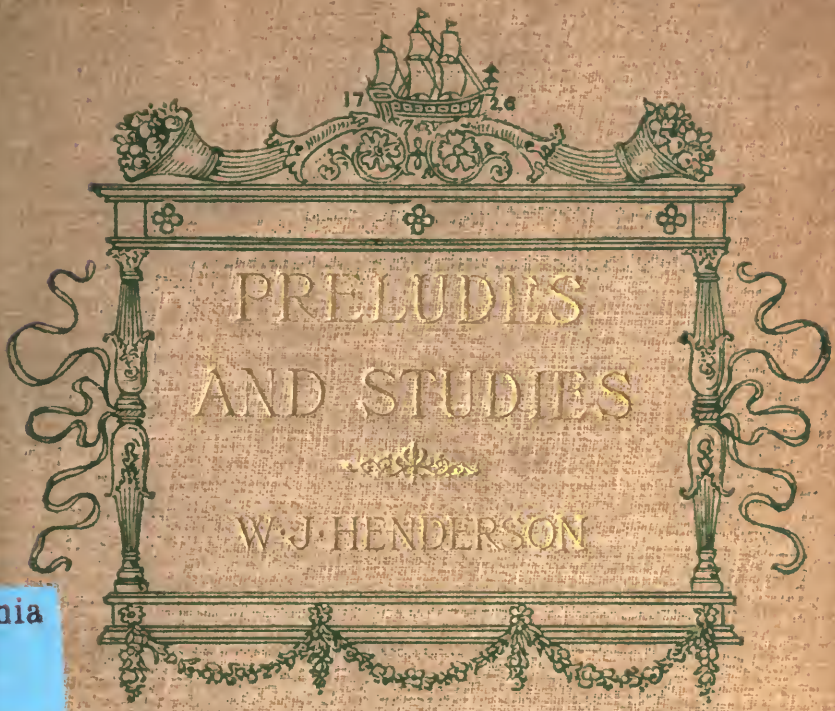

PRELUDES AND STUDIES.

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MUSICAL THEMES OF THE DAY

BY

W. J. HENDERSON

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To

MY DEAR FRIEND AND FELLOW LABORER

H. E. KREHBIEL

"To know what you prefer, instead of humbly saying 'Amen' to what the world tells you you ought to prefer, is to have kept your soul alive."—ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

PREFATORY NOTE.

THE "Study of 'Der Ring des Nibelungen'" now appears in its completed form for the first time. Parts of it have been printed in the columns of the *New York Times*, but much, if not most, of it was written expressly for this volume. The articles under the general heading of "Wagneriana" are republished from the *Times*. My thanks are due to the editor and the proprietor of that journal for liberty to treat these essays as my personal property. The first and second parts of the paper on "The Evolution of Piano Music," are taken from lectures delivered before the students of the New York College of Music. In its completed form this essay is practically new, and the major portion of it has not been in type before. The study of Schumann's symphonic music was written for this volume.

W. J. HENDERSON.

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A STUDY OF "DER RING DES NIBELUNGEN."

I. — The Story.

Why is it that the Nibelungen music-dramas, constructed on methods wholly opposed to those with which generations of opera-goers are familiar, often moving on planes of gloom and tragedy, offering none of the glitter and complex movement of spectacular operas, frequently illustrated in music prolific in harshness and discord, have taken such a hold on the public mind wherever they have had a fair hearing?

The answer is simple. They are great dramatic poems set to music. Wagner was, first, last, and all the time, a lyric dramatist; and though this present epoch, still bearing in mind the old-fashioned libretto, which had little or no dramatic force and no poetic strength, insists upon estimating the value of the man's work chiefly by his scores, it can hardly be doubted

that the future will award him a rank as a librettist equal to that which he holds in music. The prophet is not without honor in his own country. There his dramas are regarded as great works. Elsewhere the exclamation of the anti-Wagnerite continually is, "I do not like Wagner's music." He seldom troubles himself to express an opinion as to the libretto, though the entire Wagnerian system rests upon the proposition that the music must be subservient to the book. Operas, such as "Euryanthe," have succeeded by sheer force of musical excellence in spite of bad librettos; but this does not shake Wagner's position. It is possible to have music without a libretto; further than that, it is possible to have music with a libretto and nothing more, as in the cantata and oratorio. But the moment we adopt the apparatus of the theatre we assume the form of the drama, and it is obvious that Wagner is right in asserting that with the form we must take also the substance. That the lovers of the operatic stage are generally falling into Wagner's way of thinking is indicated by the fact that the operas which have attained or retained favor of late years are those which have dramatic librettos. "Aïda," "Otello," "The Queen of Sheba," may be mentioned among those which have

achieved success; "Faust," "La Juive," "Les Huguenots," among those which have kept it. On the other hand, an operatic season which relies for its attractiveness on "Lucia," "La Traviata," and their kind, unless succored by the factitious aid of some renowned singer, is doomed to disaster. There is nothing in the plays to interest the auditors, and in the present state of public taste they will not sit through three hours of inanity to hear three or four inspired numbers, unless those numbers are to be delivered with matchless eloquence.

An art work must be viewed through its design. To enter upon the consideration of any creation of the human mind with a pre-established hostility to the plan on which it is constructed, is not only ungenerous, but unjust. The primary postulate of the Wagner theory is best expressed in Hamlet's words: "The play's the thing." Let us then review the story of the Nibelung's ring.

"From the womb of night and of death," says Wagner, allowing his mystical fancy free play, "there sprang a race who dwelt in Nibelheim (Nebelheim, the place of mists), that is, in dim subterranean chasms and caves. They were called Nibelungen. Like worms in a dead body, they swarmed in varying, reckless activity,

through the entrails of the earth; they wrought in metals—heated and purified them. Among them Alberich gained possession of the bright and beautiful gold of the Rhine—the Rheingold—drew it up out of the depths of the waters, and made from it, with great and cunning art, a ring, which gave him power over all his race, the Nibelungen. Thus he became their master, and forced them henceforth to labor for him alone, and so collected the inestimable treasure of the Nibelungen, the chief jewel of which was the Tarnhelm (helmet), by means of which one could assume any figure that he chose, and which Alberich had compelled his own brother, Regin, to forge for him. Thus equipped, Alberich strove for the mastery of the world and all that was in it. The race of the giants—the insolent, the mighty, the primeval race—was disturbed in its savage ease; its enormous strength, its simple wit were not enough to contend against Alberich's ambitious cunning. The giants saw with apprehension how the Nibelungen forged wondrous weapons, which, in the hands of human heroes, should bring about the ruin of the giant race. The race of the gods, rapidly rising to omnipotence, made use of this conflict. Wotan agreed with the giants that they should build for the gods a castle, from

which they might order and rule the world in safety, but after it was done the giants demanded the treasure of the Nibelungen as their reward. The great cunning of the gods succeeded in the capture of Alberich, and he was compelled to give the treasure as a ransom for his life. The ring alone he sought to keep, but the gods, knowing well that the secret of his power lay in this, took the ring from him. Then he laid a curse upon it, that it should prove the ruin of all who should possess it. Wotan gave the treasure to the giants, but the ring he kept to insure his own omnipotence. The giants, however, forced it from him by their threats, and Wotan yielded at the advice of the three Fates (Nornen), who warned him of the approaching downfall of the gods."

This is Wagner's own picturesque version of that part of the Nibelungen story on which the whole of his tetralogy is based. Let us go back to the great original source of this tale. In the translation of the Völsunga Saga, made by Eirikr Magnusson and the poet, William Morris, Regin, son of Hreidmar, and foster-father of Sigurd (Siegfried), tells the youth his story. He was one of three brothers, the other two being Fafnir and Otter. Regin himself was a cunning smith. Otter was a fisherman who lay on the

river bank disguised in an otter skin. Fafnir was of the three "the greatest and grimmest." "Now," says Regin, "there was a dwarf called Andivari [Alberich], who ever abode in that force [waterfall, from the Icelandic *fors*] which was called Andivari's force, in the likeness of a pike, and got meat for himself, for many fish there were in the force. Now, Otter, my brother, was ever wont to enter into the force and bring fish a-land, and lay them one by one on the bank. And so it befell that Odin, Loki, and Hoenir, as they went their ways, came to Andivari's force, and Otter had taken a salmon and ate it slumbering upon the river bank. Then Loki took a stone and cast it at Otter, so that he got his death thereby. The gods were well content with their prey and fell to flaying off the otter's skin. And in the evening they came to Hreidmar's house and showed him what they had taken; thereon he laid hands on them and doomed them to such ransom, as that they should fill the otter skin with gold, and cover it over with red gold. So they sent Loki to gather gold together for them. He came to Ran [Goddess of the Sea] and got her net, and went forthwith to Andivari's force, and cast the net before the pike, and the pike ran into the net and was taken. Then said Loki:

"'What fish of all fishes
Swims strong in the flood,
But hath learnt little wit to beware?
Thine head must thou buy
From abiding in hell,
And find me the wan waters' flame.'

"He answered:

"'Andivari folk call me,
Call Oinn my father,
Over many a force have I fared;
For a Norn of ill luck
This life on me lay
Through wet ways ever to wade.'

"So Loki beheld the gold of Andivari, and when he had given up the gold he had but one ring left and that also Loki took from him; then the dwarf went into a hollow of the rocks and cried out that the gold ring, yea, and all of the gold withal, should be the bane of every man who should own it thereafter.

"Now the gods rode with the treasure to Hreidmar, and fulfilled the otter skin and set it on its feet, and they must cover it utterly with gold; but when this was done then Hreidmar came forth and beheld yet one of the muzzle hairs and bade them cover that withal. Then Odin drew the ring, Andivari's loom, from his

hand and covered up the hair therewith. Then sang Loki:

"'Gold enow, gold enow,
A great weregild, thou hast,
That my head in good hap I may hold;
But thou and thy son
Are naught fated to thrive;
The bane shall it be of you both.'

"Thereafter," says Regin, "Fafnir slew his father and murdered him, nor got I aught of the treasure. And so evil he grew that he fell to lying abroad, and begrudged any share in the wealth to any man, and so became the worst of all worms, and even now lies brooding upon that treasure; but for me, I went to the King and became his master-smith; and thus is the tale told of how I lost the heritage of my father and the weregild for my brother."

Then Sigurd bids Regin, whom the reader will readily identify with Mime, to weld him a sword that he may do great deeds therewith. To which Regin replies:

"Trust me well herein; and with that same sword shalt thou slay Fafnir."

This story, as well as the others employed to form a ground-work for the Nibelungen Tetralogy, Wagner has modified to suit his own pur-

poses, but without changing the ethical conditions leading to the "Götterdämmerung," or final decline of the gods. The rising of the curtain in "Das Rheingold" reveals the depths of the Rhine, with the three Rhine daughters, Woglinde, Wellgunde, and Flosshilde, sporting in their native element. Alberich, the dwarf, the Andivari of the Völsunga Saga, ascends for the first time from the nether gloom of Nibelheim, and, though a subterranean personage, has no trouble whatever in breathing and speaking in the watery waste. He is infatuated with the beauty of the maidens and seeks to capture one of them. They elude him with taunts and gibes, which inflame him to fury. He reviles them bitterly. Suddenly a glow breaks through the waters. "Look, sisters," cries Woglinde, "the wakener laughs in the deep." The sisters greet the flaming treasure, for this is the glow of the wondrous Rhinegold, and shout together:

> Rheingold! Rheingold! Leuchtende Lust!
> Wie lachst du so hell und hehr.

Which is, being interpreted, "Rhinegold! glittering joy! How laughest thou, so bright and holy." Alberich, astonished by the glow, asks what causes it. The maidens inquire where in the world he came from that he never heard of

the Rhinegold, and they proceed to expatiate on its beauties and its power. They tell him that he shall be mightiest of all living who can fashion a ring from this gold, but they add that only one who renounces love forever can accomplish this. Alberich, after a minute's meditation, shouts: "Hear me, ye floods! Love I renounce forever." Seizing the gold, he disappears in the depths below. The maidens dive, wailing, into the deeper waters, and the scene changes.

In the background is Walhalla, the new castle built for the gods by the giants. Fricka, the Goddess of Marriage, lies asleep by the side of her spouse, Wotan. Between them and the castle lies the valley of the Rhine. Wotan awakes and salutes the new castle. Fricka reminds him that he has promised the giants Freia, her sister, the Goddess of Eternal Youth, as the reward of their labors. Wotan frankly admits that he never had any idea of giving her up. She now appears, demanding protection, being closely pursued by the giants, Fafner and Fasolt. Wotan tells them to seek other guerdon, as he will not give up Freia. Fasolt reminds Wotan of the fact that it is dangerous for him to break a contract. "What thou art," he says, "art thou only by treaties conformable, well defined as thy might." The giants insist

on their reward. Froh and Donner, the brothers of Freia, interpose and threaten violence. Finally Wotan admits that he is forced to keep his contract, but his spirits rise when he beholds Loge, or Loki, approaching. Loge is the cunning counsellor of the gods, who is in his heart plotting for their downfall. He has been searching for some substitute to offer the giants instead of Freia. He finally tells the story of Alberich's theft of the gold, and says he has promised the Rhine daughters to speak to Wotan about the outrage. The giants are alarmed at this additional power gained by their natural enemies, the dwarfs, and Loge increases their fears, as well as excites the ambition of Wotan, by describing the wonderful power of the Ring of the Nibelungen. The giants declare that they will accept the Rhinegold instead of Freia, and carry her off to be held as hostage till Wotan shall have decided.

Loge and Wotan descend through the cavernous passage to Nibelheim. The scene changes and the caves of the earth are revealed. Alberich enters dragging Mime. The latter has just made the wonderful tarn helm which enables the wearer to become invisible or assume any shape. Alberich takes the tarn helm away from Mime and disappears in a column of smoke

after beating his unhappy brother. Wotan and Loge arrive, and Mime tells them of Alberich's power. The latter returns, driving his Nibelung slaves before him. He tells Wotan and Loge that he will master the whole world, and that even the gods will become his subjects. Loge induces Alberich to give an exhibition of the tarn helmet's powers. The dwarf changes himself to a serpent, and then to a toad. When he has accomplished the second transformation Loge sets his foot on him, while Wotan seizes the helmet. They bind Alberich and drag him away.

The scene of action is once more the plain before Walhalla. The two gods appear dragging Alberich. He asks what ransom they demand, and they name the gold. He gives this readily, because he knows where to get more. Wotan demands the ring, and on Alberich's refusing to give it up, tears it from his finger. Then the Nibelung lays his curse upon the ring and disappears. The giants approach with Freia. Fasolt demands her ransom and Wotan points to the hoard. The giants measure off a space as broad and as high as the goddess. The tarn helm has to be thrown in to make the pile good. One little crevice lets the light through, and the giants demand that the

ring shall be placed there. Wotan refuses, but Erda (Mother-Earth) rises out of the ground, warns him against the curse, and foretells the downfall of the gods. She sinks and Wotan tosses the ring to the giants, releasing Freia. Alberich's curse begins to operate at once. The giants quarrel. Fafner slays Fasolt, and goes off with the hoard, the tarn helm, and the ring. Wotan is filled with gloomy thoughts, but is inspired with the idea of creating a race of demi-gods who shall defend him against his enemies. Donner mounts a rock and swings his hammer. Black clouds descend: lightning flashes, and thunder peals. The clouds disappear, revealing the arch of a glorious rainbow spanning the silver valley of the haunted Rhine. Wotan, in a speech of sublime majesty, summons his wife to come and dwell with him in Walhalla, thus for the first time naming the new castle. The gods move toward their new abode. The Rhine daughters in the waters below cry to Wotan to restore their ring. He bids them cease their clamor, and the gods and goddesses march triumphantly on the rainbow into Walhalla as the final curtain descends.

This drama plays the part of a "prologue in heaven." It is the key to all that follows, and I have, therefore, given its story more fully than

I need to give those of the other three dramas. My dear friend and fellow-laborer, H. E. Krehbiel, has clearly demonstrated the fact that the true hero of the tragedy of "The Nibelung's Ring" is Wotan, and the real plot is concerned with his struggles to free himself from the inevitable retribution that must follow a crime. At the very outset of the "Rhinegold" we behold in Wotan a tragic hero, a victim of remorseless fate. Jealous of the growth of the darker powers, he has offered the giants a bribe that he does not mean to pay. This is the secret of the whole tragedy. This making of a false promise is the beginning of the downfall of the Æsir; for Wotan's power is based upon the inviolability of his word. It is this which causes the astonishment of the giants when Wotan bids them dismiss the idea of obtaining Freia. "What!" they exclaim, "will you dare to break a contract? What you are, you are by the sacredness of contracts."

This single error is the basis of Wotan's destruction. A brilliant novelist of our time has written these words: "This is the greatest evil which lies in evil, that the ashes of past guilt are too often the larvæ of fresh guilt, and one crime begets a brood which, brought to birth, will strangle the life in which they were

conceived." Wotan, finding that there is no escape, turns for help and advice to Loge, the God of Evil, the spirit of flickering, treacherous fire, the master of cunning and deceit; and he introduces to gods and giants the lust for gold. Loge seeks the downfall of the gods. Therefore, he induces Wotan to avoid the crime of breaking a contract by committing that of robbery. The giants are willing to accept the Rhinegold and the ring in lieu of Freia. In order to get the Rhinegold, Wotan must take it by force from Alberich, and thus the crime is begotten of the false promise, the inviolability of Wotan's godhood is shattered, and the "Götterdämmerung," the decline of the gods, is brought within appreciable distance. The fact that Alberich curses the ring, which thenceforward becomes fatal to all who hold it instead of giving them the power of the world, gains in significance when viewed from this stand-point. It is not a mere decree of destruction against some of those whom Wotan is to create for his own help, but it is also a formulation of the principle of retributive justice which is to work out the god's fate. It endows the stolen thing with the power of punishing the theft—that misdeed for which Wotan suffers, the wrong which he vainly strives to right. It is for this reason that Erda, the

wisest of the earth, rises to warn the god, saying:

Heed my warning, O Wotan!
Flee the curse of the ring!
Irretrievable,
Darkest destruction
With it thou wilt win.

And before sinking again she says:

A day of gloom
Dawns for the godly;
I warn thee, beware of the ring.

When Erda has sunk into the earth once more Wotan is wrapped in thought. He may not take the ring away from Fafner, who now holds it, because he is forbidden to use force where he has made a contract; but he may create a race of demi-gods, one of whom, working as a free agent, shall secure the ring and return it to its rightful owners, the Rhine maidens. Then for the first time he names the new castle Walhalla, and Fricka asks the meaning of that name. Wotan replies:

What mighty in fear
I made to my mind
Shall, if safe to success,
Soon be made clear to thy sense.

Now, who is to right a wrong done by Wotan? Obviously only the person whom he has in mind in this speech, a being who is of his own blood. By Wotan's seed alone can Wotan's sin be atoned. The ethical significance of this idea is the key to all that follows "Das Rheingold." It is the only apology for the humanly unholy relations of Siegmund and Sieglinde; * and it is the explanation of the failure of the god's plan through the sin of Siegfried in "Die Götterdämmerung," which sin is brought about by the machinations of Alberich's son, Hagen.

The sacrifice of Siegmund is not understood, I fear, even by many of Wagner's admirers. Wotan's plan of restitution through a free agent is good, but the troubled and hampered god does not carry it out successfully. Siegmund is a failure because he is not a free agent, and

* I am not bound to defend Wagner's morals. The relations between Siegmund and Sieglinde are outrageous, in spite of the logical demand that Wotan's wrong should be atoned for by Wotan's blood. It is a pity that Wagner could not have found means to avoid this difficulty. It is like other errors, in that it leads the erring one still farther astray; for it results in Siegfried's marrying his half-aunt. Siegmund and Sieglinde are children of Wotan; so is Brünnhilde; hence she is their half-sister, and her relation to their son, Siegfried, becomes painfully obvious. This comes of dealing with mythologies, which are proverbially improper.

it is Fricka who, in her indignation at outraged marriage ties, lays her finger upon the weak spot in Wotan's plan. Here is the passage * which explains the issue of the combat in "Die Walküre:"

WOTAN.

A hero we need
Who, free from the word of the gods,
Is loose from the grasp of their law.
Such one alone
Can accomplish the deed
That, though of need to the gods,
May not by a god be outwrought.

FRICKA.

By dense enigmas
Thou wouldst fain daze me.
What high deeds, then,
Can heroes accomplish
That must be gainsaid to the gods—
Through whose will alone they can work?

* It is a curious fact that some of those scenes in which the most important elements of the plot of the Nibelung tetralogy are exposed are talky, tiresome, and undramatic. We are told by those whom I call extreme Wagnerites that the music sustains the interest. They ought to comprehend that this is simply an adaptation to their needs of the view of the Italianissimi, who contend that the music should be the principal object of interest all the time. Let us admit the truth: Wagner is sometimes a German dramatist and writes talk, talk, talk.

WOTAN.

Their own good courage
Thou countest as naught.

FRICKA.

Who breathed this courage in them?
Whose brightness breaks from their glance?
Beneath thy shelter
Great is their strength,
Stirred by thy spirit,
Upward they strive.
Thou urgest them onward—
So blatantly boastest thou oft.
With new deceit
Thou wouldst deceive me?
By new devices
Seek to avoid me?
But for this Volsung
In vain dost thou plead:
In him I find but thyself;
From thee alone his defiance.

She also shows her knowledge of the fact that Wotan placed the sword in the tree in Hunding's house on purpose for Siegmund and then led him there to get it and find Sieglinde. Hence, when Wotan tells Brünnhilde the whole story of the theft of the Rhinegold, the enmity of Alberich, and the events preceding

"Die Walküre," he concludes with these hopeless words:

O stress of the gods!
O shamefullest need!
In loathing seeing
Always myself
In all whatsoever I work!
But the other, for whom I search,
The other I never shall see.
Himself must the fearless one fashion,
Since I none but serfs can knead.

Brünnhilde asks whether Siegmund is not a free agent. Wotan answers that he himself dwelt in the forest with Siegmund and fanned the flames in his breast. He says:

I fondly fancied
Myself to befool,
Yet how lightly Fricka
Found out the lie!
To its farthest depths
She fathomed the shame,
And her will to work I was forced.

Brünnhilde asks if he will remove his protection from Siegmund, and then Wotan answers with the key-note speech of the whole tragedy.

He declares in despair that he cannot escape the consequences of his crime; his efforts are vain; he abandons the work, and awaits but the end. For that Alberich will provide. This attitude of Wotan explains the majestic dignity of his suffering while inflicting the punishment on the disobedient Valkyr. She has striven to save Siegmund, thereby making a movement toward continuing the existence of Wotan's wrong-doing and toward fixing more firmly upon him and all the other gods the inevitable retribution that must follow. Her punishment is not the outcome of a father's wrath against a disobedient child, but is the result of Wotan's surrender to the demands of that eternal justice of which he and all the other gods are subjects.

From this time on to the end of the tragedy, Wotan stands aside and allows the human forces to have free sway. Siegfried knows no Wotan; he knows no god's will. He is a free agent. Wotan is a wanderer on the face of the earth, watching the progress of events with which he is powerless to interfere. Alone and as a free agent, at the suggestion of Wotan's enemy, Mime, Siegfried slays Fafner. Then with the knowledge imparted by the bird, he obtains the Rhinegold, seeks and wins Brünnhilde. Of his free

will he fulfils Wotan's prophecy made in the closing scene of "Die Walküre :"

> He who the point
> Of my spear shall fear
> Shall pass not the wall of fire.

Oh, the ineffable beauty of "Siegfried!" This is the immortal epic of the world's youth, the song of spring-time, young manhood, love, and unspeakable bliss. It is this marvellous fairy tale that the opponents of Wagner have chosen to ridicule, because of its talking bird and its cumbersome dragon. Oh, the folly of prejudice!

Behold young Siegfried grown to manhood under the care of Mime, the brother of Alberich. The dwarf is aiming at the recovery of the ring, the tarn helm, and the gold, which Fafner, now become "the worst of all worms," is guarding in a cave in the forest. Mime proposes to have Siegfried slay the dragon, after which he himself will slay "Siegfried." But the poor dwarf cannot weld the sword of Siegmund, which is necessary to his plan. Siegfried arrives, and after some by-play, examines the sword which Mime has been forging, and rails at its weakness. Mime endeavors to calm him. Siegfried expresses his dislike of the

dwarf, and inquires who were his father and mother. Mime declares that he himself was both. Siegfried cannot be deceived thus, and finally wrings the truth from Mime, who produces the pieces of Siegmund's sword in support of his statement. Siegfried orders him to weld the pieces, and then rushes out into the forest. Wotan disguised as the Wanderer comes to the cave and enters into a long discussion with Mime. The outcome of it all is that Wotan prophesies that the sword must be welded by a hero who knows not fear. Wotan disappears, leaving Mime in despair. Siegfried returns and finds Mime hidden under the anvil in abject terror, caused by his own fancies. Siegfried asks him if he has welded the sword, but Mime tells him he has one thing yet to learn, namely, fear. Mime tries to teach him what fear is, and seeks to frighten him by describing the dragon Fafner. Siegfried, instead of being alarmed, is eager to meet his foe, and demands the sword. Mime confesses that he cannot weld it, whereupon Siegfried proceeds to do the work himself. Then follows the great scene of the welding of the sword. When the sword is finished, Siegfried, with one mighty blow, cleaves the anvil, and, as the orchestra bursts into a prestissimo of tremen-

dous energy, stands brandishing the sword and shouting while the curtain falls.

The second act reveals Alberich, the Nibelung, in the depths of the forest gloom near Fafner's cave, awaiting an opportunity to seize the treasure. Malice and greed are breathed through the music. The wind rushes through the forest and a dim light grows. Wotan enters. Alberich and Wotan express their hatred of one another, the music graphically illustrating the dignity of the one and the malice of the other. Wotan departs; Alberich conceals himself, and Siegfried enters with Mime. The latter hopes that both the dragon and the hero will die in the impending combat and departs saying so.

Siegfried, alone in the forest, lies down under a tree. Then comes the "Waldweben"—forest weaving—the voices of the woods, often played in concert. It is one of the most masterly tone-pictures in existence. Siegfried wonders who his mother was and how she looked. He tries vainly by means of a reed flute to imitate the voices of the birds and so understand them. Failing in this he winds a blast upon his horn, which brings the dragon, Fafner, from his lair. Siegfried fears him not, but boldly attacks and slays him. The blood spurts upon

the hero's hand and he puts it to his lips. At once he can understand the language of the birds. A bird tells him to get the treasure from the cave. He enters it. Alberich and Mime appear. The ineffably lovely music becomes harsh and scolding. The dwarfs quarrel and separate as Siegfried returns with the ring and tarn helmet. Mime comes back and tries to induce Siegfried to take poison which he has prepared, but the bird warns him, and, moreover, Mime unconsciously betrays himself. Siegfried slays him. Again the hero lies under the tree and the voices of the forest speak to him. The bird tells him of Brünnhilde and leads him away in search of her as the curtain falls.

The third act opens with portentous music. The awful strife between the might of youth and love and the powers of darkness is approaching its climax. The rising of the curtain discloses a rocky mountain. The shadows of night are on the hills, and the elements are at war. Wotan appears and invokes the goddess Erda—old Mother-Earth. From her he seeks to know how to save the gods from destruction. She cannot aid him, and, weary of increasing strife, he renounces the empire of the world. Siegfried enters and Wotan blocks his way with

his spear. With a single blow Siegfried shatters the spear of the ruler of the gods, and destroys therewith the old order of things. Crying, "In vain! I cannot prevent thee," Wotan flies. An ominous glow grows upon the scene. The mystic powers of nature array themselves against the hero's progress. The strength of matter girds itself to meet the might of spirit. Fire and smoke roll down the mountain till the very world seems ablaze at Siegfried's feet. But still that giant heart knows no fear. Thundering notes of defiance from his horn, he plunges into the flames and disappears; but the echoing notes of the horn return to say that he is not vanquished.

The storm of fire sinks. The glory of the dawn surrounds the hills and the rising mists disclose the noble form of the Valkyr asleep beneath her shield. Siegfried approaches. The tremendous moment is at hand. He stoops and cuts the fastenings of her armor, which, falling aside, reveals, wrapped in the softest drapery, a perfect woman, nobly planned. The soul of the invincible youth is transformed into the spirit of the captive, but conquering man. "A touch—a kiss—the charm is snapped." Brünnhilde awakes to salute the earth, the sun, the gods, and to fall upon the breast of her hero-

lover, while their voices mingle in the passionate strains of fierce, overmastering love. The manhood of Siegfried and the womanhood of Brünnhilde are accomplished. The perfect race is come to rule the world. The old gods are to die and be forgotten.

The final tragedy opens with a scene in which the "dark fates weave the web of life and death." The Norns, the Fates of northern mythology, wind a rope of sand and foretell the downfall of the gods. This scene is frequently omitted in the performances of the work. Dramatically it is ineffective, though its music is rich. Siegfried and Brünnhilde, who have been dwelling together in the Valkyr's cave, come out, and the woman sends her hero forth in search of new adventures. Just why she should do so I have never quite understood. I am told by superior minds that it is done in order that he may win a name worthy of a Valkyr's reverence; but when he arrives at the Castle of the Gibichungs on the Rhine, whither he at once goes, he is already known there as a most tremendous hero, though no one except Hagen, son of Alberich and vassal of King Gunther, is acquainted with the history of his life. One must recall the fact that Siegfried is the great heroic figure of mediæval German lore in order

to understand the honor he at once receives from the retainers of Gunther. Hagen has proposed to Gunther that when Siegfried arrives, Gutrune, the king's sister (a charming and much-wronged girl, by the way), shall give him one of those magic drinks which abound in opera, and cause him to fall in love with her. Then Gunther is to have Brünnhilde as his queen. Gutrune falls desperately in love with Siegfried the minute she sees him and administers the potion willingly. Siegfried is won and agrees to go through the fire and get Brünnhilde, whom he as once forgets, for Gunther, with whom he swears an oath of brotherhood. Siegfried puts on the tarn helm and assumes the likeness of Gunther. He goes to Brünnhilde, tears from her finger the ring of Rhinegold which in his own person he had given her, and proclaims her Gunther's bride.

In the second act Siegfried, Gunther, and Brünnhilde arrive at Castle Gibichung. As soon as Brünnhilde sees Siegfried in his proper form with the ring on his finger, she proclaims to the assembly that she has been betrayed by him. Siegfried, still under the potion's influence, swears he does not know her. She swears he is the man who penetrated to her rocky abode. Siegfried says that she is crazy, which assertion

temporarily allays suspicion, and the hero goes on with the wedding festivities attending his union with Gutrune. Gunther, Brünnhilde, and Hagen remain and decide, on Hagen's suggestion, that for his treachery Siegfried must die. Brünnhilde reveals the fact that she did not make Siegfried's back invulnerable, knowing that he would never turn it on a foe.

In the third act Siegfried is hunting on the banks of the Rhine. The Rhine maidens appear and try to get the ring from him. He keeps it, and they depart foretelling his impending doom. Hagen, Gunther, and the vassals appear. To cheer the gloomy Gunther, Siegfried tells the story of his youth. He cannot quite recall his meeting with Brünnhilde, and here Hagen, whose whole object is to get the ring, the tarn helm, and the gold once more into Nibelung hands, steps in with another drink, which makes the hero remember. For the first time Gunther sees the extent of the treachery. Siegfried at an opportune moment in his story is stabbed in the back with a spear by Hagen, and dies breathing the name of Brünnhilde. The vassals take up the body and in stricken silence bear it away over the moonlit hills to Gibichung.

Arriving there Gunther and Hagen quarrel

over the possession of the ring, and the former is killed. Brünnhilde learns the plot of which she and Siegfried were the victims. She causes his body to be placed on a funeral pyre. She proclaims his greatness, announces the downfall of the gods, and hurls herself into the flames with the corpse. The Rhine rises, and the fatal ring is engulfed by the waters and thus restored to the Rhine maidens. Hagen rushes into the water after it and is drowned. The flames of the funeral pyre ascend to the skies and fire Walhalla. Wotan and the gods are destroyed, and the great tragedy is ended.

It is reserved for Brünnhilde, who knows the dread significance of the events of her time, to act the final and crowning scene in the drama of deeds which Wotan had begun but was powerless to finish. She it is who puts the torch to the pyre and fires Walhalla. The reign of the gods ends, and henceforward there is a new order of things. The ring goes back to its rightful owners and thus is restitution made. But Wotan does not escape retribution. He is the victim of fate and carries down the gods with him in one general fall. Thus does this tremendous tragedy work itself out, revealing to us as its hero a god who forgot the essential nature of his godhood, transgressed the law by

which he was, and fell a victim to outraged justice.

There are those who seek to ridicule this tragedy because it contains supernatural impossibilities, some of which belong to the fairy tales of our childhood. The magic ring and tarn helm, the lumbering dragon, the bird that sings German words, the marvellous drinks of Hagen—these are things over which Wagner's opponents make merry, and which they call upon his friends to defend. I shall not defend them. I agree with the anti-Wagnerites. They are as puerile as the family relations in the tetralogy are repulsive. I grant all these things. But is there nothing left? Is there nothing under the surface of the mighty tragedy on which these things float like fallen leaves upon an ocean?

II.—The Philosophy and the Humanity.

I do not propose to enter into an extended discussion of the merits of the tragedy. I shall simply point out some features of its strength, and perchance touch upon certain defects which are worthy of consideration.

In "Das Rheingold" we make our first acquaintance with Wagner's mythological adaptations in their primeval condition. The gods of the Norse mythology were not immortal, but gifted with extraordinary length of days. Their fellow-creatures in the world were inferior beings, always at war with them, but equally gifted in respect to longevity. The true myth is a deification of a human type. Jupiter and Hercules, Wotan and Thor, Isis and Osiris are human types idealized and exalted into godhood. They are heroic in person, essential in emotion, elementary in action. Civilization tends to average men. A common culture imposed upon a body of people reduces elementary inequalities to a general level, and tends to the con-

cealment of individual characteristics because it represses the display of them. Wagner has shown a fine perception of these truths in his Nibelungen works. The artificiality of civilization is wholly absent. The foul is foul and the fair is fair. The springs of action are laid bare. Every personage is as transparent as a child. The substructure of humanity is unearthed. In Wotan we have a large mind dominated by the lust of power; in Alberich a small one. Loge is the personification of primal cunning and treachery. And so it is with each of the other personages. Every one is a characterization, and their deeds are in accord with their hearts.

The atmosphere of unreality which surrounds these personages does not mar their poetic value, any more than the supernatural environment of Milton's arch fiend mars his. As Lucifer impresses himself upon us as an idealized type and the central figure of the "Paradise Lost," so does Loge remain in our minds as the weaver of the plot of the tetralogy. He stands forth conspicuously as one of the most interesting characters in dramatic fiction, and beyond a question one of the few fine character studies in opera. Around him the events of the story of "Das Rheingold," the germ of the whole tragedy, revolve with a consistent coher-

ency that is as admirable as it is unsurpassed in operatic literature. His final words, while they assist in destroying the completeness of "Das Rheingold" as a play, are eminently fitting as the conclusion in the first act of a drama whose chief events are yet to come, and whose foundation he has laid.

But in all probability there is no feature of Wagner's poetry that will strike the average reader with more force than his treatment of the passion of love. "Let us reconstruct this world," says Taine, writing of Shakespeare, "so as to find in it the imprint of its Creator. A poet does not copy at random the manners which surround him; he selects from this vast material, and involuntarily brings upon the stage the moods of the heart and the conduct which best suit his talent." Wagner could not brook the shackles of conventionality. The "moods of the heart and the conduct" which best suited his talent were not those of modern courts and society. In his reconstruction of the world he felt that the limits of established customs were too small for him. He would be hampered by no religious or social dogmas, by no small corollaries of clothes-philosophy. Elemental passions, free and fierce and blazing as the first sunlight, were to be the tremendous

moving forces of his dramas. To disrobe them of all the purple and fine linen of convenient codes and reveal them in the heroic and chaste glory of their perfect nakedness he went back into the realm of fable, seized upon the shadowy myths and made them men and women.

The love of Wagner's elementary beings is like lightning in its suddenness and fierceness. As Taine says of the lovers of the Shakespearean drama: "They cannot but love, and they must love till death. But this first look is an ecstasy; and this sudden approach of love is a transport." Shakespeare and Wagner are alike in their treatment of what we call love at first sight. The latter exposes his idea of it in "The Flying Dutchman," in "Lohengrin," in "Tristan and Isolde;" and in the Nibelungen series we have two magnificent pictures of it in the meeting of Siegmund with Sieglinde and of Siegfried with Brünnhilde. Siegmund lies fainting upon Hunding's hearth. Sieglinde enters, and, without seeing her, he cries for water. She gives him drink. Having finished the draught, he turns his head, sees her face for the first time, and gazes long upon her. He speaks to her:

Cool is the draught of thy bountiful cup;
Vigor returns to my tottering limbs;

My heart is made strong, and my eyes grow glad
With the gladness of thine. Now speak me the name
Of the woman who lifts me again to life.

SIEGLINDE. Hunding's the house and I am his wife;
Welcome art thou to rest till he comes.

SIEGMUND. Weaponless I and wounded. I pray that
I be not unwelcome to Hunding, thy lord.

SIEGLINDE [*anxiously*]. Where thou art wounded now
tell me at once.

She offers him mead to drink. He begs her to sweeten the draught with her own lips. Then, conscious of the misfortune that ever follows him, he would leave her. But she bids him stay, for she, too, is a child of sorrow. Thus in a few moments mutual sympathy and confidence and a hunger for each other's society are established between them. The stronger nature draws the weaker to it like a magnet. The woman, having lulled her husband to sleep with a draught of herbs, returns to Siegmund. She tells him where there is a weapon with which he can meet Hunding in battle. Already she believes in her soul that this is the hero who shall draw it forth from its oaken sheath whence none other could take it. He clasps her in his arms. The spring night breaks upon them in all its glory. The man bursts into a triumphant love-song, full of the

vigor of youth, strong with the power of mature passion.

> Winter storms have fled in the smile of May,
> In glory of light arises the spring ;
> Wafted with wind and wonder along his way
> Through woods and meadows that breathe and sing.

"Nay, 'tis true," says Rosalind ; "there never was anything so sudden but the fight of two rams and Cæsar's thrasonical brag of 'I came, I saw, and overcame ;' for your brother and my sister no sooner met but they looked, no sooner looked but they loved, no sooner loved but they sighed, no sooner sighed but they asked one another the reason, no sooner knew the reason but they sought the remedy."

In "Siegfried" we find the passion of love treated again in a similar manner. No sooner does the young hero look upon the sleeping form of Brünnhilde than he feels a thrill he never felt before. For the first time in his life he is frightened, and he calls upon his mother. Then he summons Brünnhilde to awake. He kisses her, crying :

> Thus drink I the sweetness of life from her lips,
> Though drinking I die.

She awakes, and in a single moment is transformed into a heroic, love-absorbed woman. To him alone, she says, could she have awakened. Her love had been a prophecy, and she had been his in soul before ever their eyes had met. The drama ends with one of the most tremendous outpourings of human passion ever couched in language. This, indeed, is the apotheosis of love. The manhood of Siegfried and the womanhood of Brünnhilde are accomplished. The race has come at last that shall supersede the sin-stricken gods. Human love is henceforth to be the well-spring of existence. It has been objected that Wagner's love is a mere passion. In "Die Walküre" and "Tristan" there is support for this objection; but in "The Flying Dutchman," "Tannhäuser," "Die Meistersinger," "Siegfried," and "Die Götterdämmerung" Wagner proclaims in immortal tones his theory of life. It is the theory celebrated in Goethe's "Faust," where the poet sings, "The woman-soul ever leadeth us upward and on." Even in those stories of Wagner's which are indefensible on moral grounds this theory is to some extent a key to the personal force of his heroines. They may stagger blindly into dark ways in their love, but their influence over man is always inspiring.

They ennoble his manhood and mould his heroism. Wagner's hero is always greater because of his heroine.

Closely related to the two great love episodes in the tragedy is the death of Siegfried. This incident of "Die Götterdämmerung" is not only the most poetic and moving thing in the whole series of dramas, but one of those most true to nature. It has been noted to the poet's discredit that after utterly forgetting Brünnhilde and becoming faithless to her, Siegfried all at once remembers her. Critics who take this ground must be unfamiliar with the workings of memory. The truth is, that Wagner has so constructed this scene that it would have been marvellous if Siegfried had not remembered. The poet's well-known fondness for metaphysics will easily account for his skill here. He was undoubtedly well acquainted with the psychology of the memory and prepared his drama accordingly. Siegfried's sudden remembrance of Brünnhilde is the result of the operation of the laws of association; not of one law, but all of them at once. Aristotle laid down three relations as constituting the law of mental re-presentation: contiguity in time and space, resemblance, and contrariety. Modern psychologists have found other rela-

tions and ramifications of them which more fully account for the phenomena of reproduction in the mind. Contiguity in space is a primary element in the revival of mental pictures. The recollection of the physical appearance of Lime-Rock Light recalls the whole of Newport harbor. Contiguity of time is another primary element. As Noah Porter puts it: "When a single event is thought of which occurred upon some day of my life made memorable by joy or sorrow, that event suggests the others which occurred in connection with itself —either before or after—till the whole history of the day has passed in review before the eye of the mind." The relation of contrast is subtly employed in this scene, but it is discernible. The fact that the circumstances which he is relating are so different from those under which he claimed the hand of Gutrune, must have its influence on Siegfried's memory. The relation of cause and effect is forcible here. The whole history of his victory over Fafner and his subsequent understanding of the language of the bird is a series of powerful causes of which the effect was his discovery and love of Brünnhilde. In fact, the whole scene appears to have been written with the law of redintegration in view. This law is that the "mind tends to act again

more readily in a manner or form which is similar to any in which it has acted before *in any defined exertion of its energy.*"

Thus we have, as already noted, a powerful operation of all the laws of association. Contiguity in space is suggested by the fire. What was in this fire? The mental image of Brünnhilde is at once conjured up. Contiguity in time is the property of the whole series of events. It is impossible for him to remember the doings of that day without recalling their climax. The relations of contrast and cause and effect we have already noted. In fact the events were as closely united as the facts of that science which Carlyle ridicules as "common-school logic, where the truths all stand in a row, each holding by the skirts of the other." No draught of magic could still the memory thus awakened. And the poet was here wonderfully aided by the musician. Instead of writing new music for the death of Siegfried, Wagner, with one of his mightiest strokes of genius, has set this death scene to the music of the love duet between Siegfried and Brünnhilde, thus telling us in the highest language of emotion the feelings that were welling up in the soul of the dying hero. The laws of association renewed for him the scene and its heart-throbs, and the orchestra re-

veals for us what is passing in the inner man. The love of Brünnhilde is once more the moving power of his life, and triumphs over him even in the hour of death. In my early study of the Nibelung tragedy it always seemed to me that an unhappy blot on this scene was Hagen's presentation to Siegfried of the drink with the juice of an herb in it. If, however, Hagen's words are to be taken literally, it is not a blot. He says—I quote the Metropolitan Opera-House libretto—

> Drink first, hero,
> From my horn :
> I mingled an herb with the draught
> To awaken and hold thy remembrance,
> That past things may be apparent.

From this speech it is plain that Wagner wishes us to understand that Siegfried's power of recalling his relations with Brünnhilde had been literally put to sleep by Gutrune's potion, and that Hagen is now administering a drink to counteract the effect of the former and "awaken" the reproductive power of the man's mind. To be sure, this is a nice point ; for we may readily wonder why Gutrune's drink did not paralyze the man's entire memory, and not simply that part of it relating to his Valkyr bride,

and we may ask why he could not recall her if he was able to recall the events leading up to her. But if we accept the fable of a magic drink at all, we have no right to put fanciful limitations to its powers. It is just as reasonable to believe in a potion that could suspend part of a man's memory as one that could put the whole of it to sleep. So we must regard Hagen's drink as the antidote to Gutrune's. It is administered simply to remove the paralysis of enchantment from the man's mind, after which removal his memory works according to the laws of psychology.

To ask, however, what had become of Siegfried's memory of Brünnhilde during the time of his unholy infatuation for Gutrune is to display ignorance of a well-known problem of psychology. Where an idea has its existence when absent from a mind which subsequently recalls it, is a question which the experts have not answered. Dr. McCosh, writing in his "Scottish Philosophy" of Sir William Hamilton, says: "What is the state of an idea when not falling at the time under consciousness? This is a question which has often been put. Thus, having seen the Crystal Palace of 1851, the question is put, What place has that idea in my mind when I am not precisely thinking about

that object? We must, of course, answer that the idea can have no existence as an idea when not before the consciousness. Still it must have some sort of existence. There exists in the mind a power to reproduce it according to the laws of association." And on this recondite point that is as far as the philosophers have been able to go.

It would be easy to select other episodes in these dramas as evidences of the author's poetic power. But it is unnecessary. Looking upon them as a whole, and comparing them with the original Scandinavian legends from which they were taken by the minnesingers, we are astonished at the manner in which Wagner has modified them. According to the minnesingers young Siegfried had a cloak, the gift of Alberich, which made him invisible. In Wagner's hands this becomes the tarn helmet, made of the Rhine gold. It is a potent factor in the action of the tetralogy, and Siegfried wrests it from Fafner with his sire's weapon, thus fulfilling a part of his destiny. Again, the minnesingers called Siegfried's sword Balmung, and according to them it was forged for him by Wieland, the Vulcan of the Teutonic gods. With Wagner this sword becomes, not the giant toy of a fairy tale, but a tremendous instrument in the hands

of fate. It is the sword of the hero's father and the gift of Wotan himself. It is a most important part of Wotan's plans that the broken sword shall be welded anew and wielded by a hero who has the unmixed blood of the Volsungs, and who knows no fear. With it he brings down the kingdom of the gods at a single blow and carves his way to the consummation of human life.

With Odin or Wotan, at Walhalla in Asgard, dwelt the Valkyrior, or choosers of the slain. These Wotan sent forth to the fields of battle to select those who should fall and lead them to Walhalla. These sisters of war, as they were sometimes called, watched over their warriors, and sometimes listened to their wooing. Led by Skulda, the youngest of the Fates, they whirled through the dust and thunder of battle, foremost in the fight, with flaming swords and an awful accompaniment of meteors and lightning. Balder, the second son of Wotan, was the fairest of the gods, and his death is the chief event in Scandinavian mythology. It was foreordained and prophetic of the final dissolution of the gods. The story of Sigurd and the Niflunga is a separate epic in the elder Edda. Wagner has made the heroine of this tale and the chief of the Valkyries one and the same per-

son—a pure and loving woman of god-like soul and of celestial origin. Where did he get the material for her? Not from the Nibelungen Lied of the minnesingers, for their Brünnhilde is simply the famed Queen of Isenland — a woman of matchless courage and strength, every suitor for whose hand must enter three contests with her, and if vanquished suffer a cruel death. No, this woman—outlined in the Edda—is made flesh and blood for us by Wagner. Siegfried and Balder he has moulded into one, and produced for us a personage more real than either of the originals.

In short, a reading of the stories of the Scandinavian bards and those of the German minstrels shows conclusively that the humanity of Wagner's people is his own. The northern Scalds created tremendous myths. The spirit of their poems is colossal. Passions and sweetness stood side by side, and were delineated with master-strokes. Lofty sentiment and heroic deed were darkened by unspeakable crime and black tragedy. The German bards denuded these old poems of their glory and made their personages small. The heroes and heroines of the Sagas were enormous unrealities; those of the Niebelungen Lied were almost pretentious nonentities. Wagner seized upon every

trait of character and every incident that was most human, and made masterly use of it. It is the ease with which we recognize in the people of "Der Ring des Nibelungen" primeval human types that makes us receptive of their influence and movable by their greatness.

III.—Some Objections to Leit-Motiven.

After several years of honest study of the scores of Wagner's works, and after repeated hearings of performances noble in spirit and execution, the writer is convinced that the most popular objection to the "music of the future" is the tremendous demands it makes on the intelligence. The great public does not like to think, especially about anything in the form of a drama. It is an old story that the opera has been regarded as a form of fashionable amusement, but that condition can hardly be said to exist now. That view of the opera is held by a minority. Even among the persons who figure as members of "society" there are those who take a thoughtful interest in the performance of a Wagner-music drama. But they, like others, are discouraged by the discovery that thoughtful interest is not sufficient to enable them to arrive at an intelligent appreciation of these master-works of our time. They learn speedily that these music-dramas require deep and con-

tinuous study. In fact, outside of the fields of politics and sociology, the lyric creations of Richard Wagner and the philosophy of Herbert Spencer offer the most considerable problems in the intellectual life of our period. No subject in the arts of painting, sculpture, or pure literature has arisen which presents so many serious artistic questions as these music-dramas. They are questions which concern not only music, but which reach out into the general constitution of that abstract entity known as art, for as surely as certain qualities are common to all the fine arts, so surely does anything which touches the fundamental principles of one branch reach those of another. It is not a settled fact that Wagner's reforms have disturbed the general laws of art upon which music rests, but they are accused of having done so, and hence the scope of the discussion.

The leit-motif system, which is the musical life-blood of the fully-developed Wagner-music drama, appears to be the root of all the evil, for it is this which makes the demands upon public thought, and it is this which is charged with having transformed the operatic score into symphony with declamatory and pantomimic accompaniment. That these charges seem to be well founded when one first witnesses the per-

formance of a later Wagner drama is hard to deny; and that the leit-motif system is not without grave defects must be admitted by every critic who is not committed to special pleading of the Wagner cause. It is a pity that anyone in the position of critic has ever assumed this erroneous attitude, though it is easily explicable on the ground that, in the face of ignorant and blatant opposition, the minor weaknesses of Wagner's works had to be ignored in order that their stupendous excellences might be preserved for the good of art.

The charge that the fully-developed Bayreuth music-drama is an attempt to subsitute symphony for opera is so foolish that it may be dismissed with few words. That certain themes are repeated and sometimes subjected to significant alterations of rhythm and harmony, need not be denied. This is the only resemblance of a Wagner score to a symphony. The working out of thematic material in the free fantasia of a symphony is so different in form and spirit from the development to which Wagner subjects his Brünnhilde and Siegfried motives that only a superficial or prejudiced mind can confound them. A far more important question is that which arises from the fact that people cannot recognize the design of the various leit-motiven

by simply attending a performance of one of the dramas. The extreme Wagnerites deny that this is a fact; but one has only to consult his own experience to realize that it is. Where is the person who has ever at the first hearing of "Rheingold" been able to identify and understand all the leit-motiven? But if they are not immediately and unavoidably intelligible, are not these leit-motiven undramatic? That is the serious question. Is a playwright wise or skilful who demands of his audience previous home study of the play about to be witnessed for the first time? Would we tolerate any such demand if made by Bronson Howard or Mr. Pinero? A play should be, according to all accepted laws of dramatic art, a thing complete in itself. It should require no explanatory notes in the programme and no previous acquaintance with its subject matter in order to be "understanded of the people." Now, the only permissible form of opera is that which can be received as a *dramma per musica*—a play expressed in music. If the opera does not meet the requirements of a play, it is undoubtedly not a perfect art form. The reforms of Gluck and Wagner were designed to remove the artificial formulas of schools which sacrificed truth to sensuous beauty. But if Wagner demands of us that we shall study his libretto phrase by phrase

and his music measure by measure at home before going to hear the opera, does he not by this confess to a certain grave radical weakness in his system? Some of Wagner's most eloquent and thoughtful advocates take the ground that his music produces high emotional results in those who do not take the trouble to learn the leit-motiven, and the writer is prepared, by personal observation and experience, to admit that this is true. The intellectual gratification obtained from an understanding of the motiven, say these advocates, is an added pleasure. But this is an evasion. To listen to Wagner's music-dramas without an understanding of the meaning of the leit-motiven is not to justify his musical system, but to ignore it. It is an endeavor to defend the system by demonstrating that we can get along without it. This will not do. Wagner's leit-motiven have a purpose, and we must recognize that purpose in order to appreciate his art form.

The true solution of this difficulty can be reached only by widening our view of the subject so that the whole field of music is embraced in it. The nature of music refutes the assumption that any composition is to be heard once and for all, as a play may be. Musical impressions are fleeting; musical thoughts are elusive. All music requires repetition. Does the world

listen to a Beethoven symphony once and no more? Not at all. The treasures of absolute music are revealed only by frequent performance; and the same thing is true of opera. "Fidelio" and "Orfeo" are not played once and then done with; nor are they put on for a single run of one hundred nights. So we must view these Wagner operas in the light of this general character of music. We are to hear them again and again, and at last, by continual comparison of the text with the musical setting, arrive at a full comprehension of the composer's meaning. This is the artistic possibility which Wagner contemplated.

There is still, however, a difficulty. Music can arouse emotion, and, in an indefinite way, also express it. Where Wagner has sinned against the nature of his art is in his attempts to make music express purely mental processes. There are several motiven, like that of the "Compact," whose meaning is entirely arbitrary. Wagner has ruled that a certain combination of tones shall indicate for his hearers the fact that Wotan is bound by his celestial nature to stick to a bargain. But music is not the language of bargains, and not even so great a genius as Wagner can make it so. You may learn the intended meaning of this motif and accept it according to

the composer's intent, but whenever you hear it you will, if you have a fine feeling for music, regard it as a sort of musical Volapük, a manufactured language. It seems to the writer, then, that the leit motif system, while not truly dramatic, is truly musical; that it is a satisfactory working system for operatic music, and that its only serious artistic defect arises from an abuse of it.

Accepting the leit motif as a defensible art form, everyone must be struck with its especial fitness for the musical setting of "Der Ring des Nibelungen." It is in the tetralogy that the present writer finds the highest justification of Wagner's system. In the overwhelming revelation of its adaptation to his purposes is the strongest plea for its existence. There is no question that many of those composers who have risen to the distinction in the field of opera would have been hampered and discouraged by the rigid requirements of the leit motif system. But the time has gone by when the world believed in the inviolability of any special form. We do not demand of the orchestral composer to-day that he shall write symphonies, or else be classed below the man who can produce capellmeister music in the established classic mold. We have come to understand that every artist

has a right to invent his own form. All that we ask is that the form shall be the best that can be designed for the artist's especial purpose.

The great drama of the Nibelung's Ring is a drama of development, and the leit motif system is peculiarly suited to its needs. The development of the Siegfried horn fanfare is one of the evidences of this. It is used in the beginning of Wagner's exposition of the character of his hero to express his youth and enthusiasm. It is then a bright and reckless challenge in six-eight rhythm. In the "Götterdämmerung" the same melody is used to express the mature heroism of Siegfried. The alteration to which the music is subjected is one of rhythm. The motif changes from six-eight to common rhythm. The effect produced is one of those which are founded upon the nature of music. A six-eight rhythm is light and tripping; a four-beat rhythm is firm and solid. Here is a case, then, in which the musical development of the motive is thoroughly rational, because the physical construction of the music is altered logically. Of course, Wagner clings to his theory—the only true one—that the music must express not the physical attributes of the man, but his soul. This is in accord with the composer's philosoph-

ical speculations on the essential nature of music as the language of consciousness. Viewed from the standpoint of the psychologist, music is certainly the language of the concept and descends from its loftiest purpose when it is made to express ideas gathered through sense-perception. No thoughtful person supposes that Beethoven meant to photograph a thunderstorm in "The Pastoral Symphony," or that Rubinstein tried in his "Ocean Symphony" to paint the appearance of the sea under varying conditions of weather. These writers sought to raise in the hearer's soul emotions similar to those raised in their own souls by these natural phenomena. So Wagner tries to convey to the hearer the emotional content of Siegfried's soul. And how does he do it? By working out the Siegfried motive symphonically? Not at all; but by subjecting it to a simple rhythmical change which alters and develops the character of the melody along the same lines as Siegfried's character has altered and developed—from lightness and ebulliency to firmness and solidity. This is one of the artistic achievements, so simple in itself, so striking in its results, that convince us that Wagner was a genius, and that for his purposes his form was the right one.

It is not necessary to trace this process in

other motives. The unbiassed student of Wagner will have no difficulty in discovering its employment in the changes to which the Rhine daughters' music, the Walhalla, Brünnhilde, and other motives are subjected. The changes are not always rhythmical; frequently they are harmonic. In one case, as has been beautifully shown by Mr. Krehbiel, Wagner achieves a remarkable effect by leaving the atmosphere of modern music and plunging into the darkness of the mediæval style. He expresses the lack of rest in the wandering of Wotan by a motive which has no tonality, and which is, nevertheless, plainly a development of the Walhalla theme. The fitness of this form of musical development for a drama, which is in itself four separate plays to be played on consecutive days, is undeniable. It makes the music coherent and connected, just as the story is. It establishes a system of cross references which explains matters to the auditor. It also is in itself an argument against the dismemberment of the tetralogy. It forbids, on artistic grounds, not only the concert performance of excerpts, but the operatic performance of any one drama of the series apart from the rest. These things may be done on the ground of expediency, but the very music itself cries out against them as sins against art.

It is beyond doubt that music which is so deep in its emotional significance and which is worked out so logically in its development does make those severe demands upon the intellect which are urged against it. But, on the other hand, when the leit motif system is attempted in a drama where there is no development, or the development is illogical, as in Franchetti's "Asrael," for instance, the leit motiven become mere labels, as some prejudiced persons say Wagner's are. There is no significant development to the Asrael motive, because Asrael is inconsistent. His motive is nothing but a fixed formula, and has no more true musical meaning than those unhappy combinations of sounds which Wagner tries to make representative of purely intellectual processes. Franchetti's principal motives are worked to death in "Asrael." He makes a ballet out of one of them. Every auditor can become acquainted with them in two hearings of the opera. They are simplicity itself. But Wagner has some motives which no auditor can learn from hearing. He must either study his score at home or have recourse to handbooks, only to find that Wagner has had recourse to arbitrary formation, and that some of his leit motiven are, as his opponents unjustly say they all are, mere labels without organic connection

with the text. They become as algebraic letters, and we hear the composer saying, "Let x equal the Gods' stress."

Here, then, we find the real weakness in Wagner's musical system. It is not that we must listen to his dramas again and again with close attention to the text ere we can learn the meaning of his emotional motives, for we have seen that the fundamental claim of music is to be heard often, but it is because he has at times striven to make music do what is not in its power, and has thereby introduced into his works an element of perplexity to the most sympathetic and patient listener.

One point more is worth noting: the emotionally truthful motives in Wagner's works are always those that are most admirable as pure music. It is not necessary to explain this statement. Any person who wishes to put it to the test should compare the compact motive with the renunciation, for instance, or the Gods' stress with the Love, or, in "Die Meistersinger," the "Art Brotherhood," as it is called, with the Longing. The brotherhood of art is a delightful subject to express in music. Wagner's leit motif for this purpose would do just as well for the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, and it is musically far inferior to those

melodies which do truthfully convey to us the emotions of Eva, Sachs, and Walther. When one is confronted with these weaknesses in Wagner's system, one feels like adopting the comfortable position, before mentioned, of enjoying the music without bothering about the leit motiven. But they are like the ghosts in "Macbeth:" they will not down at one's bidding.

IV.—Comments and Commentators.

Wagner has the proud distinction of being the one composer of our time who has given rise to controversy. He has been abused without mercy and praised without discrimination. Nonsense has been written for and against him. Some of his critics have found fault with him for the very things which are to his credit ; others have praised him for his errors. Perhaps no country has won greater distinction for its inability to view Wagner rationally than England. This is, doubtless, owing to the fact that Wagner's later works are not fairly known in Great Britain. Nevertheless, I cannot refrain from breaking lances with two English commentators, one of whom bearded Wagner in his lair.

When a man sets up a theory and undertakes to make facts agree with it, he has a hard time. The inductive method of reasoning is absolute in its tyranny, and always crushes anyone who undertakes to pierce its armor. The only per-

son who has any hope of success in science is he who studies facts first and formulates his theory on the results obtained. Precisely the same method is to be used in studying the works of great masters in art. The man who begins by saying, "Wagner was not a great composer," and then goes hunting for evidence to prove his statement, is bound to come to grief. He should begin by studying the works of Wagner, and generalizations of an unimpeachable nature will come to him, if he is a thinker. As Mr. Krehbiel wisely said in one of his lectures, the only way to find out what Wagner means is to go to Wagner himself—to study him in his scores—and not to accept second-hand evidence.

Sir Arthur Sullivan has set up the theory that Wagner did not know how to make a libretto, that he did not select the proper kind of material for his stories, and that his verse is doggerel. This is not a new attack on the genius of Bayreuth, but it is unusual. The common plan is to say that Wagner's music is bad, which is a hard proposition to uphold. Some of Wagner's music is harsh—that is a safer and surer assertion. If Sir Arthur had said some of Wagner's libretto-writing is poor, he would have taken an unassailable ground, for no one who carefully reads the book of "The Flying Dutchman" can fail to

perceive that some of it is very thin stuff indeed. But that work was written when Wagner was not yet free from the shackles of tradition in opera making. However, this is the single book which Sir Arthur praises, asserting that it is the only one which could be successfully acted without the music. This declaration is not worth disputing. It shows a singular lack of comprehension of Wagner's purposes in aiming at an indissoluble union of acting, poetry, music, and painting in the art work of the future. If any of the dramas of the trilogy could be taken out and acted without the music, it would simply go to show that the union was imperfect.

But Sir Arthur does not like his material. He says: "He chose mythological and legendary subjects, which have always taken an epic form, for the very good reason that they are essentially epic and not dramatic in character." A little learning has been called a dangerous thing. Sir Arthur must have a very little indeed to hazard such a statement. It is not improbable that the composer of "The Mikado" is aware that the lyric drama of to-day originated in an attempt at the resuscitation of the ancient Greek drama, and that the little group of enthusiasts who met at Bardi's palace in Florence, in the latter part of the sixteenth century, proceeded, to the best

of their knowledge and belief, along the lines laid down by the Greek masters. Every reformation in operatic art since their day has been an attempt to escape from the domination of mere vocal accomplishment, and to return to the true basis of the lyric drama. The real groundwork is to be found in the plays of the great Greek tragedians, and their selection of material does not support Sir Arthur's theory.

Æschylus is generally credited with being the father of Greek tragedy. Strangely enough, his masterpiece was a trilogy, composed of "Agamemnon," "The Choephorae," and the "Eumenides," in which is set forth a crime—the murder of Agamemnon—and its consequences, very much as Wagner tells the story of the theft of the Rhinegold and its dread issue. Like Wagner's work, this one contains two plots—one celestial and the other terrestrial—and mingles gods and mortals in the action. Moreover, the Greek tragedian's work is wholly concerned with those mythological and legendary characters who, according to Sir Arthur, are "essentially epic." Furthermore, Æschylus, like Wagner, used his dramas not only for the embodiment of a national legend, but also for the propagation of profound moral truths. Worse than this, Æschylus is believed to have written a tetralogy

on mythical events, of which "The Seven against Thebes" is supposed to be the final drama.

But Æschylus does not stand alone as an opponent of Sir Arthur's theory. After him came Euripides, his mighty successor, who has been called the "virtual founder of the romantic drama." His method resembles Wagner's more closely than that of Æschylus did in this: He endeavored to make his heroic personages more real, more like the men and women of every-day life. And he helped himself in a most liberal manner to that mythological and legendary matter which, according to Sullivan, is so truly epic.

His "Alcestis" differed from the normal type of Greek tragedy in that it was not founded on one of the great legends, but on one of the smaller episodes of mythology. In the "Hippolytus" he made use of one of the stories relating to Artemis, a genuine out-and-out goddess. In "Ion" the hero is a son of Creusa and the god Apollo, and one of the characters is Athena, who is also an important figure in the "Suppliants." The "Heracles Mainomenos" begins with the return of Heracles from Hades, whither he had been sent to bring back Cerberus. His "Iphigenia in Tauris," "Iphigenia in Aulis," "Orestes," and "Bacchæ" all make use of mytholog-

ical or legendary material, in open defiance of Sir Arthur's pretty theory.

But the moderns have broken faith with Sir Arthur just as ruthlessly as the ancients; for when Jacopo Peri wrote the first operas, he deliberately chose such subjects as "Daphne" and "Eurydice," and Claudio Monteverde, the Wagner of his time, wrote "Orfeo." And when Gluck launched the first operatic reformation he purposely selected Euripidean subjects, "Alcestis," "Iphigenia in Aulis," and "Iphigenia in Tauris," to which he added "Orpheus." It does really seem as if no one had any consideration for Sir Arthur. Even Mozart helped himself to the legend of "Don Giovanni," Weber to that of "Der Freischütz," and Gounod to that of "Faust," as expanded by Goethe. And even Sir Arthur's own Shakespeare wrote "A Midsummer Night's Dream," of which the material is excessively mythical.

All this goes to show that if you desire to censure a man's work you should find the real faults, not set up a theory which has feet of clay. However, Sir Arthur Sullivan does not stand alone in his folly. Mr. Joseph Bennett can discover more faults in Wagner than Sir Arthur can, and make far more ridiculous objections to his work. In his "Letters from Bayreuth" he be-

wails in good set terms Wagner's lost opportunities, and is grieved to the heart that Verdi did not compose "Die Götterdämmerung." The aged Italian maestro in his ripe years would certainly have written much fine music for the story, but it is almost impossible to conceive of the German master's stupendous dramatic poem dissociated from his own vitalizing measures. Mr. Bennett's particular grievance is that Wagner did not write more choruses instead of permitting Gunther's vassals to remain silent so much of the time. "If the warriors may acclaim Gunther and Brünnhilde," he asks, "why are they silent when Hagen kills Siegfried? Why no exclamations as the hero's body is received by the King's household? Above all, why is the stage filled with a crowd of dummies during the magnificent and moving last scene? The absence of a chorus here is the very wantonness of whim. It excites an annoying sense of incompleteness, and makes us cry, even beneath the roof of Wagner's theatre, 'Oh for a Verdi!'"

Alas, poor Joseph! How shamefully Verdi has betrayed your faith! The ardent anti-Wagnerite must have forgotten all about "Aïda" when he wrote these lines. When Rhadames and Aïda are dying in the vault, the temple above is "filled with a crowd of dummies," and

the only words uttered are a few broken expressions of grief from the stricken Amneris. Of course, poor Mr. Bennett could not have foreseen in 1876 the dreadful things Verdi was going to do in "Otello," but it is a notable fact that when Emelia alarms the household after Desdemona's murder, the members of the chorus neglect their opportunities quite as shamefully as Gunther's vassals. It was not Verdi that Mr. Bennett had in his mind, it was Donizetti. He would have cooked up a duet for Hagen and Gunther over Siegfried's body, and would have sent the dead hero back to the hall of the Gibichungs to the strains of a martial chorus. And then what a mad scene Brünnhilde would have had over the bier! "Spargi d'amaro" would have been nowhere, and she would have had a cadenza against time and a flute which would have filled the air to bursting with ecstatic bravas. And the chorus, instead of figuring as a lot of dummies, would have remarked:

> Oh, what a fatal event!
> Dread fear covers all!
> Night, conceal the sad misfortune
> With thy thick, dark veil!

It seems strange that any thinking human being should write such puerile nonsense about a

great dramatic scene as Mr. Joseph Bennett has written about Siegfried's death. Does it not strike all of us that nothing could be so impressive as the stricken speechlessness of the grim warriors who cluster in the moonlight around Siegfried's body? Could any conversation go on except that of those persons who will doubtless struggle to discuss their dinner parties during the blast of the last trumpet? What choral strains could possibly be written that would not be an impertinence interposed between Siegfried's last words and that more than human music, the death march? It is, indeed, curious that Mr. Bennett should have chosen for condemnation one of the highest examples of Wagner's fitness for the production of an immortal tragedy.

The same writer complains a good deal about the dramatic power of "Die Götterdämmerung." He says: "Had the master employed ever so freely the splendid resources that lay ready to his hand, it is doubtful whether the dramatic power of 'Götterdämmerung' would not have put the music in a secondary place." Remarks of this sort show how admirably Mr. Bennett succeeded in his brutish determination to misunderstand Wagner. To all who know that it was the immovable belief of the master that the business of the music was to explain and illustrate

the drama, and that it must consequently be in the nature of things subservient, Mr. Bennett's complaint is simply amusing. And we are still more delighted when he proceeds to rank the final drama of the Nibelung cyclus as third in order of excellence, because "it presents little of novelty."

He continues thus: "According to a very careful analysis by Herr von Wolzogen, there are in 'Der Ring des Nibelungen' ninety distinct motivi, of which thirty-five belong to 'Das Rhinegold,' twenty-two to 'Die Walküre,' twenty to 'Siegfried,' and only thirteen to Götterdämmerung,' which thus has, with small relief, to bear the burden of constantly repeating themes already heard over and over again." Now here, gentle reader, you have a capital plan for estimating the comparative value of Wagner's music-dramas. The master adopted a system of leit motiven, and constructed the scores of his operas out of themes having certain meanings, ergo, the work which contains the most motives has the most meanings, and is therefore the best. Thus we effectually demonstrate that "Tristan und Isolde," which contains a very small number of leit motiven, is one of the poorest of all the master's productions.

In the drama called "Led Astray," after Hec-

tor has poured out a long tirade against the immorality of the times, Rodolph says: "Bravo, Hector, you talk like a book! The bar regrets you; the pulpit has lost an ornament. Nevertheless, Hector, the world will go right on doing just the same." Mr. Bennett talks like a book —very much like a book. Nevertheless the world will go right on regarding "Die Götterdämmerung" as the mightiest of the Nibelung dramas, and there are some of us, not extreme Wagnerites, who will continue to regard it not only as the greatest of Richard Wagner's creations, but also as the grandest musical drama in existence, and as one of the noblest productions of the human intellect. And we shall do it largely because of the manner in which the leit motiven belonging to "Die Walküre" and "Siegfried" are repeated in such episodes as the hero's narration of his early life, his dying speeches, and his funeral march. We shall hold to our belief because of the enormous effect of the slight changes made by the master in some of his themes. Who can withstand the overwhelming power of the alteration which appears in Siegfried's motive of courage, always intoned by the hero on his horn? Wagner simply changes the movement of the motive from six-eighth to common time, and lo! the dashing, brilliant

boldness of a reckless, enthusiastic boy becomes the tremendous, irresistible heroism of a mature, resolute, indomitable man.

So much for these two musical lights of England. But elsewhere there are a few less distinguished writers who, by joining forces, contrive to keep up the old controversy about Italian versus German opera. This warfare is a curious thing. It is curious because the real question is so often obscured. The real question is obviously this: "What is opera?" Given a good working definition of opera as a standard, there should be no serious difficulty in testing each specimen by it. The result would almost certainly be that the controversy, as between Italian and German opera, would be settled; because we should find that some German works were weak and some Italian works strong. An attempt at a practical definition was recently made by a New York newspaper writer, who said that opera was "a setting for wonderful voices and a medium for the bestowal of pleasure through the agency of entrancing harmonies. That's about what an opera is intended to be." Who intended it to be that? Not the Italian enthusiasts who invented it, for their views as to the nature and purpose of opera are on record. The "entrancing har-

monies" part of the definition may at once be dismissed. The writer evidently meant melodies, for it is a well-known fact that the advocates of the vocal display opera ("setting for wonderful voices") are opposed to intricate and changeful harmony. The composers who intended their operas to be settings for wonderful voices are not quite as important as those who intended theirs to be dramas with music employed to express and intensify the emotions indicated by the text. Here is a list of the most celebrated of each class, the former in the first column, the latter in the second. The list, of course, is not made arbitrarily, but is justified by musical history, by the internal evidence of the composers' works, and by the general verdict of the musical world:

Scarlatti (A.),	Peri,
Piccini,	Monteverde,
Pergolesi,	Lulli,
Jomelli,	Rameau,
Sacchini,	Gluck,
Paisiello,	Mozart,
Cimarosa,	Cherubini,
Marcello,	Spontini,
Lotti,	Beethoven,
Caldara,	Weber,
Buononcini,	Marschner,
Galuppi,	Méhul,

Fux,	Halevy,
Graun,	Gounod,
Hasse,	Bizet,
Handel,	Wagner,
Rossini,	Reyer,
Mercadante,	Saint-Saëns,
Pacini,	Massenet,
Bellini,	Lalo,
Donizetti,	Rubinstein,
Meyerbeer,	Boito,
Verdi (early),	Ponchielli,
Thomas.	Goldmark,
	Franchetti,
	Verdi (late).

There may easily be a difference of opinion as to the place of Handel and Meyerbeer, but the writer believes that he has good grounds for placing them in the first class. Verdi belongs to the first class by all his work up to "Aïda," but that opera and "Otello" certainly put him in the second; consequently he is given a place in each list. The weight of the authority of great musicians seems to be considerably in favor of the true musical drama. Counting Verdi once in each class, there are six composers in the first division whose operas are performed to-day, and twenty-one in the second division, of whom eleven are living. There is no living composer of celebrity still producing

operas intended to be simply a "setting for wonderful voices." They are all sacrificing the old-fashioned operatic formulas and fiorituri to "alleged dramatic requirements."

There is nothing so absolutely unsatisfactory as a contest over art, because where purposes are diametrically opposed it is impossible for the contending parties to understand one another. The Wagnerite says he does not care anything whatever about waltz tempi and sweet melodies, which are as comprehensible to a child as they are to an old man. He wants dramatic truth, and if an ugly sentiment is to be uttered, it must be expressed in dissonant music; for to couch it in mellifluous measures would be an absurdity. The anti-Wagnerite declares that he goes to the opera for pleasure, and that his pleasure consists in hearing beautiful tunes beautifully sung. It is a curious fact—at any rate, it seems to be a fact—that the bona fide anti-Wagnerite never goes to a symphony or chamber-music concert. If he did, he would, in order to be consistent, be obliged to condemn Beethoven, Schumann, Liszt, Chopin, Brahms, Dvorak, Tschaikowsky, and Rubinstein for doing the very same thing that Wagner did—writing dissonant measures when it suited their purpose to do so. But, as there is no blatant

opposition to these composers, we are forced to the conclusion that the anti-Wagnerites do not go to hear their music, or else they are inconsistent, which is, of course, inconceivable.

What is the use of opposing Wagner, if he is such a wretched composer? Why not let him sink into that obscurity which is the inevitable doom of all false artists? Does anyone suppose for a moment that a great metropolitan public can be forced to go and spend its money on a pleasure which does not please it? The spectacle of three thousand intelligent citizens of New York struggling for seats or standing room in the Metropolitan Opera House, four times a week, to hear operas which they do not like, simply because a few "Wagner maniacs," as they are called, proclaim in the market places that he is the greatest writer of lyric dramas that ever lived, would be astounding. Would any amount of shouting and gesticulating induce this public to conduct itself in a similar manner with regard to the operas of Michael William Balfe? Not by any means. But, on the other hand, why should a lover of the mighty dramas of Wagner allow his choler to rise when Italian opera is announced? Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there nothing good in Italian opera, because it is conceived in a differ-

ent spirit and written in a different style from Wagner's works? What folly! What puerility to make such an assertion! Italian opera has one merit which endears it to this public, and with good reason. It cherishes an art whose loveliness never grows old and whose attractions never pall. "Age cannot wither nor custom stale" its "infinite variety." I mean the art of beautiful singing.

Without that art the opera must surely perish. With it the Wagnerian artist can reach real greatness. What would Sucher, Malten, Lehmann, and the rest be without their voices and their polished vocal art? Yet all that these people know about singing Italy taught them directly or indirectly. It is not necessary for the writer to reiterate his often-repeated estimate of the value of Italian methods in singing. Those methods speak for themselves through the medium of the marvellous voices with which the Creator gifted such singers as Patti and Albani.

There would never be any controversy between Wagner and Italian opera if the contestants would simply admit the purposes of each. Wagner strove to unite poetry, painting, action, and music in one coherent and vital dramatic art. The purpose of the music is the same as

that of the painting and the action—to illustrate and explicate the poem. This being so, it is obvious that all set forms are illogical for the purpose in hand, and all music which does not sacrifice beauty to truth is false to the composer's design. The purpose of the so-called Italian opera is to produce—first, last, and all the time—sweet melodies which can be sweetly sung. To this end the dramatic poem is so constructed as to admit a pleasing variety in the order of solos, duets, trios, quartets, choruses, and ensembles, and the orchestral portion of the work is treated strictly as an accompaniment to the voices. If any emotion demands a harsh and dissonant utterance, it must be modified in such a way that it can be expressed in song without interference with the production of a beautiful tone. In brief, the whole machinery of the opera of the "Lucia," "La Traviata," and "Il Trovatore" school is constructed for the business of turning out good singing.

Now, what is the use of going over the old argument that one is a true art form and the other an intolerable hybrid? Verdi has admitted the truth of that argument. So have Gounod and Boito and Reyer and Lalo and Franchetti and Saint-Saëns and Massenet, and other contemporaneous composers, who have demon-

strated in their works their belief that the true principle was proclaimed by the inventors of opera when they sought for it in the Greek drama. Rossini practically admitted in "William Tell" that the Neapolitan idea was a mistake. Donizetti and Bellini lived in the reign of the great singers, and they wrote for them. If they had lived till to-day they might have followed Verdi and the rest of them.

If people who love Wagner would content themselves with saying, "I do not like opera which is essentially undramatic," and those who love the Italian writers of the old style would be satisfied to say, "I like opera in which there is nothing but beautiful singing," and let the matter rest there, how much more pleasant it would be! "But," says someone, "the persons who write in the public prints will not let the matter drop. Why do not they assume the attitude which you so heartily recommend?" Simply because, dear reader, it is the critic's business to seek for the true, the beautiful, and the good in art. To be sure, if he becomes a controversialist, he is not holding the ideal position of a critic. If he becomes an out and out partisan, he sacrifices himself. But, on the other hand, the critic must eventually arrive at some conclusions. He must possess some sort of con-

victions. He cannot forever be going about inquiring, "What is true art?" The futility of an examination which never reaches any results is obvious. All that can be asked of the critic is that he shall carefully and without prejudice view both sides of the question before forming an opinion. That, too, is all that can be asked of the public. If the critic finds that a certain form of art is based on false principles, but has many beauties, he has no right to close his eyes to its attractions. Neither has the non-professional critic—for every person who goes to the opera is, of course, a critic in and for himself. The ardent lover of Wagner has no right to say that there is no merit in Italian opera. It is not true. Therefore he has no right to view with contempt those who prefer Italian opera to German. They like good singing and they don't care a rap about dramatic significance. There are substantial arguments in favor of a love for pure vocal technique, and the lover of Wagner, if he is fair-minded, must recognize them.

If he feels that the lover of Italian opera is in a benighted condition of musical taste, let him calmly and sensibly endeavor to explain the greatness of Wagner. If the lover of Italian opera believes that his Wagnerite friend is in outer darkness, where there is weeping and wail-

ing and gnashing of trombones, let him calmly and sensibly endeavor to explain the greatness of Donizetti. Let him lecture to his Wagnerite friend on "How to listen to Bellini." But, for pity's sake, let them not go at one another tooth and nail, as if the divine mysteries of music were to be settled by the rules of the Marquis of Queensberry. Exhibitions of wrath over these things will never convince mankind that one is seeking, as Matthew Arnold puts it, to "learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world."

WAGNERIANA.

I.—The Book of "Parsifal."

Mr. John P. Jackson has written an admirable introduction to his English version of Wagner's "Parsifal." In that introduction Mr. Jackson has made excellent use of Professor Tappert's contributions to our knowledge of the master's works. It is well known that the poem of "Parsifal" was completed by Wagner in the summer of 1877, or about a year after the first Bayreuth festival, when the Nibelung tragedy was revealed in its entirety. He read it on September 16th before the delegates from the German Wagner societies which had made his dream of a Wagner theatre an actual fact. "Reverently we sat that afternoon," says Professor Tappert, "in villa Wahnfried. It was an hour that can never be forgotten. When the master came to the third act, just to the place where the coffin with Titurel's corpse is borne into the hall by the Knights of the Grail, the sun was sinking behind the trees in the Hof Garden. His last beams, tremblingly, like greeting spirits, came

silently into the room and glorified the scene, the waves of light resting like a halo around the head of the composer." We can easily imagine the effect of such a picture upon those who heard for the first time this marvellous dramatic poem.

According to Edward Dannreuther, this scene was foreshadowed on May 17th, when the master read "Parsifal" to a circle of friends in Orme Square, London. The book was published in December, 1877. "But," says Mr. Jackson, "the germ of the 'Parsifal' music-drama was born in Wagner's mind much earlier than 1877. The first portions were the 'Abendmahl' scene and the 'Good Friday Magic.' The latter is thought to date from the year 1857. Professor Tappert says: 'Wagner told me (in 1877) that in the fifties, when in Zurich, he took possession on a Good Friday of a charming new house, and that, inspired by the beautiful spring weather, he wrote out the sketch that very day of the Good Friday music.'" From a letter of his to Tichatschek (the tenor), dated Zurich, February 9, 1857, Professor Tappert believes that he is justified in coming to the conclusion that 1857 is the date to be adopted. The passage in his letter is quoted by Mr. Jackson, and reads: "At Easter I shall take possession of a very charming little villa near Zurich, with a pretty garden, in

a glorious position, just like I have so long desired. There I shall soon get settled and begin work in earnest." According to Mr. Dannreuther, Wagner began to sketch the music of the separate acts of the work in his sixty-fifth year. The sketch of the first act was completed in the spring of 1878. The greater part of the second act was outlined by the middle of June and finished on October 11th. The sketch of the third act was begun after Christmas and completed in April, 1879. The master began the instrumentation soon afterward, and finished it at Palermo, January 13, 1882. The first performance took place at Bayreuth on July 25, 1882, and in July and August of that year the work was given sixteen times at Bayreuth. W. S. B. Mathews witnessed the production of the work there in 1884. He wrote: "'Parsifal,' as given here, is a revelation. The performance is of such a consistently elevated character, and so easily carried out in every department, as to make one realize that in his whole life he has never before witnessed an artistic presentation of opera." But "Parsifal" is no opera. It is not even a lyric drama. It is what the great tragedies of the Greeks were—a religious ceremony. On February 13, 1883, Wagner died in Venice. No man ever went before his Maker with a nobler

offering than "Parsifal." In all his works Wagner had preached the gospel of self-sacrifice. In "Parsifal" he returned to that beautiful Christian mythology from which he had drawn his inspiration for "Tannhäuser" and "Lohengrin," and gave to the world a passion play beside which (considering the power of music) even the sacred tragedy of Oberammergau must seem feeble.

It was while collecting the materials for "Tannhäuser" that Wagner read, among other things, the mediæval poem, "Der Wartburgkrieg," which led him to study the personal character of Wolfram von Eschenbach as well as to perceive the availability of his "Parzival" for dramatic purposes. It is aside from our direct purpose, but extremely interesting, to note here the astonishing extent of the preparatory studies which Wagner undertook in approaching all of his great works, and the fidelity with which he reproduced facts whenever it was possible. Wolfram von Eschenbach did actually pass the year 1204 at the Court of the Landgrave Herrmann of Thuringia, at the Castle Wartburg, near Eisenach, where were also (according to the poem) Walter von der Vogelweide, Reimar the Elder, Henry of Rispach, Henry of Ofterdingen, and Klingesor von Ungerland. Wolfram figures in the "Wartburgkrieg" (the Wartburg contest)

as a legendary personage, but it is not at all improbable that he really did take part in such a contest as Wagner has pictured in "Tannhäuser." The poet-composer, at any rate, has been so truthful as to make the character of Wolfram in the opera consistent with that of the real man, and to make him utter sentiments which are in keeping with those of Wolfram's writings. Bayard Taylor says that he finds spiritual meaning shining through the lines of "Parzival." It appears to him to inculcate the doctrine that "peace of soul comes only through faith and obedience." This is not far from the doctrine inculcated by Wagner's "Parsifal." Wolfram's poem opens with an introduction in which the merits of true womanhood are extolled in preference to mere beauty. This is the very heart of the controversy in the contest of song in "Tannhäuser," and Wolfram takes the same position there, opposing Tannhäuser's rash advocacy of the delights of sensual love. It is not strange that Wagner, whose life-work was largely devoted to preaching the salvation of man through the pure love of woman, should have studied the works of Wolfram and drawn from them, first "Lohengrin," and afterward the sacred music-drama "Parsifal." It is a pity that we know so little about Wolfram's life. That he

was a Bavarian is gathered from his own statement (Stanza 121, Line 7, Canto Gurnemanz, "Parzival"), and that he was poor and obliged to subsist after the precarious fashion of mediæval minstrels, is tolerably well proved. These and the few other facts mentioned are all that we know of his history; but his nobility of character is established on foundations which cannot be shaken. His great poem remained unpublished until 1477, when it was given to the world in two volumes under the title of "Partzifal und Titurel."

The story of Parsifal and his relations with the Knights of the Holy Grail is one of the most beautiful of the tales of chivalresque romance. The romance literature of the mediæval ages is divided into several cycles, of which one is known as the Arthurian. The five stories in this cycle are those of Merlin, Perceval, the Grail, Launcelot, and Tristan. The Perceval legend, with which we are now concerned, rests upon the Grail story, which, therefore, demands our first consideration. It is said to have been introduced into Spain by the Arabs, who, of course, did not endow the cup with the sacred power of the Christian legend. According to Wolfram, Guyot de Provins (flourished 1190–95), author of a poem about

Perceval from which Wolfram translated much of his own work, found an old black-letter manuscript in Arabic at Toledo. From this he learned that one Flagetanis, a heathen, born before Christ, and celebrated for his knowledge of the dark arts, had read in the stars that there would appear a thing called the Gral, and that whosoever should be called to its service would be blessed. Guyot promptly went into extensive researches for the purpose of ascertaining whether anyone had ever been found worthy of this service, and, as the house of Anjou was in power, Guyot, after the manner of flattering troubadours, proceeded to discover that in remote times the Gral had been intrusted to the keeping of one Titurel, a fabulous king of the Anjou dynasty. It is doubtful whether Guyot ever saw the black-letter manuscript except with his mind's eye. Simrock, who translated Wolfram's poem into modern German, thinks that the Gral legend is of Provençal origin. He quotes in evidence Dietz's "Etymologisches Wörterbuch der Romanischen Sprachen" (1855), which says that "even now in Southern France 'grazal,' 'grazau,' 'grial,' 'grau,' are used for various kinds of vessels." Perplexity has prevailed over all attempts at showing the true meaning of the word "grail;" but in view

of the tenacity of archaic words among provincial people, Simrock's evidence appears to the writer to be excellent, especially when coupled with the fact that in that Provençal version of the story on which Guyot's poem is undoubtedly founded, and which therefore antedates Wolfram's, the grail is a cup.

According to Wolfram, sixty thousand angels who wished to drive God out of heaven made a crown for Lucifer. When the archangel Michael dashed it from his head a stone fell out, and this became the Grail. Robert de Borron, a trouvère, born near Meaux, wrote (about 1170–80) the Provençal version which has been referred to. It was called "Joseph of Arimathea," or "The History of the Holy Grail," and in it Perceval (Wagner's Parsifal) was undoubtedly mentioned. Now, how did this hero of a French romance come to be that of one of the British Arthurian legends? And here we are confronted with evidence that seems to prove Perceval to have been of British origin, for one writer derives his name from "perchen," a root signifying possession, and "mail" (initially inflected "vail"), a cup, and surmises that the earliest form of the name was Percheuval, meaning cup-holder or grail-keeper. Whether this be the true explanation of the name or not,

it strikes us as being far more acceptable than that which Wagner made for the purpose of his drama, deriving the name from Arabic "Fal-parsi," foolish pure one.

The exploits of Arthur were compiled by Geoffrey of Monmouth. He died in 1154, the year in which Henry II. ascended the throne. Henry was of the house of Anjou, and united under his sceptre the crowns of England, Normandy, Anjou, and a great part of Southern France. In his reign (1154–89) flourished Walter Map, an Archdeacon of Oxford. His chief work, according to Professor Morley, consisted in introducing the Holy Grail into the romances which existed before his time, and making it the pivot around which they all revolved. And here, as Professor Dippold notes in his "Great Epics of Mediæval Germany," we have an explanation of the manner in which the French and English versions of Perceval and the Grail legend became intermingled. The unification of England and parts of France under one monarch was directly favorable to such a result. It accounts for the fact, too, that almost simultaneously with Robert de Borron, as far as we know now, Chrétien de Troyes wrote a "Conte de Graal." His poem does not give a complete account of the adventures of Perce-

val, and Wolfram, who mentions him, accuses him of having incorrectly told the sacred story.

The Grail romance, as written by Borron, does not mention the stone from Lucifer's crown, which afterward became the sacred cup used by Christ at the Last Supper. According to tradition, Pilate permitted Joseph of Arimathea to take the body of Jesus down from the cross, and gave him "son vaisseul," the sacred cup, in which Joseph piously collected the Saviour's blood, and the lance with which the Master's side was pierced. Joseph and his brother-in-law Bron (subsequently dubbed "le roi pecheur") went westward and the Grail was transferred to the keeping of Bron, who became the head of the line of Grail-warders. Borron, the reader will note, did not discover any black-letter manuscript with evidence that his sovereign's ancestors were the warders. Bron remains on the Continent, while Alan, his son, settles in Britain, where he becomes the father of Perceval. Bron has kept the Grail and all knowledge pertaining to it profoundly secret from everyone save Alan. Perceval is to be the third of the race to see the Grail, but after passing through a perilous quest. In the meantime Perceval has become a knight of Arthur's round table, and starts on his journey. After various

adventures he sees his grandfather, the Grail, and the holy spear, without knowing in whose presence he is, or making any inquiries. Here we have the origin of the idea of Parsifal's being a guileless fool. In a second attempt the knight is more successful. Bron reveals himself, explains the mysteries, and tells the precious truths which Joseph had ordered should be told only to the third of his lineage. Bron dies and Perceval becomes keeper of the Grail.

In this simple story, which is, of course, told with a great elaboration of detail, are contained the elements of the romance of Wolfram von Eschenbach. There is a version of the tale in the Welsh Mabinogion, which is thought by some to be the primitive source of the Parsifal legend. This story of "Peredur the Brave Son of Evrawe" is found in the "Red Book of Hergest," of which a translation is preserved in the library of Jesus College, Oxford. Professor Dippold gives a full review of this old epic in his volume previously mentioned, and wisely argues that if it were the primitive source of the story it would be a much simpler version. It is a long and complicated tale, and contains abundant internal evidence that it has been subjected to that accretive process through which all legends pass with the advance of time.

In Wolfram's epic Parzival is the son of Gamuret and Herzoloide. Gamuret is slain in a tournament, and Herzoloide, fearing that her son may meet with a similar fate, brings him up in the forest of Soltane, in utter ignorance of chivalry. But the youth one day sees three knights, whom he takes for angels. They tell him that if he wishes to become a hero of chivalry he must go to King Arthur's Court. Herzoloide, sore at heart, is forced to yield to her son's entreaties. Before letting him depart, however, she dresses him in the costume of a fool. After some stirring adventures he reaches Arthur's Court, where his manly beauty commands admiration in spite of his strange attire. The youth becomes a knight and does some brave deeds, after which he comes to the castle of an old warrior named Gurnemanz, who gives him much instruction. Parzival goes forward again and eventually arrives at the castle of the Grail. Here occurs a scene very similar to the first scene in the castle in Wagner's drama. The sacred lance, dripping with blood, is carried around the hall, and Urepanse de Joie, the purest of women, enters, bearing the Holy Grail. The sacred stone is placed in front of the lord of the castle, whose face shows that he is suffering great agony, and the feast of the

Grail takes place. Parzival asks no questions and learns nothing. Before departing he sees in an adjoining room a very aged man (Titurel) reposing on a bed. As he is leaving the castle the next morning he is scolded by a knight for not asking the question on which depends the recovery of the sick lord of the Grail. He afterward learns where it is that he has been.

He returns to the Court of King Arthur and is admitted to the fellowship of the Round Table. At a feast there appears a woman called Condrie la Sorcière, of dread appearance, the terrible messenger of the Holy Grail, who overwhelms Parzival with abuse because he did not ask the question, and says to King Arthur:

> The glory of the Table Round,
> Its power, far and wide renowned,
> By Percival has been impaired,
> Since he its fellowship has shared.

At the same time Condrie summons the Knights of the Round Table to set free the maidens imprisoned in the magic Château Merveilleux. Parzival renounces the Round Table, believing himself unworthy, and departs in quest of the Holy Grail. He falls in with a hermit named Trèvrecent, who tells him that every Good Friday a dove descends from heaven

and places a wafer on the Holy Grail, "by which the latter receives the power of giving eternal life, and providing its servants with all kinds of meat and drink." Then the hermit goes on to tell him that "Amfortas, the present King of the Holy Grail, having yielded to the allurement of forbidden love, had been severely punished for his offence. In a combat with a pagan he was wounded by a poisoned lance, and since that time had been suffering intensely and no one could cure him, while, on the other hand, the sight of the Holy Grail prevented him from dying. At last there appeared, the hermit continues, a prophecy written on the Holy Grail, saying that whenever a knight should come and ask for the cause of the king's sufferings, without being reminded of it, the king would recover and his crown devolve on that knight." Thus Parzival learns of his error. He repents, and Trèvrecent gives him absolution.

Much of the poem is now taken up with the struggles between the good knights and the powers of darkness, one of whose chief instruments is the beautiful woman Orgueilleuse. She tempts Gawain, but he conquers, and frees the maidens imprisoned by the magician Klingschor in the Château Merveilleux. Parzival, in the

meantime, is engaged in other struggles, after which he rides to Mont Salvage, prays before the Holy Grail, and asks the suffering king the all-important question. Amfortas recovers and the crown is given to Parzival. And now we have reviewed the entire material from which Wagner made his marvellous music-drama.

Parsifal is a guileless fool because he was brought up in ignorance of the world by his mother, Heart of Sorrows. He, too, sees three knights in the forest and fares forth after them. But how Wagner has transformed all the rest of his material! The sacred spear is once more, as it was in Chrétien's poem, the lance which wounded Amfortas and which alone can cure him by its touch, but it is in the power of Klingsor, the magician. Condrie and Orgueilleuse are moulded into one under the name of Kundry, and it is Parsifal who withstands the temptation instead of Gawain. He recovers the sacred spear, and, by making with it the sign of the cross, destroys the enchantment of the Château Merveilleux. Enlightened by pity, he returns after a long and weary search to the Graalburg and heals the sufferer's wound. This enlightenment by pity is a purely Wagnerian touch, for pity is the ethical principle of Wagner's philosopher, Arthur Schopenhauer. It was Hanslick

who first called attention to this beautiful employment of Schopenhauer's idea. It is unnecessary to speak at length of the sublime style in which Wagner has treated the Grail supper and the Good Friday spell, which are but scantily outlined in the original. Nor is it necessary to expatiate on the manner in which, after transferring Gawain's temptation to Parsifal, he has expanded and ennobled the scene. These dramatic pictures speak for themselves. How much, too, has the poet composer deepened the character of Kundry by slightly changing an old legend, according to which she was the daughter of Herodias, cursed for having laughed at the head of John the Baptist on a charger. Wagner makes her a woman who laughed at Christ bearing the cross. Thenceforward, smitten by His glance, she is cursed with laughter, and wanders through the world in search of her Redeemer. After Parsifal has conquered Klingsor and disenchanted his castle, Kundry, who has hitherto known a divided service, seeks to become a vassal of the Grail. On meeting Parsifal again, this laughter-cursed woman weeps, and straightway he baptizes her and she is redeemed. Wolzogen points out that the union in Kundry's nature of hostile and helpful traits has its origin in the Germanic Walküre myths, and that Wagner

has preserved it for dramatic purposes. The result is a picture of emotional struggle such as cannot be surpassed in the entire literature of the stage. Her evil master, Klingsor, is the "nameless enemy of the Grail," the chief of the powers of darkness. He has been confounded with Klingesor von Ungerland, the minnesinger. That this is a mistake is shown by the fact that the latter was a contemporary of Wolfram and contended against him in song at the Wartburg in 1204. The characters of Trèvrecent, the holy hermit, and Gurnemanz, the aged servitor of the Grail and instructor in chivalry, are effectively moulded into one by Wagner under the name of the second.

Amfortas is said to have a double symbolism. He is the personification of that suffering through sin which has penetrated even the sacred community of the Knights of the Grail. All the commentators say that he also typifies the sufferings of Christ. Perhaps this was Wagner's intention, but to the writer's mind Amfortas more beautifully symbolizes the misery brought upon mankind through yielding to the lusts of the flesh, for it is Parsifal who represents the Redeemer throughout the drama. He represents Him when he is anointed by Gurnemanz, when his feet are washed by the repentant Kun-

dry, and when he baptizes her in that sublime scene which only a God-gifted genius could have dared to place upon the modern stage. But more than all, He surely is the Redeemer when He touches Amfortas with the holy spear and bids him

> Be whole, forgiven, and absolved.

After quoting Voltaire's lament that the empire of reason was driving "the airy reign of fancy far away from the earth," Lord Woodhouselee said: "It will require a genius of very remarkable order ever to revive among the polished nations of Europe a fervid taste for the romance of literature." Lord Woodhouselee died in the year in which Wagner was born. He could not foresee the wonderful use to which Wagner was to put the forgotten lays of Robert de Borron, Chrétien de Troyes, and Wolfram von Eschenbach. Johannes Scherr calls Wolfram's "Parzival" the first great work of German idealism, and Vilmar classes it as a psychological epic by the side of Goethe's "Faust." If these estimates are just, where are we to place "Parsifal," the inspired dramatic "Te Deum" of Richard Wagner?

II.—A Study in "Tristan."

After a very impressive performance of Wagner's "Tristan and Isolde," as the curtain was slowly descending before the dead bodies of the Princess, her knightly lover, and the faithful esquire, a young lady, well clad, and bearing evidence in her face of having been reared within the confines of civilization, arose to depart, saying: "Isn't it silly!"

If she had asserted that it was tiresome, one might have set her down as of the number who prefer the sprightly fancies of Charles H. Hoyt to the masterful creations of William Shakespeare, and, while admitting the possibility of a basis for her judgment, have silently condoled with her lack of aspiration. If she had declared that it was immoral, one might have agreed with her very heartily, and taken the comfortable ground so judiciously staked out and claimed by learned commentators, that we are not under the necessity of discussing the morals of a tragedy in order to estimate its value as an art work.

But to hold that "Tristan and Isolde," or its fateful termination, is "silly," is assuming a position which is tolerable to neither gods nor men. The most adroit and well-equipped opponent of Wagner's ideas could not demonstrate that proposition without resorting to that impregnable logic which is doubtless the familiar weapon of the proponent, and which sums up the be-all and the end-all in one word—"because."

Fortunately, the value of "Tristan and Isolde," literary, dramatic, tragic, musical, moral or immoral, is not a matter for such easy decision. The extreme Wagnerites, whose self-contentment is enviable, have already decided that this is Wagner's greatest work, and that it must live even if the others should chance to perish. The Italianissimi believe in their souls—if they can ever find them without the aid of a microscope—that this is Wagner's most fiendish invention, and that it, sooner than anything else he wrote, must give way to a restoration to the musical throne of those royal tramps, "Semiramide" and "Lucrezia Borgia." To those not interested in the discussion of dramatico-musical art the heat of partisanship so constantly displayed must be somewhat tiresome as well as surprising. Thoughtful persons will wonder

why music lovers cannot seek for that which is true, beautiful, and good in their art without waxing angry in the search; and those of less considerate mood will inevitably quote the familiar lines written for such occasions:

> Strange all this difference should be
> 'Twixt tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee.

It is not my purpose at present to discuss "Tristan and Isolde" in its entirety. This tremendous tragedy would furnish material for a volume, for it would be difficult to find an art work produced by a master genius in such a lofty and continued state of enthusiasm, devotion, and self-abandonment. The life-blood of Richard Wagner's genius was called upon to shed its brightest drops for this achievement. The man made unparalleled demands upon himself and met them with unsurpassed efforts. He threw aside completely and forever every prop and stay of tradition, and launched himself upon the fathomless sea of his own originality, caring not whether he swam or sank, but ready to follow the needle of his theoretic compass toward the new country to which he believed it pointed. He tells us that in the composition of this work he went far beyond his theories: but after all he went only whither they

led him. It is given to very few men to see the ultimate, logical outcome of a theory, whether it be of medicine, of art, or of conduct. It is safe to say that Richard Wagner, toiling over the score of "Lohengrin," never had a perfect vision of the "Tristan" that was to be. And I may be forgiven for indulging in the belief that Wagner, penning the inspired pages of "Die Götterdämmerung," made some allowance for the variation of that theoretic compass which in "Tristan" carried him out of the true course.

The dramatic weakness of "Tristan and Isolde" is to be found in its second act. According to Quintilian, it was the custom of the Greek and Roman masters of oratory to begin with an exordium, then advance their arguments with the weakest in the middle, and close with a forcible peroration. "Tristan and Isolde" is built on a plan resembling this, for its weakest dramatic argument is in the middle —the second act. But the purposes of the orator and of the dramatist are so dissimilar that the plans and forms of the one will not fill the requirements of the other. A successful tragedy begins with Fate pointing her inexorable finger at an inevitable doom, and thenceforward all incidents in the drama hurry the hero and heroine toward the catastrophe. At the

first glance it seems as if there were no tragedy which could answer this demand with more startling completeness than "Tristan and Isolde." So far as its incidents are concerned this is true. But there must be no turning aside from the onward movement of the events, no consideration of secondary matters; and this requirement is not met in "Tristan and Isolde."

Mr. Krehbiel, who is one of the discriminating lovers of the great German master, has pointed out the defect of the second act of this tragedy. He has said that the long passages of word-play and metaphysical hair-splitting (these are not his words) about night and day, and love and oblivion, are poor dramatic material, and that half an hour of this sort of thing is too much. This is undeniably true. But the critic might have gone further and said, that Wagner turned aside from the straightforward development of his plot to put into the mouths of his leading personages philosophical utterances whose underlying ideas are not essential elements of the passion called love. Mr. Krehbiel has said that the poet-composer here endeavored to lay bare to us the workings of the hearts of his characters. But speculations in pessimistic philosophy, while they may be in touch with

the spirit of gloom which pervades a tragedy, are not likely to be the accompaniments of a love scene, except in a state of cultivated civilization so artificial as to be unimaginable anywhere outside of Boston or the famous Concord School. Beyond doubt Swinburne made his Iseult reach the kernel of the situation when she checked Tristan's scholastic wooing with the lines quoted by Mr. Krehbiel:

> I have heard men sing of love a simpler way
> Than these wrought riddles made of night and day.

In an article published in *Scribner's Magazine*, W. F. Apthorp undertook to show the metaphysical influences which governed Wagner in his development of the scheme of a music-drama to be called "Siegfried's Tod," but which finally became the great Trilogy. These influences were found in the pessimistic philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer, and are those which operated upon Wagner's mind in the construction of "Tristan and Isolde." Schopenhauer's ethics demand sympathy for suffering, but above all else a mortification through asceticism of the will to live. Our world, according to this philosopher, is the very worst kind of a world, and the oblivious night of non-existence

is far preferable. Sympathy softens suffering; asceticism destroys it by annihilating the will to live. This is a complete negation of the sensuous nature of man, and bears a strong resemblance to the Buddhistic doctrine of Nirvana—the final state of saints made pure by asceticism, and translated into celestial unconsciousness. The negation of the sensuous nature of man for some reason does not appear to be successfully accomplished by Tristan or Isolde, except in the latter's death, which, like the magnificent suicide of Brunnhilde, takes place when she has nothing more to live for.

This pessimistic philosophy, dragged into the love scene by the neck as it is, will not do Wagner's bidding. For hearken to the prayer of the lovers after their long-drawn discussion of the evils of day and glories of night:

> O sink' hernieder
> Nacht der Liebe;
> gieb vergessen
> dass ich lebe.

Which means, "Oh, sink down hither, night of love, and grant me to forget that I live." If anyone can reconcile a wish to forget that he is alive with the presence in his soul of a tumultuous passion of love, stronger than honor, duty,

and friendship, let him do so. It is only the overwhelming sense of guilt, the unutterable remorse following such love that can bring about a full and perfect negation of the will to live. The difficulty is that Arthur Schopenhauer's philosophy, as set forth in his principal book, "Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung," is a subjective idealism, beginning with the proposition "the world is my notion," and proceeding thence to the construction of a system tolerating no realism, not even that of a man's own body, which it regards as nothing but the will objectified—the will become notion or representation. The absolute incompatibility of such a system of philosophy with a love like that of Tristan and Mark's queen is not hard to comprehend.

Nor is it difficult to discern that feature of Schopenhauer's philosophy which gave the whole an especial importance and favor in Wagner's esteem. In Book III. of the work above mentioned the metaphysician sets forth a theory of art. Shorn of its philosophical terminology, and presented as plainly as possible, it is this: When the human mind rises from the study of the location, period, causes, and tendencies of things to the undivided examination of their essence, and when, further, this consid-

eration takes place, not through the medium of abstract thought, but in calm contemplation of the immediately present natural object, then the mind is brought face to face with eternal Ideas. Art, the work of genius, repeats these eternal Ideas, which are the essential and permanent things in the phenomena of the world. In other words, art endeavors to exhibit to us the eternal essence of things by means of prototypes. And here we come upon the one feature of Schopenhauer's system which Wagner successfully used. His greatest characters stand for the universal, primeval, and eternal essence of manhood and womanhood, uncultivated, uncivilized, unhampered. It is this which takes hold upon our hearts, which thrills and renews us, which fills us full to the lips with the enthusiasm of deathless youth.

And it is because Tristan and Isolde are two fundamental universal types, representing to us the unartificial man and woman, acting under the influence of a purely natural and unrestrained passion, that we are vexed and disappointed at their long-winded word-splitting. You will find no such blunder in the great love-duet of Siegmund and Sieglinde, in "Die Walkure." No sooner has Sieglinde told the story of the sword in the tree, and expressed her longing for the

defender who should draw it forth, than Siegmund snatches her to his bosom and cries :

He holds thee fast,
That friend for whom
Were weapon and wife appointed!
Deep in my bosom
Burns brightly the oath
That binds me forever to thee.

After he has continued in a similar strain for a few lines the curtain falls, the moonlight streams into the hall, Siegmund leads Sieglinde to a seat, and sings to her that most marvellous of all love's lullabies, beginning :

Winter storms have waned
'Fore the storms of May ;
In wondrous splendor
Wakens the spring.

No poet that ever lived sang a love-song with more unerring instinct. Again, in "Siegfried," when the young hero comes at last to the fire-girt Valkyr's rock-hewn bed-chamber, he dallies with no philosophical distinctions, but speaks out straight and true like a man :

On rapturous lips
My eyes look for pasture ;
With fathomless thirst
My mouth is on fire.

Not Swinburne, nor Baudelaire, nor François Villon, nor all the "sad, bad, mad, glad" brothers who have made love their life study, could have written with more certain note. It is, then, because these characters just named do not smother love in philosophy, but treat it as a plain, unadulterated condition of the heart, which has always persistently refused to be guided or influenced by reason, that they seem to us to come nearer to being those fundamental types for which Wagner wisely sought. When you get right down to the bottom of the matter, the philosophizing of Tristan and his lady love is almost as absurd as King Mark's sermonizing after the discovery of their guilt.

The late John McCullough is credited with saying that Hamlet was the one part in which any good actor could make a hit if he would only attend to the stage "business" and let the metaphysics alone. Love is a good deal like Hamlet. The metaphysics may be left for the reflections of one's hours of solitude. In active practice the "business" must absorb one's entire attention.

III.—The Endurance of Wagner's Works.

It is frequently asserted by those who are not in accord with Wagner's ideas of dramatic music that his works are simply sensations of the day, and that after a time this temporary craze will pass by and the world will return to its old love of Neapolitan opera. I am not prepared to assert that the world will not tire of Wagner. The constant endeavor of blind partisans to convince music-lovers that he is the only composer worth hearing, and that Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven are antiquated and uninteresting, is enough to make the world turn against the Bayreuth genius. But it seems to me that there is room enough in the affection of the human race for all that is good in music, and while I fail to see any disposition to forget Wagner's mighty predecessors, I am equally unable to perceive any evidence that the world regards his works as a fancy of the moment. They hold their possession of the stage very firmly and are being performed in more places now than ever before. As a proof

that Wagner shows no signs of waning in public estimation I think the chronological argument is a good one. It is a common mistake to underestimate Wagner's early works. That they are really valuable creations may be demonstrated in many ways, but perhaps the mere fact of endurance will strike the average thinker as forcibly as any argument. It is a common practice to say that Mozart's "Don Giovanni" establishes its claim on immortality by the firm hold it retains on public affection in spite of changes in taste and the many other changes wrought, as Carlyle has it, "not by time, but in time." Shakespeare's claim is often put upon the same ground. Well, it is four years more than a century since "Don Giovanni" was first heard, and that is a very long life for an opera.

How long has "Rienzi" held the stage? The latter end of the present year will witness the forty-ninth anniversary of its production in Dresden, under Wagner's own direction, in 1842.

But with most people "Rienzi" does not count, because it is not genuine Wagner music. It was written before his regeneration. Then let us peep at the "Flying Dutchman," in which the Wagner of the future is so clearly foreshadowed in leit motives, overture form, declamation, instrumentation, and distribution of scenic

music. This romantic opera, as its maker called it, was produced at the Royal Opera in Dresden on January 11, 1843, with Wechter as the *Dutchman* and Mme. Schröder-Devrient as *Senta*. It has, therefore, held the stage for forty-eight years, and its hold appears to be quite as firm now as at any time in the course of its existence.

Let us advance now to "Tannhäuser," which is still more Wagnerian. This work was brought out at the Royal Opera in Dresden on October 20, 1845, and has therefore held the stage forty-six years with constantly widening popularity. It is to-day one of the standard operas in the répertoire of the best opera-houses, and, with a good cast, is always sure of a large audience. And next we come to "Lohengrin," which may be regarded as fairly if not fully illustrating Wagner's dramatic principles. It was produced at Weimar, August 28, 1850, under the direction of Franz Liszt, with Beck as *Lohengrin*, Milde as *Telramund*, Höfer as the *King*, Frau Agathe as *Elsa*, and Frau Fastinger as *Ortrud*. Its popularity is very wide, and it is constantly growing.

Verdi's "Nabuco" was produced in 1842, Mendelssohn's "Elijah" in 1846, Verdi's "Rigoletto" in 1851, and Gounod's "Faust" in 1859. "Nabuco" is dead to the world. "Rienzi" has held the stage. Mendelssohn's "Elijah" is known

throughout the English and German-speaking parts of the earth. Yet the "Flying Dutchman" is three years older and "Tannhäuser" one year. No opera is better known and more justly admired than Gounod's "Faust," which contains some of the most faithful dramatic music to be found outside of Wagner; yet "Rienzi" is seventeen years older, the "Flying Dutchman" sixteen, "Tannhäuser" fourteen, and "Lohengrin" nine. And the world hears at least two of these works almost, if not quite, as often as it hears "Faust," one of the most popular operas ever written.

As for Wagner's later works, those in which his theories are more fully exemplified, it can be said that they have held the stage a very respectable time in spite of constant vociferations on the part of their opponents that they must soon go to the grave. And to-day they are beginning to carry the war into Africa. "Die Meistersinger" has planted itself in the Italian camp beside "Rienzi," the "Flying Dutchman," "Tannhäuser," and "Lohengrin," and there is—O shade of Chorley!—talk of "Tristan und Isolde."

This last-named drama, the extreme illustration of Wagner's beliefs, has held the stage over a quarter of a century, having been produced in Munich, under the direction of Dr. von Bülow,

on June 10, 1865, with the following cast: *Tristan*, Ludwig Schnorr von Carolsfeld; *Kurvenal*, Mitterwurzer; *King Mark*, Zottmayer; *Isolde*, Mme. Schnorr von Carolsfeld; *Brangäne*, Mlle. Deinet. "Die Meistersinger" has been before the public with increasing favor since June 21, 1868, when it was brought out at Munich under Von Bülow. And as for the Nibelung tetralogy, the crowning glory of the lyric stage, that operatic thing which makes the anti-Wagnerites shudder, even that has clung to existence for fifteen years, and is growing stronger and more healthy every year.

The number of operas older than Wagner's early works and still performed is surprisingly small when one comes to think of it, and the number preserving a wide popularity is smaller still. Without taking the trouble to count them, one may hazard the guess that there are not more than twenty-five, and of these several, like "Lucia," "Semiramide," and "Norma," are only given in serious artistic communities for the purpose of exploiting the special abilities of some great vocalist. It seems fair to expect, then, as Wagner's earlier works have kept their hold so firmly, that his later ones will not fail to do so. Let us remember that this very "Lohengrin," which is so melodious and so popular, was writ-

ten at a time when Wagner's mind was full of his theories, for "Opera and Drama," as Mr. Matthews cleverly notes in one of his books, was published in 1851, and the two works "may well enough be accepted as mutually explanatory."

This point is worthy of note, because it is not an uncommon mistake for lovers of the great master to suppose that his earlier works do not illustrate his ideas. Even in "Rienzi" the individuality of the man may be discovered. It is well known that this work was written partly at Meyerbeer, whose influence Wagner hoped would secure a performance of it at the Paris Grand Opera. As Mr. Matthews justly says, Wagner might have met with more success if he had not alarmed Meyerbeer with a prospect of successful rivalry. In this very work, written for the purpose of gaining an entrance where Meyerbeer and Rossini were the rulers, the individuality of Wagner is at times apparent. Mr. Matthews has already mentioned the evidences of it, and we quote his words: "The recitative is largely arioso, there are long passages of soliloquy or speech-making, and the harmony has that mysterious coherence peculiar to Wagner's manner of associating chords. Italian as it is, 'Rienzi' could only have been written by

Wagner, and by him only at a time when, as yet, he was feeling after the style which later he completely attained."

In "The Flying Dutchman," however, Wagner had done with Italianism forever. There is not a solitary measure in the work that reminds one of the Italian stage. Even the brisk little march at the end of the first act is German. In this work the future Wagner is promised. We meet with the powerful declamatory arioso style, the intimate association of musical phrases with the ideas of the drama, the coherent and well-fashioned book, the mythical personages, the marvellous instrumentation—in short, the entire apparatus of "Der Ring des Nibelungen" is here in embryo, and in the music-dramas which were written after it an observant person can very easily trace the development of Wagner's ideas.

THE EVOLUTION OF PIANO MUSIC.

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I.—Laying the Foundations.

If any music lover desires to take up one of the most fascinating departments of the history of the art, let him enter upon the study of the evolution of piano music. He will find some difficulty in the lack of good works treating of the early writers. The best, however, is Weitzmann's "Geschichte des Clavierspiels und der Clavierliteratur." Why it has not been translated I am unable to say. It certainly ought to be. The facts in the following story of the beginnings of piano music as far as Paradies are given wholly on Weitzmann's authority, except where otherwise stated.

In the early part of the fifteenth century flourished the celebrated organists of the Church of San Marco at Venice, and thither went great numbers of students and famous musicians from

all parts of Europe. As far back as 1364 we find that Francesco Landini, a blind poet and organist, was in high repute. But the first great light of this Venetian school was Adrian Willaert, born in 1480 at Bruges. It appears, according to Weitzmann, that he did not escape the fate of modern pianists. He had to teach young ladies who wished to learn the fashionable instrument of the time, the monochord. In 1529 Elena, daughter of the poet Pietro Bimbo, wrote to her father for permission to learn to play. His reply is happily preserved. He says:

"As regards your request to be permitted to learn to play the monochord, I reply that because of your tender age it is impossible for you to know that such playing is fit only for vain and frivolous women. I, however, desire that you shall be the most amiable and the purest girl on earth. Moreover, it would give you little pleasure or fame to play ill; but, in order to play well, you would have to spend from ten to twelve years in practice without having time for anything else. Now, consider whether this would be worth while. If your young friends desire you to learn to play in order to give them pleasure, say that you do not wish to make yourself ridiculous before them, and be content with your scientific studies and your fancy-work."

To Willaert is due the first movement of music toward freedom from the old ecclesiastical modes,

and his pupil, Cypriano di Rore, went far forward in the study of chromatic music, publishing in 1544 his "Chromatic Madrigals." Willaert's fantasias and ricercari are for the most part founded on original themes. In his strictly contrapuntal music, however, he follows the custom of his predecessors and uses the canti fermi of the church. In his treatment he employs the dominant, sub-dominant, and octave, and makes much use of imitation. Willaert's successors, previously mentioned, all followed his free style, and to their united labors we owe the gradual liberation of instrumental music from the vocal-ecclesiastical style. The first instrumental form to be clearly established was the toccata, which, with its quick passages, was designed for the speedily vanishing tones of the clavichord. The first of these compositions to be printed were those of Claudio Merulo, a Venetian organist, published at Rome in 1598, under the title of "Toccate d' Intavolature d' Organo." The title, of course, implies that they were designed especially for the organ. At that time there was no distinct clavichord style, however, and compositions for the organ and piano of the period were pretty much alike in treatment.

In Merulo's toccatas we find some connection

between the figured passages, and there is good contrast between the melodic portions and the passage work. Dr. Philip Spitta, in his great "Life of Bach," says that Merulo found in the toccata "a kind of composition in which he endeavored to give full play to the wealth of tone possessed by the organ by alternating combinations of brilliant running passages with sostenuto sequences of harmonies." The canzona and sonata (of that period) were developed by Andrea and Giovanni Gabrielli. In their works the melody became more important. In Giovanni's canzone we meet with interesting forms, with essentially melodic subjects always forming their foundations, and with subject and counter-subject regularly alternating. The fugue, which has become so important a study, was originally an imitation of the voices in vocal music. Zarlino christened it canon because it followed a canon, or fixed law. The entrance into music of the folk-song at the time of the Renaissance caused a richer development of these old studies. The instrumental writers began to take up the dance forms of the people and to write courantes, chaconnes, galliards, etc. These compositions were received with favor. Subsequently the giga was added, and a set of these dances was called a suite or partita.

At first, instrumental music was simply a doubling of voice parts for the purpose of accompaniment. Then compositions were written to be played or sung. Consequently we find that in 1547 came the first publication, that of Jacob Buus's "Ricercari da cantare e sonare." Two years later Willaert's fantasies for three voices (vocal or instrumental) were printed, and in 1551 was issued the "Intabulatura nova di varie sorte di balli da sonare per Arpichordo, Clavicembalo, Spinetti e Manachordi," by various authors. The upper voice of the dances in this collection is supported by a simple harmony in chords. In later works the accompaniment is worked out in a much more interesting manner. These dances, too, were written in the church modes, and have a very dry and ecclesiastical air about them, as if they belonged to some ancient religious ritual, which, indeed, all dances originally did.

It was in Venice that the first systematic organ and piano method appeared. It was written by Girolamo di Ruta and was called "Prima parte del Transilvano, dialogo sopra il vero moro di sonar' organo ed instrumenti da penna" (1593). The second part appeared in 1609. "Transilvano" refers to the Prince to whom it was dedicated. Di Ruta's work

teaches the keyboard, shows the position of the hand and use of the fingers, explains the score, and illustrates the necessity of his rules by toccatas original and selected. In the second part he tells how to write a song, gives suggestions for improvising, with examples, treats of the church tones and the accompaniment of chorals, and gives some suggestions about singing. Weitzmann, however, gets a good deal better information about fingering as it existed at that time, and for a century later, from a book which was published at Bologna in 1656, and reached its fifth edition at Antwerp in 1690. It was written by Lorenzo Penna, organist, and its title is "Li Primi Albori Musicali." In it he lays down the following rules:

In ascending, the fingers of the right hand move one after the other—first the middle, then the ring finger, again the middle, and so on in alternation. Care must be taken that the fingers do not strike against one another. In descending, the middle, followed by the index finger, is used. The left hand simply reverses this process. The rule for the position of the hands is that they shall never lie lower than the fingers, but shall be held high, with the fingers stretched out.

In the following century, which brings us

into the days of Handel and Bach, the fingering is no more rational. There is an old work by J. F. B. Caspar Majers, published at Nuremberg in 1741, and quoted approvingly by Matheson. He gives the names of the white keys as c, d, e, f, g, a, and so on through four octaves. He gives the names of the black keys also. In giving his rules for fingering he numbers the thumb 0, the index finger 1, the middle finger 2, and so to the end. This is notable as being similar to the system employed in this country, where the thumb is marked x and the index finger 1. In Germany it is the rule to mark the thumb 1, the index finger 2, etc. Majers's rules for fingering are as follows:

Left hand you take	2ds ascending	with the	index and thumb.
	2ds descending		middle and ring.
	3ds and 4ths		ring and index.
	5ths and 6ths		ring and thumb.
	7ths and 8ths		little and thumb.
Right hand you take	2ds ascending	with the	middle and ring.
	2ds descending		middle and index.
	3ds and 4ths		ring and index.
	5ths and 6ths		index and little.
	7ths and 8ths		little and thumb.

A little experimenting will show you how different these rules are from those of to-day.

The first rational rules are those published by Emanuel Bach, at Berlin, in 1753; but the great Sebastian Bach's fingering was not bound by such absurd laws as those of Majers's.

It is worth while to go back a little in order to study the development of the harpsichord style in Rome, where we first meet with the works of Girolamo Frescobaldi (1591–1640). He was a great organist, and in all of his compositions we find fugal writing, but his ricercari show development of a fixed subject, while his canzone contain bits of choral-like melody. The principal melody of the canzona is always recognizable. Again, his capriccii differ materially from those of his predecessors. The capriccio before his time consisted of a movement in common time in which different themes were developed, followed by a second movement in triple time, shorter and in the dance style. A new movement of fugal character acted as coda to the entire composition. The capriccii of Frescobaldi are always based on a peculiar prelude, containing some striking suggestions, and here the composer especially distinguishes himself by the wealth of his inventive power and by his treatment.

In his "Capriccio di Durezze" are examples

of intentional harshness of harmony. In his "Capriccio Chromatico con Ligaturi al Contrario" there are passages of chromatic nature with ascending resolutions, a piece of daring new at that time. His contemporaries always used the church scales; but he made attempts toward approaching our present keys by use of the leading tone. He was also the first who tried to write music that could be easily read. He published in 1615, at Rome, "Toccate e partite d' intabulatura di cembalo." In this the notes for the right hand were written on six, and those for the left on eight lines.

Bernardo Pasquini, born 1637, died 1710, was one of the great lights of the Roman school in the latter half of the seventeenth century. In the few of his compositions which have been printed there is shown a tendency to leave the former strict style and to adopt a manner clearer than that of Frescobaldi. His toccatas are no longer contrapuntally written for four voices. We occasionally find arpeggios in the full chord, and sometimes an attempt to disguise and prolong the short tones of the clavichord by a sustained trill. He writes flowing passages for both hands, and in his fugues, which are formed strictly according to rule, we find in the second part some of the livelier passages of the first

introduced for the purpose of bringing the composition to an end.

This brings us to that point in the growth of the Italian school from which the development of the classical forms of piano music are distinctly traceable. We have seen that the tendency of the school has been, first, to escape from the fetters of the ecclesiastical modes and to acquire the wealth of chromatics; second, to throw off the shackles of contrapuntal rules and compose with freedom of style; third, to abandon writing for four voices and to compose a melody with subordinate yet independent accompaniment; fourth, to employ contrasted movements, and fifth, to establish the difference between the technique of the organ and that of the clavichord and harpsichord. The man who completely established the tendencies of the Italian school and fully achieved what his predecessors had attempted was Domenico Scarlatti (1683–1757).

Attempts had been made previous to his day to establish equal temperament, rendering it possible to play in all the modern keys. This end was attained by Scarlatti's contemporaries, Bach and Rameau. At the same time the influence of the Neapolitan school of opera composers, founded by Alessandro Scarlatti, father

of Domenico, was the ruling power in Italian music, and the chief merit of this school was the fluency of its melody. What could be more natural than Domenico's endeavor to transfer this melody to the instrument of which he was master, and to enrich it with all those technical embellishments in which he was an expert? This, then, is what Domenico Scarlatti accomplished. He settled for all time the dominance of homophonic music over polyphonic in compositions for the piano. Langhans says pertinently, in his "History of Music," that Scarlatti did not realize the significance of the sonata, but commended his compositions of this class to the indulgence of the public, with the remark that "in them not deep design would be found, but the ingenious pleasantry of art." "In fact," continues Langhans, "he makes more account of technics than of intellectual contents; yet by his application of the principle of tripartition, prescriptive for the modern sonata, and by a number of effective innovations of a technical kind, such as running passages in thirds and sixths, the quick stroke of one and the same key with different fingers, broken chords in contrary motion for both hands, etc., he leads us directly into the modern age." These things were new and original.

We must return to the indefatigable Weitzmann to get a more detailed account of this man's work. The exhaustive German historian says that Scarlatti's compositions maintain throughout a characteristic principal motive, sustained by a well-elaborated bass. The first movement of the real sonata form is outlined in them. There are two parts, each of which is repeated. The first contains the exposition of the thematic material of the composition. It begins with the principal theme in the chief key, moves to a related key in the following passage, and closes with a cadence in the second key. If the first part is in a major key, the dominant is used for the modulatory passage by which the second part is reached; if it is in a minor key, then the relative major or dominant minor is used. The second part then develops the material of the first, and modulates back to the fundamental key, takes up the beginning of the composition, or sometimes a later passage in the exposition, repeats the motive of the first part in the original key, and closes generally with a cadence like that of the first part. An important peculiarity of Scarlatti's form, foreshadowing that of much later writers, is that frequently in the modulatory portion of the first part he introduces a new thought, or second subject, essentially different

from the first. Add to all these novelties in treatment the fact that he was original, and even daring, in his modulations and rhythms, and you have a general view of the importance of Domenico Scarlatti.

There are three more composers of the Italian school who may as well be mentioned here, because they bring us into direct connection with our own times. The first of these is Francesco Durante (1684–1755). He wrote studies in the free style, consisting of flowing passages and broken chords, sometimes for two, sometimes for three, and even four, voices or parts, following by a sort of divertimento for two voices, in the same key, less laboriously worked out.

The second is Domenico Alberti (about 1717 to about 1740). His compositions consisted of a long allegro in two parts, in the sonata form already suggested, followed by another movement, sometimes long and sometimes short, in the same key. Alberti did not treat his accompaniment contrapuntally, but invented the well-known Alberti bass. This was much easier than the older basses, and the abuse of it did much to retard the development of the left hand. Pietro Domenico Paradies (1710–1792) wrote twelve "Sonate di Gravicembalo." His works are musically and technically far more val-

uable than those of Alberti. They consist of two movements in the same key, but differing in tempo. The first movement is the longer. It is in two parts, the first of which regularly closes in the dominant of the chief key. It is either an allegro followed by a shorter movement vivace, or it is an aria. Sometimes he begins with an andante, followed by a minuette or a giga. This composer's works were studied by the celebrated Muzio Clementi. This master taught John Field, one of whose pupils was Alexander Villoing, the teacher of Anton Rubinstein.

It is necessary now to go back in order to note the rise of the English, French, and German schools. The English school of harpsichord players and writers was very important while it lasted, but it exerted no great or lasting influence on the progress of art. The German school, on the other hand, developed steadily along a well-defined path, giving to the world the works of Handel, Sebastian and Emanuel Bach, who clearly defined the sonata form, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, after whom came the modern romantic school. It seems most convenient to dismiss the English school before showing how the Germans, having learned the arts of composition and performance of

clavichord music from the Italians, proceeded to advance in their own characteristic way. The French school, which is of more importance than the English, will also be considered.

It appears that in 1550 there were in the service of Edward VI., in addition to singers, players of the lute, harp, flute, and rebek, trumpeters, and drummers, three active virginal players, and in 1575 Thomas Tallis and his famous pupil, William Byrd, were organists to Queen Elizabeth. There had been virginal playing in England long before this, however. Even Henry VIII. was a player, and a composer as well, as may be seen by his "Pavane," transcribed by J. Stafford Smith from the Arundel collection, and printed in the "Musica Antiqua." This royal composition was much like the Venetian dances of the book of 1551, and the development of virginal music in England seems to have been similar to that of spinnet music in Italy up to a certain point. In "Queen Elizabeth's Virginal Book" are to be found specimens of the writing of Tallis, Byrd, and their contemporaries, Giles, Farnaby, Dr. Bull, and others. Among these compositions we find fantasias, which consisted of different motives following one another in imitation and fugal style, pavanes, galliards, and variations on folk

melodies. The first collection of virginal music published in England was that known as the "Parthenia," which appeared in 1611. The music was written by Byrd, Bull, Orlando Gibbons, and others. It consisted of twenty-one pieces, printed on six-line staves. These pieces were preludes, pavanes, galliards, one fantasia in four parts, and the "Queen's Command," by Gibbons, which was an air and variations. These Englishmen were great players and composers in their time, but they accomplished little or nothing in the development of our extant form and technique. It is safe to say that the achievements of the French school deserve more careful consideration, though, as we shall presently see, the development of piano music and piano playing passed from Italy to Germany in the first half of the eighteenth century, and was continued by the great Teutonic masters down to our time.

The first great light of the French clavecin school was François Couperin, the second of the name, born 1668, died 1733. He was a contemporary of Jean Philippe Rameau (1683–1764), who was not only a great operatic composer, but also a celebrated theorist. His "Traité d'Harmonie," published in 1722, contains rules which form the basis of our present

harmony. "Moreover, Rameau brought to perfection equal temperament, which we saw Zarlino beginning to study in Venice a century and a half earlier. He divided the octave into twelve equal half steps, thus removing the impediments offered to the progress of instrumental music by instruments with a fixed tuning. Bach had already brought equal temperament into use in 1722, but it was only after the publication in 1737 of Rameau's 'Génération Harmonique' that scientists accepted this system of tuning as the essential basis of music" ("Story of Music," page 45). Couperin lived hardly long enough to reap the benefits of Rameau's achievements, but his immediate successors showed the influence of the new theory. Couperin published four volumes of "Pieces de Clavecin." They were approved by Sebastian Bach, who advised his pupils to study them. He also published a notable technical work entitled "L'Art de toucher le Clavecin, y compris huit Preludes."

His compositions were mostly suites, but the form was very uncertain. Full harmony is rarely found in Couperin's clavier movements. They are usually contrapuntal, but the upper voice carries the principal melody. His works contain curious rhythmical oddities, which give them a

stiff, old-fashioned, angular movement. His suites are a sort of refined ballet music, and the movements are often distinguished by theatrical titles, such as "La Majesteuse," "La Prude," "La Flattesse." The uncertainty of the form of his suites is seen in the loose distribution of the movements. For instance, one suite, the fifth (A major), consists of an allemande, two courantes, a sarabande, a gigue, and six rondos, intermingled with numbers in free style. Dr. Spitta says ("Life of Bach," vol. ii., page 86): "In spite of this he never entirely quits the ground of the suite, for he keeps to the same key throughout, even when he does not begin with the usual pieces. But it is clear that he never felt the necessity of welding together the various constituent parts to one perfect whole of many members." The chief significance of Couperin's suites for us lies in the fact that the great Bach studied them and imitated them. This accounts for some of the peculiarities of his compositions in this line. Couperin also wrote an allemande for two claviers, which may have had some influence in producing Bach's double concerti. It may as well be added here that Bach wiped out the uncertainties of form in the suite, and in this, as in other departments, established the model for future composers. Louis Marchand (1669–

1732) and his successor, Louis Claude Daquin, were the other lights of the French school. Rameau, before mentioned, published several collections of compositions for the clavier, the last of which, issued in Paris in 1741, was "Trois concertos pour clavecin, violon et basse de viole." As this was published after the time when the development of piano music had fairly passed over into Germany, it needs but to be mentioned. There is an excellent edition by no less a master than Johannes Brahms of some of Couperin's compositions, and other works of the French school can be found in E. Pauer's "Alte Claviermusik" and Weitzmann's "Geschichte des Clavierspiels."

Let us now turn to an examination of the beginning of the great German school. The early masters of this school studied under the Italian composers. It is not necessary to enter into this matter in detail, but for the benefit of those who would like a more extended account than will be given here, it may be said that material is to be found in Naumann's "History of Music," vol. i., page 612 et seq.; Weitzmann's "Geschichte des Clavierspiels," page 34 et seq., and in various parts of Spitta's "Life of Bach," which must be discovered by searching the index. The first of the Germans who studied under Italian

masters was Gallus (1550–91). He is supposed to have been a pupil of Andrea Gabrielli. Jacob Meiland (1542–77), Adam Gumpeltzhaimer (1560–?), Christian Erbach (1560–1628), Hans Leo Hassler (1564–1612), and Gregor Aichinger (1565–1621) all studied under Venetian masters and wrote in the Venetian style for organ and harpsichord. Meiland, for instance, wrote what Naumann calls "song-dances," which were galliards, pavanes, etc., *da cantare e sonare.* Hassler was probably the most talented composer of all these, but his best works were canzonets and madrigals for voices, and they became widely popular. Many Germans studied in Rome, whither they were drawn by the fame of Carissimi and Frescobaldi, and it is among the pupils of the latter that we find two of the important predecessors of Bach. These were Johann Kasper von Kerl (1625–90) and Johann Jacob Froberger (1610–67). It is not definitely proved that Kerl studied under Frescobaldi, but his eminence as an organist, together with the fact that he studied in Rome and the internal evidence of his works, makes it a safe inference that he did so. Froberger, we know, went to Rome on purpose to study under Frescobaldi.

Froberger excelled as both organist and cembalist. His writings display the finely developed

contrapuntal and fugal style of his master, and also a tendency to an excessive use of those special kinds of ornamentation adapted to keyed instruments. These ornaments, called agréments, such as the "tremblement simple" (trill), "autre cadence," "pincé," "chute et pincé," "coulé," "tierce coulée," etc., were cultivated by the French, and Froberger is supposed to have learned them while visiting Paris. He rejected the six- and eight-line staves and wrote on a five-line staff as we do now, using indifferently the C, F, or G clef. Two important works of his were published at Mayence. The first was called "Diverse curiose rarissime partite di toccate, ricercate, capricci e fantaisie per gli amatori di cembali, organi ed instromenti." The second, a larger work (1714), was called: "Diverse ingegniosissime, rarissime, e non mai più viste curiose partite di toccate, canzone, ricercate, alemande, correnti, sarabande e gigue di cembali, organi e instrumenti." There is much charming melody in these works, and Sebastian Bach esteemed them so highly that he wrote a prelude and fugue in E flat on the Froberger model. Dr. Spitta says that Froberger's toccatas "contributed to the formation of the North German fugue form, consisting of several sections." He further says that "with regard to free organ com

position Froberger stands about half-way between the northern and southern masters." This is less interesting to us than the fact that Froberger was one of the earliest composers of programme music. Dr. Spitta, in searching for the model after which Bach built his "Capriccio sopra la lontananza del suo fratello dilettissimo," mentions Kuhnau's six sonatas on biblical narratives and says they did not stand alone. He quotes Matheson, who declared that Froberger could tell whole histories on the clavier, "giving a representation of the persons present and taking part in it, with all their natural characters." Matheson says, moreover, that he possessed a suite by this composer "in which the passage across the Rhine of Count von Thurn, and the danger he was exposed to from the river, is most clearly set before our eyes and ears in twenty-six little pieces." Of course these attempts at characterization were imitations of the efforts of Couperin. The force of their delineation must have been much greater than that of any programme music of our time, if Matheson speaks truly. But Matheson had an active imagination.

George Muffat (—— – 1704) and Heinrich Franz von Biber (1648–1705) must be mentioned, because the former, in his "Apparatus

Musico-Organisticus," published at Augsburg in 1695, proved himself to be a greater master of bravura writing for keyed instruments than either Frescobaldi or Merulo, and because Von Biber, though a violinist, contributed greatly to the development of the sonata form. His writings in this department show a well-considered contrast in rhythm and tempo, but there is none of that regulated distribution of keys which is deemed indispensable to the modern sonata.

The immediate predecessors of Bach were organists of great ability and renown. They can be traced in a direct line from Jan Pieters Sweelinck (1540–1621), a celebrated master of the Netherlands school. Among the most noted of them were Samuel Scheidt (1587–1684), Heinrich Scheidemann (1600–1694), John Adam Reincke (1623–1722), Dietrich Buxtehude (1635–1707), and Johann Kuhnau (1667–1722). The three last, as the dates show, were contemporaries of Bach, though older men, and exercised marked influence on his development. He was acquainted with all three personally, and made long journeys in order to hear Reincke and Buxtehude play the organ. Reincke was an organist pure and simple, but Buxtehude was also a fine player on the clavier and composed some good music for the instrument. He ex-

celled in the free style of writing, and his works are imbued with deep poetical feeling.

Kuhnau is more important for our consideration, because he advanced the development of the sonata form in Germany. Some writers have held that he was the inventor of the sonata form in many parts, but it is more truthful to say that he introduced it in his own country. His first sonata is in three parts, and is found in his work bearing this curious title: "The other part of clavier exercise; that is, seven parts from re, mi, fa, or tertia minor tone, in addition to a sonata in B; written for the special delectation of lovers of music." Kuhnau's sonatas do not disclose a form growing out of the use of two or more themes or subjects. They are monothematic and consist of either fugato movements or parts in the style of a suite.

This brings us down to music which still figures in piano recitals. The growth of piano music from this time is in one of its aspects the development of the sonata form, of which the history has been written in many places and is familiar to most lovers of music. But there is another aspect of the evolution of piano music, which to my mind is quite as important as the development of the form. This is the development of the technique of the instrument. in-

fluenced as it was by the musical tendencies of the successive periods of musical history and showing a singular but unmistakable reaction upon them. Let us, then, review briefly the condition of music before Bach established his technique.

II.—Development of the Technique.

In the history of instrumental music there are three great periods, not divided by distinct lines, but gradually passing one into the other, and overlapping. These three periods are the Polyphonic, the Classic, and the Romantic. In the early history of music the musical scholars were all churchmen, and musical learning was all expended upon church music. Musical scholarship devoted all its energies to the production of great works in counterpoint, till after a time the masses of the church became unintelligible. The Lutheran chorale, the broad hymn tune for congregational worship, which came into prominence in the Reformation, convinced the fathers of the Roman Church that a simple style was necessary, and they took measures which led to its adoption. About the same time a band of Florentine enthusiasts, in seeking to resuscitate the dramatic recitation of the Greek drama, gave to the world the modern opera, and introduced a still simpler and more

beautiful vocal style than had hitherto been known.

Before these changes took place instrumental music was nothing but an echo of vocal music. The instruments simply played the voice parts of compositions written for singers. The monochord, the piano of the time, was used for the home practice of organists, and its style was borrowed from the organ, which spoke only the contrapuntal accents of the Church. When vocal music assumed a simpler style, instrumental music went on elaborating contrapuntal devices, and this contrapuntal, or polyphonic, instrumental style reached its perfection in the hands of Bach. In contrapuntal playing, in the simultaneous delivery of several melodies, Bach remains the model in the history of music. He brought the old style of performance to the highest grade of finish; but he was also instrumental in overthrowing it, for it was during his time that the cantabile style of monophonic playing began to supersede the old fugal manner. The music of Bach's day gives abundant evidence of being in a state of transition from one period to the other. All through Handel's "Messiah," for instance, you will find passages built on scales, like those of Bach's successors, mingled with passages in the fugal style. If

the reader will examine the tenor air, "Every Valley," he will at once perceive the meaning of my assertion.

Now what causes led to the transition from the polyphonic, fugal style to the cantabile of Emanuel Bach and Mozart? The first was the operatic aria. The *aria da capo* made its appearance in Cavalli's "Giasone," which was produced in 1649, and was afterward made popular all over Europe by Alessandro Scarlatti. The *aria da capo* was a simple song form, consisting of a melody, a second melody, and a return to the first. Its perspicuity and symmetry pleased the public, and composers for the clavier felt that it had emotional possibilities not found in the fugal style. Evidence of its immediate influence is found in the clavichord works, already mentioned, of Bernardo Pasquini (1637–1710), who aimed at a more flowing and vocal style than that of his predecessors. The second cause was the complete establishment by Domenico Scarlatti (1683–1757) of the difference between the technique of the organ and that of the piano, as described in the previous chapter. And the third cause was the immense reforms in fingering introduced by Johann Sebastian Bach. He was the Moses who led music out of the ecclesias-

tical wilderness. If you wish to understand that new testament of which Beethoven was the John and Wagner the Paul, you must go back to the old testament and study Bach and the prophets.

Previous to the time of Johann Sebastian Bach the technique of the clavier was simply obstructive to the progress of playing. It was based upon illogical and arbitrary rules, which had no foundation in the anatomical structure of the hand. The old rules required the player to use his fingers in ways contrary to the laws of nature. To be sure, one can train his muscles and ligaments to do abnormal things, as you may learn from the performance of any acrobat; but playing a piano should not be the feat of a contortionist. The rules set forth by Caspar Majers in 1741 commanded the pianist to play ascending seconds in the right hand with the middle and ring fingers; thirds and fourths with the middle and index; fifths and sixths with the index and little; sevenths and eighths with the little and thumb.

It is easy to perceive that such rules as these, which, according to their date, were extant in Bach's day, precluded the possibility of great fluency and rapidity. A smooth legato style could be obtained only at a moderate tempo.

Any attempt at rapidity would have been destructive of smoothness and would have resulted in an uneven distribution of dynamic power and a consequent disturbance of the symmetry of the phrasing. The impulse which caused pianists to break the shackles of these old rules was undoubtedly the growing influence of romanticism in music. In the old polyphonic, ecclesiastical style of composition for the clavier, when pieces written for that instrument resembled in form and content the organ fugues or contrapuntal anthems of the Church, the player was compelled to cultivate a technique which would enable him to enunciate with his fingers the three or four voice parts in which these contrapuntal compositions were always written. D. Scarlatti established the monophonic or single-voiced style of composition. In plain words, he wrote airs, composed of progressions of single notes, for the right hand with accompaniments for the left. His style of writing was learned by the Germans, and Sebastian Bach, whose genius exalted and moulded anew the entire formal material of music as known in his day, effected in some of his works, such as the "Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue," an astounding combination of the old and new styles. There are passages in the composition named which lean far forward

into the present and resemble in style and spirit some of the devices of Liszt.

In order to perform the new kind of music Sebastian Bach was compelled to throw over the stupid and illogical technique of his predecessors. His son, Emanuel Bach, who was not a great composer, but whose comprehension and revelation of the genius of the clavier entitle him to an honorable position on the page of musical history, carried the development of technique still further in his admirable search after a fine legato style. In his epoch-making book on "The True Manner of Playing the Clavichord," he says: "Methinks music ought principally to move the heart, and in this no performer on the pianoforte will succeed by merely thumping and drumming or by continual arpeggio playing. During the last few years my chief endeavor has been to play the pianoforte, in spite of its deficiency in sustaining sound, as much as possible in a singing manner and to compose for it accordingly. This is by no means an easy task if we desire not to leave the ear empty, or to disturb the noble simplicity of the cantabile with too much noise." This art of singing on the pianoforte is still one of the great desiderata of a lofty style, and to-day no higher praise can be awarded to any player's

touch than to say that his cantabile made his hearers forget that the pianoforte was not a producer of sustained tones.

The whole structure of modern piano technique, which was over a century in the course of development, rests upon the foundation of the Bach legato; for from this came our smooth and equal scale and arpeggio playing, which is one of the most salient features of our technique. All the other features of modern technique are derived either from this, or from the virtues of the old polyphonic style. The Schumann technique is simply a rational development of a blending of the two styles. Now let us see wherein the mechanical wonder of Bach's revolution lies.

Previous to his day players had used the fingers in an outstretched position, the thumb hanging down (Fig. 1). Bach at once perceived that this position of the hand was unnatural, that it robbed the fingers of their normal power and left a valuable ally unemployed. He, therefore, began to make as free use of his thumb as he did of the other fingers. But the moment that he attempted to use the thumb he

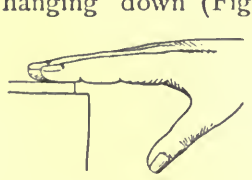


FIG. 1.

was forced to change the position of the other fingers and the old order of things was overthrown. For in order to play with the thumb as well as the fingers, it was necessary, on account of the shortness of the former, to curve the latter (Fig. 2). As Dr. Spitta puts it in his great "Life of Bach," "This curving at once excluded all rigidity; the fingers remained in an easy, elastic attitude, ready for extension or contraction at any moment, and they could now hit the keys rapidly and accurately as they hovered close over them. Thus by diligent practice the greatest possible equality of touch, strength, and rapidity was acquired in both hands, and each was made quite independent of the other."

FIG. 2.

Bach was not alone in the free use of the thumb, for François Couperin (1668–1733), Johann Gottfried Walther, a contemporary of Bach, Heinichen, and Handel, who was a great clavier player, and whose hands were used in a bent position, according to Chrysander, all employed the thumb in many ways; but it was Bach who systematically developed a method of fingering based on the new style and who

handed down rules. Some of them have lived until our day, for as Dr. Spitta says, "The natural tendency of the thumb to bend toward the hollow of the hand made it of admirable use in passing it under the other fingers, or them over it." It was Bach who refingered the scales in accordance with this natural use of the thumb.

Now let us see how this innovation of Bach's revolutionized the technique of piano playing and the style of musical utterance employed by writers for the piano. As soon as composers found that the freedom of the hand facilitated scale playing, they naturally began to write extended melodies based on scales, a practice already introduced in vocal music. The complete beauty of this style is found in the works of Mozart, who was the next great piano composer after the Bachs. And we ought to notice the interesting fact that the fondness for scale passages fostered by Mozart's great virtuosity as a pianist influenced his orchestral style and even his operatic creations. We must remember that Mozart's career began at the piano. Even in Beethoven's time the use of the scale had not palled upon composers, and some of the noblest thoughts of the mighty Ludwig are built on simple scale passages. Of course in Beethoven's early piano concertos, when he was still under

the influence of Mozart's genius, scale passages and the running style prevail, and I think I do not go too far in saying that there is nothing in these works which cannot be performed with the technique of Emanuel Bach.

Mozart followed the theory of Emanuel Bach as to the singing character of the piano. Jahn says: "Mozart's musical training was founded on song—and his inclinations led him to song—in a greater degree than was the case with his two predecessors." Bearing in mind, then, the influence of his early training as a pianist and his later development as an operatic composer, we see the logical tendency of Mozart's technique. He demanded of the pianist a perfect legato, a singing touch, and an unaffected style. It is on record that he said as much, and the internal evidence of his music shows that he practised what he preached. His beautiful fingering was the result of a close study of Sebastian Bach and his son Emanuel. He carried forward the development of the latter's technique, and is the connecting link between him and Clementi. He demanded "a quiet and steady hand, with its natural lightness, smoothness, and gliding rapidity so well developed that the passages should flow like oil." He required the delivery of every note,

grace, and accent with appropriate expression and taste. He was opposed to over-rapidity of execution and to violations of time. "Three things," he said, "are necessary for a good performer;" and he pointed to his head, his heart, and his fingers. Thus we perceive that from the moment that Bach threw off the shackles of the old rules and made it possible by the use of the thumb to play scale passages smoothly and evenly, the genius of piano-music composers led them in the direction of a singing style based on the scale.

The next great change in the style of piano composition and piano technique, for the two things go hand in hand, came about in the course of the supremacy of Muzio Clementi (1752–1832). This man was in some respects a repetition in musical history of Emanuel Bach. He was not a great composer, not even as good a composer as Emanuel, and his music never figures in general concerts in our day any more than that of Bach's son; but he had the keen insight of his predecessor into the nature and possibilities of the instrument on which he played. Given a different instrument in the hands of such a man and you will have new results. This is just what took place. The prime cause of the vast difference between the

technique of Clementi and that of Mozart was a difference of instruments. Clementi used the English piano; Mozart, the Viennese. The English piano, as Ernst Pauer has noted, had thicker strings, and a richer tone, and its hammer had a deeper fall. This made it "favorable to the sure execution of thirds, sixths, and octaves, and to the clear and precise playing of chords in succession; the tone of the Vienna piano, though thin and of shorter duration, was highly agreeable, and its action was so light that (as in the harpsichord) the most delicate pressure produced a sound from the key. . . . Clementi's piano was therefore favorable to a substantial and masculine treatment; while the Vienna piano responded best to a rapid fluent style and to arpeggio playing."

In every art there come periods when its votaries devote themselves wholly to the development of its technique. I think we are passing through such a stage in some arts to-day. Poets are more concerned just now about the music of their verse than about the vitality of their thought. And when artists take up this study of technique they almost invariably seek to carry it beyond the domain of their art, as did the ancient painter who painted grapes so as to deceive the birds. That was great tech-

nique, but it was not art at all. So the followers of Clementi have striven to make the piano a rival of the orchestra, for he was the founder of the school which aims at immense sonority and bewildering complexity. The Vienna school aimed at retaining the character of the piano as a chamber instrument. The more powerful construction of the English piano tempted Clementi to develop a larger style. This could not be reached through the simple scale passages and single-note progressions of Mozart. If you wish to get a volume of tone from a piano you must take notes by the handful. Consequently in Clementi's compositions appear rapid passages in thirds, sixths, and octaves. Moreover, he writes more extended chords and demands of the player a muscular power previously unknown. Clementi, as I have said, was a piano technician pure and simple, and he wrote almost exclusively for his chosen instrument. His exploration into its resources developed a technique which is ample for the performance of everything in piano music up to the death of Beethoven. It is natural that this man should have trained John Field, the teacher of Alexander Villoing, who was the only instructor of Anton Rubinstein.

We have now seen the transition from the

polyphonic style to the monophonic legato, and we have seen added to that the use of chord successions and the other elements of a sonorous and masculine method. These two styles are the foundation of our present technique, which is the result of their natural and inevitable union. For it was not to be supposed that pianists would rest content with a division of styles based on a difference of instruments. The demand of the musical world for a piano on which both styles could be employed with equal facility and brilliancy was, of course, unavoidable, and the development of music combining the two styles was bound to be, if anything, a step in advance of the growth of the means of execution.

I have said that the technique of Clementi was sufficient for the performance of everything up to the death of Beethoven. The emotional content of the mighty Ludwig's works is, of course, far more important than their technical peculiarities. Indeed, in respect of technique, Beethoven's sonatas and concertos show little advance over the works of his predecessors. All that is best in the styles of Bach, Mozart, and Clementi is to be found in Beethoven's works; and that which is distinctively his own is the spirit rather than the mechanism. He

certainly did, however, enrich the piano style of his time by a freer use of polyphony than his immediate predecessors had made. It was not the ecclesiastical polyphony of the contrapuntists, but a modernized kind, the growth of an adaptation of scholastic material to the needs of romantic expression. The tremendous finale of the sonata, opus 111, is an example of Beethoven's use of this style. Again, Beethoven's originality in rhythm demanded of pianists increased attention to the distribution of accents; and to achieve the desired effects it was necessary to be more careful in developing independence of finger, a thing which in our day is a *sine qua non* of piano-playing. Finally, the majestic dignity of the musical utterance of these sonatas and concertos called for a broader and nobler tone-color and a more dramatic phrasing than had hitherto been known to the piano. Even in our day, with the superb instruments at our command, and the entire resources of Liszt's witchcraft in tone-color open to us, we cannot exceed the requirements of Beethoven's works in the details of sonority and variety of color. This feature of their technical aspect points, as all their other traits do, to the fact that the child of the Bonngasse wrote not for a day, but for all time.

Nevertheless, as far as the mere mechanics of piano-playing are concerned, the technique of Clementi's "Gradus ad Parnassum" suffices for the performance of even the "Emperor" concerto. The technique of Schubert and Weber was also based on Clementi's. The latter, however, showed some originality in the use of extended chords, and in his "Concertstück" introduced the octave glissando, a cheap virtuoso trick. In general it may be accepted as an established fact that all players and composers of music in the classical style since Clementi have based their technique on his "Gradus," and those features of our modern playing which cannot be found therein are the productions of Liszt and the other romanticists. It is only in the use of the damper pedal that players not exclusively romantic have exceeded the limits of Clementi's teaching.

The history of the use of the pedals would of itself make a large and interesting chapter, but must here be touched briefly. In the Ruckers harpsichords an attempt to reach some of the effects now attained by pedals was made "by adding to the two unison strings of each note a third of shorter length and finer wire, tuned an octave higher," which increased the power and brilliancy of the tone. There was a second

keyboard, and stops which controlled the action of the jacks on the strings. Of course these contrivances produced a very limited variety of tone effects. I have tried them on a very excellent harpsichord of the Mozart period, formerly in the collection of M. Steinert, of New Haven, and can testify that only a moderate increase of tone and richness are obtained. If my memory serves me rightly, in that particular instrument the necessity of moving stops with the hands had been obviated by the introduction of pedals, which were invented by Hayward, an Englishman, in 1670. Real piano and forte pedals first appeared in 1783, when they were patented by John Broadwood. Naturally pianists soon began to make use of them, and we find very explicit directions for the use of the pedals in Beethoven's piano concerto in G and in the sonatas, opera 101, 106, 109, 110, and 111. The piano pedal was extensively used by the classic players, but it remained for Chopin to show how both pedals could be employed alternately or in combination for the production of the most beautiful effects of tone-color. Liszt, of course, elaborated this department of technique, as he did all others. It is hardly necessary to remind the reader that in our day educated pianists use the pedals not to obtain

contrasts of loudness and softness, but entirely in the production of tone-color. The infinite variety of qualities of tone which contemporaneous artists, like D'Albert, Rummel, and others, get out of a piano is wholly due to a combination of many different kinds of touch with changing uses of the pedals, employing sometimes one, sometimes the other, now both, and again neither. It was Chopin who revealed the possibilities of the pedal, Liszt who perfected the powers of touch.

The whole character of our contemporary technique is the result of romanticism in music. It has come from the efforts of romantic writers to imbue the piano with a greater power of emotional utterance, to make it a dramatic force, and, even more than that, a personality. Classicism means perfection of form, unfailing beauty of thought and utterance. It is the science of the beautiful in music. But romanticism means personality, characterization, individual expression, even universal revelation; and it has no hesitation in pouring forth abrupt rhythms, harsh dissonance, startling progressions, when these speak the thought of the composer. The repose and suavity, the serenity and the dignity of all that was noblest in the age of musical sculpture are exhibited by the romantic

school when required; but its favorite moods are hot, passionate, changeful, and irresistible. For these the utterance of the piano had to be widened. The polished legato of Mozart on a scale basis could not serve all moods. The rapid thirds, sixths, and chords of Clementi were at hand and were needed, as also was the broad phrase and great color of Beethoven. But, with all these elements, the romanticists cried for more. Schumann, Chopin, and Liszt —two immortal composers and one the Stanley of the piano—unlocked the treasures that lay concealed in the instrument. The first and second, having immortal creative genius to let loose, developed technique along the lines suggested by their own individualities; the third, having great gifts without the divine spark, developed technique in a direction suggested by the various possibilities of the instrument as it yielded up its hitherto unexplored territory to him.

Schumann's ideas did not at first seem suited to utterance through the medium of the piano; yet it was equally evident that they were not suited to any other instrument nor to the orchestra. The man spoke his new thought in a new language, to which the piano had to adapt itself as best it could. To speak the new tongue

the instrument was compelled to acquire a new articulation, which we call the Schumann technique. It is familiar enough to us now; but it was strange and troublesome at first. The fundamental reason of this was Schumann's incompleteness of training. He was not a thoroughly schooled musician, and his technique was not based, like Chopin's, on an exhaustive mastery of all that had been done by his predecessors. I am aware that these assertions are not new. The same points have been brought out by John Comfort Fillmore, whose "History of Piano Music" I cheerfully commend to all students of the divine art. But they are facts, and must be repeated here. The new difficulties of the Schumann technique consisted in obscure and involved rhythms, in peculiar relations of melodies to their accompaniments, in the unusual use of extended chords in difficult positions, and in the participation of both hands in the delivery of the same phrase. This catalogue of novelties does not look formidable at first sight; but when one remembers that rhythm is at the base of all music, and that any wide change in it upsets the entire structure, then one perceives that the strange Schumann rhythms, with the other new things added, must have demanded execution hitherto unknown to the pi-

ano. It is now an accepted fact that mastery of the Schumann technique can only be acquired by means of special exercises not necessary to the performance of piano music written before Schumann's time.

If I was asked what one thing lay behind the whole difference between Schumann's technique and that of Chopin, I might answer rhythm. That would not be strictly true, for no one thing accounts for the whole difference. But the fact is that while Schumann's rhythms are strange, and sometimes almost insoluble, Chopin preferred forms built on some accepted rhythm, such as the valse, mazourka, polonaise. The disguise which he throws around these forms is one of idea rather than of technique. The Chopin technique, new, marvellous, and learned as it is, never obtrudes itself. This, I think, was because it was chiefly concerned with a remodelling of the principles of a beautiful legato style. Chopin taught us how to play chromatic passages in double thirds and other intervals legato by putting the fifth finger under the fourth and third in descending, and the third and fourth over the fifth in ascending. He wrote arpeggios dispersed in wide intervals or so interspersed with passing notes that no earlier rules of fingering would apply to them.

He, therefore, made new rules by which the novel successions could be performed with certainty. In other words, it was reserved for Chopin to finally revolutionize the Bach method of scale playing, which had held its influence in music even to Beethoven's day. Even the Clementi technique did not break through the old limits; on the contrary, it remained within them. Its principles depended on the construction of compositions from five-finger passages, scales, and arpeggios. Its rules required that a five-finger position once taken should not be changed unnecessarily; that all passages made from scales and arpeggios should be fingered in the same way as the scales and arpeggios when played as exercises; that the thumb and little finger should not be used on the black keys except under extraordinary demand. Chopin overthrew all those rules and introduced methods of fingering which would have made Clementi stand aghast, but which rendered the performance of the new music possible.

Liszt knew all that Schumann and Chopin could teach him. Using their improvements in the use of the fingers, together with his own devices, he set out to make the piano the rival of the orchestra in sonority, brilliancy, and variety

of tone. To him we owe the deep study of the possibilities of the different kinds of touch. He showed us how to acquire the greatest strength and power of discriminative emphasis in the individual fingers. He developed the resources of the loose wrist, showing how it could be employed to produce effects previously unknown. He taught us to hold it higher than had before been the custom and to have it quite flexible, yet in such a position that the fingers had all possible mechanical advantage for the production of a powerful tone. The études which Liszt composed for the use of piano students are an epitome of modern technique. They are a complete revelation of the resources of the instrument. It is possible that the future may witness a further development of piano technique; but the instrument must first acquire new powers. Looking back over what has been done for the piano by inventive minds in the last fifty years, who can say what the next century may produce? Let us hope, however, that one great evil will not come—the loss of the character of the instrument.

The lesson of the growth of piano technique is the same as that taught by the growth of orchestral technique and of vocal power. Looking back over the history of music we find that

a very simple array of instruments sufficed for the classic ideas of Mozart, while the tremendous romantic conceptions of Wagner called forth all the resources of the contemporaneous instrumental army. Before romanticism got its hand upon the pulse of opera, the rule of the legato scale school extended even to the lyric stage, and all Europe sat breathless at the feet of that singer who could sing scales and trills faster and more accurately than anyone else. Romanticism introduced a sort of Schumann technique into singing, and for a time the new style was deemed foreign to the human voice. Only a few years ago artists declared that they could not sing "Tristan und Isolde." Now it is familiar wherever music is truly known. The whole development of technique in music has been brought about by the requirements of romantic thought. Wagner epitomized the growth in the words of Hans Sachs in "Die Meistersinger:"

> Nun sang er wie er musst'!
> Und wie er musst', so konnt' er's.

Which may be translated freely thus:

> He sang but as his thought compelled,
> And from the need the power upwelled.

III.—The Modern Concerto.

The influence of romanticism in piano-music did not cease with its effect on technique. It caused also a revolution in form. It brought about a new treatment of the sonata idea, changing the outward shape and intensifying the old spirit of unity and continuity which underlay, yet never fully dominated, the classic sonata form. The new shape grew out of the old, yet is different. Both are conspicuous examples of adaptation to æsthetic purpose. The purposes of the two are different, yet each originated in the search after coherence.

The development of musical forms is one of the most interesting studies in the realm of the tone art. The significance of the developed form, however, is too often missed; in fact it is almost wholly overlooked by those who write on the subject. The technical aspect of the growth is that which seems to interest them most, and in their consideration of it they are led away from the more profitable examination

of the emotional causes which produced the successive changes. A performance of the B-minor piano concerto of Eugene d'Albert, with the little giant himself as the solo player, caused the writer to realize that there had come to be an almost complete dissociation of modern romantic thought in music from classical forms.

That the D'Albert concerto is a remarkable composition is a conclusion that cannot be avoided when listening to it, and at its end one is so influenced by its vigorous vitality that he is ready to declare that it ought to live. One has a similar feeling in listening to the piano concerto of Richard Burmeister, one of the loveliest compositions ever produced in America, gentle and dignified as a statue of Diana, and differing from the D'Albert work as Diana's image from that of the Farnese Hercules. The Burmeister concerto is romantic in spirit, but leans toward classicism in form, while the D'Albert composition at once raises the question in the hearer's mind whether the composer has not stepped beyond the domain of the piano, or of the concerto, or of both.

The question is a natural one, but it is far easier to ask than to answer. As to the domain of the piano, I do not propose to enter upon a discussion of that topic for the reason that we

know not what the future has in store for us. Nor can I decide whether D'Albert has stepped beyond the limits of the concerto. It is easier for the metaphysician to find answers for the theories of materialists than for the student of musical progress to foretell at what point instrumental composition will find its limits. One thing appears to be beyond doubt: the D'Albert concerto is in a direct line of development which has been going forward since Mozart's time, and which may lead to the recognition of a new form distinct from the concerto.

The whole matter turns upon the question, whether we are to recognize in the contemporaneous form set up by ultra-romanticists a purpose wholly different from that of the conventional concerto. The classical concerto was designed to display the technical facility of the performer and the resources of his instrument without sacrifice of musical beauty and dignity. Such a concerto as that of D'Albert relegates technical achievements and musical beauty to a secondary place. It makes them subservient to the utterance of thoroughly dramatic ideas. It elevates the orchestra to an equality with the piano, and almost wholly deprives the latter of its character as a solo instrument by denuding

its part of what I must for lack of a better word call pianism. The solo part has few or none of those passages in which the special character of the piano is made known. The instrument is treated orchestrally, and its share of the concerto becomes part and parcel of the complete utterance of the composer; in fact he writes simply a symphonic poem for two orchestras, the piano being used as the second orchestra, and the two instrumental factors being employed with varying force. Sometimes it is the orchestra which is the chief speaker; again it is the piano. And nearly every trace of the form of the classical concerto has disappeared. The new thing is, as I have intimated, an adaptation of Liszt's contrivance, the symphonic poem, a form based on the assumption that there is no break between any two successive emotional states; hence there is no disconnection of the several movements. If we choose to call such a composition as D'Albert's a concerto, we must admit that, while it is the descendant of the Mozart form (which is a variety of the true classic sonata), it is totaly changed in purpose, shape, content, and technical treatment.

Writers on musical theory are fond of saying that Mozart settled the form of the modern concerto, and then proceeding to give an account

of the concerto's growth, which conclusively proves that the glorious boy did nothing of the sort. Mozart laid the foundation of the modern concerto by giving us a form absolutely perfect for the purpose for which it was designed. The purpose, however, is gone. We no longer aim at a mere display of the power of an instrument as an explicator and embellisher of ideas which are admirable wholly for their pure euphonic beauty. "Ausdruck der Empfindung"—expression of emotion—as Beethoven put it, is the slogan of contemporaneous music.

Mozart made a form which in and for itself was beautiful and unsurpassable. But when Beethoven came as the culmination of the classic and the father of the romantic school, the form had to give way to variations made necessary by the expression of new thoughts and the birth of new purposes. These changes in form have been going on ever since without cessation, and it is impossible to say where they will end. The Mozart form is not dead. There is no reason why it should be. If any man to-day desires to write a piano concerto in which there is to be an exposition of pure euphonic beauty and perfect symmetry, the perfect form is ready to his hand. For his purpose he cannot in all probability invent anything better than the Mozart model;

but if he wishes to write in the spirit of his time, there is nothing in the canons of art to forbid his altering the old form or making a new one. All that art demands of a form is that it shall be the best for the purpose for which it was designed.

It is not our purpose to enter into a review of the steps in the development of the modern concerto. Those who care to look into the matter will find sufficient information within easy reach. It may not be unprofitable, however, to point out one or two salient features. In the first place modern composers, beginning with Beethoven, have shown a tendency to abandon the ceremonious introductory tutti, in which the orchestra made a prolonged announcement of the themes.

Again, Beethoven set the fashion of writing his own cadenzas, instead of leaving them to the fancy of the performer. Furthermore, he introduced the novelty of accompanying the cadenza —or at least part of it—thereby completely changing its character, purpose, and effect. Mendelssohn went further, and placed the cadenza of his violin concerto in the middle instead of at the end of the first movement. All composers, save one or two, since Mozart have developed the orchestral part of the concerto,

thus leading up to the advent of genuinely symphonic productions like D'Albert's.

The joining of the three conventional movements of the concerto was suggested by Beethoven when, for the sake of avoiding an interruption of his thought, he united the second and third movements of the G and E flat major piano concertos. Later writers, notably Liszt, went further and joined all three movements. Moreover, the Abbé adopted the plan, employed by Schumann in his D minor symphony, of carrying forward the thematic germs of one movement into the next. Liszt's A major concerto, for instance, has several connected movements built on the same melodic subjects throughout.

Some commentators have denied Liszt's concertos the right to be classed as concertos. It matters very little what they are called. They certainly are not concertos of the same kind as Mozart's were. Their object is wider, and their shape is altered thereby. D'Albert's concerto is a natural outgrowth of the developments we have noted. He has abandoned the introductory tutti, the separated movements, the formal, unaccompanied cadenza of the first part, and the difference of themes. His concerto has four connected movements in which the same melodic

material is employed, and his cadenza is placed near the end of the whole work, where it is the beginning of a climax simply stupendous in technical difficulty and musical utterance.

If Liszt's so-called concertos are not concertos, D'Albert's certainly is not. It may be that in the future educated musical taste will decide to apply the term concerto only to compositions in the Mozartian, or, at any rate, the Beethovenian form, and to give the new style a title of its own which shall more aptly describe its character. Musical nomenclature is very limited and often inadequate, and it may be that none of us will trouble ourselves much about the name of a composition as long as it is so charged with matter as this piano work of D'Albert's. But composers are certainly moving toward a very different combination of the piano and orchestra from that of so recent a time as Schumann's. Whether the new style, so full of dramatic power, is better than that of Beethoven's last period, or than Schumann's, it is too soon to decide. It is certainly more ambitious, and therein lies a danger, for the fate of vaulting ambition is familiar.

One thing must undoubtedly be borne in mind in considering this matter, and that is the splendid development of the piano. The resources

of the instrument, as every one must have realized while listening to the piano performances of the last few seasons, are now beyond the fondest dreams of Beethoven and the wildest imagination of Mozart. Rubinstein in one of his concertos has set forth his idea that the piano is the equal and the rival of the orchestra. There is a substantial foundation for this thought. In power the piano yields only to the boldest fortissimo of a full modern orchestra. In feeling it gives way to the violin and 'cello, but in variety and extent of tone-color and dynamic gradations it surpasses them.

D'Albert has employed the solo instrument with superb effect, both alone and in combinations, in his B minor concerto. Some of his passages—for instance, those in which stopped horns accompany the piano, are marvellous in their intensity. As we said before, the whole work is surprising and masterful. If the advance of compositions for piano and orchestra designed to embody the concentrated and complex emotional feeling of the new romantic school is to be along the line foreshadowed by Beethoven and developed by Liszt, there is probably no man living more competent to conduct the march of progress than that little giant of the pianoforte, Eugene d'Albert; and it is be-

yond question that the term concerto is both feeble and inexpressive. I do not like the name symphonic poem. It is awkward and misleading, yet musical nomenclature is so barren that I do not blame Liszt for adopting such a title. It would certainly be a more fitting appellation for such compositions as that of D'Albert than concerto.

But by whatever name we may call these works — and D'Albert's being in the direct line of development will not be the last of them—we must recognize the fact that they open a field for the piano which no prophet could have foreseen when Scarlatti was defining the rudiments of technique, or even when Bach was making those rules of fingering which we still admire and practise. We have followed in this review of the evolution of piano music a long and marvellous series of advances. Looking back over them we must perceive that the tendency has always been toward greater power and wider range of effects in technique, toward concentration in ideas and intensification of feeling. The natural results of these tendencies, as exemplified first in the Clementi technique, afterward in the Schumann technique, in the connected movements of the G and E flat concertos of Beethoven, and later in the con-

tinuous movements and reiterated fundamental melody of the Liszt concertos, are seen in such a work as the B-minor concerto of D'Albert. From the mountain spring to the sea is a far cry; but one can trace the river all the way.

IV.—Some Living Players.

It would be a pity to leave the piano without a word or two about contemporaneous players. All that we have been reviewing in the evolution of piano music would be but a sealed book to most of us were it not for the eloquent exposition of the great performers of our day. In a single chronological recital we get an insight into the history of technical and æsthetical development that no printed pages can give. There are many persons in every audience, to be sure, who do not get this insight, for the piano is fashionable and many learn it simply as an accomplishment.

But those who have some talent penetrate deeper into the mysteries of the instrument and learn to recognize some of the higher qualities of technique, and even to catch an inkling of the æsthetic basis of the player's work. This insight into the inner consciousness of the piano is becoming more widely spread, and the result is that good piano-playing is beginning to get

something like real appreciation. The number of those who can discriminate between mere technical brilliancy and real musical feeling is constantly growing, and any pianist who comes before a musical public at the present day is fairly sure of an intelligent hearing. This is a good thing for the good players, but it is manifestly bad for the poor ones. As time passes there is bound to be less and less toleration for mediocrity and little pity for pretentious incapacity. The pounders and the mutilators must go to the wall and make room for those who can speak distinctly, beautifully, and eloquently through the medium of the most popular solo instrument of our time.

Those who do so speak are, as intimated, the greatest gainers from the development of public taste. The number of persons who can tell the differences between the playing of men like D'Albert and Von Bülow is much larger than it was a few years ago. This has come about through the energetic and self-reliant attitude of music lovers. The people who really know and understand music are in the habit nowadays of thinking for themselves a good deal. To be sure, they read much, and take their Schuré or Wolzogen in large doses, and they look at the newspapers. But they reserve for

themselves the liberty of taking everything on trial and coming to their own conclusions at last. The newspaper comments on current musical events are read by most lovers of music; but, as a rule, they serve chiefly to stimulate the readers to thoughtfulness and the formation of their own opinions. It is a good thing that this is so. The benefit of criticism is much greater when it induces people to think independently than when it gains blind adherence.

Among contemporaneous pianists conspicuous figures are Von Bülow, D'Albert, Rummel, Rosenthal, and—so far as America is concerned—Joseffy. Dr. von Bülow is, perhaps, greater for what he represents than for what he is. It may be that we must view something of his present through the roseate glory of his past; but standing at the summit of sixty-two years of life and thirty-nine years of musical experience, resting upon the laurels of triumphant victory in the battle of the new German school, first for existence and then for supremacy, wielding as executant, teacher, and conductor an influence which radiates from Berlin to the four corners of the earth, Dr. von Bülow looms up as an intensely absorbing personality and a conspicuously important figure in the musical progress of the day.

Moritz Rosenthal is a pianistic whirlwind. The impression he made on me at a first hearing was that he literally paralyzed the sensibilities of his audience. Stupefied by such an exhibition of technical perfection and physical power as had not been known since the springtime of Rubenstein, his first hearers momentarily forgot that there was spirituality in music and went mad over its bodily strength and beauty. Yet Rosenthal's playing was far from being devoid of musical feeling. Sometimes he was really eloquent; but it seemed that his eloquence was sporadic and governed largely by the mood of the moment. This is not consistent with the true artist's singleness of purpose. Again, there were times when Rosenthal showed high intelligence. His performance of Beethoven's sonata in E flat major (No. 3) was more satisfactory to the true musician than most of his other work. He played the composition in a manly, straightforward, honest style, presenting the themes and their development in a very intelligible manner. It was a thoughtful interpretation, worthy not only of an eminent pianist, but of a man of culture. Again, Rosenthal was sometimes a musical poet, as, for instance, when he played Chopin's E minor concerto. He had penetrated to the soul of that composition and knew how to

lay it bare before his hearers. His exposition of the themes was unsurpassed in its justice and eloquence. His treatment of the involved passages was vital with the most subtle delicacy of feeling, couched in a tone that was absolutely caressing. His color was soft as September haze and warm as June sunset; his touch was as sweet and as moist as dew. But the entire reserve of his technique was completely subordinated to a faithful rendering of the composer's poetry. It was a performance which made us willing to accord him a position in the front rank of pianists.

Yet when he played Schumann's "Carnaval," in a most uneven manner, he demonstrated that he had not achieved greatness. He gave the "Préambule" with superb breadth, dignity, and volume of tone. The "Eusebius" he actually interpreted, giving its delicious voice-parts their relative value, imparting to the whole passage a soft and organ-like tone-color, and imbuing it with something of the wistful mysticism revealed to us in that particular mood of his own personality called by Schumann Eusebius. On the other hand, he played the "Valse Allemande" with a ridiculously affected *tempo rubato*, and he fairly burlesqued the quiet humor of the march of the "Davidsbündler." What

was it that this brilliant young pianist most lacked? It was repose, without which no lofty art-work is possible. Technically this failing showed itself in a tendency to play many phrases in a manner best described by that unpleasant word "jerky." Æsthetically it showed itself in a want of even balance of ideas. But Rosenthal is a thinker and a student; his time will come. I agree with Heinrich Ehrlich. Rosenthal has reached the topmost peak of virtuosity. There he will spread his wings for flight toward the sky of musical feeling.

Eugene d'Albert I have already called the little giant of the pianoforte. Here is a man even smaller than Rosenthal, and with a technique as great as the Roumanian's. To describe Rosenthal's technical ability would be to summarize the entire field of piano mechanics as known to the virtuosity of to-day. The same thing is to be said of D'Albert, but something is to be added. There is a greater man than Rosenthal behind the technique. There is a more intense and vital individuality, a deeper and subtler temperament, a more highly gifted and roundly developed intellectuality. D'Albert is not only a great pianist, but also a great musician. He is a thinker, an analyzer, an explicator. The marvellous technique of the player

renders the mechanical performance of any music facile to him. The artistic temperament fills the execution with passion and vitality. The brain controls the whole and fashions it into a well-rounded, luminous, influential exposition. It is hardly necessary to mention specially any details of D'Albert's style. One thing, however, which struck me may be worth noting. His delicious *tempo rubato* undoubtedly puzzles some of his hearers. He obeys the spirit, but not the letter, of Chopin's injunction to preserve the tempo with the left hand, letting the right sometimes run ahead and sometimes linger behind. Whenever the chief thematic utterance passes into the left hand, D'Albert transfers the *tempo rubato* with it. The effect is striking. At times it is dramatic. It adds to his work a variety of fruitful nuances which to the untrained hearer increase the complexity of his playing. But complexity is often a feature of higher types in art as well as in biology. D'Albert's supremacy as a performer of Beethoven's concertos must not be forgotten. His wonderful rendering of the G major concerto ought to be long remembered by lovers of piano music. It was ideal in its perfection. In loftiness of conception it was beautiful. In finish of technical treatment it was wonderful. We hear much about the art of

singing on the pianoforte, but we seldom meet with a genuine example. D'Albert's vocal presentation of the second movement of this concerto transformed the piano into something almost human; and his treatment of the cadenza of the first movement was in itself an education in piano-playing. His performance of the "Emperor" concerto was another splendid achievement. The pianist did not astound with his reading, but he certainly moved the heart and fired the imagination. No one else whom I have heard has played this loftiest poem of the piano with such manliness, solidity, fidelity, and symmetry.

Yet there is something lacking in D'Albert. He is, of course, not perfect. The same justness of conception and rounded finish of presentation as he showed in the Beethoven works were not always conspicuous in his performances. A few quotations from Adolf Christiani's interesting book on the "Principles of Expression in Pianoforte Playing" will be instructive here. He says:

"Talent implies a peculiar aptitude for a special employment; hence pianistic talent implies a peculiar aptitude for that particular branch of musical art. . . . A pianist may be a great specialist without being much of a

musician, but to be a truly great artist he should be an accomplished musician also." He must have emotion, which will make him all warmth and feeling. Emotion is "that sixth sense, 'the power of conceiving and divining the beautiful,' which is the exclusive gift of God to the artist. . . . It involves the germs and instinct of several minor faculties, such as natural taste and instinctive discrimination; these, however, like talent, in order to become perfect, depend on intellectual training. Then only does natural taste become cultured refinement and instinctive discrimination become sound judgment."

"The term intelligence," the author continues, "presupposes capacity, and comprises all musical attainments that are teachable. . . . It requires each and every musical attainment acquirable by the exercise of thought and mind, including self-control, mastery of emotion, and repose. Intelligence aids and corrects talent; it guides and regulates emotion, and directs technique."

"Technique," he says further, "is, in a certain sense, the opposite of æsthetics; inasmuch as æsthetics have to do with the perceptions of a work of art and technique with the embodiment of it. . . . Therefore, technique

comprises more than mechanism. Mechanism is merely the manual part of technique, not requiring any directing thought; technique, however, requires thought. For example: as to fingering, which precedes mechanism; as to tempo, which governs mechanism; as to force, which qualifies mechanism; as to touch, which ennobles mechanism."

Apply these considerations to D'Albert. In emotion he is pre-eminent. He certainly has the "power of conceiving and divining the beautiful." And his natural taste has become cultured refinement; his instinctive discrimination sound judgment. His special pianistic talent is beyond a moment's doubt. And his technique is gigantic. The only one of Christiani's departments in which D'Albert is still lacking is intelligence. He has not yet acquired perfect self-control, mastery of emotion, and repose. He is not always able to preserve the delicate mental state of Chopin in his feminine moods. Of Chopin in his masculine moods he is a superb explicator. But D'Albert's fiery individuality breaks the bonds of Chopin, the female, at times, and translates the ultra-refined ideas into a sterner utterance than befits them, and so shocks our sensibilities. We may readily forgive him this, for his tremendous masculinity

makes him a grand preacher of the gospel according to Beethoven. He is very young, and his blood is hot. The judgment is ripening, and self-control, mastery of emotion, and repose will come with the years. Repose is the consummation of artistic development. It is the child of time and study. We must not demand it in a mere youth. He must accomplish his development normally. To have attained mastery of emotion and repose at his age would presuppose the quelling of the fire of youth. D'Albert is already great. He will be greater if the world does not spoil him, as it loves to spoil artists. Perhaps the impulses in this little man are too large to be checked by the world's adulation. For the sake of art let us hope so.

Mr. Joseffy has always impressed the writer as being deficient in elevation of sentiment. The limitations of his technique cannot be at present defined because he has of late sought to make certain changes in its character. His playing was formerly distinguished by crystalline purity and clearness, coupled with a delicacy and neatness which transformed everything he touched into a sort of Queen Mab scherzo. But recently Mr. Joseffy has aimed at breadth and power. He is seeking for a deeper dramatic note, but I am not quite sure that he is justified in doing

so. It is better for the executive musician to be perfect within a limited field than imperfect outside of it. But it is beyond dispute that Mr. Joseffy has gained in depth and dignity in the last ten years, and his future may demonstrate that the line of his advance has been wisely chosen. One thing is certain: he has fairly earned a place in the front rank of pianists—a fact which is more and more fully demonstrated when he is brought into comparison with artists acknowledged to be of the first order.

This study would be incomplete without some reference to so noble an artist as Franz Rummel. I confess without hesitation that I do not know just where to place Rummel. If it were not for a certain hardness of style, which obtrudes itself at times, and which seems to me to be the outcome of an over-elaborate adjustment of technical means with a view to reaching just the exact effect sought by the player, I should put Rummel ahead of all these pianists. Perhaps he ought to be placed there anyhow. He certainly is a great pianist and belongs in the front rank. His development has been notably sane and logical. In former years he was all emotion. He had no self-control, and his temperament fairly ran away with him. All that is past, however. I had the good fortune to hear

him frequently in the season of 1890–91, after not hearing him for three years. It was immediately evident that the old accusation of a lack of symmetry and repose could no longer be brought against him.

At the first concert in which I heard him he played Beethoven's G major and Liszt's E flat concertos. The newly developed qualities of the artist's work were shown in a high light in the first selection. His reading of the noble composition was scholarly in its justice, masterful in its sympathetic warmth and wide scope of feeling, luminous in the varied picturesqueness of its color, and stamped with the finish of lofty art in its dignity and repose. All the fiery impetuosity of the man's temperament remained. His emotional force was as strong as it ever had been, but the period of defiance of government was passed. The emotional power was held in the grasp of a strong and commanding intelligence, which guided it with firmness and wisdom. It would have been an impossibility for any hearer to rightly measure the amount of study and self-control displayed in such a performance as Mr. Rummel gave on the occasion under consideration. To approach such a judgment would require an intimate acquaintance with the pianist's methods of private labor

as well as with the changeful nature of his strong moods. But remembering that the player but a few years ago had been a creature of unbridled emotion, playing from impulse rather than idea, I could not avoid marvelling at the breadth and depth of artistic devotion which this growth, accomplished in three years, plainly revealed. Where Rummel seems to me to fall short of the highest possible achievement is in the lowest department of his art—technique. There is a lack of spontaneity in his tone-color, beautiful as it often is. The mechanism is too often exposed. The effort of the player to accomplish the design of the artist is betrayed.

As for Dr. Von Bülow, the special trait of his ability which gives him his position is easily discernible. Indeed, it is frequently obtrusive. He is the highest living embodiment of musical intelligence. He has acquired, in the most perfect degree, self-control, mastery of emotion, and repose. It has been said that he is deficient in emotion. Doubtless there is some truth in this. The time has been when, if Dr. von Bülow had possessed as much emotional warmth as intelligence, he would have been the ideal pianist, and the boundaries of piano-playing would have been defined. Happily for art and artists, the doctor was cold, and the world is still waiting and seek-

ing. All the musical emotion which he has is under the most complete control of his brain. Personal feeling never gets the better of him. He is always an objective player, striving to interpret the composer, not himself. Therein he differs widely from D'Albert, who often projects his own personality in too brilliant a light upon the musical picture which he is painting. Dr. von Bülow is always an interpreter, revitalizing for us the thoughts of Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, and Schumann with reverential fidelity and a remarkable range of technical styles. To listen to one of his recitals is to live in turn with each of the composers on the programme. Dr. von Bülow gives contemporaneous human interest to dead composers not by modernizing them, as so many weaker artists do, but by taking his audience back with him into their time.

The doctor is failing in technical power, but he is still a most instructive pianist. We may be astonished, electrified, paralyzed by the others; we are convinced by the doctor. But let us remember that without emotion the supreme pinnacle of performance cannot be reached. Experience, deep and thoughtful study, and arduous practice have made Dr. von Bülow what he is, or rather what he was. But with all his thought he cannot move a hearer as D'Albert or Rummel can.

In closing this brief view of the work of some living pianists something must be said of one whose personal magnetism is so great that it sometimes obscures the real nature of his playing. Ignace Jean Paderewski produced a profound impression upon all who heard him in both England and America; and the impression was one which did credit to the musical perception of both countries. It seems idle to reiterate the oft-repeated assertion that Paderewski is a very great pianist, yet it must be repeated here for the sake of the record. Those of us who sat under the magic spell of his performances in New York, and at times let emotion run away with judgment, will never forget how we awoke, as it were, on leaving the hall, and were conscious of vague questionings.

Perfection, we reflected, is still a poet's dream. We could not listen even to the Arabian Nights' entertainments of Paderewski without repeating the familiar query which the young man of departmental ditties attributed to the distorted genius of his Satanic Majesty — "Is it art?" And then we turned scornfully upon ourselves and cried, "Away with all cynics! Throw criticism to the dogs! Let us praise, applaud, and be merry; for to-morrow some piano-manufacturer will import a pianist who cannot play thus.

Let us sound the loud timbrel of laudation o'er Egypt's dark sea of analysis. Great is Paderewski!"

And he is great. His performance of the Emperor concerto of Beethoven was not what we expected; but it is not a *sine qua non* that a pianist should be in complete sympathy with the majestic musical thoughts of the mighty Ludwig. No one but a great artist could have played Schumann's A minor concerto as Paderewski did. His performance was lovely in the poetry of its feeling, exquisite in the delicacy and warmth of its color, convincing in its expression, and captivating in its refinement. It was a complete demonstration of the player's artistic nature. It was a radiant companion piece to his interpretation of Rubinstein's beautiful D minor concerto, and his incomparable delivery of some of Schubert's works. Moreover, no one but a musician of genuine originality could have written Paderewski's own concerto, and I do not believe that any other living pianist could play it with such ease, brilliancy, and beauty.

Paderewski's mastery of the key-board is simply glorious. All the difficulties of modern compositions resolve themselves into fancies under the magic caress of his graceful hands. But that is a minor consideration. The great

fundamental trait of his playing is its vocal character. When Emmanuel Bach said: "During the last few years my chief endeavor has been to play the piano-forte, in spite of its deficiency in sustaining sound, as much as possible in a singing manner, and to compose for it accordingly," he formulated the true principle of all instrumental performance. Now, as a matter of course, the passages which Paderewski plays so wonderfully on the piano could not be sung; but he makes them sound as if they could be, and, indeed, were sung. He steeps every composition in a vocal atmosphere, which causes the piano to seem animated by the breath of life. The ability to do this combines with a rare gift of sympathy, uncommon poetic insight, and a marvellous faculty of conveying his own feeling through the medium of the key-board to the hearer, to make Paderewski what he is—a man with interpretative and creative individuality. In every art such a being is precious.

SCHUMANN AND THE PROGRAMME-SYMPHONY.

SCHUMANN AND THE PROGRAMME-SYMPHONY.

AFTER the first performance of one of his symphonies Robert Schumann wrote to a friend expressing his delight at its favorable reception. No symphony had been taken so kindly by the public since Beethoven. Schumann's pleasure had a very substantial foundation. The condition of the public feeling toward his works is the same now as it was then, with the addition of that deeper respect which familiarity with good intellectual work always breeds instead of contempt. Schumann is pretty generally accepted now as the second in rank of the great symphonic writers. There is still a tendency in some quarters to overrate Mendelssohn, whose worth must certainly not be underestimated. But close and sympathetic study, without which any critical summary must be built on insecure foundations, will, we think, convince any one that

Schumann is surpassed in emotional depth, intellectual force, and expressive ability by Beethoven alone.

Emil Naumann, whose "History of Music" is an exhaustive work and sufficiently trustworthy as to facts, declared his belief that Robert Schumann was not a genius. If he was not, I am very doubtful as to the existence of more than four geniuses in the whole record of music. They are Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, and Wagner. The reader will note that this list omits such important personages as Orlando Lasso, Palestrina, Haydn, Gluck, Mendelssohn, Schubert, and Chopin, not to mention the whole list of operatic composers of the Italian and French schools. Naumann, however, is a man of no middle measures. Having decided that Schumann was simply a man of talent, he dismisses him, together with Schubert and Mendelssohn, in a few scant pages.

It is fair to suspect that a good deal of the reasoning which led Naumann to make this classification was affected by what H. T. Finck calls the worship of Jumboism. If Franz Schubert was not a genius, then the universal conception of genius as inspired ability is false. Schubert's songs are small works as compared with Beethoven's symphonies; but it is cheap criti-

cism that measures the value of a painter's work by the size of his canvas. There have been hundreds of grand operas worth far less to the world than Schubert's "Doppelgänger," "Du bist die Ruh," or "Erlkönig." The same comparison can be made in regard to Schumann's songs.

This digression is made with a view to showing that Naumann's classification is arbitrary and foolish. Robert Schumann was surely a genius, and he proves it in his symphonic writings as fully as in his songs and piano pieces. His symphonies are as incontestably entitled to the rank of master-songs as is "Morgenlich leuchtend." If there is one quality more potent than another in his orchestral words it is that intense, concentrated, and irresistible emotional force which is the soul of his songs. And this emotional intensity is not hampered by a lack of utterance. There is no mistaking Schumann's moods, for his musical exposition of them is so luminously eloquent that even those unskilled in the language of music must be quickened by their innate warmth. Like Wotan's sword in the trunk of the tree, they glow even upon the eyes of the uninformed.

It has always seemed to me to require singular opacity to fail to perceive Schumann's tremen-

dous virility. It reveals itself most brilliantly in his four symphonies, of which three certainly deserve to be classed in the first rank, as second only to the third, fifth, seventh, and ninth of Beethoven. Though Schumann undoubtedly lacked the fertile invention and the lofty simplicity of thematic utterance possessed by the greatest of all symphonic writers, he equalled his predecessor in earnestness of purpose and in the originality of the methods by which he sought to make his purposes known. This is a broad assertion ; but it seems to me that a careful study of Schumann's symphonies will justify it. Perceiving, as I always do, the big human heart of the man in every measure of his music and feeling at each hearing of the C major, the Rhenish and the D minor the glorious magnetism of a sympathy which it is the privilege of music to build between the quick and the dead, I approach the task of paying my tribute to the memory of Robert Schumann with no little feeling. He was the keenest and wisest of critics, a king among men and a prince among composers.

Schumann was a romanticist by temperament and by the environment of time and situation. Therefore he wrote programme music ; for programme music has always been a special means

of expression for romanticism. Let us, then, first consider this kind of composition. Many words have been written about it, and "yet is there strength, labor, and sorrow." Whether it is a good or bad thing, beneficent or maleficent toward art, has been discussed *ad infinitum*, and, perhaps, *ad nauseam*. It is a question which cannot be answered categorically. Whether programme music is good or bad depends, in the first place, on the composer's design and upon his just observance of the limitations of his art; and, in the second place, on the hearer's conception of the possibilities of musical significance.

No one can deny that interest is added to a composition for the average hearer by the application of a "programme." Men and women are fond of having a peg on which to hang their imaginations. This is sometimes urged as an objection against all programme music. The objectors say that one cannot understand such music without a key. That is true enough; but when the key is supplied it certainly opens the door for us and lets us see what is going on in the composer's mind. The music stimulates the imagination, and the two act and react on one another. The objection offered against this is that the whole proceeding is largely a matter of imagination. But that objection may be

made to all art. It is certainly fair to offer it against poetry, fiction, and the drama. The novelist imagines a series of incidents, and by the force of his words makes us see them with the mind's eye. He tells us what he wishes us to imagine, and we imagine it. How much difference is there between his power and that of the composer?

The difference is in the character of the concepts formed by the mind. The novelist can tell a direct story; he can name his personages, and describe the color of their eyes. This is not in the power of music. She fills the mind with broad, universal imaginations rather than with images. To be sure there are persons who seek for images in all music. Among them are those fanciful enthusiasts who find the colors of the rainbow, the thunders of the mountain-storm, the babbling of the meadow-brook, or the bellowing of the great deep in this or that composition. Sometimes in the carrying out of a great plan the masters have written music designed to conjure up in the mind images of external objects, but to do that is to put music to its lowest use.

The highest form of programme music is that in which the programme is simply an emotional schedule. I mean that the composer, having

studied his own soul, and having found that certain events in his life or observation have given rise to a train of emotions, designs his composition to convey some knowledge of that train of emotions to his hearer, and to place him in responsive sympathy with it. He says to the hearer, "Listen to my music and feel what I have felt." Unless I have failed to comprehend his obscure language (not made more comprehensible in Mr. Lawson's translation) this is what Dr. Hand means in his "Æsthetics of Musical Art," when he says: "We truly cannot tell what every individual tone in a piece of music says, as is possible in the case of the words of language, or even what feeling is expressed in particular harmonies; but in the condition of feeling—which in itself is not indefinite — the fantasy operates, and creates and combines melodic and harmonic tone-pictures, which not only represent that condition, but are also, in themselves, valid as representations. Thus, for instance, the feeling of perfect enjoyment of life, or of sadness, becomes a picture in a Rondo, or in an Adagio, in which all individual successions of tones, and forms of tones, are in unison with the fundamental feeling."

This, it seems to me, was the kind of programme music that Robert Schumann wrote.

It is not music for the masses, I admit, though Schumann's manly strength is so plainly revealed in his music that even the superficial get a certain pleasure from his symphonies. But the real meaning of Schumann's orchestral works is reserved for him who can find the key to their emotional basis. Once you have discovered the composer's schedule of feeling, you have opened up for yourself a mine of musical wealth which, it seems to me, could only have been worked by a real genius. Reading Schumann's symphonies thus, we must perceive that they are programme music of the loftiest order, in which the essential nature of romanticism in music becomes at once the rule of their construction and the justification of their existence. This essential nature of romanticism, which means the completion of an emotional circuit between the composer and the hearer, is the only argument in favor of programme music. It is the only ground upon which the symphonic poem and the leit motif can stand with any hope of safety. It is the ground upon which Beethoven placed his pastoral symphony when he wrote over it, "mehr Ausdruck der Empfindung als Malerei:" more an expression of emotion than portraiture. If we go back to the earliest programme music we find that it

does not stand the application of these principles. Take, for instance, the ballet suites of François Couperin. After writing, he sought for effective theatrical titles, and called his movements by such names as "La majestueuse," "La voluptueuse," "Les enjouments bachiques," "Tendresses bachiques," "Fureurs bachiques." The auditors were supposed to discover the qualities indicated by these titles, or at any rate to imagine them. But as Couperin was not conscious of any particular emotional state in the composition of these pieces, as he had no conception of the possibility of projecting his emotion through his music, his titles were meaningless, and his programme music constructed on false principles.

In failing to grasp the real possibilities of programme music, Couperin was, like his contemporaries, hampered by the condition of musical art. Music was not yet free from the shackles of the ecclesiastical scales, and the ecclesiastical spirit still controlled her utterance. All the great composers of the day failed comparatively in emotional writing the moment they attempted anything that was not religious. Bach's "St. Matthew Passion" will live forever; but his instrumental programme pieces are only musical curiosities. We have seen in our study of piano

music how Kuhnau tried to write programme music of a pictorial kind and was unsuccessful. Yet the internal evidence of Kuhnau's works goes to show that he had some ideas as to the limitations of his art. For instance, the argument of his "Saul Cured by David by Means of Music" is thus quoted by Dr. Spitta: First, Saul's melancholy and madness. Second, David's refreshing harp-playing. Third, the King's mind restored to peace." Dr. Spitta describes this as really well made. The themes are characteristic and well handled. The great point, however, in this and the other sonatas is this: "Situations are selected which are characterized by the most simple and unmixed sentiment." In other words, Kuhnau sometimes had a dim perception of the truth that only broad effects were attainable. The very moment that one attempts to paint details in music, text becomes necessary. The domain of absolute music is transcended, and we must have the choral symphony, the cantata, or, best of all, the opera.

Kuhnau's descriptive sonatas gave us Bach's "Capriccio sopra la lontananza del suo fratello dilettissimo"—"capriccio on the absence [departure] of a loved brother." It has often been said that Bach was the father of programme music, but in the face of Froberger, Kuhnau,

Couperin, and Knecht, with his two labelled symphonies, it would be better to drop this assertion. Those who are unacquainted with this composition of Bach's will find food for reflection in the composer's programme: The first number is labelled "Persuasion addressed to friends that they withhold him from the journey;" the second, "A representation of the various casualities which may happen to him in a foreign country;" third, "A general lamentation by friends;" fourth, "The friends, seeing that it cannot be otherwise, come to take leave;" fifth, "Aria de postiglione." Dr. Spitta adds, with dry humor, "When the carriage has driven off and the composer is left alone, he takes advantage of his solitude to write a double fugue on the post-horn call." Delightful consolation!

Can one fail to discern how the whole spirit of programme music was misconceived by the masters of the first half of the eighteenth century, including the great Sebastian? Kuhnau did the most surprising things, such as writing recitative without words for the clavier in his vain efforts to transform that modest instrument into a dramatic singer. Bach must have felt that his attempt to make the clavier catalogue the accidents that might happen to his brother in a foreign land was a failure. At any rate he

did not pursue the study of programme music. It was not in the line of Bach's development anyhow.

The truth of the matter lies just here: No composer can convey a definite descriptive communication to his hearer in music. He can reveal his mood and reproduce it in the sympathetic auditor; but that is as far as he can go. He can be gay or sad, calm or stormy, peaceful or heroic, and he can make the hearer share his feelings. But the very moment he desires to say to his hearer, "I am sad because my only brother has gone to China," he must put that fact in words. For the hearer's idea of sadness on account of the absence of a brother may be very different from that of the composer, and the former in that case will fail to comprehend the latter. It is here that a key is needed, either of text or of knowledge of the causes producing the emotional conditions under which the music was written. Without a key the hearer is as helpless as he would be in the presence of a Bayreuth leit motif divorced from its text.

If Wagner had written a theme designed to express the sorrow of the Volsungs, and given it to us dissociated from its dramatic text, we should recognize its marvellous melancholy, but we could go no further. Herein lies the only

possible justification, as I have intimated, of the leit motif. It is explained by the very text whose meaning it intensifies and illustrates. Just as the intonations of the human voice betray the feelings that lie behind words, so does Wagner's leading motive, substituted for the spoken tone, throw warmth and influence into his text. But without the text the meaning of the motive would remain a secret in the composer's breast, because it would be beyond his power to make music anything but subjective. This must not be understood as a declaration of belief that every time a leit motif is repeated the text should accompany it. The explanation once given should suffice to make the theme significant through the drama.

What are we to think, then, about orchestral music and piano compositions? What becomes of our theories about being faithful to the intentions of the composer? The truth is that, unless the composer has left us some indication of his design, we are limited to such knowledge as can be obtained from the internal evidence of the music, and that, as seems to be pretty thoroughly established, is only of a broad and general nature. Who has solved the riddles of Beethoven's last quartets and sonatas? Their interpretation must rest upon a sympathetic

study of the emotional life of the composer at the time when they were written. Tell us what Beethoven suffered or dreamed while he wrote any one of these works, and you have offered us a key to his meaning. To play those works in such a way as to reproduce in the hearer something of the emotional life of the master at that time is to approach as nearly as any human being can to carrying out the composer's intention. It is to vindicate the influence of music and to establish its spirituality. It is to demolish the transcendent rubbish of Tolstoï on the one hand, and the rhapsodical idiocy of rainbow and sunshine discoverers on the other. It is to establish the intellectuality of the tone art and to demonstrate that materialism cannot debase it.

It is in this spirit that we must approach the symphonic works of Robert Schumann. We must examine them in their relation to the composer's life, and look upon them as in some measure a record of his emotional experience—not necessarily written under the stress of the emotions which they express, but designed in calmer moments to paint the composer's heart for us. If there be any notable end to be gained by a continuance of the classic inquiry into the nature of the true, the beautiful, and the good,

then there is a profit in the thoughtful study of Schumann's music.

To be sure, standards of judgment vary. One man says all music should be beautiful; but he does not know what "beautiful" is, and he shares this elementary ignorance with Thales, Heraclitus, Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, Sir William Hamilton, Ruskin, Spencer, Voltaire, Diderot, Kant, Wieland, Vischer, Schopenhauer, and Oscar Wilde, all of whom tried to define the beautiful with conspicuous lack of success. Another man—and he, be it noted, is always a rabid Wagnerite—abides by the dictum of Jean Jacques Rousseau: "La tout est beau, parce que tout est vrai." Which assertion crumbles into absurdity in the presence of a brown-stone house or a canon by Jadassohn. But the Schumann emotional programme music is both beautiful and true, and, measured by the standard of either man, must be pronounced good, if not great.

The composer fell into this way of writing early in his career. His great sensibility, keen and subtle perception, strong sense of humor, and vivid imagination rendered him incapable of writing music simply for music's sake. His wealth of impressions found utterance in what he wrote. It prevented him from succeeding as

a writer in the sonata form. He could not shut himself up within the boundaries of a formula. He never wrote a great work in the sonata form until he saw how that form could be made to bend and yield to his wishes, as it did in the C major and D minor symphonies. But his programme music for the piano was a revelation. It not only revealed the tendencies and wonderful powers of Schumann's creative gifts, but it discovered to the world new possibilities of expression in the piano. Schumann began his career as a pianist. He understood the instrument and knew how to make it speak his language. That he invented for it a new manner of speech will be apparent to every student of the technique of the instrument. But he did more than that. He gave the piano new thoughts to utter. The instrument, which had been a prattling babe in the hands of Scarlatti, a singing boy in the hands of Mozart, a hero and a prophet in the hands of Beethoven, became a poet in those of Schumann.

We may say what we will of Beethoven's sonatas—and to the writer they have always been the greatest music written for the piano—but we must bear in mind that they are great as music pure and simple, not especially as piano music. Through them the piano utters thoughts never

before uttered by it; but its language, its vocabulary, remains the same. Beethoven invented no new figures. Therefore, he was not essentially a developer of the instrument. Schumann not only said new things, but said them in a new way. He enriched the vocabulary of the piano a thousandfold, and opened the way for later writers to produce effects which were previously unknown. Together with Chopin, his twin giant, he revolutionized the rhetoric of piano music. Beethoven had thundered his Areopagitica through the piano—had made it the mouthpiece of his great cries for human liberty. Schumann and Chopin were no orators as Beethoven was; but they were poets, and they sang together as the morning stars did, "or ever the earth and the world were born."

Schumann began to paint his soul-pictures as early as 1831, when he finished "The Papillons." It is not necessary to remind music lovers of the beauty of these short pieces. It has been well said that in some of these there was no great significance, but an exquisite poetic idea underlay their arrangement. It has been well said, also, that the rhythm of the profoundly beautiful waltz marks the time of the hearts rather than of the feet of the dancers. This was to be expected of Schumann, and we

should not go far astray, probably, if we accepted that waltz as marking the beat of the composer's own heart; for it is impossible to avoid perceiving that the originality of Schumann's music is the result of his constant endeavor to express his own soul. You can trace his attempts through such piano works as the "Davidsbündler," Opus 6; "Carnival," Opus 9; "Fantasiestücken," Opus 12; "Scenes from Childhood," Opus 15; "Vienna Carnival," Opus 26; "Album for Youth," Opus 68; "Forest Scenes," Opus 82; "Album Leaves," Opus 124. Yet we know that Schumann did not wish these compositions to be accepted as programme music in the older sense. He held his hearer down to no binding schedule of scenes and incidents. He preferred to give a title which hinted at his ideas, and then let his music awaken the hearer's emotions.

That Schumann felt his own power, that he realized that a new force was making itself known in German music, can hardly be doubted. In his critical writings the composer gave utterance frequently to words of much significance. In one place he says: "Consciously or unconsciously a new and as yet undeveloped school is being founded on the basis of the Beethoven-Schubert romanticism, a school which we may

venture to expect will mark a special epoch in the history of art. Its destiny seems to be to usher in a period which will nevertheless have many links to connect it with the past century." His feeling that he was destined to be one of the singers of this school is shown in a letter written to Moscheles in 1836, wherein he says: "If you only knew how I feel—as though I had reached the lowest bough of the tree of heaven, and could hear overhead, in hours of sacred loneliness, songs, some of which I may yet reveal to those I love—you surely would not deny me an encouraging word." Can we not perceive in these words the yearning of a great soul for self-expression?

The time came. Stimulated by the enthusiastic resolution with which he entered upon the defence of all that was noble in art in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, his imagination began to embody the indefinite emotions of his soul. It was in the years 1836 to 1839, when he had well mastered the routine of journalistic labor, that he poured out those immortal piano works, including the Fantasia in C, the F minor sonata, "Kreisleriana," and "Faschingsschwank," which have made his name dear to all lovers of piano music. Now he realized that he could express his inner self: "I used to rack my brains for a

long time," he writes; "but now I hardly ever scratch out a note. It all comes from within, and I often feel as if I could go playing straight on without ever coming to an end." But it was in 1840 that he began to pour out his heart in a new manner. It was in that year that his struggle for the hand of Clara Wieck came to its victorious close. As the man beheld day after day the unshaken steadfastness of the woman who loved him in the face of all opposition, he felt that the piano, marvellously as he himself had increased its power of speech, could not embody his emotions, and he turned to the oldest and most flexible instrument, the human voice. In the year 1840 Schumann wrote over one hundred songs, of which the world never tires and probably never will; for their romantic self-expression is so broad, so human, that they will stand for all time as the soul-hymns of men.

The artistic development of Schumann is so indisputably the result of his life up to this point, that we are not surprised at his next step. The tumult of young love lifted him from the piano to the voice. The consummation of his manhood, in the union with a woman of noble heart and commanding intellect, led him to the orchestra. In 1841 he rushed into the symphonic field, and composed no less than three

of his orchestral works. The first of these was his B flat symphony (opus 38), which was produced, at the Leipzig Gewandhaus, under Mendelssohn's careful and sympathetic direction, on March 31st. The other two were produced on December 6th. One was the work now called "Overture, Scherzo, and Finale," which, it is said, Schumann originally called "Sinfonïetta." The other was the immortal D minor symphony, now known as the fourth. It was not a great success at its first production, and Schumann was dissatisfied with it. He rescored it, filling in the brass especially, so that the best critics are now generally agreed that it is somewhat thick and clouded. Joseph Mosenthal, who has seen a copy of the original orchestration (in the possession of Johannes Brahms), says that it is much more clear and delicate. The failure of the effect of the original score was due to the weakness of the strings in the orchestra. It is necessary to bear these facts in mind in order to get a proper idea of the emotional contents of the D minor and C major symphonies, of which I purpose to speak particularly as embodiments of Schumann's inner life. The B flat symphony, which preceded the D minor in the same year, is Schumann's spring symphony. He even intended at one time to give it that

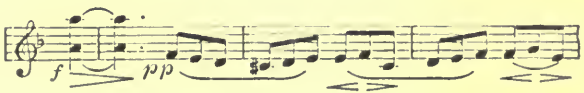
title, and it is generally so called. It is full of the spirit, the gladness, the buoyancy of that happy season, beloved of poets and musicians.

Do you know that wondrous time when spring buds into summer, when the timid tinge of the half-blown leaves bursts into a triumphant splendor of emerald, when the wild orchids lift their heads among the woodland hollows, when the busy hum of bees begins around the vine-clad porches, and the great sun, rolling in dazzling majesty across our deep-blue northern skies, sends new currents of life bounding through the veins of plants and beasts and men alike? It is not the "early spring," of which so many youthful poets carol, but that later spring that merges into summer, and is the new-crowned glory of the year. It is of such a season that Schumann's D minor symphony sings —of such a season, not among the birds and brooks and flowers, but in the infinite universe of a man's heart. It is Schumann's nuptial hymn, the "Io triumphe" of love victorious and manhood blessed.

Is it any wonder that this man, growing, as we have seen him grow, with a constant romanticism, and an unflagging search after self-expression, should have swept away the barriers of form, and, while preserving the general shape

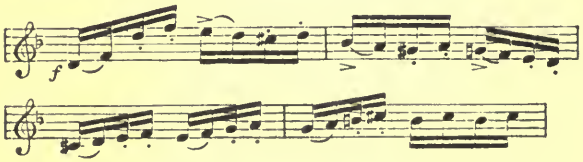
of the symphony, have given us a work, novel in appearance as it was in feeling? Let us—for it is necessary—enter for a brief time upon the unhappy business of analysis. The first thing that strikes the student of the score is the title: "Fourth Symphony: introduction, allegro, romanze, scherzo, and finale in one movement." We seldom hear this symphony played in one movement; a break is usually made between the allegro and the romance, thereby breaking the flow of the composer's ideas and doing violence to his intentions. No thoroughly artistic conductor should be guilty of such a wrong. Schumann wrote his symphony in one movement with a purpose. It is, as I have said, his nuptial hymn, the free, untrammelled outpour of his emotions, and he desires that the hearer's feelings shall pass, as his own did, from one state to the next without interruption. In a word, this is the first symphonic poem, a form which is based upon the irrefutable assertion that "there is no break between two successive emotional states." Now, Schumann did not rest here; but he introduced a device which had not been used by Beethoven when that master saw the need of unbroken connection between his movements. This device has been called "partial community of theme." I do not like

that appellation ; it belongs to a style of terminology which treats music as if it were a science, not an art. Music is a form of poetry. Let us not treat it as a form of mechanics. Schumann's "partial community of theme" is nothing more nor less than an approach to the leit motive system. Wagner himself tells us, in his account of the composition of "The Flying Dutchman," how the conviction dawned upon him that the recurrence of a thought or emotional state in the opera should be made known by a repetition of the music in which it was first embodied. Knowing full well the eagerness of commentators to read into the works of artists things of which the artists themselves never dreamed, I must admit that there is no evidence of Schumann's having anticipated Wagner's conclusion ; but there is abundant internal proof in his music that his strong feeling for direct self-expression led him to a usage resembling in principle that of the leit motive. The introduction of the D minor symphony is made of this theme:



The soft, caressing, yearning nature of this theme is at once apparent to every hearer, and

is intensified by its orchestral treatment. It is announced by the second violins, playing on the fourth string, and the first bassoon in unison, the violas and second bassoon in unison playing a second part in sixths below. The clarinets are added, an octave above, in the fifth measure. In twenty-one measures the melody evolved from the above theme is completed and the brief but eloquent exposition of that yearning tenderness which has in it a note of pain is ended. I call this the yearning motive. Six short measures, in which Schumann plainly throws aside his softer mood and turns to a hymn of happiness, lead us to the motive of rejoicing:

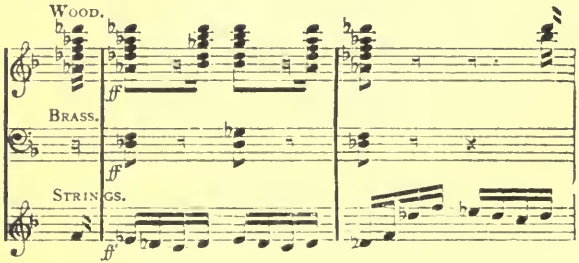


Ebenezer Prout has made an analysis of the D minor symphony, in which he speaks thus of this theme: "Trite and uninteresting as it is, it follows us relentlessly—now in the bass, now in the middle, now in the upper parts, now in the passages of imitation, till, when we reach the end of the movement, we hardly know whether to feel aggravated at its pertinacity, or aston-

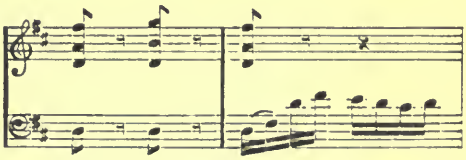
ished at the effect produced by such an unpromising subject." It seems to me that a musician so well informed as Mr. Prout must have written that sentence without due consideration. Surely the subject is no more unpromising than the simple diatonic scale which Beethoven so often used with astounding effect. It seems to me that Schumann has done what all great symphonists have done: he has taken a simple melody and developed it in an effective manner. His theme of rejoicing does, indeed, echo and re-echo from all parts of the orchestra, now thundering in the basses, again carolling with the flutes, but always swelling higher and higher in its rapturous utterance, till at the end of the movement we certainly "are astonished at the effect" and wonder how the composer is to spread the wings of his fancy for further flight.

One part of Mr. Prout's analysis (which I am far from dispraising) is worthy of reproduction here. He notes that a vigorous forte concludes the first part of the allegro, and continues by saying: "From this point to the end of the movement we find nothing but what is commonly called the free fantasia. It would be very interesting to find out how many hearers of this symphony have ever noticed that neither the first nor the second subject ever recurs in

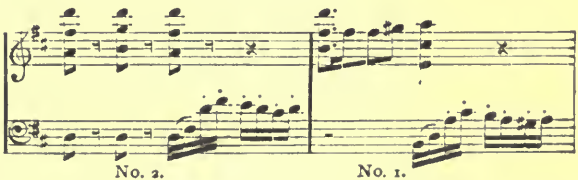
the latter part. The music is almost entirely constructed of new material, to which the opening bar of the first theme mostly serves as an accompaniment; and such unity of character is given to the whole by this means that it is doubtful if one hearer in a hundred has detected the irregularity of the form." There are two reasons for this "irregularity of form." First, Schumann's purpose was plainly to develop to its furthest power of emotional expressiveness his motive of rejoicing. He sought to do this not only by carrying it through a series of modulations, and setting our auditory nerves to vibrating under the invigorating shock of such foreign tonalities as D flat major, but by a process of variation, made familiar by Beethoven, through which, by the addition of small portions of new material, the original melody takes on a new form and color. Here is the treatment to which Schumann, in his search after accents of joy, subjects his theme :



He works this out in such a manner that at the end of the allegro it is succeeded by this form:



Now, if the student of the score will turn to the final allegro (what would under ordinary circumstances be called the last movement) he will find that his theme, plainly a motive of triumphant victory, is made out of these two forms in this manner:

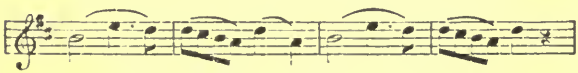


No. 2. No. 1.

And this explains why Schumann did not follow the sonata form in his first allegro and repeat his principal subject in a third part of the movement. Having once stated his motive of joy, he had no further use for it but to develop it into a pæan of victory at the end of the one grand movement which constitutes the symphony.

Does not this view throw a truthful light upon the purpose of the composer? Is it not justified by our preliminary study of the real nature of programme music and the bent of Schumann's genius? If there were no other revelations of a purpose to convey to the hearer the knowledge of a series of emotional states, we might rest here and declare that the existence of a programme symphony was established. But this is not all. I have spoken of a yearning motive, which is used to introduce the symphony. Later in the first movement (using the conventional terminology) appears a theme whose character is so similar that I always think of it as the motive of love's tenderness, fittingly associated, as it is, with the motive of joy. It is this:

If my view of Schumann's method of composing the D minor symphony is correct, there should be a counterpart of this theme in the finale. So there is, and Schumann uses it to begin his coda, his last burst of rapturous triumph.



Put them in the same key and try them connectedly in the order in which they stand here, and you will see how beautifully one supplements the other in feeling as well as in melodic character. Surely, we must admit, remembering the composer's indisputable attempt to give his work unity, that his purpose governed the construction of these two themes.

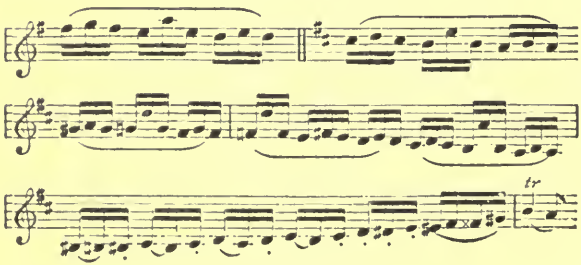
Again, having given free rein to his expression of love's joy and tenderness in the first movement, he enters immediately upon the romanza. This is clearly a serenade beneath the window of his bride. That Schumann intended to give it such a character is shown by his use in the original score of the guitar, afterward taken out because it was ineffective in the mass of strings. If Schumann had written the D minor symphony thirty years later, he would have used a harp and achieved his effect fully; but he was too close to Beethoven to know the value of that improvement on the model of symphonic instrumentation left by the mighty Ludwig. Yet in his romanza he continues to exploit his new treatment of symphonic form in a most touching manner; for immediately after the first enunciation of the theme of the serenade, he recurs to the yearning motive, thus giving us a most eloquent expression of the feelings of the

singer beneath the window. He is outside, but he yearns to be at her side.

Here follows one of the loveliest touches in the whole work. The yearning melody ends with this passage:

And this is succeeded at once by a very beautiful section in which the body of strings plays the subjoined air, obviously formed from the passage just given:

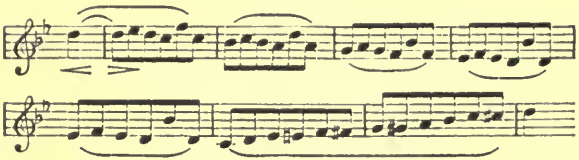
And above this the voice of a single violin sings the following lovely variation:



This is a marvellous working out of the yearning melody with which the symphony begins, is it not? How such treatment as this reveals us the closeness of Schumann's self-analysis and the firmness of his purpose to express his heart in his music! How thoroughly it explains to us his recourse to the orchestra to obtain adequate means for the representation of the multitude of joyous and tender emotions which crowded his heart in the full realization of all his hopes! If this is not the tone-poem of a genius, where are we to look for one?

After the romanza the composer passes without pause to the scherzo. It has always seemed to me that conductors who are resolved to interrupt the continuous flow of this symphony at some point would better make the break between the romanza and the scherzo than elsewhere. The connection between these two movements at the point of contact is less marked, I think, than that between the first two. The scherzo itself is true to its name. It is playful and airy, the badinage of the lover. But mark how charmingly he reminds the object of his affection of the yearning mood that has prevailed in his heart so much of the time. He does it in the trio, not by a repetition of the yearning melody itself, but by a reproduction in

all the first violins of the variation given in the romanza to a solo violin :



It is with a working out of this melody that he concludes the scherzo and returns to the first theme of the whole symphony, which is given out by the first strings, accompanied by the tremolo of the second violins and violas, sustained chords in the wood, and declamatory phrases in the brass. It reminds one of the wonderful passage from the scherzo to the finale of Beethoven's fifth, though it has not the impressive mystery of that awe-inspiring episode. Schumann lets his now triumphant mood grow through the orchestra till he reaches a pause on a full forte chord. Then he bursts into his pæan of victory previously described. This movement contains considerable new material, all of which, however, is bright in movement and happy in character. The hearer of the symphony finds no difficulty in following its treatment. I cannot agree with Prout, who says that the free fantasia of this part is labored.

The entire work has always impressed me as being singularly devoid of obtrusive evidence of the great amount of thought which a study of its construction reveals. I heard it several times before the most obvious passages of repetition forced themselves upon my attention. The less patent did not reveal themselves except under a careful study of the score.

After what has been said about the D minor symphony the C major may be dismissed with shorter consideration. Schumann himself tells us that it was sketched "during a period of great physical suffering and severe mental conflict, in the endeavor to combat the difficulties of his circumstances—a conflict which he says left its traces behind it, and which in fact led at last to his unhappy death." What a flood of light this explanation lets in upon the tremendous vigor and stress of the entire work. How fully it makes us understand the difference between this and the Spring symphony. We cannot fail to be caught and carried by the flood of power—aggressive, militant power—in this C major work, and here is a satisfactory reason for its presence. Truly this is the voice of a great singer. In this work we see a further use of the methods of construction employed in the D minor symphony. They are not so elabo-

rately carried out because the composer's purpose did not demand it. But he does not lose sight of his idea of repeating certain primary themes in every movement. The sostenuto assai in the C major is "an introduction not to the first allegro, but to the whole symphony," as Sir George Grove has noted. "The call of the brass instruments, which forms the first and most enduring phrase in the opening, is heard in the same instruments at the climax of the allegro, again at the close of the allegro, and lastly in the termination of the finale, and thus acts the part of a motto or refrain." Sir George also points out that other phrases of the introduction occur later, and that the theme of the adagio returns in the finale. He also specifies the very beautiful employment of a subsidiary melody in the introduction as the basis of the second subject of the first movement. I think Sir George Grove did not read between the lines here. The probabilities are that Schumann created the two subjects of his first movement before he undertook the composition of the introduction, and this subsidiary melody in the introduction was derived purposely from the second subject of the movement. This would be more in accord with the evidences of deep design which the entire symphony contains.

I may be pardoned for a momentary digression here to remark that Sir George seems puzzled to account for the scherzo's two trios, and timidly supposes that the composer may have got the idea from Beethoven's repetition of the trios in the fourth and seventh symphonies, or from "some 'cassatio' of Mozart or Haydn." He should have known that in Sebastian Bach's great concerto in F for solo violin, two horns, three oboes, bassoon, and strings there is a minuet with three trios, after each of which the minuet is repeated. And he should also have known that Mozart took up this idea half a century later. In his divertimento in D (Köchel, 131), there are two minuets, the first of which has three trios and the second two. This use of a second trio, therefore, is not a modern custom and may be dismissed.

The matter under consideration is the repeated use of the same themes in different parts of the symphony, a fashion which was the model of the Liszt variety of piano concerto, and which unquestionably led that writer to the invention of the symphonic poem. The question may now be asked, and it is very pertinent, Whether this repetition of themes is a confession of weakness on the part of the composer? Does it mean that he is not able to invent new melodies for

each new movement? Or does it mean that he is able to produce melodies which will bear extended discussion? I fancy this question is not so very difficult to answer after all. The thoughtful student will readily perceive that it speedily resolves itself into a question of fact: Do the ideas which are repeated bear the repetition and elaboration?

If the recurring melodies strike the mind with fresh force at each re-entrance, if they gain in beauty and significance with elaboration, the composer is justified in repeating them for the sake of euphonious effect alone, without regard for deeper æsthetic considerations. Schumann's D minor is the most conspicuous example of a symphony written in this manner. Does it weary the hearer to find a theme of the first movement used as the foundation for the finale? I think not. On the contrary, I think that, from a purely sensuous point of view, the unfamiliar hearer is always surprised and delighted at the return, and at the new and triumphant modification of the melody.

But we have already seen that Schumann did not use his ideas over and over simply for the purpose of ringing euphonic changes on them. He had a deeper purpose—one which stamps him as a great musical thinker and demonstrates

that he had explored the resources of music as an emotional language. The character of this C major symphony is, as we have seen, aggressive, resisting, combative. He wrote it when in the heat of a physical and mental conflict. In the light of this fact examine that brazen phrase with which the symphony begins. Surely this is a challenge, the fanfare of the knight entering the lists against fate. It is stern, weighty, and resolute, the expression of the determination of a brave and unyielding spirit. It is simply the Schumann leit motive, representing through the storm and stress of the symphonic struggle the calm courage of the man. And at the end to what alone does this phrase give way? To a triumphant hymn of victory, a prophetic vision of the composer which was destined never to be realized.

Does the reader think these explanations fanciful? They are no more so than the explanations of Beethoven's third and fifth. They are no more so than those of Wagner's Walhalla or "Wanderer" motives. And the writer does not deem those explanations fanciful in the least. They are logically deduced from substantial data. The explanations of Schumann's D minor and C major symphonies herewith given are deduced in the same way; and a suggestion is

offered as to the value of the repetition of subjects. The reader, of course, will accept it or not as he chooses. But I may add this: That it has always been, since the days of Bach, the object of composers to express their own souls. Indeed, the endeavor to do this can be traced back to even earlier days in the history of music. No sooner had the mass of contrapuntal learning which had been growing for several centuries reached its height in the hair-splitting and puzzle-building of Okeghem's time, than Josquin des Près, his pupil, sought to impart euphonic beauty to his music; and but little later Orlando Lasso was producing music which nobly expressed religious feeling, the only emotional utterance attempted in the art-music of the time. Thenceforward composers developed the emotional element till they reached a comprehension of the great truth that they must look within for their inspiration. As Dr. Henry Maudsley has it: "It is not man's function to think and feel only; his inner life he must express or utter in action of some kind—in word or deed." Music is the composer's word, and by a thoughtful study of his own mental and emotional states he brings under his survey the entire psychic experience of humanity. The essential characteristic of ro-

manticism in music is the ceaseless endeavor to reveal this inner life. If Robert Schumann was truly a romanticist, as people are in the habit of saying, without much thought about it, then he was trying to disclose his inner self in his music, and the insight given by the composer into his emotional states at the time of the composition of the D minor and C major symphonies justifies the explanations which have been offered.

"It requires much time to discover musical Mediterraneans," says epigrammatic Berlioz, "and still more to master their navigation." It took much time to discover the true vocation of programme music, and there are many whose eyes are still blinded. It was reserved for Beethoven to show how the symphony could be made to utter the life of the inner man. It was Schumann's task to teach us a new method of symphonic speech. I suppose the general judgment of cultivated lovers of music will award Schumann the second place among symphonists; yet I often feel that the words of his letter to Kossmaly on another subject would be applicable to this. He says: "In your article on the 'Lied,' I was a little grieved that you placed me in the second class. I do not lay claim to the first, but I think I have a claim to a place of

my own, and least of all do I wish to see myself associated with Reissiger, Kurschmann, etc. I know that my aims, my resources, are far beyond theirs, and I hope you will concede this and not accuse me of vanity, which is far from me."

Schumann would have asked no higher meed of praise than to be ranked second to Beethoven as a symphonist. But let us remember when we set him there that he had certainly a great claim to a place of his own. The revelations made to us by the scores of the two symphonies which I have discussed lift the curtains from the inner shrine of a genius of the first order.

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