without the greatest difficulty. Take the Introduction to the *Jessonda* Overture in E flat minor, with the clarinets in B flat, the *Terzflöten* and trumpets in B natural, the horns in X, and all at war with themselves and one another; truly delightful! Must the trumpeter tune his D sharp and F sharp to the chord of E flat minor, and the drummer tune his E flat to the chord of B major? By that rule, everything would be "tempered," but the composers had rather not. My remarks in the Fugitive Essays upon the objective fitness of Style, may be applied here. Such things are utterly out of place in an orchestra, which is neither organ, piano, nor harp, but an assemblage of individuals, in which everyone can accomplish successfully that, and that alone, which is peculiar to his nature; and nature is one thing in the violin, another in the flute, clarinet, trumpet, &c. The whole lot of them are but machines, which we twist and bend to our service, but singers are human; nothing unreasonable is to be got out of them by force (or by anything but their own impulse).

What sort of new books have you been reading lately? It has been my good luck, to come across a volume of Letters to Merck, from Herder, Wieland, Goethe, and many others. I don't at all expect discussions of very interesting subjects in collections like these; the real interest lies in the accurate portraits they give of the writers themselves. But for the attractions of these men, the letters, except in a few instances, would certainly

fail to attract; as it is, some of those from unknown people had better have been omitted. Goethe's letters resemble those which he wrote to Lavater (I allude to such as were written before 1780), they are flighty and wild—a complete contrast to those of his later years. Wieland is a charming letter writer, and so too are the Duke and the Duchess Amalia. Tischbein's are very good reading. Herder's soon bore me; there is something in them, which shows there will be a split later on. It's a pity there are none of Merck's; I fancy he must have been a clever fellow, from the high esteem in which he was held. But in general, I think, published letters are rather questionable. The Goethe and Schiller Correspondence, edited by Goethe himself, is on a different footing; so too are the Goethe and Zelter Letters, which were intended all along for publication. But what on earth is the use of lumping together masses of letters from people in all quarters of the globe, who never dreamt of seeing themselves in print? Why should that poor innocent Court Lady, Fräulein von Göchhausen, be smuggled into the collection? I don't mean to say there is any harm in it. Gossip imputes to people, on an average, a great deal more than is made known by any amount of letters and confessions. Even if, in a confidential letter, somebody roundly abuses somebody else, to whom he is polite in public—are we ourselves quite guiltless of that kind of thing? Wieland's devotion to Goethe is quite touching; it's rather like Haydn's for Mozart. . . .

What do you say about the *Jodel?* Is it not a forcing up into the various regions of the falsetto? For in the first place, it can only be done on very high notes, and secondly, only in the natural harmonics of the note. It is an easy matter to pronounce on such subjects *ex cathedrâ*. Enough that the professor lays down the law, and that his pupils make a note of it, and then the thing is settled. But real knowledge is not thus regulated. If professors were only allowed to teach what they themselves understand, our professorial chairs would cut a curious figure. What a funny thing it would be, if a professor's voice failed him (just as a greasy bow fails a violinist) every time that he uttered

anything which he had not thought over and understood for himself! He himself should not notice it, only one of his audience, gifted with ears that could not hear anything false.

Now they say we are to have *Die Jüdin;* they have not been able to get *I Puritani.* What does it mean? Julia only heard the general rehearsal, and she was rather bored with it. Bellini reminds me in some ways of Pergolesi, plenty of sweetness, and emotion too, but no real backbone. Pergolesi, if you look at the age in which he lived, went no deeper, but he was full of feeling. Whether you take his *Stabat Mater* or his *Salve Regina,* it's exactly the same thing; you might exchange them. Yet I well understand how people like Rousseau, with their ears stuffed full of the music of the day, fell passionately in love with him; after that declamatory Psalm-singing, Pergolesi must have been real balsam.

I declare we never get a note of tolerable music here now. A certain Dr. Hanno, from Vienna, sang *Masaniello* here a few days ago. The performance was beneath contempt. Many people declared they had seen him in former days, singing at small theatres, and that he then called himself Hannoweck. Change of name won't do him much good, though such a poor creature may be well advised to appear in borrowed plumes, in each town he visits, and thus avoid a meeting with his own reputation. It is ages since we have had anything at all fresh here; everything comes from Detmold and Nürnberg, from Kuhschnappel and Flachsenfingen. I daresay there are all sorts of reasons for it—this and that amongst others; *il resto nol dico.* I could make a pretty list of worthies, who have declined to take up their abode with us. For some time past, such a rough, rude, tone has prevailed among the authorities, that everyone has taken offence. The wound may be skin-deep, and easily healed; still, it is unpleasant to live in a place so redolent of coarseness; reproof is one thing, offensive epithets are another. Why will people transact business in a way that makes them so odious to themselves and others? It beats me. I suppose there must be a good deal of internal irritation to account for it. The prospect of launching a new opera, under such auspices, is hateful to a degree; it makes

one long to be half a millionaire, if not a whole one. It was not so in old days, for when I dreamt of a competence or a good income, I was quite content, in fancy, to retain my post in the orchestra at the same time; now I often sigh to be out of it—yes, to wash my hands of music altogether as a business, for in reality it's no business at all. Natural gifts are more or less indispensable to that profession, if you mean to be happy. And then we are in such a disagreeable position here, the whole thing is mean and hollow. I daresay I am arguing from my early impressions, but in Dresden (where it is still a very different thing from what it is here), the dignified *Kammermusiker* whom I remember in my young days were respectable people—or, at all events, people who were respected. When Naumann took his place in the choir of the church, he used to give a friendly bow, first to the singers on his right, then to the orchestra on his left, and then the music, such as it was, proceeded evenly and quietly to the end, when everyone bowed again. The ordinary rehearsals too, how quiet and methodical they were, everyone taking and giving advice on different points. As for the last rehearsal, it was like a performance, there were so many listeners present. Here, at a rehearsal, if a few people get smuggled in against orders, I blush when their ears are polluted by the filthy language hurled at the orchestra—nay, now and then, at the singers themselves, who are scolded for faults of which they are utterly guiltless, if they were only allowed to explain. However, the least attempt at justification means an instant threat of "Turn him out!" It is not only the instruments that are out of tune, but the people themselves, and who can wonder that the result is inharmonious? How many years have I loathed that little infernal white wooden stick! When I see this weapon of tyranny, away goes all feeling for music; it seems as if the whole opera only existed, to show off the conductor beating time. Look at him, with his punctilious accent, marking the smallest *nuances* of light and shade! I suppose it must have become necessary to do this, but I like to remember the *Matrimonio Segreto*, and the *Maestro*, seated quietly before the cembalo, accompanying the *Recitativo secco*. Every note of the music went of itself. Thinking of this, I am transported to a different sphere, as

far as heaven from ours, where crude barbarism prevails, stripped of all grace and dignity. Words fail to describe my utter aversion to *this* style of German art. If it was meritorious in our forefathers, to do a great deal with very little, we have balanced matters by doing very little, with everything to our hand. But enough of the joys of the feast! we must keep off it as much as possible, there is no joy to be found there, and we cannot alter matters; let him who understands such things invest himself and his capital in railway schemes! How is a man to find out the best market for his millions? They say that the rate of interest for Prussian bonds has depreciated. Have you any good counsel to give? . . .

WEDNESDAY, *March 3rd.*

If letters improved with keeping, like wine, cheese, and medlars, this one would be none the worse; but though it is eight days old, as I judge, it does not seem to get any riper. I see it was undated—in fact, I had almost forgotten it. Looking at it again, I find I have been talking scandal, so take it with the *refrain*, "All in love and kindness," or remember the words of Jesus Sirach: "Ofttimes a man is hasty to utter a word, though he meaneth it not, and who is he that hath not offended?"

One must enjoy a good scold now and then; it rids the breast of perilous stuff; it sets one right again, and purges the system. That reminds me of a remark of Zelter's, which has cheered me many a time, when despondency would otherwise have done for me. He is very much worried, because his books are always getting mislaid, and, says he, "One might fret oneself to death, if one *had nothing better to do*." I should like to print those words in letters of gold; they are well worth it. Do take them to heart! Surely, one can always do something better than fret, though sometimes one can't think what that something is, for fretting; but do it as long as you can, anyhow! How it frets me, when my pupils make blunders which I never expected! and yet the reason of their blundering was my failure to explain difficulties in a way that they could understand. How far more rational to improve one's teaching, than to fret over their stupidity!

How very wrong we are when we fret about others, who, if they only knew what we wanted, would cheerfully comply with our wishes!

. . . In fancy, my summer residence often pleases me well enough, for it is on the Weinberg, and the situation and the view are quite splendid. The mornings must be wonderfully lovely there. It will be my first experience of free Nature, if I except my *half* rural summer excursions in old days, when I was in Russia. The Prince had a suite of 180 people, and home comforts were so scarce, that we used to wish ourselves back in town again; it was impossible to feel that anything of the country was left over, with so many people there. But I have a dark side to my summer quarters,—viz., the neighbourhood of a public garden, which is attended by crowds in the season. I daresay the discomforts will not be so bad as I think, after all. I must just let things be, and tell you all about it by and bye. . . .

Yours,

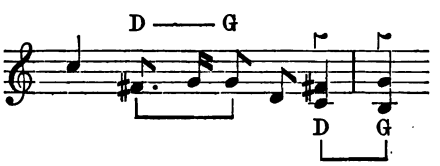
M. H.

47.

CASSEL, *March 19th*, 1836.

. . . We too mean to have our first performance of the *Passion Music* on Good Friday. I am getting the recitatives of the Evangelist from Schelble. These, as you probably know, have been entirely remodelled. There is really no one here with whom I can discuss the subject quietly; one party is against any alteration of *The Passion*, the other is *passionately* in favour of it! I can't help smiling at the situation. I myself infected people, when the passing fit of enthusiasm was upon me; now they are raging fanatics, and I am like the man in the *Zauberlehrling*, my house flooded from top to bottom, and my disciples bringing water from all sides. I rack my brains in vain, to discover who it was that first brought Sebastian Bach on the *tapis;* whoever it was, he must have been a musician, and none of those that I am acquainted with know anything about Bach. Then again,

the mania infects more amateurs than professionals—who have no time, and have got their work to see to. Spohr is too honest to veil his dislike, but the enthusiastic amateurs, or amateur enthusiasts, will not tolerate the omission of a single number or a single note, and the enthusiasts who are not amateurs can hardly sit out the entire work. Our selection of airs is quite enough to satisfy ; the omission of some of the others does not mean that they are less good. I yield to none in my appreciation of the beauty of this music, but the work, like all human things, reflects the influence of the age and of the circumstances that attended its origin, let alone the individuality of the composer. The recitatives are *not* typical of the age, because Handel and many others excelled as writers of recitative; they are solely the recitatives of Bach who, I suppose, had but rare opportunities of hearing the genuine Italian recitative in Arnstadt, Eisenach, Weissenfels, Köthen, —nay, in Leipzig itself. Declamation is the main thing in recitative, and a correct accentuation of each word according to its meaning in the sentence, is quite essential ; Bach, though not always, too often accentuates it according to its individual meaning. I cannot help thinking that the recitatives assigned to Christ, and to the Evangelist, are exceedingly awkward. The meditative recitatives, although they most nearly approach the arioso, seem to me the most natural. Anyhow, they come to a stop, whereas the others wander about at will. I once made an abstract of my general observations on the treatment of recitatives, but I don't remember it all at the moment. One point was this, that harmony is *not introduced at the same time with* melody, but invariably follows after. It sounds strange, but this is the peculiar nature of the recitative, if it be such an one as to set the singer at his ease. Just think for a moment—the ordinary close, *e.g.*,



is based upon this principle ; so too are many forms quite

peculiar to recitative, but which are never resorted to in other kinds of music. The sounding of a chord precisely with the melody is foreign to the spirit of recitative. But this one remark does not exhaust the nature of the subject—melodic intervals are another question altogether. A good deal that is necessarily of a general character was included, apart from the fact that before all things there must be a definite centre, from which height or depth is attainable, according to the expression of the words, moderation prevailing throughout. But in Bach, the faintest suggestion, arising from some single word, drives us through two octaves, at the top or bottom of which we are landed or stranded ; and mind you, this is no desperate lover, who has lost all self-control—it is the Evangelist, it is Christ Himself. I should like it much better sung Collect-fashion, in strict accordance with the punctuation, and in monotone, the voice falling a third at the comma, a fifth at the full-stop, &c. The following are the two chief faults, or if you would rather have it so, peculiarities that distinguish Bach's recitatives from all others: (1) They are too firmly interwoven with ever changing harmonies, and the treatment of those harmonies is not free enough ; (2) The melody has too large a range, and the minute expression attached to particular words is overdone. I remember that in Leipzig days you were not quite at one with me on the subjects of style and manner, as I treated them in my *Zerstreute Blätter*. But I cannot shift my ground, and the observations simplify and explain a great deal to my mind. Whatever is foreign and unsuitable to the peculiar method of expression of the representative medium, in relation to the subject represented, is *of no style at all.* There is no Bachian, Handelian, Mozartian style, but there is a chorus style, a solo style, an organ style, and so on—and further, there is an ecclesiastical style, an operatic, and a concert style—and style degenerates into mannerism, when it is applied in the wrong place. Music that is well adapted for the violin will never suit the voice (though in itself it may be noble and beautiful), and to try and make it do so is not Spohr's style, but violin style, and Spohr's mannerism. Mannerism no doubt may be extended to other things—*e.g.*,

the features of a single work, in which we recognise the master, or the general characteristics of all his works which are not marred by false style. Compare Beethoven's Symphonies and Quartets with those of Mozart and Haydn, and you will understand my meaning. Style and mannerism go together; they are objective and subjective. Of course the prevailing feature of Sebastian Bach is the Organ style, elevation and sustained power of tone—all that is fully definable in music—fixity, plasticity, for the sculptor always looks out of Michael Angelo's pictures. This style is best imported into choral writing, for in choral writing, evenness of the vocal parts, and subordination of the subjective expression are appropriate. For this reason, Bach's choruses seem to me his most effective works, except the organ compositions. By effect, I do not mean the effect which is produced by mere masses of people singing—that charm is soon lost—but the realization of the idea intended by the composer. One voice is all that is wanted for an Air; we want a hundred for a good chorus. The soloist may often be a first-rate performer, and yet we are never fully satisfied with an Air of Bach's, whilst his choruses, as sung by amateurs, are delightful to listen to. The same remark applies to the Piano Sonatas with Violin; let the violinist do what he will, he never does right, because Bach did not do the right thing by the violin, which is quite a different instrument to the piano. If the two are to fit into one another, it must not be treated in the same way. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

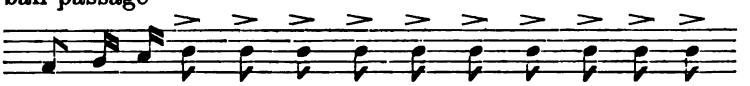
48.

CASSEL, *June 29th*, 1836.

DEAR H.,—

Another fiasco! this time, it is my intended trip, which has come to grief as usual. I may say, with the bride's father in *Götz von Berlichingen*, "House and yard are safe enough, but where's the cash to come from?" N.B.—I've got no house and no yard. I know people, who do a good deal with very little to do it on; the reverse of that would be easier to

me. I ought to have gone to Dresden too, and I have recently had another invitation to attend the Musical Festival at Brunswick. This would have been the easiest flight of the two, but I am not inclined to make the effort : were Brunswick a pretty town on the Rhine, and just as easy to get at, I might be tempted, but *The Messiah* has no strong attractions for me; the solos in oratorios of that kind give me very faint pleasure. Many of the songs, even when sung in first-rate style, rather bore me than otherwise, and in the choruses, my favourite passages are not the most famous. Take, for instance, *Worthy is the Lamb*, with that powder and ball passage—



where the tenors have to start with the basses, so as to intensify the roar, though they are absolutely out of their proper order here in the Fugue. Such bare materialism never occurs to the mind of Sebastian Bach, who, on the contrary, often inserts passages which never reach the ears of his listeners, herein resembling those Gothic architects, who adorn their highest spires and pinnacles with delicate foliage, where no eye can see it, simply for their own pleasure. Besides this, there is to be another Oratorio, by Marschner, equally unattractive to me, and then Symphonies—Mozart's, and the *Eroica* of Beethoven, besides solo performances. Mendelssohn is at Frankfurt just now, acting as conductor to the *Caecilienverein* in Schelble's absence, and that of Voigt, his amanuensis, who passed through Cassel yesterday, on his way to Hamburg for a month. They are studying Bach's Motet, *Singet dem Herrn*, as a greeting to Schelble on his return. All things considered, Schelble is supposed to be doing well, but Voigt tells me he is in a very anxious way, and the doctors are at a loss about the symptoms. Mendelssohn is giving some extra touches to *St. Paul*, before he allows it to be printed. Schelble begged him earnestly to begin rehearsing the Oratorio in his absence, but he absolutely refuses, and sticks to Bach's music instead. What a rare contrast to many others, who are never so

happy as when they are practising their own music! I cannot understand how people like to hear their own works constantly repeated; there is no thriving on such food. I fancy the best fun would be to hear, accidentally and indirectly, that people were really pleased with what one had done. Pixis and his daughter were here, a few weeks ago. I am sure you will make a face, when I tell you that their singing more than pleased me; there were some passages in the Duets in which he moved me powerfully, even to tears. If it was not the *What*, it was the *How*. And then the girl has her voice thoroughly under control, her pure, refined intonation is quite heavenly, and the words are one with the music, and yet preserve their character. The first time I heard her was at Spohr's Quartet party; amongst other things, she sang one of Dessauer's songs in Italian, a beautiful plaintive air, written with great freedom, and yet not wanting in form. I have been listening to music for so many years, that nothing really affects me, but here, the first few bars dissolved the outer crust in a moment. What that song looks like upon paper, I cannot say, but it seems to me now, or it seemed to me then, better than hundreds of others which are less vocal. She only sang Romeo at the opera—there was no time for anything else—but people went quite mad about the little creature. It was a very pretty performance, and she has evidently been well taught. Just think what poor stuff there must be in an opera written in a single fortnight—nay, what utter rubbish; on what trifles too the effect depends, and yet an effect *is* produced, not merely on A. and B., but on many thousands of listeners, in all sorts of countries — not Italy and France merely, but Germany too, where for the same money we could hear (only we had rather not), the *Vampyr*, the *Räuberbraut*, *Hans Heiling*, &c. There is no denying some musical talent to a writer of this kind; he has a natural instinct, which brings him into closer touch with the opera than anything our little pianists, violinists, and contrapuntists can ever pretend to. That gift is not to be got by teaching. The French and the Italians, from the earliest times, were never without an opera,

suitable to the particular age in which it flourished. The thing existed, it was not acquired by degrees, for they were never without their own appropriate organ, and what they had to express found its legitimate expression in operatic form. With us, the opera is and ever will be an artificial thing. In Eckermann's *Conversations with Goethe*, when discussing the subject of false tendencies, Eckermann asks him, whether it is possible to recognise a false tendency in oneself or in others, whereupon Goethe replies: "A false tendency is not productive; or, if it is productive, you have no pleasure in it." A composer like Bellini is only hindered by his own simplicity; there is a *naïveté* in his attempting so much with so slender an outfit; still, he has the right stuff in him. But as for Marschner, he is not likely to become more agreeable than he is now, and he's not very agreeable in opera. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

49.

CASSEL, *July 15th*, 1836.

. . . I must not forget to tell you, that I sent off Berlioz's Symphony at Whitsuntide; it went to H. with a parcel of books. You talk of the South-East; let me know where you intend going to—Prague, Breslau, Gratz, or where? We have a new tenor here from Dresden, a Bohemian by birth; his name is Derska. I fancy he spells it Drska, and only inserts the *e* to please the Germans, and make the word pronounceable. His voice is veiled, but he sings and acts fairly well. They tell me that Strauss, the Waltz man, is dead of the cholera; others say it is a mistake for Strauss, the Berlin preacher; others declare it's the ostrich* of the Zoological Gardens at Vienna. We are to have another Musical Festival at Paderborn, not far from here. It really is a Church Festival, in honour of the thousandth anniversary of the building of the church by St. Liborius. Spohr's last Oratorio will be performed on this occasion. But I cut the other Festivals, so I mean to cut this, for the music will be nothing

* *Strauss* is the German for ostrich.

to speak of. . . . A fortnight since, I joined some comrades in a tour through the Werrathal, in the neighbourhood of the mountains of Hesse. I should have enjoyed it more, if they had thought less about their wine. We came across old University chums, doing duty as Government clerks, in many of the small towns which we visited; they talk of nothing but one bottle of wine after the other, up in those nests of theirs. Did I fly to the bosom of Nature for this? What an odious spectacle is a tipsy man, in the midst of beautiful scenery! A pig would set it off better. As a general rule, everything ugly derives from Man alone. The scream of a peacock is not a lovely sound, but a fiddler scraping wrong notes grates on my nerves still more. In a state of nature, an ugly brute is a rare exception; an old cart-horse has civilisation to thank for his ugliness. I could ramble along interminably on this subject, which long ago forced itself on my attention, and is connected in my mind with a variety of questions about Individuality and Life in common. People often ascribe Somnambulism and similar phenomena, such as Clairvoyance and the penetrative knowledge of hidden things and circumstances, to an *exalted* state of mental activity. If animals could speak, they too would tell us things which we could only find out in a state of heightened mental activity—but then, were they to speak, they would no longer be in the condition of animalism; they do not think, they act immediately and involuntarily. I am of a different opinion. I think that a man in such a state descends a step lower, instead of rising a step higher; he passes, so to speak, out of humanity into mere animalism; from individual life into the common life of nature. We belong more closely to the Whole, because our individuality is lost. As a substitute for perception through the senses, we have the common feeling, the immediate feeling; we have no need of a medium, for separation there is none. When the nerve-system of the brain is passive, the vegetative enjoys a more uninterrupted activity. And as this happens during our ordinary sleep, it may be, that in our dreams, we penetrate through Space and Time in a manner that is incompatible with the waking state, when individuality prevails. Individuality is *mikrokosmos;*

in sleep it is *makrokosmos*. But the first state is, after all, the strangest of the two; that man should think, even if he thinks rubbish, is something nobler than that he should digest and make blood and lymph. . . . What are you reading? Or, what have you been reading? I have done very little in that way. Eckermann's *Conversations with Goethe* is the one book I have stuck to, and read with real interest, from beginning to end. A great many people will start a great many objections to it; what do I care for that? I say with Rosina, "I had rather be in his company than in that of many others." "Better be in the wrong with Plato, than in the right with thee," as that old Greek said. Do read the volume, it takes you into the best of society. I fancy it irritates some people, that Goethe should be so thorough, and have so many sides to him. A. says he is no philosopher; B. denies his mathematics; C. questions his religion. One wants blue, another yellow, another red, whereas it is the blending of all three tints in one that makes up the healthy human complexion.

People came home from Brunswick very well satisfied with the performance of *The Messiah*. Next year, they say, the Elbe Festival will be held on the Fulda; probably nothing will come of it, it is a mere suggestion of Spohr's. Who is to manage the financial arrangements, or the music either? I know of no one. Surely old *Krauskopf* can't do it all by himself! At Brunswick, the toast of the day was: *Franz Schneider, the Handel of our time.* They say his Cantata really did begin in the Handelian style, but it ended quite differently. Spohr's superiority to all others consists in this: that he does not try to write like Handel, Bach, or Beethoven, but just as his natural instinct bids him. Even Handel is not always inspired, much of his music is mere Handelian ware,—and Spohr now and then threshes out empty husks, when he had better have left threshing alone; but there is nothing false about it. Whilst on the subject of Bach and Beethoven, it occurs to me that even Mendelssohn, now and again, reminds us of both the one and the other; but that is quite a different thing. He has thoroughly steeped himself in the atmosphere of the former, and he belongs to the latter in point of date. A really gifted writer *of our time* must

have something of Beethoven about him. If Mozart had been born now, he would not have been Mozartian, but Beethovenish. I can imagine the same spirit, in different ages, as Palestrina, as Bach, as Mozart, as Beethoven. It is the mark of a thorough-going Philistine, to carp at young composers, and complain of their shallowness, because they do not write Sonatas and such like. The Sonata is, like the Fugue, a form of the time; the Gigue, the Sarabande, and the Chaconne were the same. Some things are accidental, others necessary; the domination of the Dominant is a necessity, it always was so and will remain so—there is nothing specially musical in it, it is but the human element in music, the rational element, the principle of every definition. It is that which distinguishes the song of human beings from the song of birds, and if they refuse to abide by it, they need not allow the progression of the scale in seconds. But if they do abide by it, and abide by it *in every sense*, rhythmical, melodic, and harmonic—*i.e.*, not turning the highest into the lowest, nor putting the cart before the horse, then let them write, and call their music what they please, and it may prove to be as good of its kind as anything that has yet appeared. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

50.

CASSEL, *October 5th*, 1836.

DEAR HAUSER,—

A letter intended for you some time ago, is hopelessly lost; I daresay it was full of fine things—which fate ordains that you shall never see! Whilst you were re-writing Sebastian Bach, I was composing over again the old Italian composers, from vocal parts printed in ancient days. I came across some things by Giovanni Gabrieli, which were quite delightful—in passages, at all events. It is like unrolling papyrus sheets from Herculaneum; when you get to the end of one, and not before, you see whether it was worth the trouble—but I am charmed with some of my discoveries among the six-part Motets. The specimens in this collection

contain from six to twenty-two vocal parts. The variety of rhythm is characteristic of Gabrieli and his contemporaries; in some instances, it goes so far, that it is difficult to imagine how they could sing such a piece in one and the same *Tempo*, for we come across an unbroken succession of 𝅗𝅥 and quavers, nay, even semiquavers with syllables attached to them, whereas but one rhythmical unity invariably prevails in Palestrina and the writers of his time. There are some points of resemblance between Gabrieli and Palestrina, just as there are between Mozart and Beethoven, and they bear the same relation in point of time. Whilst I was in the thick of this business, and rejoicing in the beauties of the music, as they gradually became apparent to me, we were doing *I Puritani* at our Theatre. I don't know what you think of this Opera, but it was another source of enjoyment to me, and I think there are extraordinarily good things in it; it is not merely the passionate expression of love, as in the *Capuletti*, there are other scenes which are very finely conceived. Few things in German music are more beautiful than the first *Finale* and the Trio in the second Act; a great deal shrinks into trivial filagree work beside them. My difficulty in this Opera is, to keep the muscles of my face under proper control, and to avoid coming to blows with my next door neighbour in the orchestra. I am restored to equanimity by the trumpets of the Fatherland, in the famous *Suoni la Tromba* Duet at the end of Act II. The third Act again is beautiful. I should like to know, whether we have Bellini's real score; it has been ascertained, that there are two in circulation. The one we are using came from Eberwein, of Rudolstadt, and the instrumentation is so different from that in the *Capuletti*, and so superior to it, that I can't make the thing out; often, you could not imagine more careful and effective writing; the four horns, in particular, are used with great skill. And yet, in other parts of the score, I detect marks of Italian carelessness. If Bellini did the scoring himself, I think it quite stupendous—*in comparison with his earlier operas* (of which I only know *La Straniera* and *I Capuletti*). . . .

So Curschmann is really going to be married! he will be a happy man, if he has made a good choice.

Counterpoint, taught by correspondence, is worse than useless; teacher and pupil should be in the closest contact. I have taught some hundred pupils in Cassel, and I doubt if two out of that number ever did exactly the same exercises; I set them by the thousand, but always according to circumstances. A. stumbles at one point, B. at another, and the teacher must arrange accordingly. It is unpractical, to begin with explanations of the scales and such like. Of course it's another matter, if a trained musician asks me about them. I presuppose much more than the mere scales; I presuppose the whole of music as a *Concretum*, and leave everything together as long as possible. It is no good attempting to force on pupils what they do not wish to learn; if they can get on well with a little learning, so much the better for them, as poets. What is it Schiller says in one of his letters? "When I am at my task, I would often gladly exchange all my theatrical knowledge for a few hints about *workmanship*, for not only is theory useless to one in the study, it does not even help one much to criticise a finished work." It is with Science as it is with Virtue, which, if it be genuine, must be loved and practised for its own sake. I have had dozens of pupils who got through their task merely because they wanted to get through it, and to be quit of the wearisome thorough-bass and counterpoint; such fellows never get on. Here too poetry cannot be ignored; the slightest exercise must be to them a composition, a piece of music to be treated lovingly. They must throw themselves into it, heart and soul. Just now I have a Russian and a Pole in my class, capital fellows, superior, in fact, to the general run of my German scholars, but there is very little musical stuff in them. I have to lay some sort of foundation, before I attempt to explain anything; they can grasp the fact that the chord of the seventh is dissonant, all besides is to them more or less merely *discordant*. Let them have a major seventh, prepared ever so beautifully beforehand, and they make faces like children taking a dose of rhubarb; it is only by degrees, and when they have seen it growing under their own hands over and over again, as I try to give them the opportunity of seeing it, that it becomes a living truth to

them. English pupils are easy to teach, for they are perfectly content to be told: "That is so—you must do it so," and they obey to the letter. I have never yet had Frenchmen or Laplanders; they would make a ragged lot, I expect. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

51.

CASSEL, *December 1st*, 1836.

DEAREST H.,—

What a heap of anomalies and oddities are to be found at Munich! The new *Ludwigsstrasse* is a choice jumble of styles, Græco-Roman, Byzantine, Gothic, all combined. The Library is the Venetian Palace at Rome, the *Residenz* is the Palazzo Pitti at Florence, and the *Allerheiligen Kapelle* is a pre-Gothic Basilica. The Post Office opposite the *Residenz* is painted in polychrome, in keeping with the idea started a short time since, that ancient Greek statues and buildings were decorated in this fashion. That fallacy is exploded, but the Post Office must remain in all its gay colours, until the rain once more washes it Grecian white. There is much in Munich that is graceful and pretty, so I don't like to be captious, and yet one cannot really approve of it, because it is so *unreal*. Why on earth should the Munich Library have loopholes? It was a different thing for the Florentines of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; they had good reasons for them. It is excusable, nay, commendable in the Nurembergers to Gothicise their small public buildings, fountains, and the like; but away with all these Gothic dwelling houses! They don't match the modern gentleman, in the newest style of frock coat, looking out of the window! The Greek style pleases me just as little, except in Goethe's adaption: *Let everyone be Greek after his own fashion, only let him be Greek!* meaning, in other words: Let everything express itself outwardly in accordance with what it is within; try to find the simplest and most appropriate expression for the thing, and the proper medium of representation (that is what I mean by style). Did Goethe

himself turn out any sort of *Greek* work? Even his Hexameters are not Greek; he has not written a single strophe in Sapphics, or Alcaics. Is his *Iphigenie* a Greek, or more of a Greek than a German? He was Greek after his own fashion, as the Greeks were after theirs, as the German Masters of the Middle Ages were after theirs, in fact, as the artists of every good period of Art were after theirs—as, however, we are *not*, whether we happen to be building Grecian Temples or Gothic Cathedrals. The *Glyptothek* contains an historical series of sculptures, dating from the most ancient Egyptian examples down to the latest Greek, besides a room devoted to the works of Canova, and others of the more modern school. But this modern sentimentality in stone is hardly endurable. I couldn't stand it, after those healthy, *naïf* Antiques; it seems to me like a collection of wax figures. I always have the same feeling, when I look at Canova's Monument to Maria Theresa, in that Church at Vienna, near the Burg; it is a painting rather than a sculpture—the true spirit of stone is wanting. Saturday being a close day, I missed seeing the *Pinakothek*, but I did see the Gallery that surrounds it, with Cornelius' frescoes, representing the History of Painting. Each painter has a niche assigned to him; the design and the execution are equally good. The King has done wonders in the last eleven years. . . .

A few days ago, a very successful performance of Mendelssohn's Overture to *Melusine* was given here. I am sorry to have missed it, for I liked it very much on the piano. The professional musicians, whom I have casually fallen in with, are not entirely satisfied with his compositions, but I continue to think him the most gifted of all his contemporaries. I should like to hear his orchestral works played in the hall of the Leipzig Gewandhaus. Nothing could be more perfect than the way they gave Beethoven's *Leonore* Overture, and yet I cannot suppose that every member of the Leipzig band is a pure genius. Mendelssohn has a rare talent for conducting, and his position in Leipzig is a good one, for he is free from all theatrical worries. I was greatly pleased with what I heard of *St. Paul* on the piano. Spohr observed an

unevenness of style in it, which is equivalent to saying it has no style; it did not strike me in that way, but one should hear the whole work first. *A priori* discussions about the fitting style for Church and Oratorio, are of small account in our day, for we have no Church music; it is only a modification of stage music, just as the stage music of the Germans is a modification of non-theatrical or of merely instrumental music, and therefore ineffective on the stage. A writer of sacred music has a fair field before him, just now; he need not follow Fr. Schneider nor anyone else, he has no competitor in the race. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

52.

CASSEL, *January 10th*, 1837.

. . . The Hummels are living in the same house with us, so I have been induced to write six new *Anacreontics* for Susette. Except for one low note, the range of her voice could not be better, for, as a rule, songs of this kind are all written too high, so much so, that every song written in the violin clef can be sung in the treble clef. I shall enclose a copy of the new *Anacreontics* in a box which I am about to send to Paris. Please don't find fault with the *dolcezza* (forgive me for being so silly); in the first place, I purposely put in the Italian garnish, and secondly, I must confess that the rough style of singing in our *Kränzchen** is so detestable, that I rather enjoyed the reverse of it. Vitorelli's poetry too is refreshing, after all the sentimentalities of the present race of versifiers, with their everlasting, "Could I but weep, and weep again!" Now, I have already wept such floods of tears, that there are none left. Of course I know that this Arcadian pastoral simplicity is a trifle old-fashioned, but the sentiment is fresh and never morbid, and the turn of expression is always graceful. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

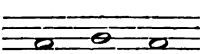
* A social club for amateurs and artists.

53.

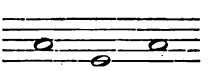
CASSEL, *February 1st—4th*, 1837.

. . . I was glad that you were pleased with the finished performances which you attended in Paris; there is such a virtuosity about everything they do, on the stage or elsewhere, that we Germans always look like amateurs beside them. All that we think of is, whether the thing will succeed or not: they have a regular method. We always want too much, we aim at everything possible and impossible, without caring in the least whether it has anything to do with the matter in hand. I don't ignore or dispute our good points, but we must concede theirs to the French, and respect them too for having something which *we* have not. They are our superiors in the art of dramatic form; if they deal with lighter subjects, they understand the drapery better than we do, and they have a correct feeling for the proper accessories. The clumsiness of our public performances is quite an offence to me; our actors are so inferior, they have such an inadequate perception of their duties. They can neither stand, walk, nor talk properly, and yet they attempt to act! I hunted up in Choron the other day a Cantata *a voce sola*, with a figured bass accompaniment, by Alessandro Scarlatti. The Recitatives are crabbed and involved, the harmony changes with each word, and rambles about in every kind of remote key, making it painful for the listener to follow. Immediately afterwards, I came upon a fine Recitative from Pergolesi's *Orfeo*, written in the best style. Now these two works differ, though not materially, in point of time; but in former days the *genera* of composition were more distinctly separated, so much so, that there was a style for chamber music, a style for the theatre, and a style for the Church. All music for the stage was written in a broader and freer manner, for it needed further accessories, and was not intended to exist independently. There is an objective and a subjective to be considered, the audience and the actors themselves. Choron's work is interesting as a historical collection, and it gives us

a clear view of the different features of music in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Roughly speaking, we may call the sixteenth the Roman, the seventeenth the Venetian, and the eighteenth the Neapolitan century; Palestrina, Gabrieli, and Scarlatti are the representatives of the three periods. According to Winterfeld, the marked superiority of the Venetians to their forerunners is seen in the *characteristic* treatment of the text, and in their use of declamation; compared with their immediate predecessors, they are real revolutionists, and they represent the young Germany of ancient days. They had wearied of the even measure of Palestrina's music, and were so impatient of the style, as well as of the want of change of key, that all at once they plunged recklessly into modulations and enharmonic changes, such as we never dream of now-a-days. The livelier and the more varied the *tempi*, the better they were pleased, and we meet with any amount of long semibreves, followed immediately by quavers and semiquavers with special syllables attached to them. Such was the seventeenth century, to be succeeded by a restoration of peace in the eighteenth, when music was held together by thorough-bass, and a solid substratum of tonic and dominant. In former times, the bass part was one of many others, it had the same melody as the others; it was this first of all:—



and afterwards this:—



The former is based on the system of the ancient modes, but the latter is the source of our present tone-system, the characteristic of which is the chord of the dominant seventh, a thing never seen in old days, when discords were only used as Suspensions, I mean discords which can be resolved on the same fundamental harmony, whereas the resolution of the chord of the seventh makes a new fundamental harmony a necessity. The old system is based upon melodic, the later upon harmonic requirements. (You must construe all my remarks in the widest sense.) I think it a strange fancy,

to publish for present educational purposes such a book as Sala's or Choron's, for the greater portion of it is filled with examples taken from a musical epoch as different from our own, as the Old is from the New Testament. If anyone were to draw up a course of religious instruction, and were only to mention the Gospel casually in the appendix, I should say he had failed of his object, for whatever good there might be in the bulk of the book, as opposed to those few pages at the end of it, the root of the matter—*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*—would not be so clearly stated there. Formerly, there were twelve modes* or eight; now we have only one (*sic*), but in that one an unending variety—and this is the inevitable result, if it is meant that a thing should come to maturity. Chemistry is subject to the same conditions, with its fifty-three elements, destined at some future time to meet and combine, one with the other, just like tonic and dominant in harmony, employed so variously and successfully by Mozart and Beethoven—not to mention Berlioz. When we find old Fux in his *Gradus ad Parnassum* basing everything on the old modes, and ignoring all besides, it is not surprising, for that doctrine was part of his life—but Choron! in 1808! and in Paris too! I still think Kirnberger the best of all books, for a man who wants to teach himself. It is founded on Sebastian Bach, who had a perfect knowledge of the old modes, though he only used them exceptionally, just as Goethe wrote *Ghaselen* in imitation of exotic poetry. However, all that is needed to justify Choron, is to keep the title of his work, *Principes de Composition des Ecoles d'Italie*, before the eyes of the reader. These principles are fully set out in the work, and they are all the more valuable and interesting in my eyes, because they are not a repetition of Kirnberger in another form. In the First Part, there are over two hundred figured basses, long excerpts from Fenaroli, Sala, &c., not two or three bars, such as we find in our school-books, as dry illustrations of the text. All the instruction I ever had in thorough-bass and composition, at the hands of an inferior pianoforte teacher, consisted in playing old figured basses, and writing out chords in all the keys. That lasted for nine

* Hauptmann means the twelve ecclesiastical modes.

months, when the good man was quite used up. It was winter time, and on my asking him when we should start with counterpoint, he comforted me by preaching patience until the days got longer,—but when the long days came, he got rid of me! Then I wrote some few two-part exercises with Morlacchi, but I soon left him for Spohr, under whom I wrote a Violin Concerto, which did me more good than all my other lessons put together. From that date, my harmony was all right; I had the instinct—all I wanted was a hint or two, and to watch Spohr at work. My first teacher did nothing at all, and Morlacchi did nothing well; there was nothing to be got out of them. But a pupil always follows in his master's wake, and under Morlacchi I composed a few Arias and the like, in which I tried hard to write as incorrectly as he did. I thought that this carelessness was a part of the business; it was as if one had wanted to imitate the hasty sketches of an artist, before one had learnt how to draw. But though my early training in Italian Opera is of the greatest use to me now, I cared very little about it then; I thought it was more important to hear "those interesting harmonic progressions," than to study the complete score of an Italian Opera, in which harmony is conspicuous by its absence. What strange epochs we go through! Time was, when a diminished seventh could move me to tears. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

54.

CASSEL, *September* 18*th*, 1837.

. . . It is very refreshing to know that you like the second series of Italian Songs as well as the first. I have been engaged for two months in revising the first six, and I don't see the end of it yet, for I have my doubts about the expediency of publishing them at all. My music seems to me like one born out of due time—thirty years too late; everything is so completely changed, that people will think it too simple—not spicy enough. Have you read R. Schumann's

review of my last Sonatas? He is correct in many points, but he makes a mistake, if he thinks that I shall change my style, because he has drawn my attention to the marked difference between popular taste, as it is, and as it was. I must write as Nature prompts me. I know my music is old-fashioned, and not being a pianist myself, I never could write brilliant pianoforte music. It must seem to the pianist mere child's play, and I would rather that no *virtuoso* ever saw a note of it. It will be just the same with my songs; who would care now-a-days to listen to a composition, which only modulates to the key of the dominant, without diminished sevenths? However, I wrote them as a refreshment, after the agonizing stuff I have had to listen to; not that I was guiltless myself in former days, but I have had enough of that sort of thing, and besides, there is more than enough for the amateur. I appreciate your advice that I should see about a publisher in Berlin, for I am very half-hearted about Leipzig. As for the *Mass*, I thought that if Spohr would say a good word for me, I might succeed with Haslinger, but I will try the other quarter first. You are welcome, if you please, to make a copy for the organist; but he must keep it to himself, for several have been made already, and I want to go with a clear conscience to the publisher. I have lately written half-a-dozen Four-Part Songs, the words by Goethe; we did them *al fresco* at a pic-nic, and they sounded very well; also some Canons, with Italian words, for three sopranos, and four or five German Songs, which I set no great store by. I cannot find any modern poetry that suits me; it is all got up, there is no real *experience*, as in Goethe. It is just this sincerity, which makes his poems true for all time. Somewhere in Eckermann, he says he has discovered new synonyms for "Classic" and "Romantic"; to be classical is to be *healthy*, to be romantic is to be *morbid*. Judged by that standard, the *Niebelungenlied* is as classical as Homer. . . .

55.

CASSEL, *December 13th*, 1837.

. . . I have, for many years, despaired of winning the big prize in the lottery, especially as I have no tickets left, and I find it far too expensive to pay for the mere expectation, beyond which you get nothing. One might as well live in perpetual fear of death by lightning, as in the perpetual hope of winning the big prize. So say I now; but if I can't get rid of the Jew on any other terms, after all I may take an eighth of a chance. Much as I should chuckle if I won, I shouldn't care to live by gambling, but I should like to have the money to spend, best of all, to travel with—for the expenses of fellows like us are out of all proportion to our means of earning money, and we spend in an hour what it has taken weeks to scrape together.

The *Maatschappy tot Befordering der Toonkonst* has elected me an honorary member, and has sent me my diploma, with a big seal, and a highly complimentary letter. I feel very much flattered. From time to time, they send me examination papers to look over, with the answers written by candidates competing for a prize. Hitherto, I have found little to praise in any of them, and as I told them this as politely as I could, confining my criticisms mainly to theoretical points, I thought that they would get weary of my eternal fault-finding, and would quietly let me drop; but it seems to have dawned upon them, that now and then I am in the right. They mean well with their institution, that's plain enough, but what good will come of it, if there are no influential persons amongst themselves? I told them in my last criticism of the setting of a Psalm, that mere drilling in thorough-bass was not enough, least of all for polyphonic writing; to learn how to avoid utterly inadmissible combinations is not the secret of effective part-writing, for although harmony is the chief thing, if it is to be worth anything, it must be won from the melody assigned to each separate part. To be successful now-a-days, a writer ought to have lived

through in himself the whole period from 1400 to 1800. Of course, it is natural that the current style of the day should chiefly interest him at first; but later on, unless he is himself ephemeral, he will go farther and ever farther back, returning by the path he has thus found for himself, to the Present, which then, and not before, will become a living Present to him.

Your remarks upon the differences between Rome and Berlin reached us before the Cologne newspapers, which appear to have had no direct information; I suppose it is a matter of universal comment. Materials are still wanting for us to form an opinion; later on, we shall be better able to judge, whether the affair is really a serious one or not. This is the kind of thing that attracts me to the newspapers; military questions soon weary me. I have no turn at all that way. As a schoolboy, I never played at *soldiers*, though I was a great hand at *knights*, and spent a small fortune on paste-board and tinsel for making armour. It must have been innate Romanticism; the boys who played at soldiers were unconscious Classics. Soldiering was second nature to the Romans. When we speak of *Art* among the ancients, according to Winckelmann, we exclude the Roman, and confine our remarks to the Greek world—though he gives the Romans full credit for their literature . . . .

Talking of accident, I heard the other day from Wieninger, who has been at me for years about a Mass. He tells me, that strolling about Vienna one day, he happened to see a bundle of music in an old curiosity shop, and on looking through it, discovered the original scores of my two Masses, which had been bought up at Artaria's auction. He purchased them for a trifle, and they are once again in my hands. Here is a chance, and no mistake, that out of 400,000 persons, he should be the one to find them; the other 399,999 would never have sent them back to me! The same post brought an answer from Trautwein, to the effect that they had gone in too heavily of late for publishing that sort of music; there were the usual expressions of regret, framed in more or less polite terms. Peters also, to whom I subsequently offered the Italian songs, declines—not because I have written them,

but because they are songs. If I had a lithographed letter, I might possibly offer my wares in other markets; but as it is, they may stand for a while. I like to see my things printed; however small the circulation, a chance purchaser may light upon them, and get some fun out of it, which is impossible, if the music remains locked up in my drawer. I care little about a large profit, though it's pleasant enough to finger a few *Louis d'or;* I make up the sum, when I count the pleasure of writing and finishing my Opuscula. . . .

You often find fault with the poor results of my energy, and at times I heartily agree with you. I know why it is; I have too many interests; if I could limit myself, I should get further. Whenever I come to know eminent men, they generally seem to me *bornés*, I don't say stupid, but only learned within the limited circle of their own pursuits, outside of which they know nothing. But people who aspire to know something of everything, lose one thing, hunting for the other. There are some heads that will contain everything, or almost everything, and still have plenty of room in the midst for daily thoroughfare; witness the Goethes and the Humboldts, but they are rare exceptions, and even they appoint their own limits, and stick to them conscientiously.

The Dresden people have engaged a Miss Kemble, a niece of the English tragedian; she has a fine voice, and she is to make her *début* on the stage at Easter. Schröder Devrient's reappearance was not a success to begin with, and she lost all heart, after her first night's reception; they had better send her away, she was no longer any good, &c. Reissiger and Bienitz, her doctor, tried to soothe her; she was furious with the latter: "I wish *that* stupid fellow would hold his jaw! What does *he* know about it?" *Norma*, it seems, was the failure; she awoke the old enthusiasm in *Euryanthe* and *I Capuletti*. We, too, have revived *Euryanthe*, which Pistor selected for her benefit. I like it still less than I did of old. I am just beginning to realise more clearly than I did before, its want of artistic beauty, and I am less satisfied than ever with the merely poetical accessories, though of course they are undeniable. I am dissatisfied, for much the same reason, with all the more modern music; one ought to be able

to raise oneself to some point above it, and thence to watch its development, during which perfection is of course impossible. No one finds fault with the thick, clumsy legs of a young dog or a young horse. That would be the most favourable criticism, and the kindest, and the composers themselves ought to acknowledge it, for they call themselves The Rising School of the Age. Lightly come, lightly gone! and the very fact that a thing is firmly established means that it is given over to decay. Take, as a passing instance, those overtures before the opera, which are written independently and on their own account, or those formal passages in concerted pieces, with a shake at the end. Spohr excepted, I know of no first-rate composer, who would tack on such a periwig to every one of his numbers, as though it belonged to a man by nature. A good old portrait, bag-wig and all, never loses its character, but you must not paint in that style now, it was only a fashion of the day. Auber's operas, just at present, are plaguing me beyond endurance; his best are all very well, but, Oh, those everlasting quavers, eight to the bar, so that there's no getting on, until ten bars are over! I get so sick of it all. Adams's *Postillon* is a pretty, delicate thing, but there is too much mechanical work in it for a young, aspiring operatic writer; he has almost reached the smoothness of the *Dame Blanche*, and yet it is often very thin and poor. However, I gladly agree with those who find a certain merit in it. Where much is good, we are bound to point out the faults; where much is bad, we should try and pick out the good points. It seems to me, that in the former instance, criticism refers chiefly to the artist: in the latter, to the work. To the artist we ought to be humane, and we shall be too, if we think how much is required, to make up even a tolerably good composition. But if we measure the value of a work, which is a mere impersonal thing, without taking into account the antecedent labour, we are bound to blame unsparingly everything that falls short of perfection, since we are not dealing with a person; there is no object in being merciful, or malicious either. . . .

You ask me from time to time, what I am reading? Well, I have really been reading nothing. If I have no solid business on hand, I can't read anything with a good conscience,

my thoughts always go astray. I wonder whether you have read Leopold Schefer's *Laienbrevier?* There are fine things in it, and the sentiment is good, though the style is rather laboured. I have got the *Makamen des Hariri*, by Rückert, both parts of it; the first part used to cost four *thalers;* now that they have reduced the notes, you can get both parts complete for two *thalers* sixteen *neugroschen*. It is not a book that affects one's life, but there is a charm about the graceful language and the brightness of the style. Do get it at once, if you don't know it already. It really is a sort of Eastern relation of *Reinecke Fuchs;* probably, most nations with an independent literature of their own, have something of the same kind. It reminds me in parts of Ulysses; his divinity consists chiefly in his knowingness. According to our ideas, he cuts rather an ignoble figure in the *Ajax* of Sophocles, but in those days it was energy, not good and evil, which was the basis of morality. There are no villains at all. Our modern poetry could not exist without them. Sophocles allowed the *Vampyr* to escape him. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

56.

CASSEL, *May 1st*, 1838.

. . . The best sacred music I heard, when I was in Italy, was at St. Petronio; it was rather like the singing at Dresden, but neither at Bologna nor at Florence had they any male soprani. Pilatti's Mass, however, which I heard at Bologna, was written for men's voices. In Florence they were singing a Mass of Haydn's, and, I shudder to add, the alto was above the bass, and the tenor below the soprano. You say very little about the *Miserere;* I guess you didn't find it as heavenly as they say it is. The Pope's choir, when I heard it, never aimed at particular effects, at light and shade and that sort of thing; they sang correctly and with good intonation, but, after all, it was nothing more than mechanical certainty. Since those days, I have made a

closer study of the old Italian music, and got far greater pleasure out of it than I did, when I was in Rome. However, I can imagine a very different rendering; there is such a lovely vocal melody in all the parts, that one would like to sing them all oneself. But you are quite right in saying that Italian singers understand their business; with all their mannerisms, they achieve something; they have none of our cursed happy-go-lucky, amateur ways—the result of which is that, with us, a performance often sounds like a first rehearsal. The opening scenes of an Italian Opera frequently give me real pleasure; I enjoy the fine sound, and the steadiness of the thing, but then I am bound to say, that I can rarely stand more than the First Act. I do wish that French and Italian composers would not dabble in German romanticism; as in almost all imitations, they only succeed with the negative part of it. I heard Persiani's Opera, *Eufemio*, a work of this *genus*, professing to be *Musica caratteristica alla tedesca*. He certainly managed to make it sound worse than Italian, but that was the only characteristic thing about it. . . .

Did you happen to meet Professor Rhoden, Hummel's brother-in-law? How glad Tosoroni must have been, to meet you in his beloved Florence! There are no more cities like that now. It seems to me, that you may say the same of every large town in Italy; each has its distinguishing feature. Venice is quite unique, Bologna has her arcades, Florence her fortified houses, her unbounded strength and power,—and Rome is Rome. But why should I go on chattering about Italy, when you are in the midst of it, and I am two hundred miles away? You talk of Vienna or Leipzig; do you intend to settle down in either of them? If it were Leipzig, perhaps I should see you this summer, but you will be wanting to go to Switzerland in July, and I shall probably have to go back to Dresden. . . .

At last, in spite of serious obstacles from high quarters, we had a performance of *St. Paul* on Good Friday. I am satisfied that we have no other musician but Mendelssohn, capable of writing such a work, even the declamatory part of it, though, according to Plato, there is no art, but only adroitness

in rhetoric. Considering the age in which he lives, Mendelssohn's adroitness is extraordinary; there is no choral style to compare with his. I think he occupies a remarkable position in musical history; his style forms the connecting link between the style of Sebastian Bach and Handel and that of Beethoven, and it has not the slightest trace of the intervening Mozart. Mozart is in many respects Italian, but there is no echo of Italy to be found in Mendelssohn, it would have jarred upon him. His music lacks the firmly articulated organization (like that of animals) which distinguishes Mozart and the Italian School; its form is more freely developed, it opens out like a plant, only the parts are not so defined, not so inevitable as they are in Mozart and the Italians. He has much more of Sebastian Bach about him. It is a perfect example of natural and beautiful development, and the length of each number soothes and satisfies, but never satiates. When one thinks that this is the work of a man in his twenty-fifth year, one cannot but rejoice in spirit. Nor is there any effort to appear original; that is what makes it so winning. That Chorus in E flat, *Happy and blessed are they*, clings to me, as if it were some dear old familiar strain; it is as beautiful as anything can be. That was the first number I heard him play at Leipzig on his own piano, and it put me *en rapport* with the whole work. I would not allow a single note to be altered, in the passage where St. Paul is converted by the Voice from Heaven; as it stands, we *must* believe in it, it appeals so powerfully to every one of us. If the words were given to a single tenor or bass, what would be gained, except compliance with historical tradition? In Art, if it be Art at all, the Vision must speak for Itself, no matter how we think It spoke at the time. Mendelssohn, unlike Handel, will never write thirty oratorios—that must be left to Fr. Schneider, who does things quite differently—and the impediment lies not in himself but in the age, which has no means of expression for him, so that he must take his own line, if he does not wish to speak a strange language. But Bach and Handel had their own. Their Toccatas, their Suites, are in their essence only varied expressions of a common anguage. How different are Mendelssohn's *Songs with-*

out Words from his Fugues and Chorales! and both styles cannot be equally true. Once again, this is not his fault. Spohr, if you like, writes more naïvely; his Oratorios are as Spohrisch as everything else he does; you never get quit of *Jessonda*, and the Virgin Mary is feebly in love with Christ, and He with her, just as if they were on the stage. I take no account of the choruses, in which the melodic connection is confined to the upper and lower voice parts alone, while there is nothing but mere harmonious padding in the middle parts, though they are meant to be sung by people, every one of whom is, *per se*, an individual, just as much as a soprano or a bass. The best they can do is to *hit* the notes; it is impossible to sing them. I don't call that polyphonic writing. But, oh dear me! can't I write a single page, without getting back to this old subject?

A day or two ago, I got the *Gradus* and the *Paolucci*, through H., to my no small delight. I think you picked up the latter in Leipzig? I had bought the *Gradus* a few days since at an auction in Halle for twenty *gr.*, but I set great store by the Latin original, if it is only out of pride at discovering something which you have not got. I indulge in very little systematic reading now, for my days are regulated like clockwork. Lessons from 8 to 11, or to 10 if there is a rehearsal; on other days I go to Susette from 12 to 1, then home to dinner; at 2 Rüdinger comes to fetch me for a walk in the Aue, at 4 I go home, and then, if there is no opera, comes my only opportunity of doing anything. Why, in heaven's name, do people come to me from far and near for lessons? I refuse whenever I can—I keep them waiting—but they take no denial. Two pupils leave me this summer, and long ago there were three candidates for the vacant places, two here and one from Cologne. How rarely, too, do I get a pupil to my liking! How often I sigh in vain, to be rid of the whole business! Spohr has long been of my way of thinking, but there is no help for him either, he must give his two lessons daily. He has lately written several songs for a bass voice (I fancy they would suit you admirably), and six others, with clarinet obbligato, for Hermstedt and his Princess. His last great work was a *Paternoster* for men's voices, written for the

Frankfurt Festival. They wanted something of the same kind from me too, but I refused. I don't care for the *genus*. . . . On Sunday, there is a jubilee at one of the churches, and we are to have Handel's Utrecht *Te Deum;* I am not fond of this music, it is too fragmentary, too abrupt. But I won't begin again about that. It is 125 years old; some fifty years since, Hiller had the score printed in Leipzig, substituting a new Prelude, in a number where the trumpet part was too difficult. These eight bars of his sound more old-fashioned than anything written by Handel, half a century earlier. I wish I were not so near the end of my paper; the aging of music is a curious subject; people are moved to tears at one time by sounds which, at another, seem poor and laughable. . . .

I am anxious for news of Benedict, who will be delighted to see you. My kind regards to him, Vesuvius, *La Muette de Portici*, everything and everybody. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

57.

CASSEL, *June 24th*, 1838.

DEAREST HAUSER,—

Many thanks for your delightful letter, which arrived yesterday. . . . By the time that my answer reaches you, you will be on your way to Milan, and in regions where I can no longer follow you. I was prevented from going there, as I at first intended, by the cold, by the snow, and by my wish to see Vienna again. But Milan Cathedral, in spite of its interior, which is said to be magnificent, never had any very great attractions for me. Compared with other Gothic churches, it seems to me like a fir-tree, the main shoot of which was cut to a point when it was young, so that the rest of it has grown out into a bush all round; but the interior is very beautiful, they say. . . . I have to tell you a very sad piece of news, dearest Hauser; perhaps I ought to keep it to myself—I don't know—that is easier with strangers than with friends; one would rather they knew even the things that grieve one. Dear Therese Spohr died on Whit-Monday last; she had been ill for eight days of

nervous fever. She was such a bright, sweet creature! There is universal mourning in Cassel for her loss. My grief for her father is beyond words. Spohr will stand a great deal, but this is a fearful blank; the old days were the happiest after all, and Therese was the last relic of that time.

It seems to me, that now-a-days people would like to eliminate from Spohr's later compositions the very thing that was once so attractive—the very substance of them, musically speaking. Stay here a moment! Do you remember, that it was a long time before we would listen to anything else? I at least recollect the days when I raved about him, with those charming, full, soft melodies of his—that rather primitive part-writing! It is natural, too, at a time when we are not yet clear about ourselves, when the echo of the chord within us is as yet a simple harmony, and we are innocent of combination. Later on, division makes re-union a necessity, and then Spohr must give way to others. But whatever one may think of his later compositions, it may safely be asserted that there is no one who can imitate him, easy as many a man may have thought it "to wander at his own sweet will towards a self-appointed goal"; it *seems* easy—that is the very secret of his power.

Mendelssohn passed through here a few weeks ago, on his way home from the Musical Festival at Cologne; David (the *Concertmeister*, not the king) was travelling with him. He was on his way to Berlin, to bring his wife back to Leipzig. We only had him here for a few hours, but I was very glad to see him. Spohr, who has resigned his post as Conductor of the Frankfurt *Sängerfest*, starts to-morrow morning for Carlsbad. Frankfurt was Therese's birthplace; she was looking forward to her father's going there, and in short, the visit would have opened fresh wounds. Eight hundred voices are engaged for this Festival, and I have before me, at the present moment, the three works which are to be given: Spohr's setting of Klopstock's *Vaterunser*, a Cantata by Schnyder, and a Psalm by Klein. The second of these is a vapid work, I like it the least of the lot; Klein's has certainly more style about it. . . . Have you heard of the *furore* created by Benedict's Opera in London? I am told that an opera by that nice young

fellow, Despréaux, is coming out in Paris. I hope, with all my heart, he will succeed. Of course you couldn't find Princess Wolkonsky in Naples; she has been acting as *Oberhofmeisterin* to the Empress in Berlin. I managed to send her the Sonatas at last. . . . You have made me fall quite in love with your Vicomte Viard; I can almost see him! A nice, cultivated Frenchman is a more definite object for fancy to exercise herself upon than a German could be, even if he were painted as large as life. If his views are rather limited, that is not the least part of his charm. . . . In Napoleon's time, cooks and valets became Generals and Field Marshals, and Generals and Field Marshals they were, for the cooks were men to begin with. To be sure the French have no *Faust*, no *Temperirtes Clavier*, but the authors of those works esteemed the French highly, and would not think much of the admiration of those, whose sole boast is their German origin. Our last Opera was Spohr's *Faust;* the one before that, *Fra Diavolo.* Apart from poetry and music, what a mere puppet-show is *Faust!* The characters are so clumsy! How shapeless and awkward are those four comrades — too many as individuals, too few for a crowd! And much of it is now too long for me, that last *Finale*, for instance; I dare say it's well enough *meant*, but just compare it with a scene of the same kind in French, such as the *Finale* of the second act in *Fra Diavolo*, where our eyes and ears are satisfied at the same time by a lively *ensemble*, the divisions of which are as easily understood as the grouping of Fra Diavolo between the two couples $\overset{2}{\smile}\overset{1}{\frown}\overset{2}{\smile}$. But in the *Finale* to *Faust*, it is perfectly endless, five or six people come upon the stage, each singing a separate story, and how on earth are we to keep them all in our heads? There might as well be nine or thirteen. But I am getting prosy. On one point, I have firmly made up my mind, and that is, that in a work of Art it is the form of the subject, the *poetic* part of it, which is the *artistic* element; and if the German nature is more poetical, the French (Græco-Latin according to their language) is more artistic, in Art as in life. All I pray is, that they may get on well together! . . .

If I could but guess, where you are going to after your return home! At the end of this week, I mean to go for a few days to Dresden. I had as lief stay here in the vacation time as anywhere else; it seems like one long holiday, but one year telleth another, and I see nothing but the same old faces. In truth, after a week at Dresden, I am not sorry to go away anywhere, even to Cassel. I don't want to make comparisons —but I do very well here, with a few old friends. If I covet one thing more than another, it is a rather more civilized atmosphere in the Theatre. Spohr is ill at ease, and dissatisfied with his surroundings. Besides that, as he is now situated, he has to put up with a great deal from the powers that be. Not that the artists themselves are quite free from blame. Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's! In the palmy days of Art, the artist respected the Prince, and the Prince the artist. Now-a-days, the pride of the artist runs counter to the pride of the patron. Each refuses to acknowledge the rights of the other, and, after all, the Prince can the easier dispense with the artist—at least, in our case. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

58.

CASSEL, *November 12th*, 1838.

. . . We have not much that is interesting in the way of new music; the theatre has quite ceased to amuse me, I would rather never hear an opera again—for a good long time, at any rate. Singers and orchestra have been so spoilt by the modern operas, that even the old ones no longer sound well, at least so it seems to me. We had a revival of *Figaro* the other day, after a long pause. They attacked the delicate, sweet music so hardly and callously that it nearly cried; better it had slept on, than been waked in such a fashion. We had the *Räuberbraut* again too, a most unlucky abortion; it is doubly vexatious, because Ries is in many ways a very respectable composer, and here he is, torturing himself and others, by venturing in absolute ignorance upon ground where

an Italian, or even a Frenchman, of the shallowest type, need only show himself, to achieve something incomparably better,—something that at any rate will not inflict the keenest misery upon the audience. We have got hold of Dessauer's *Besuch in St. Cyr;* it was brought out at Dresden, but with doubtful success—at least, it was seldom repeated. I should trust him for good vocal music, at any rate; the few songs of his that I know, have something Italian about them. Did you hear Cherubini's Quartets? I have only heard one, but I liked it very much on the whole; there is a hardness and dryness about all his later works, indeed in everything that he wrote after the *Wasserträger;* it is evident even in *Faniska.* But his style is that of a *virtuoso*, symphonic at times. The *Adagio* seemed to me the most laboured part of it, and that movement, as with Onslow, is almost always the weakest section of the work. We have had a Quartet of Mendelssohn's too, but not one of the new set, which is said to be very fine. So far, I prefer his sacred music and his music for the pianoforte, then the Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, then a Pianoforte Quartet, Op. 5 (or 3). I am pleased with Adolph Henselt's new compositions; he also is a millionaire in the way of notes, but there is such an easy flow and simplicity about his style, that one can take in his meaning at a glance. The word *also* does not refer to Mendelssohn, but to more modern writers for the piano, including Thalberg & Co. The way they treat the instrument is quite stupendous, but the listener, oppressed by the excess of sound, soon wearies. Even if I am compelled to acknowledge that the music is pretty, I cannot listen to it sympathetically, for any length of time. The modern improvements of the piano have resulted in a complete change of the music written for it. What an odd effect an *Étude* by Henselt would make, upon a spinet! though the Spinet music of the last century—say the *Temperirtes Clavier*—still sounds very well upon a Streicher. In Cassel, we lag behind in the matter of fresh pianoforte music, for we have no first-rate native pianists, and outsiders no longer come near us.

Mendelssohn called on me, when he was here for half a day, on his way home from Cologne, and was very friendly

indeed. I am always delighted to see him. Whilst he was with Spohr, he played at sight a Sonata for violin, besides some of his own compositions; it was quite splendid! I cannot make out why M., with all her natural power, which leaves nothing to be desired, should play in a cramped, constrained style, wanting in bone and muscle. Had I those fingers, it would be quite a different story! Spohr said, the other day, that he would give a hundred *Louis d'or* to be able to play the piano. I would give two hundred down on the nail, without a moment's hesitation. Why, could I have played the piano, I might have been tempted, in old days, to accept the post of *Capellmeister* that they offered me in Dresden. But I can't abide a *Capellmeister*, who is unable to take up a score and play it off. I know by experience the importance of this; if the first rehearsals of an opera are with a string quartet, there are perpetual halts and stoppages. Spohr's inability to play the piano is one of the main reasons why our new operas come to grief in nine cases out of ten. If I tell a stranger that our first rehearsal of a new opera is always with strings, he will hardly believe me. One pianoforte rehearsal to start with, does more good than the first ten quartet rehearsals. In Italy, they have only two orchestral rehearsals after one with the piano, and the opera is safe. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

59.

CASSEL, *December* 10*th*, 1838.

. . . I feel strongly the force of your observations on pianoforte playing—*i.e.*, on the tiresomeness of not being able to play. Henriette tells me that you teach your boys the piano yourself; well, you must know what is best for them; I am not certain, as a matter of theory, that I should have advised it. Mind, if you send Moritz to Spohr, don't let him go before he is a really finished violinist; it would be too soon otherwise! As a rule, we do very little good here with pupils, unless they are already well advanced. The more a

lad brings with him, the more he learns, and the sooner too, if he is capable of taking in what we teach him. As to composition, he may learn some thorough-bass here (though in the end he will do that with you), and he can compose if he likes. As a pupil, I never went through the system I now adopt as a teacher. My old tutor Grosse, at Dresden, used to make me analyse and transpose into all the twelve or twenty-four keys, a lot of mouldy exercises in thorough-bass, which he thought exceedingly precious, on account of their age; his one object was to spin out the lesson, for he knew nothing beyond. My contrapuntal studies ended there. My own plan now is to write out, every day, dozens of exercises for my pupils; I hope my examples are better than Grosse's, anyhow they admit of proper polyphonic treatment. I never think of keeping them, or of preparing them beforehand. Not that I make any boast of that!

Comparing myself with those who are now my pupils, I see that, on the whole, Nature made the task easier to me than to most others. From my earliest childhood, the writing of four-part harmony, pretty correctly, was a matter of course, and so, too, was correct form in composition, whether vocal or instrumental; long experience has taught me that those two things are correlative. I still retain a few songs, the work of that antediluvian age; their one fault is that there is nothing in them; they are quite good in other respects, there are no mistakes. I remember something, too, of a Sonata and a Quartet, which had a certain continuity. Talent, I think, consists in abstracting from many phenomena of a similar kind, an idea of the form of Art appropriate to a particular genus of composition; this comes of natural instinct —unless it is born in a youth, he cannot feel it. Idea certainly is not the right word here, for that cannot be felt; but form in music has so little objectivity, that it is less perceptible to the senses. We have in music what painters call composition, and it exercises a good or bad effect upon the listener, without one in a thousand being aware of it; a beginner in music is in a bad way, if his early efforts show that he has no instinctive feeling for it. He may have poetical gifts, but he lacks the artistic sense, and both are needful—one for the

subject, the other for the form. In Art the apparent is the essential, the body is the soul. Form, by standard rule, is not nearly so important nor so indispensable in painting, as it is in music; my attention may be riveted by one special point in a picture—the work of an old German master, for instance—in which the expressive faces delight one, though the figures are badly drawn; but this is impossible in music. Music, generally speaking, without its opposite, Architectonic structure, is as little artistic as the singing of a nightingale, or the sound of an Æolian harp. To-night we are to hear Pistor in the *Berggeist;* * she has awakened the spirit from his long sleep for her benefit. There is another German blunder. As though spectres, hobgoblins, and operatic magic were the fitting material for the undefined (romantic) element of music! First of all, such things are in themselves out of place on the boards, for it is not essential that we should see them, they belong to the region of indefinite fancy; when we read of them, the imagination conjures up a picture with no definite outline at all. And besides that, a solid, external subject is a great advantage; music contributes the liquid element. Apart from all this, the *Berggeist* is really too childish a story. I rather like old Opell's joke about it. "I have seen the *Berg*, but not a vestige of the *Geist.*" † There is no *central idea* in any of Spohr's recent works; there is nothing behind, as people say. His fables point no moral, they are not of universal application, and so they take no hold of an audience. People have no respect for them, they won't be fobbed off with artificial situations. If Spohr thinks his operas are too good for a silly public, he is wrong; they are too silly for a good public. Just think of his *Pietro* and his *Alchemist*, dry, dead rubbish, without a single spark of real life in them! One word more! Meyerbeer is my pet aversion; give me any other composer in preference. He strains every nerve for the creation and elaboration of music, that shall and *must* impose on people by its sudden and startling effects, by its demoniac force. I don't deny him a certain energy—no mean thing in itself; it's that which carries him through. He

* *The Spirit of the Mountain.*

† The word *Geist* means *intellect* as well as *spirit.*

certainly does not let the grass grow under his feet. It takes a good deal, to arrive at such a performance of *The Huguenots* in Paris, with those eternal rehearsals! I know what he did, too, as a young German in Italy. I know that he stakes everything on his ventures, and whether by fair means or by foul, he manages to succeed. However, let that drop for the present! I have no time to finish my argument. But one thing does not succeed, and that is the old-fashioned way of setting a bit of the text to music every day, and scoring it afterwards; that bores people to death.

(After the Opera.) That's just what we endured this evening, although everyone was very keen about it, and quite determined to be pleased. One day in a confectioner's shop, I overheard a discussion as to the price of chocolate, *à propos* of certain kinds which cost three *thalers* a pound. Someone said, he could not conceive why, for the only thing that could affect the price was the quantity of vanilla in the mixture. It is something like this with Spohr. He deals out just the same amount of musical stuff to all his characters, only the ghost has got trombones, and the others have not. We should be rather startled, if Donna Anna were allowed to sing Leporello's Airs, or Leporello Donna Anna's; but such an exchange would do no sort of harm in Spohr's operas, so far as music is concerned. I don't say this from malice nor from a wish to exaggerate, it really is so. The expression never changes in any of the Recitatives or Airs; you never get quit of the old diminished seventh, with the long drawn notes for strings accompanying the Recitative. The Ghost has trombones,—and so has the Ghost in *Don Juan;* but it's not the trombones alone that make him ghostly. There *is* chocolate to be had for three *thalers*, without a suspicion of vanilla, though that man in the shop couldn't get it. . . .

Peters announces, that he is going to publish a complete edition of the works of Sebastian Bach, with the help of contributions from your rich collection. This edition is to be fingered by Czerny, and I highly commend the plan; if people say they don't want it, why, there are plenty of editions without, but there are hundreds of other people, for whom it is indispensable. Marks of expression are not on the same

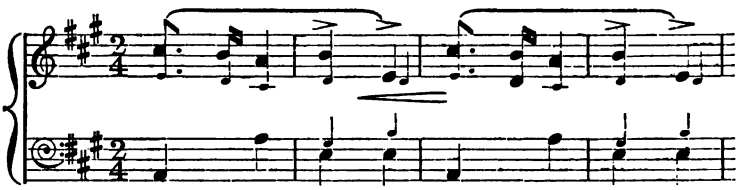
footing, a wider margin must be allowed for these, though the directions in the *Kunst der Fuge* seem to me to be perfectly proper. How can we lay down any general law for *Crescendo*, *Forte*, and *Piano*, in playing a Fugue, in which each part must tell its own tale, with its own appropriate expression? For in passages where the higher part is stronger, the lower will of course get weaker, and the difficulty is, when to introduce a general Crescendo, without doing violence to one or more of the parts. It is almost in the nature of Fugue, that prominence should be given only to the plastic element of music; on the organ, this comes of itself. In any case, the *nuances* should be but slightly accented on the piano, and never to the detriment of the polyphonic character of the Fugue, although all the parts may be subject, in accordance with their melody, to a *Forte*, *Crescendo*, or *Sforzando*, if we wish to consider them as vocal. I have a whole series of Rückert's songs, but there are only a few among them that I myself like; I copied one, which I set to music, into Frau Mendelssohn's album, and her husband seems pleased with it. It is an old poem of the sixteenth century, modernised. If I had some thin music paper, I would send it to you, but I will spare you the extra postage—my letter is too long already. Rückert has a curious way of playing with the cæsura; often, the pause does not correspond with the sense of the words; this has its advantages in declamatory verse, but in lyrical poetry it will not adapt itself to music. Take this passage:—

Seinen Traum,
Lind wob
Frühling kaum,
Wind schnob! * *&c.*

If we would not dissolve it into prose, music desiderates a cæsura after *wob*, as the word stands in the verse, though the sense does not require it. In writing music for this identical song, I have followed the metre of the lines; the inconsistency of it may pass for the humour of the thing. The singer ought to render the verse, as you would read it

* Spring scarcely yet
Wove his soft dream;
The wind was whistling!

metrically, yet so that the sense can be clearly understood:—



Apart from this peculiarity, which might be treated as a joke, or left unsung, if you don't care to take it exactly in that sense, it is the Formal in Art which delivers us from the burden of passion.

In poetry, the unchanging metre recurs, in music the beat, and here in a wider sense a period consisting of four, two, or three separate beats, recurring similarly.

In Greek and Latin, that is Quantity, which does *not* depend upon accent or stress, being merely a formal matter of duration; in our modern languages, the accent controls the metrical position of the word, and this accent or stress is a matter of feeling, based upon the significance of emotion. The metrical position of the word therefore is not sufficient, its significance overweights the form, and so we substitute rhyme, which depends on sound not upon significance; for it often degenerates and becomes comic, in case of an inner parallelism of sound with sound being intended (jingle). This might be further developed, and form a thesis, which a Philistine might defend.

If any one does not know how to read, he will hardly learn the art from my letters. I have now given up steel pens, and taken to quills again; I thought it must be owing to the instrument, that my caligraphy was daily growing worse, but now there's a new worry—the quills have not been properly mended! I have got an English book, by the study of which you may acquire a perfect handwriting in a fortnight; but it has now been in my possession for more than a month, and I still see no signs of improvement. . . . Goethe tells us somewhere, how grievously it jarred on him, when he came home from Italy, sound in soul and at one with himself about the truth of Art, to find, on the one hand, Schiller preaching

his stiff morality, and, on the other hand, Heinse worshipping barefaced sensuality. He felt like Moses, when he broke the Tables, in horror at the dancing and the golden calves. Bettina Brentano was here the other day. I missed seeing her, but her visit induced me to take up the Letters again; people gossiped so much about them at first, that I avoided the book. I think her power of expression unequalled; whether she tells a simple anecdote, or kindles with enthusiasm, she does for me completely. How touching too that self-restraint and reserve in Goethe, though now and then he cannot help taking her into his arms, and kissing her forehead! Of course she knows how fond he is of her, and that he has plenty to do without making love. Some people think that they should have ignored everything but each other, and that he ought to have corresponded with her *à la* Werther—when Werther was fifty years younger than he was! He is always begging her to tell him her experiences, for he is on the look out for material everywhere—and here too she is at her best. In the diary, she is quite dithyrambic; too often, we lose sight of the ground beneath our feet. But there are many passages, showing how deeply she sees into things which others evolve by speculation —which she can see for herself, and give expression to. . . .

Yours,

M. HAUPTMANN.

60.

CASSEL, *January 7th*, 1839.

DEAR HAUSER,—

I often feel oppressed by the thought, that there is no one here, with whom I can really converse. There can be no free communication between people who are not agreed upon the main point; quarrelling is as unprofitable as it is disagreeable, and where there is any fear of it, one would rather change the subject—yet, on the other hand, a friend must have something to say for himself, and some opinion of his own. I expect it is mostly my own fault; please don't think I mean that the people here are not clever enough!

Constance says that there is a great difference between Dresden and Cassel, and that Cassel society is distinctly the best; but in my own immediate circle, I get no sympathetic response, and, without that, I am done for. In old days, I had plenty of discussion with Nebelthau, and I am still on the best of terms with him, though we rarely meet now. At one time he was, I may say, passionately devoted to me, but music was at the bottom of it. I used to give him lessons, and perhaps he mistook his love of music for the same amount of talent, whereas all that was really innate in him was a talent for listening. Things cannot go on like that; happily, he gave up Art for business, and he has become one of our most popular advocates, and a leading man in the *Landtag*. But our relations are now a little strained in consequence; I can't quite account for it, but we feel awkward somehow when we meet; the old freedom is gone—it is as if the memory of what went before were a tender spot, not to be touched upon; and yet it is difficult to behave as if nothing of the kind had ever happened. With Nebelthau I come to an end. Who else is there? I know of no one. Spohr's circle is narrow and very limited, it isn't his nature to converse; he has his say, and then there's no more to be said; it's law for all time. He talks about "the interesting harmonic progressions" just as he did twenty-five years ago; it used to interest me then, but I don't care a straw for it now, except in connection with other matters, and even then it's superfluous. Hasemann is the only musician here worth speaking to, but he, like Spohr, must be cock of the walk; all he wants is a listener. Rüdinger and I stroll out most days together into the *Aue*, fair weather or foul; there we drink coffee, and chat about all sorts of things. He is a man of great cultivation and intelligence, and he has read a great deal, and is well-up in the world—unlike myself. But we rarely allude to what is musical in Music and poetical in Poetry; indeed, I avoid it. Heigho! you often used to say, when you wanted to get rid of the blues. It's no use; here we are, and here we must stay. But here it is a musical, or rather unmusical Siberia. Cassel is Avernus, ἄορνος; there is not a single bird left, not even a bird of passage. It was quite different during my first years

here, things have got worse by degrees; inquirers were always dissuaded from coming to us, and now we are in such bad odour, that no one troubles his head about us any more. What a difference between Cassel and Leipzig! Of course, Leipzig has a few more inhabitants—but you might as well compare a bright river to a stagnant pool. Show me a more infernal place than Cassel, if you can, and let me curse it! Laugh, if you please, at my bad temper. I can't get on without damning something or somebody. The worst of it is, that it's the fashion to grumble at everything around you here, forgetting that you yourself are the real blot on the landscape. I am doing no kind of good in this place; why don't I take wing, and renovate my jaded life somewhere else? Would that I had a magic cloak, a wishing-cap, and a purse that was always full! I wouldn't exchange them for a crown. There is nothing more charming than the First Part of poor Fortunatus—in Tieck, I mean—though he comes off badly enough in the end.

P. S.

February 13th.

A long interval! I really ought not to forward this Jeremiad, this glorification of self—but I suppose it must go with the rest, as so much padding. . . . Ole Bull was here the other day; the Theatre was crammed for both his concerts, though the prices were doubled. At Spohr's house, he played in Mozart's Quartets, but that I could not stand. He can do many of Paganini's tricks, but there was none of the Italian substratum, which saved the thing from utter badness. Paganini's demoniacal power made one believe that there was something behind it all; without that belief, the whole thing falls to pieces, and one is annoyed rather than amused. His chief feats are his *staccato*, ascending and descending in harmonics, his playing on three strings simultaneously, and the melody in octaves; the thinness of the strings and the flatness of the bridge make the tone weak. Let him play his own pieces in that style, if he likes—but he makes no change in Mozart's Quartets, and a queer travesty it is, one half on the G string, the melodies with the octave, eternal

Tempo rubato! &c. Of course the first violin broke clean away from the rest, and if the others had followed suit, a pretty mess it would have been!

I was lately offered the post of Conductor of the *Cäcilienverein* at Frankfurt. It was the same old story over again; my inability to play the piano stood in the way. I see too clearly what comes of conductors who cannot play, and the music suffers still worse. I must hide this from Constance, for she would be much annoyed at my refusal, although she knows I cannot play at sight, nor without having practised every note mechanically—but she won't believe it. I like to see a conductor playing, if it's only to keep his hands off that infernal *bâton*. Schelble never used it, nor I think did Zelter, Dreyssig, or Schneider. No good Society wants it at all. We beat time, and a wretched affair it is, and Wiegand beats time, with the same result. People lose all their fine feeling for time; if the music does not go well at once, it seems as if it never could. . . .

Have you heard of the *Allgemeiner Deutscher Musikverein*, which has been started by Gustav Schilling in Stuttgart? Spohr is President. Between ourselves, I hear that a new musical paper is to be issued. *Nous verrons!* Robert Schumann is said to be in Vienna. I wonder whether you will see him? Pray remember me kindly to him if you do. Although he must think my style of music very tedious and conservative, he was very friendly to me last summer, when I went to see him in Leipzig, and he played me some pretty, curious little things of his; there was no real central point in them, but they were interesting in other respects. What a tiresome letter! But your answer will mend it. I wrote to you, as far back as the 12th December.

Yours,

M. HAUPTMANN.

61.

CASSEL, *May 13th*, 1839.

. . . I doubt my getting away in the holidays. Where is the money to come from? If I could manage to squeeze out just enough, I should be at full ebb again directly, just as Venice is twice a day, when the muddy bottom of the Lagunes is uppermost. It is only by careful management, that I get on at all. I see plainly enough, how easy it is for misers to roll up their money; where your heart is, there will your treasure be also. Lots of my last Christmas bills were left unpaid, and as I had invested my available cash in new coupons, and sent it to Berlin, I was like Cortez, after he had blown up his fleet in the enemy's country—a fine dramatic incident, by the way, not because of crash-bang! but on account of the sympathy one feels for Cortez, a sympathy not always easily evoked by stage heroes. After all *my* ships were blown up, and I had parted with my papers, I found myself a hundred *thalers* to the bad. Fine, wasn't it? Things righted themselves, however, and I saved quietly out of my current expenses—there were no bailiffs, no distraining for rent. But a truce to these family worries! I don't care for money, except as a means of exchange for things other than money, and yet I am always down in my luck, if I'm hard up. It is only when I have nothing, that I should like to be a millionaire; if I have enough, I don't think about it.

So the *Allgemeiner Deutscher National Musikverein* has actually come into existence! Have you seen any of the journals, which are being published in weekly parts? It is the same kind of paper that has often been tried before, and I don't predict a long life for it. The two Leipzig papers have a distinct character of their own, and opposition keeps them going; one is a protest against the other, but this new journal stands solely on its own merits, adopting a very high tone indeed—and if you look into it, it is the most ordinary stuff, and the *Feuilleton*, for which the Editor himself is

respónsible, is utterly commonplace, and as heavy as lead. Dr. Schilling is disagreeable to me, wherever he crops up. I can picture to myself an *Allgemeiner Deutscher Zollverein*, though they won't get Austria to join it; here the big State attracts the little ones, but I have no real feeling for an *Allgemeiner Deutscher National Musikverein*, made up of provincial *Capellmeisters*—words, words, nothing more! The only thing that binds them into one is, the refusal of the public to listen to their operas. Journals won't alter this state of things, and the public won't change its mind, for all that ridiculous abuse of the French and Italian schools. The better plan would be to find out how it is, that with all their faults, these schools manage to get naturalised. It is not because a man is a German that he cannot compose, but because the German opera has no form. In early days, there were many German composers who wrote operas for Italy, and they were among the most famous in both countries—witness the names of Handel, Hasse, Naumann, Schuster, Winter, Weigl, Mayr, and now again, Meyerbeer. I am speaking only of the *success* of these operas, which show that at any rate they really were operas. Now, taking all our living composers together, with their full harmonies and diminished sevenths, I doubt if they could write a single number of *L'Elisire D'Amore*, I mean with the same grace and freedom of scoring. I doubt whether they could reproduce any of its good points. That trade has to be properly learnt, and Germans in old days were sent to do their 'prentice work in Italy. Thorough-bass they could always get in their own country.

For a week past, I have been drinking Kissingen Rakoczi water, and it seems to do me good. . . . The worst of this tiresome illness is, that one can think of nothing else but being ill or being well, being alive or dying, and that too in no very elevated frame of mind, for one is in a state of chronic discomfort, and it is impossible to appreciate the present, which after all is the one real thing in life,—because I need it, even to think of Eternity. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

62.

CASSEL, *April 12th*, 1839.

. . . I am sending you a *Canzonetta alla Madonna di Frascati*, a little poem which Susette copied *sine irâ et studio*, and brought back from Italy with the rest. It does not pretend to be Church Music, but a sort of sacred Volkslied, and as it speaks of *Maria cogl'occhi belli*, there is a little touch of amorousness about it. I have just tried my hand at three Sonnets of Petrarch's, Nos. xv., cxxxi., and cxxxii., though I should have dissuaded anyone else from a similar task. It gives one no end of trouble, to put such things into any kind of musical shape. Naturally, it is at the cost of the outward form of the Sonnet, though, if I remember rightly, Italian and Spanish poets (no! I think it is only the latter) occasionally break up the Sonnet into dramatic dialogue, and divide it arbitrarily amongst several characters, so that there too the form is sacrificed, as far as the audience is concerned, anyhow. But there are other difficulties. These are the five-foot Iambic, the want of a definite cæsura, and the epigrammatic point so often found at the end of the poem—when the cadence in music must bear some relation to all that has gone before, must be architectonic. A poem may end with an exclamation or a question, but music must have an answer. I shortened the first movement in *Amor timido* for Susette; it was better than cutting out the whole piece, still it did not entirely satisfy me; it is wearisomely long, both for singer and for listener. *Le secret d'ennuyer est de tout dire*, as Voltaire or somebody else says. Least of all, should the first movement, the introduction, be over long. Beethoven shows great wisdom, in compressing such of his introductory movements as have to be repeated. What can be more tiresome, than to be forced to listen to the same thing twice over, and to find, when you think yourself already far advanced, that you are still at the beginning? I will enclose my abridgement. . . . Yesterday Spohr played us his new *Concertino*, which he calls *Past and Present*. In

the *Present*, the music reminds one a little of Ole Bull, of the *Polacca guerriera*, though, of course, it is greatly modified, and far more elevated in style. Such thorough workmanship is to be found in the Concertos of Spohr alone; you go from point to point in it, as if you were travelling by rail. He played it quite splendidly; you feel, not the fascination of a young girl's beauty, but the charm of a woman who is in the prime of life, and still retains her loveliness. The *Concertino* was followed by a new Overture of Reissiger's, with the motto :—

> "If all were taken,
> What is there that to me would still belong?
> Love unforsaking, unforsaken,
> And Song!"

The words have about as much connection with the music as the mottoes affixed to lottery tickets (such as "Oh, dear me!" "Who'd have thought it?" &c.) have with the lots. They would do just as well for anything else, but it's all one to the worthy Reissiger, who puts up with any kind of conventional rubbish. In the second part, we had a Grand Cantata for male voices only: *Freude, schöner Götterfunke.* There were two Oratorios on Good Friday, *The Last Judgment* and *The Resurrection*, by Wiegand—a real consumption of home produce; we shall want some time for digestion. So we are to have *The Huguenots* after all, and with the Vienna libretto! It's rather a grim prospect, when I remember what I suffered at Dresden; I couldn't sit it out, though I went with the full intention of hearing every note. . . . I find music of the rarest beauty in Giovanni Gabrieli, disfigured though it often is by the Venetian luxury of his time. Music of that date fares badly with us. Our judgment must be uncertain, for we have nothing but the vaguest indications to guide us with respect to its performance. How are we to manage those long semibreves and the change to semiquavers? Is it all to be in *one* time, or are we to make alterations? *Non sappiam niente.* Then again, in that polyphonic music, the lowest parts go down often to the low C, buzzing deep down in those regions; there never were such voices, yet we are told that the voices and instruments must combine—but are there words to all of them? The Past is

as much a seven-sealed book as the Future. Now-a-days, after drinking our coffee in Leipzig, we get into a railway carriage, and are at the Dresden Opera-house in the evening—the same person on the same day,—else there would be nothing new in it.

No work, for a long time past, has had such universal success as *St. Paul.* It is something quite different to that of *Der Freischütz,* which also made the grand tour and triumphed, one can't exactly say why! I set down the success of *St. Paul* to the pure intensity of the music, for instrumental and choral effects are to be found in other composers besides Mendelssohn. It is a great delight to me; I loved those choruses passionately, the first time I heard them tried. The music glows with such warmth of feeling, that you would suppose this alone had created it, but what artistic power responded to the will! As a choral writer, Mendelssohn differs from all his contemporaries, in that his choruses are woven together out of genuine melodies, and each choral singer, who takes part in them, sings with a will, because he has something to sing. I have met with only two people, who agree in thinking *St. Paul* a mistake; these are Morlacchi and Klengel—they would have done it better, at any rate if they had worked together! I feel quite vexed at the way they stand aloof; it is so narrow of them. Criticism, with men of this kind, never goes directly to the point; there is always some hidden reason that prompts it. We have a rule here, that no composition by any living master shall be performed on Palm Sunday,—so they wanted to wait for Mendelssohn's death! But meantime the king *commanded* a performance, and he never had commanded an Oratorio by Morlacchi, you know! This young fellow begins to make them feel uncomfortable. For the rest, the rule is every bit as good as this exception, as they say in the Philister: the law is tragedy, and the fact that you may transgress it, and yet be in the right, makes comedy. I think your confession of faith as to musical forms is unquestionably correct: you say that every form is correct, assuming it to be the medium of expression for any living, organic thing. This is meant of course for the initiated,

though there is little more to be said about the whole matter. All discussion is the discussion of extremes, of something that is altogether general, of something that is altogether particular; the medium cannot be discussed, it transcends the understanding. One can explain a form, but not the method of formation. Reicha's plan is not bad. He takes the Overture to *Figaro*, unfolds the map of it, and points out the different ways by which the same goal might have been reached, thereby showing the student the road Mozart preferred, so that he gets an inkling of his method. There is a little old book by Kirnberger (?) which deals in a somewhat similar fashion with harmony and melody. By way of suggestion how to turn out Sonatas by the bushel, he takes the bass of a Sonata as the groundwork of a new upper part, and for that new upper part the pupil has to compose a new bass. I suppose it's more of a joke than anything else, though perhaps he meant it seriously, and the plan may have been more feasible in those days. Nobody thought of talking about form then, and very inferior composers were as sure of it as only the best are now. Where, in an older generation, will you find such inorganic music as that of Weber's Overtures? They are mere accumulations. . . . Susette, coming in for her singing, happened to see the Canzonetta, and said she would like to make a vignette for the title-page. I told her she must be quick about it, so she tried to dash off something all in a hurry, and now she brings it to me, not over well pleased with her performance, and laughing at herself for having made such a mess of it. She doesn't want me to send it to you, but I enclose it as a wrapper, unmindful of Wilhelm Meister's obviously true saying, that a work of art, if not first-rate, has no right to exist at all. She can make another, I suppose! She says I am to send you a better greeting than that unfortunate Madonna. Frau Malsburg, who is very fond of you, also desires to be remembered. Our Beethoven Concert is to come off at Whitsuntide, and we are to have the music to *Egmont*, with parts of the play recited, *Ah perfido*, the C minor Pianoforte Concerto, and the Overture to *Prometheus*. I recently heard, for the first time, the first *Overture to Leonora*, and I like it least of the three; it is curious that Beethoven

should fail to hit the right note three times over. The second, with all its grandeur, is too heavy and cumbersome; the third, which is now in use, is lighter and more flighty than any situation in the opera. But even as regards the Overture to *Egmont*, where in the whole poem do we find that passionate restlessness which is here the keynote? In Clärchen's state of mind at the beginning of the fourth Act, perhaps. But that is the nature of music; every man feels it in his own way, and every age makes its own. *Egmont* is some fifty years old; had any of the composers of those days set it to music, we should hardly have patience to listen to it, even now. What is there of the old time which still lives among the people, except Mozart and Haydn? and even of these, only selections! . . .

Yours,

M. H.

63.

CASSEL, *September 17th*, 1839.

. . . The fine arts attain their highest point, not in the dawn of a nation's effort, but in the noontide of its wealth and prosperity; this is always the case, even in so prosaic a country as the Netherlands. (The youthful period which draws on its own resources, is different.) Venice and Rome are other instances. The grandest styles of church architecture, the palmy days of Art in relation to the Church, do not synchronize with, but fall later than the age of earnest piety. The proverb, "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh," rests on no solid foundation; what lies deepest in the heart often comes least readily to the lips. It goes against a man to utter it. All this *cum grano salis!* It vexes me to read about the removal of the spire of St. Stephen; to be sure, they may put it up again, but will they? I was so fond of it! The stump will spoil the aspect of the whole town. If it is bad in Frankfurt, what will it be in Vienna, where we are accustomed to a tower? I think every Viennese should make it his own business, and insist on its restoration. I

would give my *thaler*, even if I never set eyes on the town again—but not a farthing will I give towards the monument to Hermann or to anyone else; I have no sort of sympathy with these things. You remember Goethe: "You are raising monuments to yourselves, not to us, who never knew you!" Religion and politics are the common property of all; anything that touches the Church or the Fatherland, touches the whole nation. How are the common folk, how are the rustics affected by Beethoven's Symphonies in A major and C minor, or Schiller's *Wallenstein?* It is but a small fraction of the whole number that appreciates such things. To be sure, a good deal may be said on both sides, that is always so. I am no longer young enough to see only my own view of the question, but I have my likes and my dislikes. That reminds me of *Norma*, which bored me to death yesterday; that cursed triplet *pizzicato* accompaniment set my teeth on edge, the very first time I heard the opera—as if an orchestra was meant for nothing better than to play the guitar! It's the same all the way through, and the Druid choruses are just as bad. Bellini's stupidity is so aggravating; fancy attempting to write a grand opera, and never troubling oneself to find out the meaning of style, nor to look at what has been done in that line by Gluck, Mozart, Cherubini, not to speak of the *Vestalin* or *Cortez* even! Putting Iphigenie and Alcestis out of the question, the High Priestess in *Die Vestalin* is not a mere figure-head, nor Julia either; it is too bad to fob us off with such sing-song as this, such tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee as that duet with Adalgisa, under the Roman column and Woden's oak. I grumble all the more, because, as a rule, I like to stand up for Bellini; but *Norma* and *La Straniera* are too much for me. *I Puritani* and *La Sonnambula* are my favourites. The Italians are very teachable; if it is to be of any use to them, they soon learn how to do a thing that is not required of them in their own country. Who ever wrote more finely for the orchestra than Cherubini? He is full of animation and brilliancy, and he at all events did not learn it of Mozart, whose style is sublimated Italian, and very different to Haydn's for instance —showing greater independence in the individual parts. Then there's Clementi, what a clever fellow!—Sarti, Sacchini

too, and many others, all of whom worked in foreign countries—not to speak of the people who make barometers and polish spectacles. We had that delightful opera, the *Wasserträger*, lately; it is written *con amore* from the first to the last bar, yet there is a dash of the unmusical element in it, and the melodramatic character of the music itself bore evil fruit later on, in the works of other composers, though here it is the inevitable outcome of Cherubini's nature, as an artist of Italian birth, and consequently, it never interferes with the general effect. Then too, though the charm of harmonising was new to him, he did not make it his one object, it served only for ornament, not, as with so many others, as a substitute for thought; it is always developed out of well-written parts—see, for instance, the very first bars of the Overture.

Your last letter induced me to take up Regis's translation of Rabelais; he's an ill-mannered brute—still I like him immensely. In later years, we are as much interested in the manner as in the matter; we read the poet in the poem, we picture to ourselves how he wrote it, and where—and it does me real good, to think how comfortably an old author like Rabelais worked away at his long task, in the midst of his every-day life and occupations. I remember going for a walk one day, in Leipzig, with Regis and Professor Seidler; I liked Regis very much, but I suppose he has long ago forgotten my existence. This translation of his must have been a Herculean labour. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

64.

CASSEL, *December 23rd*, 1839.

. . . I am certain you are right in what you say about the spiritual nature of the voice, and I am inclined to extend your doctrine to instruments as well, when I remember what a different thing the violin is in Spohr's hands and in Wiele's, quite apart from the mechanism acquired by practice. Schelble's pianoforte playing is superior to that of many others for the same reason, it has a soul. Wiele is quite

satisfied with his thin tone, and never feels the want of anything deeper. It is a strange thing—I suppose a man cannot have two souls ?—to contrast the tendency of Spohr's playing with his unsympathetic character outside his art, though I do not go so far as many do, in saying he is destitute of feeling ! After all, something must be forgiven to the artist, for the devil has him by the forelock ; he forgets the thing itself in the meaning of the thing, he has feeling enough and to spare in the domain of Art, and how can he help snubbing his nearest and dearest, if they interfere with him there? I am not thinking of Spohr in particular, but of all artists more or less, and of musicians especially, for they, more than the others, are absorbed in an abstract world of their own. Like you, I only read by fits and starts, and now I can scarcely believe, that there ever was a time when I read these books through, from beginning to end—of course I didn't read them every one, but then I began a good many. I have on my bookshelves numbers of uncut volumes, not one-tenth part of which do I know. When I square my accounts at Christmas, I hope to find my book bill lighter than it used to be, though I believe I still buy a great many more than I am ever likely to read. I cannot resist an author, dead and done with, who has become a genuine classic, when he appears as *un volume compact;* I always yield to the temptation, as if I really knew something more about him, because I have him bound up on my bookshelves. The First Part of *Gil Blas* in the new illustrated edition was a real joy to me; but now I cannot fix my attention, I lose the thread of the story, I read down the whole page, and then have to begin all over again, for gradually it becomes, as Hamlet says, nothing but " Words, words ! " My thoughts take their own way. Newspaper reading is the worst of all. This year, though I had the run of twenty journals, I don't care to remember a line out of the whole lot, and I thank my stars that I am rid of them. Not that I read them right through, but the mere act of looking to see what there is, dissipates one's energy somehow. It would be much better to read nothing at all. Regis has just published the second volume of his Rabelais, but with all my respect for that giant, and his indefatigable translator, I have had an overdose of

Pantagruelism. Commend me, however, to perseverance of some kind or other; whatever form it may take, it is always something positive, and as such, it is a wholesome contrast to flightiness and infirmity of purpose. Anyone, who saw me out walking, would think I was mad sometimes; first I go one way, and then another; I really *cannot* make up my mind, what direction to steer in. . . .

The new Pianoforte Music, with all its deluge of crotchets and quavers, is a monotonous thing after all, and yet it represents the so-called Romantic Generation. An *Etude* of Chopin's, or a *Morceau* of Henselt's, is all very well, if it be decently played, but then it only lasts a minute; half-an-hour would mean thirty such fragments, just thirty times too much of the same sort. They all sound the same to me; nothing but *Etudes*, *Impromptus*, *Wenn ich ein Vöglein wär'*, *&c.* We never get anything else. I could forgive them for not writing Sonatas and such like, if they would turn their hand to something that would take the place of these. The old form of Aria has long been abandoned, but it was superseded by other Arias, not by little *Liedchen*. . . .

If you come across a small volume of Philosophical Essays, by Constance's friend, Dr. Snell, I advise you to get them; they are excellent reading. Perhaps you don't care about the occurrence of poisons in Nature, about minerals and metals, about the constitution of the senses; but he treats these subjects in a masterly way. Poor fellow! He is condemned to the dreary duty of teaching boys of the lowest class. No doubt, many others share his fate. I often think of what Mephisto says to Faust: "The best thou knowest, thou mayest not tell to others." We must keep our best to ourselves. What if we do print it! All that once was light and food to us, is but a little book among a hundred thousand others! . . .

Yours,

M. H.

65.

CASSEL, *February 17th*, 1840.

. . . That funny fellow, Voigt, was here yesterday, on his way through Cassel; he was deputed by the worthy people of Frankfurt, to thank me for the Four-part Songs, which really seem to have given them pleasure. Anyhow, it pleases me to think that such light things, dashed off long ago, *sine irâ et studio*, and meant to be sung through once, and then forgotten, should still be thought effective, outside my own circle. Had I written them with any serious intention, all my time would have been spent fruitlessly in trying this—cutting out that—result: zero. Just one word about the Prize Exercises, which are now all the rage! The subject set by the *Deutsche Allgemeine National Musikverein* is the 130th Psalm, *Out of the deep have I cried*, and I have had before me forty-three different versions already. It is hard to say, which is the best of forty-three schoolboy efforts, though there is no great difficulty in weeding out the majority. It was just the same with the 149 Songs, *In die Ferne*, and with the Quartets, over sixty of which were sent in the other day. Spohr is always the final court of appeal, but—don't think me boastful!—he has a kind of secret confidence in me, so that, between ourselves, I always say the last word. I am only supposed to give my opinion, but he generally abides by it. The competitors would make a fine row, if they knew what an obscure person they had to adjudicate the prize! That Philistine, Dotzauer, was within an ace of getting the Quartet prize the other day. I knew the writing and the handiwork, but as it was rather in Spohr's style, it pleased him; however, I sent it down, and hunted up something else, and now I find the murder's out. In the compositions of the rising generation, the Beethoven element is inevitable, if that be absent, they are mere *Epigonæ*. You must do what your hand findeth to do in the age in which you live, but you must do it well. It would be impossible now-a-days to write a good Quartet *à la* Haydn, or *à la* Mozart, and even if the thing could be done, it would be a matter of

complete indifference to the world at large. "'Tis true, 'tis pity, and pity 'tis, 'tis true," says Polonius to the King, when he is making bad jokes, because he's puzzled. But what real good can ever come of these Prize Essays? If a clever fellow cannot get to the front, except in this way, he had better take up some other line of business. As Wilhelm Meister says, Art will have excellence or nothing. To be sure, mediocrity has also a right to exist, but don't let us encourage it! With Science it is another matter, for competition induces many to work in some special field where workers are wanted, and a gap has to be filled up, and there we find very eminent men quite ready to enter the lists. It is not so with musicians—at least, I have not found it so. . . . At Whitsuntide, Spohr goes to Aix, to conduct the Musical Festival. He did not ask for leave of absence himself, but the application was made by a Deputy from Aix, and consent was given. His first opera, *Der Zweikampf mit der Geliebten*, was given here the other night; there is some pretty, light music in it, such as he would find it hard to write now, and it is not so exclusively in his own manner. It is the same with Mozart's operas; every bar in them is not, strictly speaking, Mozartian; one often meets with a passage written in the current style of the day. The libretto to this opera of Spohr's is a miserably bad one. It was written in 1811 for Hamburg, where Schröder was making an attempt to bring German operas into favour. He had four operas, written by Spohr, Romberg, Clasing, and Winter, respectively; all of these were, I believe, performed *twice*, Clasing's excepted. They were probably "too solid" for the stupid people, they were "for connoisseurs." The people want the light wares of France and Italy,—only it is vexatious that Mozart seems to suit them also, and holds his own so long! Cassel is always in a joyful state of excitement, whenever *Don Juan* or *Figaro* appears on the play-bills. I wish I had heard Liszt and the Pleyels; she is said to play beautifully, and is famous for her *pianissimo*. Cassel is the most melancholy hole in the world; barring two blind flute players, who look in upon us from time to time, we never see an outsider.

Yours,

M. H.

66.

CASSEL, *April 3rd*, 1840.

DEAR HAUSER,—

Your last letter was a real joy to me, chiefly because it showed me that you are heart and soul with your young Cecilia,* with the whole body and every member thereof. Our daily occupations are rarely those we most delight in; all the happier are you if yours are an exception, and as you have already seen London, I am glad to think that you are not likely to leave your little Society in the lurch. You may run down Vienna as much as you please, but in spite of it all, there your Society is, and it flourishes. Abuse the big city, that's right enough, when you're in it! once safe at home, and the outside world need give you no trouble. Just think of our wretched little worries here, and take comfort!

Once is enough for Liszt and Thalberg,—all very well in its way, but we know what it means. Nor should I care to hear Ole Bull again; but it's stupid not to go once, when the name is in everybody's mouth, and the theme of every newspaper. Even if he be a *nothing*, it is a positive gain, to be able to convince oneself of the fact, and to strengthen one's allegiance to something positive. But the dearth of visitors here is remarkable. We are not in the line of *route*, and Cassel has few attractions in itself. If a traveller must pass through it, he makes as much haste as he can, and we only know he was there, when he's gone! Last Sunday, for instance, Meyerbeer was here, on his way to Brunswick, to conduct three performances of his *Huguenots*. Brunswick is no more London or Paris than we are, but he flew by, as if Cassel were plague-stricken; he did not even go to see Spohr. You spoke in the beginning of your letter about an order for Duets, and you said you would explain further on—but you never did. Please let me know what sort of Duets. Are they to be for two bass trombones, or Jews'

* The *Cäcilienverein*.

harps, or ophicleide and piccolo, *à la* Marcell in the *Huguenots?* This last always makes me think of the bear with the monkey dancing on his head. I would gladly have sent you the Four-part songs. It vexes me, to hear of your buying any of my music. I wish I could send you the Sonnets and the Rückert songs, but the carriage would cost more than such rubbish is worth. . . .

15*th.*

Well, Easter and Whitsuntide will soon be upon us! On Good Friday next we are to repeat Spohr's Oratorio, *The Last Hours of the Redeemer.* My bookbinder has printed the title on the back of my pianoforte edition: *Spohr's Redeemer.* Not bad! Mendelssohn is much abused for giving the words: *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?* to a chorus, but I think the idea quite admirable, and I like the way it is carried out. Leaving everything positive out of the question, it is a negative gain, to be rid of the special personality that would attach to a single tenor or bass voice, more especially as the arrangement of the rest of the Oratorio would make it necessary to give this part to a third tenor. I do not like it even for a first tenor: where can we expect to find the right melody for such a passage as *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me,* in a solo? It is quite another thing for a chorus; there each passage can be made the most of, because it is only an application of the words,—there need be no attempt to give the feeling of the real speaker, since we are only quoting. I was not aware until lately, that Handel's oratorios, like those of the earlier Italian composers, were performed on the stage, as sacred operas. A curious species of Art they are now, apart from the visible representation, which one is glad to dispense with. We get accustomed to it, as we get accustomed to everything else —*e.g.*, dialogue in opera instead of Recitative. Now Recitative is to the opera what stem and foliage are to the tree, and Arias are the flowers; where there is no Recitative, the flowers grow out of the dry twigs. I shall always envy you your *Gesangvereinchen,* and I wish that I could be there to hear it; but it is just as you say—good music can only be well interpreted by a singer who can do some-

thing over and above singing. If we attempted to start such a thing here we should meet with another slight hindrance, for a new Society would look like opposition to Spohr, and his *Caecilienverein* is all that we should have to rely on for our materials, though it includes very few capable singers. The beginning of the *Caecilienverein*, when I first set up in Cassel, was funny enough. Some forty or fifty members used to come together, each of them armed with a choral part from one of Mozart's Masses (though a good many of them were hardly up to that). Away they went through thick and thin, Spohr casually throwing out some hints about light and shade to begin with, and the same slap-dash style has been followed ever since, so that we stand exactly where we did in our first year, when Hasemann thought fit to say that we had no voices, and sang like pigs!

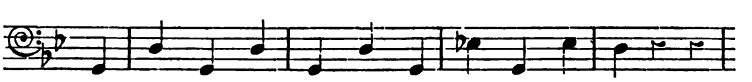
Whata treat it would be, to hear a good rendering of the old Italian music, from Palestrina to Gabrieli! I have often been moved to tears, while I was copying some of Gabrieli's lovely things in the library here. Of course, you have to work your way in, and it is easy to get out of touch with them again. The difficulty for a small Society would be, that they are written in so many parts—six at least—although a large body of voices is unnecessary, and would not even be an advantage.

This is the 28th :—

"To-day the Bell *must* have its birth!
Up, up, my comrades bold!"

My work is a regular scramble; one thing thrusts out another. Since I last sat down to write, a fresh packet has come from Peters, containing the three-part Inventions, for these too are among Spohr's MSS. and I had told Peters about them. No. 5 was rather a riddle to me; it was in manuscript,—Bach's own, I expect,—inordinately embroidered with flourishes. The ink showed that these were an afterthought, besides the cramped way in which they were written, evidently for want of room. He probably marked it thus, on purpose to show a student how the music was ordinarily played, and many another piece may have been embellished in just the same way, though there is no trace of it left. However, I could

not make up my mind to stick all this paint on to the beautiful face again; I left nothing that did not exactly suit it. I am glad, for many reasons, that I saw these MSS. before they were printed, though even without the help of the originals, I should have made many restorations; long intimacy with Bach has taught me something of his ways. It would be difficult to express what I feel about it, for his laws go deeper down than the laws of thorough-bass,—nay, they often run contrary to them. Yet people try to alter him in accordance with these laws, and where that has been done, the altered passage, taken in connection with the rest, sounds all wrong—it is a stake in the flesh. Peters says nothing about Mendelssohn in his letter. I should be sorry if he gave up editing Bach; my two efforts have shown me, how necessary it is that these things should be revised by someone who thoroughly understands the matter. I have just heard from my English pupil, who gets the papers sent him, that Spohr's *Historical Symphony* was a dead failure at the Philharmonic Concert—nay, worse—that the audience hissed and hooted so loudly, that the directors dare not give it again. The bare idea of any composer, however eminent, seriously setting to work to represent S. Bach, Handel, Beethoven, and Mozart, put everyone's back up—and it *is* a very curious thing to attempt! Spohr can only depict Bach and Handel as they appear to him, old-fashioned and fuguey; if he had really conceived any idea of their grandeur, he would have shrunk from trenching on *that sphere* with his resources, and as for his dabbling with Beethoven—but really there is not a trace of him! Because Beethoven, once in his Ninth Symphony, uses drums in F and F, Spohr, in his *Scherzo*, has three drums in G, D, and E flat; the drums alone start the subject, which is therefore utterly unintelligible.



Now this is not Beethoven, nor is anything else; and the last number, "1840," in which Spohr affects the romantic vein, is very repulsive,—fantastical in spirit, Philistine in form. Botter, the conductor, wrote him a most flattering

letter about the Symphony, a little while ago. "I think it has quite exhausted your Muse," said he, after a great many compliments. Of course he didn't mean to be offensive; it was some time before the performance. What folly to attempt the parade of such an empty task! How silly we should think a painter, who should wish to reproduce on his canvas Giotto, Gian Bellini, Leonardo, Raphael, &c. To be sure, the periodical development of music is a different thing altogether, but it has no more soul than the other. The English critic adds that he can only conclude, that the honoured composer meant the *Historical Symphony* for a joke. Have you read or heard *Les Treize?* About the filthiest and lowest subject I ever came across, but it is treated with a virtuosity only possible to a Frenchman! The music, by Halévy, is very neat and catching, witty, and pretty at times, just as Adam is; to do it well would be enormously difficult—the whole thing, however, is a scandal. What a pity it is, that Halévy should be a Jew, and a Parisian Jew! I say with Habakuk: "What a capital fellow he would be, if only he were another man!" . . . That precious youth, Dr. Schilling, is now combining the *Allgemeiner Deutscher N. M. Verein* with the Leipzig *Verein*, under his own ægis. They ought to annihilate a donkey like that. Again I say with Habakuk: "A more repulsive man I never met." . . .

Addio, caro Hauser! Oh, that I could be off with you to Venice! No go. Oh, that I could make more money! No go. Oh, that I could win in the Lottery! No go; couldn't take a ticket. Here, everyone is agog about the Railway, the Rhenish-Prussian Railway, and Hopffe is a Commissioner. That looks more like business, but I shall be an old man before it is finished. My kindest regards to your dear wife! I shall think of all sorts of things that I wanted to say, when it is too late. What an owl I have been! *Addio.*

Yours,

M. H.

67.

CASSEL, *May 8th*, 1840.

. . . No! I had far rather start with a pupil *de novo;* with those who are able to do something already, I have often had to go backwards, because I had pre-supposed knowledge which did not exist, and unpicking bad work is the worst of all things. Speaking generally, a pupil must have an instinct of pure writing, an innate and comprehensive grasp of the meaning of harmony, rhythm, and melody. Many a lad, however thoroughly well drilled at first in theory and practice, will never learn the secret of composing a good four-part Chorale. Modern music is a bad nursery, and the most modern music of all is a bad schoolroom. Pianists who have Henselt, Chopin, and Liszt at their fingers' ends, feel it especially. If they have had no other models, they may labour in vain for any clear idea of harmony or polyphonic writing. You may as well expect to learn the beautiful proportions of the human body, when all that you have seen is the lady of a fashionable journal, with her puffed sleeves and her wasp's waist; of course there is a body inside it all, and even tight lacing can't change it much, but we see only the accessories; there may be a form underneath, even a form harmonious in itself, but it is a difficult task to recognise the articulation of the limbs. Set them to draw from the nude, and they will do it fairly well, though perfunctorily, for their one wish is to get it done. "What's the good of it?" they say. "People don't go about stark naked." I do not attack the present style of composition for the pianoforte, but if one of my pupils brings me a specimen of it, I decline to enter much into detail. I am at the end of my tether, when I have given him some general advice, as to the plan and the construction. I should have to be a pianist myself, if I pretended to go farther. In short, I won't have anything to do with it, let them make what they will of the thing! If it turns out well, I am willing to admit that it is quite as pretty as a tastefully dressed doll. Most of the learners of this

Palestrina's music, it would be folly to attempt to imitate the inimitable, and the discovery that there really is no other sacred music is not very encouraging. That is my genuine conviction, but since I formed it, I have not written a note. I don't grudge the young people their good time in Italy, but how about their work there? They send off their two *Pezzi* to Paris, but neither in Despreaux's nor in Besozzi's do I find the orange, the laurel, the myrtle, or the blue sky; the mule is there sure enough, shambling along in the mist, and something too of the old dragon's brood, which they carried away with them out of Paris.* Did you get the little parcel of songs I sent you? *Kennst du das Land* was one of them. I have had to stop composing, for Constance is with me just now, and I am busy revising and correcting, one by one, three hundred and fifty Chorales for the new Hessian Hymn-book. A wearisome piece of business! I was asked in the first instance to compile it, but I declined, on the ground that it would take up too much of my time, and that I knew too little about it, from the Church point of view. I should also have found it difficult to refrain from copying Bach's manner, and it would not have suited the congregation, had I introduced progressive middle parts (harmonic changes with the notes of the Chorale), without which it is often impossible to thaw those rigid melodies, and infuse into them what *we* feel to be harmony. None but an absurd Philistine can affect universal knowledge; to be sure, the great Vogler rounded upon Sebastian Bach for his ignorance, yet Bach's Chorales still survive, whilst Vogler's improved versions died long ago—in fact, they never had any life at all.† Maria Weber's Introductory Essay was, as it were, the baptism of an illegitimate child; but it did very little towards Christianizing them.‡ It is idle to suppose, that people could write in the old modes. I grant you, F. Rückert can translate from

* Of course this refers to Mignon's song, *Kennst du das Land*, mentioned directly afterwards.

† Vogler "professed to demonstrate that all the Protestant chorale-melodies were written in the Greek modes."—See article *Vogler* in Grove's *Dictionary of Music*.

‡ Weber wrote an Introductory Essay to Vogler's "Improved edition" of Bach's chorales.

Oriental languages, but surely it has never yet occurred to him, to write poems in Arabic or in Persian; he uses his mother-tongue. The old modes were not so very far removed from Sebastian Bach, and from all the material that was before him, he knew them better than we do, but he very rarely applied them, and if he did, he never called attention to it. I hear with regret, that Mendelssohn's new Cantata for the Jubilee of the Invention of Printing (I hoped it would have been an oratorio) is written for men's voices. I still think it must be only a *pièce d'occasion*, and not the work we have been talking about so long. I can't stand music—to wit, four-part music—for male voices only; it is an unnatural thing—the bare idea is a misconception: the 2 x 2 of the parts, to be rational, can only mean S : = J : B, it can only exist in the one and the other octave, otherwise it is a mere twisting of musical osiers.

. . . Private teaching, unless hard cash be paid down for it, is a regular do. Benedict, who gives eight to ten lessons daily, and gets ready money for them, means to continue it for seven years, like Jacob. He urges me strongly to come to London. If I could start as a young man, and get the seven years behind me, it would do well enough; but it would be silly to devote the last seven years that are left one to such a task. No doubt the prospect of old age here, if it should come upon me, is not encouraging; still, here I am, and fellows like me find it hard to move. It is best, after all, to follow out what Nature intended you for. In former days, I often wished to do as others did, but kindly Fate restrained me. When I was young and foolish, I all but undertook the conductorship of a military band in Russia, and after that, the opera at Revel; both contracts were actually drawn up. What a ridiculous figure I should have cut, in either capacity! Now I know better what I am suited for; *one* thing we must come to recognise—viz., that every man should see to his own ways; let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall! . . . I have just been reading in Schumann's paper a very complimentary notice of my four-part songs; but there is an amusing bit at the end. The critic cannot help remarking, that words which are only

possible for a solo voice, often furnish the text of a four-part song. So much we may admit, and it is in itself a perfectly correct view, though the converse may be equally so—for otherwise, very many of the old Madrigals, written in four, five, or six parts, would be sheer nonsense. He is still funnier on the subject of other four-part songs, with which he says it is impossible to find fault, because the soprano and alto sing, *Komm o Geliebter*, and the tenor and bass, *Komm o Geliebte*. You see how nicely it all dovetails. The bass matches the alto, the tenor the soprano, I suppose—in any case, the donkey of a composer matches the donkey of a reviewer—three pairs of Philistines! He says in the earlier part of his article, that to use the words of a solo for a four-part song can be justified only by the purposes of comedy; but if it is absurd, it cannot at the same time be comic. *À propos* of comedy and tragedy, the first may be compared to dissonant suspensions, the other to the harmonies of the seventh. The suspension resolves itself, without interfering with the fundamental harmony; the harmony of the seventh cannot be resolved, without tearing up the chord by the roots, just as the tragic conflict is only atoned for in death. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

69.

CASSEL, *February* 14*th*, 1841.

. . . I have been dabbling with authorship lately, to please Peters (*à la* Fixlein with his School Programme), and have managed an Introduction to *The Art of Fugue*. I merely touched on the subject. I think that Czerny might have made a closer analysis, besides adding the historical notices. Too little comes of such phrases as "This is the work of a master, whose keenness of sight has hitherto been unrivalled." As a rule, people know very little about the contents of the book, though it's not written in Chinese. Peters seemed very anxious that I should do something of the kind; I thought at first it would only take four sides, but it has run to five sheets already, and I don't see my way to making any cuts. I

certainly think it useful, though it is too long to be given gratis with the volume, especially when the French translation is added. I feel diffident about offering the thing to Peters, for, in gratitude for what I have already done for him in the way of revision, &c., he couldn't well refuse to publish, and I should feel uncertain whether it was a matter of business or a favour. I could not accept a favour from him, and I don't wish him to think that because I lathered his Jew, I want him to lather mine. I could, however, put together a few sets of songs, and three sonnets. My work, measured by that of real composers, is a little stunted weed, working its way, stem and flower, through the crevices of a closely paved yard; they are the owners of a meadow with thousands of blossoms, or a cultivated field full of herbs, fodder, or whatever it may be—the whole surface free, and the soil loose. I have lately exchanged letters with that precious fellow, Dr. G. Schilling; they would have me as joint examiner, to help pick out the best of a batch of thirty-two leathery Sonatas. Mendelssohn refused to act, and, next to him, I had the most votes. I have examined before, and remembering all the Psalms, Quartets, and Songs, *In Die Ferne*, I know what a thankless task it is. But these exercises are so far useful, that they enable one to gauge the average musical talent of the time. First-rate men don't enter the lists; it's generally left to the youngsters, and consequently the results are not very edifying. The winners come off worst of all. The best thing they could do, would be to lose themselves among the common people, but how can you do that with a crown on your head? Heaven defend a man from getting one of these Art Prizes! If he be really No. 1, he will be No. 1 without it. None can fail to observe that ours is an Age of Imitation. It is notorious, that these competitions have done but little good hitherto; the first was a mere experiment—now they are all the fashion. I have on my desk, at this moment, ten Overtures by Danish composers, sent in by Spohr for me to look at, and then there's another Sonata prize offered at Hamburg, and so on, and so on. Tell me what you think about monuments to composers, set up in market-places! I cannot think they are appropriate. Unless a man goes to concerts, he knows nothing

about Beethoven; let us have his bust in the orchestra. Religion and politics are for the masses; let us see them represented in the Market-place and the Forum. It was another matter at Athens, when they put up a statue to Sophocles, whose plays symbolised the national history of his huge audiences—but Symphonies, Quartets, Sonatas, are for the concert public only, and it is no part of a citizen's duty to go to concerts. I wish they would lump together all the money collected for statues to Schiller, Mozart, Beethoven, &c., and present it to Cologne Cathedral. How much better than supporting a stray institution here and there, where it's of no manner of use! It would be doing some good at Cologne. What a piece of folly is that monument to Hermann! As for the patriotism of it, people might as well think they had discharged their religious duties by framing and glazing The Lord's Prayer, and hanging it up as a masterpiece of caligraphy in their parlour or drawing-room. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

70.

CASSEL, *March* 19*th*, 1841.

. . . You will not be much edified by my Commentary on *The Art of Fugue*, and I hope you do not expect great things of it; it is scarcely more than a summary of the contents, but that was just what was wanted, only I have made it so long, that I doubt if Peters will be able to use it. It is annoying to be obliged to fill whole pages with superfluous matter, but somehow or other, ideas that are very thin in themselves expand in writing. I remember that when I was a small boy, and had to work out answers to written questions, I always felt inclined just to put down Yes or No in my copybook, if the question admitted of a direct reply; the difficulty was, that the answer had to be so framed as to include the question in its terms. Rhetoric like poetry *nascitur non fit*. I couldn't make a rhyme, if I were to die for it, but there are plenty who can. Julia used to be always saying, that she imagined composition must be terribly difficult, because it might often happen that one had no ideas; I am

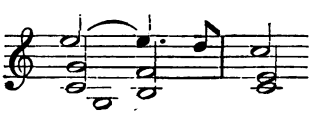
certain I should never have any ideas about poetry. What a joy your Cecilia Choir must be to you! I am keenly interested in it. If they sing music in six parts, they must be pretty strong numerically. I should like to hear them in something of Palestrina's. . . . I wish the *Lamentations* were not so monotonous, so beautifully wearisome; but it is a splendid work, and Allegri's share of it is almost the finest, on account of his exquisite part-writing. It is ages since I studied all these things properly. It's useless merely to dip into them; the student should copy out the different parts, as I did, and piece them together. The old Italians, and glorious Gabrieli, became living things to me. Many a composer of our time could not be better employed than in copying whole pages of this music. I wish they were obliged to edit an old work every time that they publish a new one—like those country people, who have to bring back a good big stone to mend the road with, every day that they take their green stuff in to market. The old music is hard to sing; it is hard too to make the singers stick to their work, until they know the music thoroughly. Judged by the standard of other music, the early Italian is quite unique; it is not to be expected, that people should recognise instantaneously its special excellence and fitness for divine service, and see that it never was meant to be an independent thing. And then it has no form. It is not the musical expression of our time, and it is only an æsthetic cosmopolite—not a common cit—who can identify himself, heart and soul, with another age.

You tell me nothing about books, except *Spiridion;* I too have but little to say about them, with the single exception of *The Memoirs of Niebuhr*, which I am now reading with great delight. What a grand character, let alone his wisdom and learning! There is a veil of gloom over it all, but it is not hypochondria or morbid ill-humour; it is sorrow, it is heart-felt sympathy with the many woes of humanity; he bears the sins of the world. Niebuhr certainly did not enjoy Rome as we did, but that was not from want of sympathy, but from excess of it. The book consists chiefly of his letters, which are only connected by sketches of different periods of his life; these of course are by others, and were put together after his

death. It is a model life, such as one does not often see; it reminds one of very few, least of all of oneself, except in a most unflattering way. Niebuhr, from his earliest days, was a real man. . . . The brothers Grimm left us for Berlin a few days since, though they would have liked to remain here as librarians of Cassel. What idiots we are to let them go! After losing Cornelius and Schelling too! . . .

Entre nous, David has been sounding me, as to whether I would accept the Cantorship of the *Thomas-schule;* they mean to give Weinlig a pension, and they want me in his place. But I have no sort of confidence in myself; could I be certain that the Leipzig people knew me thoroughly, and wished it all the same, it might alter matters. But whence they got their good opinion of me, Mendelssohn and all, Heaven only knows! I suspect Mendelssohn had a finger in the pie. I can say with Faust: "I felt so little, others standing by." I always think that anyone could do the thing better than I could. Humility apart, I am too theoretical, not practical enough; where there is anything to be done, I am as much out of place as Hamlet. . . .

They tell me that Mendelssohn's Symphony-Cantata, in honour of the Anniversary of Printing, is a very big thing indeed, and one of his finest works. I long to hear it, but it will be ages before it gets to Cassel, if it ever gets here at all. On Good Friday we are to have a new Oratorio by Spohr, *The Fall of Babylon*. Odd, isn't it, that all Spohr's Oratorios hitherto have been founded on Falls, *e.g.:* 1, *The Last Day;* 2, *The Last Judgment;* 3, *Calvary;* 4, *The Fall of Babylon*. The second is the best of the whole lot, I fancy. It is a matter of surprise to me, that Spohr should be able to write an Oratorio which lasts three hours, without a single new tone or harmonic progression—by *new* I don't mean one that has not been heard before, but one that does not immediately suggest its author. It must be intentional, else I cannot conceive why we get that everlasting cadence of his, repeated perhaps thirty times over—



until we get so used to it, that we ask nothing further. . . . I send you some Canons, written for three sopranos, which will perhaps amuse you; they were done for a pic-nic, and I accidentally came across them, the other day, among my musical rubbish. A bowl of punch might serve as an accompaniment. . . . The Sonnet, though a trifle gloomy, is a favourite with Constance. I am sorry it was not finished while you were still in Cassel. Do you remember the day when I had to improvise on the piano, to try and cure your headache, and you insisted on downright discords and "strings of ninths," as D. used to call them? That passage from the fifth to the eighth bar might well have served the purpose. After it was written, not before, I went nearly distracted over the harmony; but that kind of thing is always correct, if it expresses something we feel that we must say. . . .

I shall probably go to Dresden this summer. . . . The real Florence would be more to my taste. I think the special charm of Italy consists in this, that each one of her many cities repays the labour of a visit. Rome of course stands first, but think of Venice, Bologna, Florence, Naples, Milan, and Genoa (which I don't know), and ever so many more! We only just pass through them: what would we not give to stay? As for living there—no! not in one of them! I think a certain Northern element is a deep necessity of our nature. They have no Bach, no Beethoven—I don't mean exactly in music—it's the whole atmosphere, the air that permeates literature and life. Niebuhr, who is no Philistine, often longs for Berlin, for a few real friends, men of his own standing, with whom he could give and take. In Rome, the young artists (young in those days), Cornelius, Veit, Overbeck, &c., are his most congenial associates, and he supports them very generously, but he is a great scholar and statesman as well; he condescends to step into their sphere, they cannot enter his. "Art I value highly," says he, "but it is not by any means everything—nay, it is not even the main thing." . . .

Yours,

M. H.

71.

DRESDEN, *July 5th*, 1841.

DEAREST HAUSER,—

Would that you were here with Susette and me! She and I are roaming about sweet Dresden together. I like it better than ever, and I shudder when I look back upon Cassel. I should like to live in a real good town. There are lots of objectionable things in Cassel, beginning at the top. Of course there are good people everywhere; they do exist in Cassel, but then they exist here also, and I had much rather be here. If people make remarks about our travelling here alone together, our excursions to Galleries, our *tête-à-tête* walks, &c., remember that the best safeguard against all such gossip lies in the fact that dear Susette means to become my wife! Laugh, if you like, at your old friend, close upon fifty,—but one doesn't arrange these things for oneself—it comes to pass somehow. I love her with all my heart, and she loves me and has loved me, with the most perfect constancy, ever since the first day that I made her sing to me, the 19th December, 1836. We only settled it the day before we left Cassel. You can't think what a dear little creature she is—so full of feeling! I had seldom so much as thought of marriage, but we were very intimate, and hardly a day passed without my seeing her. That won't do in this world; it must come to an end, somehow; if not, people's tongues will wag, and despise it as we may, we cannot stop them, if they choose to think evil of what is perfectly pure and good. It does not matter to a man, if he is of any mark in the world; but her good name is woman's most precious jewel, and it would be intolerable to me, that Susette should incur a shadow of suspicion on my account, even though it were through no fault of mine. It was her touching devotion that brought me to the point; she never thought of herself. I now learn, for the first time, that many people expected the engagement to come off long ago. I, poor innocent, never noticed anything! But it is a joyful thought to me now. My love is not the young and foolish passion of a boy, but something better; a firm chain binds us together, and I cannot look

back upon our former relationship, without feeling that there is a great gulf between that time and this. I can no longer bear to be alone, to know that she is in another house, not to know what she is doing, nor how she is. So it is; the leaves grow opposite each other, the stem between them, but they meet at last in the flower and the fruit, and there is no retreat. . . . All I think of is peaceful and inseparable communion. If I were only younger! How long will it be, before I have to leave her? When I think of that, I can but weep, and I could wish that she loved me less. I have always held marriage in the highest veneration. A thousand cases may turn out badly, that does not in the least disturb my pure ideal. The only rational theory of existence is to exist for someone else, and that not capriciously, just as the fancy takes one, but seriously, for the whole of life; to exist for oneself alone is simply illogical. I feel now, that with Susette at my side, I should like to be a different man in a different place,—though not out of ambition, for she has as little of that as I have. A Court Musician in Cassel may not be much thought of *in genere*, but *in specie* people are not so uncivil as to tread him under foot. I do not speak of the behaviour of my superiors in the service, for it is not a personal matter, but a sacrifice made to art. But I am weary of sitting in the orchestra, and it does seem strange, that I should have to make my livelihood by my violin playing, which is little more than nominal; besides, such a superannuated member of the orchestra has something uncanny about him. Were I to get an offer from Leipzig now, I should be strongly disposed to accept it, whatever doubts I might feel about my own capacity—doubts which would have had great weight with me, even had my present circumstances been otherwise. But I don't hear of anything, and if Mendelssohn goes away, who then would remember me? I have also been told, that they wanted him to fill the post himself; if that be so, they want a tried man, and I should have to compete with a number of candidates more active and zealous than myself. *Ma basta per il momento!* Let me have a few kind words, dearest H., and if you are so disposed, do enclose a line for Susette, who is a warm admirer of yours. You

should hear her sing the Sonnets! She has style and she has feeling, and it gives people real pleasure; still I should like you to give her a little advice. In Cassel, you work away for yourself alone, and it is all one, whether you do anything for the outside world or not; so it is some encouragement, to find that you really have achieved something, when you leave this charmed circle. Between ourselves, with all its gimcrack prettiness (which I find it hard to discover—the streets are straight enough, but the houses are not much to speak of), Cassel is a miserable hole. From the *haute volée* downwards, life is simply unendurable, and has been so for many generations; one has only to think of the three generations of Countesses. Here, on the contrary, Art, for generations past, has been fostered by the good will of the rulers, though they sometimes exercised a wise restraint over themselves in earlier days. Now, however, there is no check, and Art flourishes like a plant put into fresh earth, shooting out new buds and fresh leaves on every side. Every time I come here, I am gladdened by the sight of new and handsome buildings. This time, the special interest was the new Theatre, and the Synagogue—the latter, of course, is only interesting as regards its architecture. Cassel also has its new Synagogue, and the worthy architect has taken immense pains to build something that should be neither Greek nor Christian; with such a negative object, it follows, as a matter of course, that the whole thing must be dreary and unrefreshing. The Synagogue here is not a nondescript thing of that kind; it is conceived, down to the smallest details, in the healthy Old Testament spirit. The Theatre is not so complete a success, but then, technically considered, it was a much harder task. It is, in many respects, a fine building. The exterior is rather massive and overgrown; by moonlight it looks like a gigantic elephant. Oh, those old Grecian and Roman buildings, seen by moonlight! How it brings out in relief their living form! But all our more modern architecture, especially Christian architecture (and indeed Christianity altogether), is to be criticised mainly from the spiritual point of view, and estimated accordingly; even the old painters looked within, not without. The Theatre is excellent for sound, and the interior is quite splendid, the

painting and decorations being in excellent taste. What a lot of bad music is sure to be done there! A wretched barn would perhaps be more suitable. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

72.

CASSEL, *August 18th*, 1841.

DEAREST HAUSER,—

A thousand thanks for your congratulations! Susette insists on thanking you and your dear wife herself; she was quite touched. . . . My flat is the same that the Hummels had, when you were here in 1836; the rooms are large and comfortable, and many people envy me my little home. My pupils, and the rest of the riff-raff, can go through the kitchen, which, *du reste*, is a room like any other; visitors proper will go through my room, and Susette will take care that the entrance is pretty. Women who love their husbands soon find out what they like, and so will she; I daresay she knows already, that I like to have things tidy. We have got some walnut-wood furniture, which is pretty and simple. She has some good engravings of her own; it will be quite charming. Couldn't you come and see us one day? We would do our best for you. . . .

When you came back from England, you used to say, "What good are railways in Germany?" But since it has been possible to drive, we never walk; and if the railway is there, we soon begin to wonder, how we ever got on without it. We should feel cut off indeed, were we reduced to the old Dresden and Leipzig *diligence;* yet that was thought a great advance, after the mail-coach days. To get to Leipzig in twelve hours seemed lightning speed; now you go there, get through your business, and are home again in the same space of time. . . . In Leipzig I called upon Peters, Schleinitz, David, Fink, and Schumann. . . . Mendelssohn and some of the others talked to me a good deal about the appointment there, which will be vacant, as soon as Weinlig dies or disappears. Susette and I delighted the Dresdeners with our sing-song, old Mieksch amongst them;

he vowed the *ensemble* was perfect. It's so amusing to watch the bewilderment of people who, seeing a very small person, expect a very small voice, and then find out that the little lady has a style of her own, and that there is nothing amateurish about her. We heard Ungher and Mariani at Dresden. It is impossible to define the limit between exaggeration and expression. The middle register of our barometer stands at twenty-eight inches, in higher regions at twenty-seven; when we are at Storm Point, they are only at Change. But one must credit these people with a fair share of virtuosity—*i.e.*, not the fluent execution of rapid passages, but a certain superiority, which makes the art of vocalisation a medium, an organ of expression. The same melodic phrase is in itself indefinite, it is only defined by the circumstances of the situation, and it can be turned into anything. This accounts for the effects produced by the great Italian singers, in Bellini's and Donizetti's music; our singers produce none, because they merely repeat the notes, which to the Italians are simply what the libretto is to the composer. How otherwise could such a *rôle* as Norma be made such a fuss about in the theatrical world? Why, at Brussels, they have actually raised a statue to Malibran in that character! It was all I could do, to sit through such rubbish as *Lucia* and *Lucrezia*. But in one point, Donizetti has remained true to himself. In his earlier operas, there was always one fine number, and now and then quite a sublime passage; how it got there, no one knew. It's the same with these two, I suppose, but the beauty is short-lived, and then we are deafened by that odious and everlasting brass, trombones,  ophicleides, horns, and *trompettes à piston* blaring away together in a huge mass,—though, as a rule, that kind of instrument demands a certain reserve. Then those detestable choruses, mere *Cantilena*, no choral style, and shouted by a herd of the coarsest singers! To-morrow, we launch Halévy's *Chitarero*, a better work than *Die Dreizehn*, not so witty and pointed, and therefore more musical. . . .

Yours,

M. Hauptmann.

73.

CASSEL, *December 10th*, 1841.

DEAREST HAUSER,—

To-day you will receive the first letter of a bridegroom, who is no longer young; I don't mean counting the years of his bachelorhood, but the thirteen days of his married life. He is as happy as he can be. We were married on the 17th November. Would that you had been with us! . . . There was a long delay. It was only through a fortunate mistake of mine, that the wedding-day was fixed for the Sunday before Advent. I hurried on matters, because I thought that here, as in Saxony, marriages were prohibited during that season. . . .

Last month, we gave a performance of Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang* in the Theatre—full orchestra and chorus. I was delighted with it. I wonder whether you have heard it yet? North German composers get to Vienna rather slowly. Perhaps you have done it with your own *Verein*, but in that case, you will have missed the grand introductory Symphony. I am not quite clear about the relation this Symphony bears to the rest of the work. (I don't know if others feel the same difficulty.) It is a question whether it was necessary, or whether it can be æsthetically justified. It seems to me an accessory, rather than part of the work itself. To be sure, there is a musical figure which runs like a thread though all the movements of the Symphony, and it recurs in the vocal part with the words, "All that hath life and breath, sing to the Lord," but taken by itself, before it is blended with the words, the figure does not express this intelligibly. In other respects, these Symphonic movements are very beautiful. My especial favourite is the second, in 6/8 time. The first movement requires a full band, and plenty of room too, if it is to make its proper effect, and the organ is indispensable, to fill up the interstices, and to give a massive effect to the whole. But the second movement would sound well anywhere. No one of our time approaches Mendelssohn as a choral writer; he never dissipates his power, every note tells,

and if you examine the score closely, you will see that the text has often been written in, under the music, as he went along. This is less observable in Handel and Bach; when they do it, it sounds as if the music had been set to the words. There is no straining to set different phrases of the text to the same musical phrases in different parts. Now, it is of the essence of the complete *Fugue*, or of the older polyphonic style altogether—that the same words should have the same music, in different parts, according to their relative pitch. But in *choral writing*, we have as many varieties of melodic expression given to the same words, as there are parts; some rise, some fall, one goes straight on, and it would be incorrect, if the whole were not gathered up into one, to which the individual parts are subordinate. Modern feeling finds its complete expression thus. Polyphony is to us the reflection of ancient days, and as such it is highly to be prized, if it is only managed as it is by Mendelssohn, who understands it better than anyone else. What I like best of all in him is, that he never aims at making an effect—even the effect of *not aiming*; effects there are, but only such as result from the subject, and the best conditions of the age in which he lives. In solo writing, Mendelssohn's individuality is easily recognizable; I don't call it mannerism, but a peculiarity of *style* which arose out of his feeling for church music, and has stuck to him ever since he wrote *St. Paul.* I am not well up in his earlier compositions, but I fancy they have something of the old Italian school about them; here, however, we are entirely on German ground, and indeed he is intensely German altogether, for he is imbued with the spirit of Bach, Handel, and Beethoven. He has nothing of Mozart in him; Mozart, by temperament and culture, is more of an Italian—Grecian, not Teutonic. I can't preach this doctrine to stupid folk who wouldn't understand a word of it. They would think at once of Rossini and Bellini, whereas they ought to be thinking only of Leonardo, Raphael, and Titian, as contrasted with Dürer, Lucas Cranach, and Holbein.

Härtel, on hearing that the *Lobgesang* was to be given here, wrote to me for a review of it. I didn't want to be disobliging, so I promised him an article, although I don't feel that I am

the proper man to do it. A hymn of praise upon a *Hymn of Praise* would bore people, and to go into particulars, and point out occasional blemishes would be a tedious affair,—and perhaps it would be bad policy as well. Musical criticism is at a very low ebb just now; people merely ask whether such and such a thing was hissed or applauded, whereas the main point ought to be: What is it? Highly as I prize Mendelssohn's sacred music, I cannot ignore the fact, that he does not reach the quiet unity of Handel. An Oratorio of Handel's is a piece hewn out of a whole rock, massive enough in itself to supply material for twenty Oratorios, and yet leave plenty over. In those days, the loom was broader—it was 12/4 broad. Shakespeare wrote thirty-two plays, in the interval between his twenty-fourth and his fortieth year, and these can be classed together. Goethe wrote, I forget how many, but each of them stands by itself, unless you choose to class *Iphigenie* with *Tasso;* but for these two, they are so varied in character, that you would hardly think of binding them up in the same volume. Were we to resuscitate our fathers and forefathers, painters, poets, and composers would not be what they once were; the caterpillar that eats cabbage is as green as the cabbage he eats. . . .

Spohr has completed another Symphony, which he calls *Irdisches und Göttliches im Menschenleben.* What does it amount to? "Interesting harmonic progressions," of course. There are two orchestras, and they are so arranged, that one is for solo instruments, and the other for the orchestral *Tutti*, but the simple stringed instruments sound very meagre, when contrasted with the wind, and the combination is, to my mind, very ineffective. As a rule, I care little for sestets, septets, octets, and nonets, for the strings play too poor a part in them; give me a quartet, a quintet, or an orchestra! The first movement of this Symphony describes the unimpassioned days of childhood—the second, the age of passion—the third, something of the same sort—the fourth, a kind of purification. I can't endure such subjects—the outcome of laborious thought, rather than of genuine feeling. It has no vitality, no special meaning. People listen to it, as they would to anything else. After all, that is the best of the matter, and we need think no

further about it, unless it is directly prejudicial to Spohr's music, when he is in the humour to give us something characteristic. For childhood, and the heavenly purification, or the return of calm to the mind, are not in his line; both subjects are clouded by those inevitable chromatic passages in the middle parts, and the affectation of *naïveté* and piety are equally unpalatable. . . .

Franz Liszt has been here. I am pleased to have had the experience; I could not have imagined it was so like pistol-shooting. He gave two concerts, and he played at Spohr's house, and at Frau Malsburg's. I was at the first concert, but I missed the rest, for I had a bad cold, and I didn't care to risk the postponement of our wedding; I know all about it now, however, and his music is not the music for me. Schelble and Mendelssohn are still my favourite pianists, because they make music on the piano, so that I forget the keyboard and the ten fingers. I am glad you have heard Liszt, so I need not say more on the subject. You know to what an extraordinary point he has carried his powers of execution; when it is all over, one can't think how he did it. . . .

Mendelssohn's future position in Berlin is still a matter of vague surmise; I hope they will not pin him down to writing perpetual Greek choruses. I regard the whole of that *Antigone* affair as nothing more than a *fête d'occasion* at Court. Just ask an ancient Greek, what his ideas are about our theatres, our fiddles, our flutes, our hautboys, our prompters' boxes, our *coulisses!* This kind of thing is neither ancient nor modern. The Medicis also tried to revive ancient Tragedy, and out of it we got the Italian opera in no time. Lucky for us, if we get anything out of this! I think, if Gluck were to come to life again, he would easily hold his own against the Meyerbeers, Halévys, and Donizettis. Of course, genius is indispensable; the mere negative aspiration to do something different from others, never has accomplished, and never can accomplish any positive result—anything really impressive. . . .

Yours,

M. HAUPTMANN.

74.

CASSEL, *March 2nd*, 1842.

. . . I wish I were in a position to say, as Mendelssohn and others do: "I don't give lessons." There is nothing of the *Domine* about me. A teacher's real interest should be his teaching; a dunderhead should interest him as much as an intelligent person. I cannot feel this. Generally speaking, I have no taste for such duties, and I envy anyone who can adapt himself to some other employment. When I am at my best, I only feel interested in such pupils as retain something of my instructions, and these are not invariably the cleverest; there is often talent, but it does not need such cultivation as I should like to bestow upon it. I let such pupils as these take their own line, without attempting to force them, but then the reins are so long, that driving is difficult. They would get on better with another coachman. I have often had enough of it, after the first month; A. has a certain *degree*, and B. a certain *kind* of talent, and just because of this, I can make nothing of them. I do not know what to do with young pianists, who have been educated in the latest school, without being grounded in the old. They come to me with millions of notes, and they cannot satisfy me with two, they think me a fidgety old good-for-nothing. They do what I tell them as a matter of obedience, that they may be able to say they have studied strict counterpoint, but my teaching rarely has any influence on them. It only makes them distinguish what they call the free, from the severe style—as if it were all one, whether you draped a broomstick, a scarecrow, or the human body. But dress up the former as much as you like, it will be a broomstick or a scarecrow to the end of the chapter! A truce to this wearisome subject! It does no good. It is worry that ages a man, you know that as well as I do; one goes round and round, like a horse in a mill—and no blinkers either, to deceive oneself into the belief that one is really getting forward! This is what I had to say about giving lessons. "Now, will I speak of other matters!" see Herodotus, the ends of his chapters. How curiously one achieves a certain kind of

reputation! From the first, I had no inclination nor aptitude for teaching, and I have never, in the course of twenty years' experience, invented any particular method, much less written treatises and articles on the subject. . . . And yet pupils will come. It gives me no satisfaction, I merely state it as a problem. it is only tradition; because A. and B. come, C. and D. come too. I think though, between ourselves, they do get more from me than from people like Schilling and Marx, who write big books upon composition, and fancy that they teach better than their predecessors, better than those under whom Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven studied. I am not going to compare Marx with that contemptible fellow Schilling, but there's not much marrow,* as the Dresdeners say, in Marx either. They are not penetrated with real feeling for art; they only have a sort of general impression that Bach and Beethoven have kicked over the traces of Albrechtsberger, and that they must do the same. If they knew how to give laws instead of rules, they might overthrow the latter; but they give what is still less generally applicable, they give exceptions instead of rules, whereas no exception is legitimate out of its own place. Because, now and again, you find a succession of fifths, a False Relation, or a Tritone in Beethoven, "and Brutus is an honourable man," therefore all prohibitions are mere pedantry and Philistinism. This fashion was started by G. Weber, who is looked upon as a Messiah—or rather, each new teacher looks upon him as John the Baptist, and upon himself as the real Messiah. . . . Härtel wanted an article from me on the *Lobgesang*, but I have merely dotted down a few casual observations; they are very diffuse, and I am not at all satisfied with them, least of all, with what I have said about the *Lobgesang* itself. . . . I had much rather that such a work should rest on its own merits, and speak for itself. When you have said that it is good, you have said all that is really interesting about it; when it is defective, there is a much larger opening for discussion; truth is more plainly exposed by error than by perfection. I think Mendelssohn's sacred music his best work, and the best of

* The German word for *marrow* is *Mark*, pronounced *Marks* in Dresden.

that *genre* in our day; but our day is not the best for that *genre*, and he belongs to it, and must keep himself aloof from it, if he wants to write in the true ecclesiastical style. There is a something which always hinders unconditional praise. . . .

We too played Berlioz this winter, the Overture to *King Lear*. I read the other day, in a musical journal, some such words as these: "To the honour of good taste be it spoken, Berlioz's Overture to *King Lear* was a complete failure." That looks as if there were nothing in it. Now this is not so. To be sure, it is hard to say, whether many a crazy passage in it is to be referred to King Lear or to Berlioz, but assuming the latter, he is still very far from being stupid or imbecile: even a madman is not a dog—nay, he is something better than the cleverest animal, and I am less surprised by the popularity of Berlioz's symphonies in Paris, than by the success of Meyerbeer's operas. There is more music in one page of Berlioz than in the whole of *Roberto*. Some of his passages are as fine as anything in Beethoven, but then he goes mad again, and, in spite of the musical element, you feel oppressed by the work as a whole. It is this dæmonic force of Nature, this elemental fire, that makes the thing uncanny, as well as the fact that reason has nothing on earth to do with it; it is an escape of gas; there is no rebound upon the inner consciousness. I fail to understand, how he can have carried it about with him, developed and finished it as a work of art, and produced no other result than that of an intellectual improvisation. Doubtless, there is a good deal that illustrates an abnormally excited temperament, and perhaps the want of form is in some sort adapted to reflect such a state of mind; but looking at it from an artistic standpoint, mere temperament must not be regarded as the one and only criterion. I know Gluck said, that when he composed, his one effort was to forget that he was a musician; but Gluck himself supplies his own negative; Nature appears in the abjuration of Art: harmonies and rhythm purposely impure, utilised for special effects. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

75.

CASSEL, *June 7th*, 1842.

DEAREST HAUSER,—

. . . I suppose you have heard or read that Weinlig of Leipzig is dead; his successor is not yet appointed, but the election will take place soon. Probst and Peters write to say that the choice will fall on me, and that Mendelssohn, when declining the appointment for himself, spoke strongly in my favour; the same report has obtained currency here, outside our own circle. All this is strictly confidential! One oughtn't to talk about such things, until they are certain. . . . Peters has published two sets of my Songs, Op. 28, but I expect you have them all, the best of them, at any rate. Spohr is going to Carlsbad; perhaps you may like to pay him a visit there. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

76.

PARIS, *July 2nd*, 1842.

DEAREST HAUSER,—

You wrote to me, when you were in Paris, so I must write to you, now I am here. But now I know how to value, from another point of view, the long, delightful letter you sent me, for it is no small matter to sit down in the midst of this turmoil, to tell a long, circumstantial story to a friend. . . . I like to think that you have been here, and that I need not give you a description of the city; no description ever gave me any idea of it. The Palais Royal, the Louvre, the Tuileries, are names I have often heard, but their mere names were hollow sounds to me; I wanted badly to fill them up. . . . We have been here nearly a week. We took Frankfurt, Mainz, the Rhine, Cologne, Aix, and Brussels in our way. You know all that by heart, but it was quite new to me after Mainz. The Rhine, as far as Coblenz, is so lovely—Cologne Cathedral so beautiful—Brussels so smart—we hardly thought there could be anything left for Paris! But however sparkling it may be at the moment, what is it all compared to this? and it's no mere glittering tinsel either; there is much to command respect everywhere.

MONDAY, *July* 11*th*.

. . . It is difficult to imagine real people at Versailles; we can only picture them to ourselves as representatives of a certain rank, as in the catalogue of the *Eugenie*, King, Duke, Count, Noble, &c. Goethe says somewhere, that he could not work, except in a very simple room, and his study, as you saw it, answered to that description. Individuality is crushed in the midst of such splendour. Of course it depends on the people, and we must not judge by ourselves. St. Cloud is more habitable, especially the apartments of the Royal Family; anyone might feel happy there. . . . They have added several historical pictures, since you were last in Versailles, and such an amount of talent as is there displayed compels admiration. Compare the two or three dozen Emperors we have in the Römer at Frankfurt; wretched things, mere stop-gaps! All Germany subscribes valiantly to it, but what a meagre, paltry thing it is after all—some of them tolerable, the rest indifferent and bad! I don't mean to say we have no great artists; but, on the whole, Art is narrow-chested, there is little development. The students of the French Academy, whom I met at Rome in 1830, have contributed large, highly finished pictures, well composed and carried out; the young German painters, who were there at the same time, have disappeared altogether, and, on the rare occasions when I have come across a work by one of them, it was miserably crude stuff—a superficial thing, beneath all serious criticism. So they grow old, the little poetic feeling they had in their youth vanishes, and, in the end, they have really achieved nothing. I cannot quarrel with them; everyone does what he can; but their boastful attitude is intolerable, and they are for ever bragging about their depth of thought and their artistic nature. If they want to persuade me of this, let them show it to me in their work; I am not to be taken in by a *berretta*, a long beard, and a short coat. We have been twice to the Grand Opera; the first time we heard *Le Guerillero*, by Thomas, which was followed by a grand *Ballet*, *La Jolie Fille de Gand*. The second time we heard *La Juive*. Number one was a miserable affair; it may have good passages for all I know, but it is only as a whole that music keeps me in tune,

or puts me out of tune, and I was out of tune there. Unfortunately, he has followed Donizetti's lead in his serious operas, and though *L'Elisire* is *very good*, all the rest are execrable. The *Ballet*, with its scenery and appointments, was a gorgeous affair, but I never can sit out these long *Ballets*, and we left when it was half over. We were greatly delighted with *La Juive*, which we heard from beginning to end. As it is a new opera, I daresay the music was performed with greater brilliancy, with more crispness and precision; but anyhow, it is on such a big scale, that it cannot fail to prove interesting. I never was in a better theatre for sound. Nathan and Dorus-Gras are the only singers I should call first-rate. The *Opéra Comique* is very inferior; once was enough. We liked the *Théâtre Français* best of all. I doubt our hearing much else in the way of music, although it is partly music that keeps us away from the other theatres. Those odious *Vaudevilles!* I can't make out what people find in them; surely the actors would be just as glad as the public, were the songs omitted; singing it is not—mere patter. . . . The Napoleon Museum, with all its supposed splendour, seems to me stagey; it doesn't look as if it was meant to last. The velvet and silk hangings will have to be renewed, at least every ten years, to keep it decent. The little hat stands on a pedestal, at the foot of the coffin, with a glass case over it, as if it were a cheese. The exhibition is in a side chapel of the *Invalides*, so that, to make it symmetrical, there ought to be another Napoleon on the opposite side. Perhaps it's only a temporary arrangement. What poor monuments are silk, velvet, and ivory, however lavishly displayed! . . . Meyerbeer came here, a few days since, to start the rehearsals of his *Prophète*. Perhaps I shall look him up; I should not venture to presume to do so, on the ground of old acquaintance, though I saw him at Vienna in 1813; but he spoke of me as a teacher of theory to somebody in Berlin, the other day, in such a way, that I venture to hope he will give me something more than a formal reception. . . . Besozzi offers me introductions to Ingres and Habeneck. . . .

Yours,

M. H.

77.

CASSEL, *August 5th*, 1842.

. . . I found a heap of letters on my return home, amongst them a large official despatch, stamped with the seal of the Leipzig *Stadtrath*, offering me the Cantorship of the *Thomas-schule*. This morning the Prince accepted my resignation, so I mean to pack up as quickly as I can, and to be installed at Leipzig, within a short month of the present time. Though I can't pretend to say I am as yet perfectly happy at the change, it was clearly impossible to refuse the offer. I can't fancy myself a conductor, and they told Spohr, when he was in Leipzig, that they meant me to conduct the Concerts as well. This shows that Mendelssohn is not coming back, and I deeply regret it. I do not aspire to fill his place; I shall be quite content, if I can only fill my own tolerably well. . . . Such an exodus as ours, though on the whole advisable, costs a good deal in detail. It is a melancholy task, to leave a place where I have lived twenty years, and where I have made many dear friends. The best of it is, however, that there are two instead of one to undertake it. We mean to give Lachner's *Caterina Cornaro* for the Royal birthday. Judging by the Quartet-rehearsal, I question if Lachner is on the right track; no doubt it is hard to find, when it has been trampled under foot, and worn away into ruts, by the German composers. . . . If it be admitted, that Art consists, not in the choice of a subject, but in the manipulation of it, I think there is more Art in many a modulation of Rossini's or Bellini's than in the clumsy, overloaded accompaniments of Marschner, Lindpaintner & Co. The Italians spiritualise their subject, they never have to bolster it up; that is one of the virtues of these operas, and the reason why they are so popular. The German composers are wanting in irony; Art should retain its self-dependence, even in the midst of passionate lamentation, else it becomes oppressive. . . . My next letter will be from Leipzig, I expect, but before that I shall have no peace for weeks to come. Help me a little with your sympathy! Susette joins me in kindest greetings to your dear wife. . . . Yours,

M H.